

Swavesey Primary School

Learning Outside the Classroom and Educational Visits Policy

1 Introduction

1.1 All schools are required to offer children a broad and balanced curriculum that promotes their spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development, and prepares them for the opportunities and experiences of adult life.

1.2 At Swavesey School we seek to ensure that the National Curriculum is delivered to all children, regardless of social background, race, gender or differences in ability. All are entitled to the development of knowledge, understanding, skills, and attitudes. To enrich the curriculum for our children, we also offer a range of LOTC, educational visits and other activities that add to and complement what they learn in school.

2 Organisation

2.1 At Swavesey School, we follow the guidelines contained within the Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough document Learning Beyond the Classroom 2005. This file is kept in the main office and is referred to as 'LA Guidance' from this point in the policy. Teaching Staff organising an educational visit should also refer to the DFES guidance contained in 'A Handbook for Group Leaders' which is kept in the back of the LA Guidance file.

The school uses Evolve, the LA planning tool which allows staff to plan and submit visits for approval.

2.2 The Headteacher is the Educational Visits Coordinator.

2.3 The National Curriculum defines what we teach the children in school. This is the basis for each class's programme of learning for each school year. In addition teachers and governors agree the corresponding programme of visits and activities at the beginning of each academic year.

2.4 Within each class's programme of work the teachers plan educational visits and activities that support the children's learning. We give details of these visits and activities to parents at the beginning of each school year in our School Diary. We plan other activities as the school year progresses, and inform parents of these in due course.

2.5 Visits and activities usually take place within the school day, and the governing body approves all such visits in advance. We follow the Local Authority's guidelines relating to health and safety, and we ask parents to give written consent for their child to take part in any activity that takes children off the school site and out of the village of Swavesey. If we do not receive this written permission, the child will be unable to participate. When joining the school, each parent is asked to sign a document giving permission for their child to take part in activities within the village during their time at the school.

3 Charging for school activities

3.1 See Section 7, LBTC 2005. All education during school hours is free. We do not charge for any activity undertaken as part of the National Curriculum. There are some circumstances when the school can make a charge for certain activities. The governing body has a 'Charging and Remissions' policy that details the full range of activities where a charge can be made. A copy of this is available from the school office.

3.2 The Governing Body has agreed the wording of the statement relating to charging for both for Establishment approved visits and LA approved visits (see LBTC 2005 Section 9 point 52 on for explanation of visits types) that is to be included in letters to parents regarding educational visits. This forms part of the 'Charging and Remissions' policy.

4 Curriculum links

4.1 All Learning outside the classroom, educational visits and activities support and enrich the work we do inside the school. There are also a number of people who visit the school to support our work. Some visits relate directly to areas of learning for individual classes, whilst others relate to all our children.

4.2 For each subject in the curriculum there is a corresponding programme of activities which includes visits by specialists. All these activities are in line with guidance published by the Local Authority and may include:

- English/Literacy – theatre visits, visits by authors, poets and theatre groups;
- science – use of the school grounds, visits by speakers;
- mathematics – use of shape and number trails in the local environment;
- history – castle visits, study of local housing, local museums;
- geography – use of the locality for fieldwork, village trails;
- art and design – art gallery visits, use of the locality;
- PE –Cluster and other sports activities, extra-curricular activities, visits by specialist coaches;
- music – range of specialist music teaching, extra-curricular activities, Music School, concerts for parents to hear;
- design and technology – visits to local factories/design centres;
- ICT – its use in local shops/libraries/secondary schools etc;
- RE – visits to local centres of worship, visits by local clergy.

4.3 We also have regular visits from our neighbourhood police officer and health workers. These visits support the personal, social and health education of our children. A local Vicar of the Church of leads assembly regularly. Other local religious leaders also take assemblies in the course of the school year. We do this with the full agreement of the governing body.

5 Residential activities

5.1 At Swavesey Primary School, children in Year 6 have the opportunity to take part in a residential visit. This activity takes place during term-time and is linked to the National Curriculum, so we do not make any charge for the education or cost of travel although parents are invited to make a voluntary contribution towards these elements. We do, however, make a charge for board and lodging, insurance and specialist instruction for certain activities. Parents in receipt of state benefits are exempt from payment.

5.2 The residential visit enables children to take part in outdoor activities and environmental studies linked to their science work. We undertake this visit only with the permission of the Local Authority and follow the LA Guidance in the organisation of the visit. All specialist activities are undertaken with qualified instructors.

6 Risk Assessment

6.1 The school follows the guidelines on Risk Management in the LA Guidance. The risk assessment should identify significant risks and take measures to control these, through proper planning by staff leading the visit.

6.2 A risk assessment must be undertaken prior to all educational visits and off-site activities. The Headteacher delegates this responsibility to the member of staff organising the visit or activity but must approve and sign the risk assessment before the visit/activity is allowed to go ahead. The risk assessment must include the SEN/medical needs of the specific group of children participating.

6.3 The school has a standard format for risk assessment (see Section 2). Risk assessments should be completed on the staffroom computer and saved on the hard-drive in the appropriate folder. These can then be amended when further visits are organised. A printed copy of the risk assessment should be placed in the file in the main office. All adults accompanying the visit should be given a copy of the risk assessment and made fully aware of their responsibilities.

7 Pre-visits

7.1 In order to undertake a full and comprehensive assessment of risks, a pre-visit is useful but not compulsorily. Even where the visit is made regularly, risks should be re-assessed in light of current plans. It is usually the responsibility of the visit organiser to carry out a pre-visit.

8 Ratio of adults to pupils

8.1 At Swavesey Primary School we follow LA Guidance (section 2) on minimum staff/pupil ratios for visits;

In all cases one adult included in the above ratios must be a teacher. It must be stressed that these are minimum ratios and that visit organizers must consider the following factors when deciding on the final adult/child ratio: SEN and medical needs; type of activities to be undertaken; experience and competence of all adults accompanying the visit; duration of the visit; competence and behavioural history of the group of children.

9 Voluntary Help

9.1 At Swavesey School, we are aware that many educational visits could not take place without the goodwill of volunteer helpers. Volunteers will normally be people well-known to the school as either parents or governors.

9.2 Volunteers will be told that they have the responsibility to follow the instructions of the visit organiser and that the visit organiser retains overall responsibility.

9.3 The school will appoint volunteer helpers as far in advance of the visit as practical and will provide opportunities for those volunteers to meet the pupils, for whom they will have responsibility, learning their names and getting to know them.

9.4 The school retains the right to make the final decision as to which volunteers accompany a visit as not all volunteers may be suitable or competent.

9.5 The visit organiser is responsible for ensuring that each volunteer knows precisely what their role is and understands that they have a responsibility to carry out that role.

9.6 Where children are organised in small groups, a child will not generally be placed in a group for which his/her parent is responsible.

9.7 All volunteers accompanying a residential visit will be required to obtain a Criminal Records Bureau Disclosure, ISA check when implemented.

10 Transport

10.1 Parents will always be informed as to the type of transport being provided for an educational visit.

10.2 Coaches. Seat belts must be provided on all seats and it is school policy that each child will wear a seatbelt whilst travelling on a coach. The visit organiser is responsible for the conduct and behaviour of the children whilst they are travelling. The school must ensure that there is sufficient supervisory staff to ensure the health, safety and welfare of the children whilst travelling.

10.3 Public transport can also be used including buses for local journeys, either as private hire or public use. An increased adult/pupil ratio must be considered and close supervision of the children must be ensured.

10.4 Private cars.

This is covered by a separate policy from CCC about driving.

11 Check list

The visit organiser should ensure he/she has completed the 'Check List for Visits' and given a copy to the Headteacher no less than 24 hours before the visit is due to take place.

12 Monitoring and Review

It is the responsibility of our governing body to monitor the effectiveness of this policy. The governing body does this by:

- requiring the headteacher to report to governors on an annual basis on the effectiveness of this policy;
- taking into serious consideration any complaints regarding educational visits from parents, staff or pupils;
- Reviewing this policy every three years.

Signed:..... **Chair of Governors**

Date:

Appendix 1

Statement to be included in letter to parents regarding visits

“In order for this visit/activity to take place, we ask you to make a contribution of £..... Although such a contribution is voluntary, in reality we have no alternative source of funding. One week before the date of the visit/activity the Governors will assess whether sufficient contributions have received to make the visit/activity financially viable. If it is not considered viable, it will be cancelled and all contributions will be refunded. In cases of financial hardship, any requests for the contribution to be waived will be treated sympathetically; do come and talk to me in confidence if this is the case. As this educational visit/activity is taking place in school hours, we are not permitted by law (Education Act 1996) to exclude from such a visit/activity children of parents choosing not to contribute to the cost.”

Appendix 2

Statement to be included in letters to parents regarding visits

“The Education Act 1996 includes a section dealing with charges that schools may levy for activities such as day visits and residential experiences like our visit to..... The Act specifies that any activity which takes place in school time, or mainly in school time, must be free except for the cost of board and lodging, although the school may request voluntary contributions.

We would very much like to take the children to but no funds exist to subsidise the activity. Therefore it can only take place providing the parents of all children participating are prepared to pay for the board and lodging and to voluntarily meet the transport costs involved. If this turns out to not to be the case, then the visit will not go ahead.

The cost of the visit to will be £..... comprising:

£..... board and lodging

£..... transport to and from

£ visits while at

Anyone who is in receipt of income support, income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, Working Families Tax Credit or Disabled Persons Tax Credit is entitled to claim exemption from payment for board and lodging and should contact the Headteacher, who will treat the matter with the strictest confidence.

