



Educational Visits Policy



Sherborne Abbey
CE Primary School

Reviewed September 2025

Next Review due September 2028

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This policy is underpinned by our school motto:

“This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it”



Educational Visits at Sherborne Abbey CE Primary School

POLICY SUMMARY

Safely managed educational visits with a clear purpose are an indispensable part of a broad and balanced curriculum. This school recognises its duty of care and statutory responsibilities for the health, safety and welfare of pupils, staff, volunteers, providers and members of the public in connection with educational visits for which it is accountable.

Underpinning all risk assessments is the SAGED approach as well as the National Guidance, which is recommended by Dorset Council:

Rationale

(1) Safely managed educational visits with a clear purpose are an indispensable part of a broad and balanced curriculum. They are an opportunity to extend the learning of all pupils, including an enrichment of their understanding of themselves, others and the world around them. They can be a catalyst for improved personal performance, promote a lifetime interest and in some cases lead to professional fulfilment. Educational visits are to be encouraged.

(2) This school recognises its duty of care and statutory responsibilities for the health, safety and welfare of pupils, staff, volunteers, providers and members of the public in connection with educational visits for which it is accountable.

Purpose

- (1) To ensure that every pupil has the opportunity to benefit from educational visits.
- (2) To ensure that all visits are safe, purposeful and appropriate to meet the educational needs of pupils taking part.
- (3) To enable the school to identify appropriate functions, responsibilities, training, support and monitoring for Academy Committee, staff, volunteer assistants, pupils and providers involved in educational visits.
- (4) To ensure that whenever appropriate, further advice is sought from the LA / SAST and from other technically competent sources.

Guidelines

- (1) The organisation of an educational visit is crucial to its success. With rigorous organisation and control, a visit should provide a rich, learning experience for the pupils.
- (2) The following guidelines support the planning and implementation of educational visits organised at Sherborne Abbey CE Primary School.
 - (i) All visits will have a clear, recorded educational purpose and will be planned sufficiently well in advance in accordance with good practice and effective planning procedures detailed in the DC Policy of Safety and Guidance–Offsite Events and Adventurous Activities. (www.dorstforyou.com/schoolsafety). SAST will include in its role the support of school policy and procedures for educational visits including the reporting of visits.
 - (ii) The Head of School will be responsible for the approval of all visits, or may designate this function to the Educational Visits Coordinator (Tim Newton).
 - (iii) A named and trained Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) will be appointed to support the Local Governing Body and Head of School. In the absence of a suitably

trained Educational Visits Coordinator the Head of School automatically assumes this role.

(iv) There will be a named and approved Event Leader (and where appropriate, deputy) on all educational visits. The competency of the Event Leader will be determined by the Head of School with support from the DC Outdoor Education Adviser if required.

(v) Working with the EVC as necessary, the Event Leader will be responsible for all aspects of the planning, risk assessment and organisation of the visit. The Event Leader will assume full responsibility during the visit, including ongoing risk assessment

(vi) The Event Leader will ensure when purchasing goods and services that appropriate checks are made and that insurance and financial procedures have been followed.

(vii) Wherever possible the group leader should undertake an exploratory visit to:

(a) ensure that the venue is suitable to meet the aims and objectives of the school visit;

(b) assess potential areas and levels of risk;

(c) ensure that the venue can cater for the needs of the staff and pupils in the group; and

(d) ensure that the group leader is familiar with the area before taking a party of young people.

(viii) If it is not feasible to carry out an exploratory visit, a minimum measure should be to contact the venue, seeking assurances about the venue's appropriateness for the visiting group. In addition, it may be worth seeking views from other schools who have recently visited the venue. In some cases, such as when taking walking parties to remote areas, it may be appropriate to obtain local information from the Tourist Boards.

(ix) Details of any residential visits at home or abroad or day visits involving adventurous activities will be submitted to the LA for assessment/ monitoring

through use of Evolve at least 1 month before the departure date & countersigned by the Head of School.

(x) All residential, overseas and visits involving adventurous activities will be scrutinised by the EVC, Head of School and DC Outdoor Education Adviser.

(xi) Event Leaders will be responsible for the planning of their visit. They will receive training and support from the EVC. Planning will include checks on providers and venues, pre-visits and producing risk assessments. They will also be involved with the production of parent letters, consent and other relevant data collection with the support of the office team and EVC.

The visit preparation process will all be recorded on the schools' Evolve site.

Parents and Carers

(i) The school will provide parents and carers with information about policy and procedures relating to the safe management of educational visits.

(ii) Parents and carers will be given sufficient written and supplementary information about educational visits to enable them to make informed decisions and give written consent together with medical and emergency contact details.

(iii) Whenever appropriate for higher risk, residential and foreign visits a briefing meeting with parents/ guardians will be arranged.

(iv) Expectations with regard to behaviour and codes of conduct will be explained to parents/ guardians. This information will include the necessity of meeting additional costs and making collection arrangements in certain circumstances.

(v) Trips & visits within the local community (i.e. the Sherborne Area) are covered with parental / guardian consent via a one off letter / consent form in entry to school.

Reminders are periodically sent to parents / guardians to remind them of this & to give any opportunities to change permissions.

Pupils

- (i) Wherever possible, pupils should be involved with the planning of an educational visit, establishing codes of conduct, assessing and managing risk and evaluating their own learning, development, attitudes and behaviour.
- (ii) Pupils should be adequately briefed about aims, expectations and codes of conduct for all educational visits. Ongoing briefings are an important element of learning and safety.
- (iii) Any pupils whose behaviour may be considered to be a danger to themselves or to the group may be stopped from going on the visit. This will be communicated to their parents / guardians by the Headteacher & discussed as appropriate (the Health & Safety of the party on the trip is paramount & if a child could possibly endanger this action is always taken.) This will most likely include an SEN Risk Assessment for the child, alongside discussions with the SENCO & parents / guardians. The curricular aims of the visit for these pupils should be fulfilled in other ways.

First Aid

- (i) First Aid provision should be considered when assessing the risks of the visit. For adventurous activities, visits which involve overnight stays, or visits abroad there must be at least one trained first-aider in the group. The group leader should have a working knowledge of first aid and all adults in the group should know how to contact emergency services.
- (ii) The minimum first-aid provision is:
 - (a) a suitably stocked first aid box; and
 - (b) a person appointed to be in charge of first aid arrangements.
- (iii) First-aid should be available and accessible at all times.

If a first-aider is attending to one member of the group, there should be adequate first-aid cover for the other pupils. The Educational Visits Coordinator should take this into account when assessing what level of first-aid facilities will be needed and how close the party is to have access to first-aid e.g. close proximity to an A & E hospital.

Supervision

(i) It is important to have a sufficient ratio of adult supervisors to pupils for any off-site visit, this must be determined by a SAGED risk assessment. There is no guidance on ratios by through National Guidance, but the following guidelines can be followed:

(ii) Ratios - general guidelines (this can vary depending on the nature of the activity e.g. a sit-down cinema visit for year 6 could easily have a ratio of 1:12):

(a) 1 adult for every 4 children- Reception;

(b) 1 adult for every 6 children - Years 1-3; and

(c) 1 adult for every 10 children - Years 4-6.

(iii) Higher ratios may be appropriate in particular cases, such as for higher risk activities, for particular groups of pupils or for all trips abroad. Higher ratios are also recommended for swimming activities.

(iv) Swimming in the sea on a coastal visit, will not be allowed for Sherborne Primary School children, supervised by our staff only (an exception might be whilst on a residential visit supervised by fully trained staff, who are acquainted with the local conditions / appropriate risk assessments etc.). Paddling will only be allowed as part of a supervised activity, preferably in recognised bathing areas which have official surveillance.

(v) Where paddling is to be allowed on a visit, a ratio of 1 adult:4 children is a minimum.

(vi) Where there is more than one adult supervisor a group leader, who has authority over the whole party, should be appointed.

(vii) Where a high adult: pupil ratio is required, it is not always feasible to use school staff alone. Parents with appropriate clearance may be used to supplement the supervision ratio. They should be carefully selected and ideally, they should be well known to the school and the pupil group.

(viii) All adult supervisors, including school staff and parent helpers must understand their roles and responsibilities at all times. In particular, all supervisors should be

aware of any pupils who may require closer supervision, such as those with special needs or those with behavioural difficulties. Teachers retain responsibility for the group at all times.

(ix) For the protection of both adults and pupils, all adult supervisors should ensure that they are not alone in a one-to-one situation with a pupil.

(x) If the school is leading an adventure activity, such as canoeing, SAST or the Local Governing Body must ensure that the group leader and other supervisors are suitably qualified to lead and instruct the activity before they agree that the visit can take place. Qualifications can be checked with the National Governing Body of each sporting activity.

(xi) Whatever the length and nature of the visit, regular head counting of pupils should take place. The group leader should establish rendezvous points and tell pupils what to do if they become separated from the party.

Inclusion:

The Educational Visit Coordinator / Teacher / Head of school/ SENCO will not exclude pupils with special educational or medical needs from school visits. Every effort should be made to accommodate them whilst maintaining the safety of everyone on the visit.

Special attention should be given to appropriate supervision ratios and additional safety measures may need to be addressed at the planning stage.

Links

(1) Although this policy focuses on the management of health, safety and welfare, educational visits are an integral part of the strategy for learning and the curriculum plan. The policy should therefore be linked to complementary policies concerned with such issues as: equality of opportunity, special educational needs, social inclusion and staff development.