

Educational Visits – School Policy

This document covers all types of educational visit, including short, local visits on foot, day trips and residential trips.

This document is intended to be read in conjunction with other policies in the school, notably the Inclusion policy and the Equal Opportunities policy.

This document should be read alongside the Plymouth City Council guidelines for Outdoor Education Visits and Offsite Activities (PCC guidelines), published in 1999. The PCC guidelines give details of roles and responsibilities of the Headteacher and the Party Leader (teacher in charge of the trip). This document is in no way meant to replace the guidelines mentioned above. The PCC guidelines should serve as the main point of reference for all teachers organising educational visits.

Before arranging an educational visit, it is vital that the following areas are considered and discussed with the head teacher and all other adults involved with the visit.

- The value of the educational visit and whether or not the visit is necessary, desirable or feasible.
- Equal Opportunity/inclusion issues.
- Legal requirements such as Duty of Care and the Health and Safety at Work act.
- The experience of the group leader and other adults supporting the Party Leader on the visit.
- The basic principles of safe practice for offsite activities.

Guidance on the issues above can be found in the PCC guidelines, pages 6 to 10.

Section 2, page 11 of the PCC guidelines states that “The safe practice of the employees of the council engaged in activities away from their normal site is ensured by the following measures”. Below is a brief summary of the measures in the guide.

- A policy covering educational visits is to be in place.
- The Headteacher is responsible for regularly reviewing and updating the policy in line with changes recommended by PCC. This member of staff may be known as **Educational Visits Co-ordinator**. (Page 12 of PCC guidelines)
- **A Party Leader** will be identified for each visit planned.
- Governing bodies should agree a policy for educational visits. The governing body should ensure staff members receive regular, updated training in the areas of educational visit management, action to be taken in case of an emergency and the procedure for reporting accidents and incidents. The governing body should also ensure that the policy is monitored and reviewed and ensure that the policy is being carried out in practice.

The roles and responsibilities of the Headteacher is detailed on page 12 of the PCC guidelines.

The roles and responsibilities of the Party Leader is detailed on page 12 of the PCC guidelines.

What to do if you are organising or taking part in an educational visit.

The following points are summarised from the PCC guidelines and added to by suggestions and advice taken from members of staff at Goosewell School.

- Read the PCC guidelines, especially pages 5 to 29.
- Read the school policy on educational visits.
- Identify whether your visit is classified as a category A, B or C educational visit. See PCC guidelines, page 14.
- The Party Leader and colleagues must visit the proposed site before any risk assessments are completed.
- Carry out a risk assessment. PCC guidelines, page 13, define a risk assessment as follows:

“A risk assessment is nothing more than a careful examination of what, through your off site activities, could cause harm to people, so that you can decide whether you have done what is reasonably practical to prevent harm.”

Risk assessments may be carried out verbally, or in writing. It is essential that all those involved in the visit take part in preparing the risk assessment so that all risks are identified and shared with all participants. A risk assessment needs to be in written format. A copy of the risk assessment must be kept by the group leader and another copy must be kept by the office. PCC guidelines recommend head teachers adopt or adapt form PSOE1 for all category A and B visits. Goosewell School has a Preliminary Educational Visits Planner which must be completed. (Form PTC). Any category C Visit will require approval by Plymouth City Council and will need to be in written format, detailed in the PCC guidelines.

- Approval procedures are detailed on page 13 and 14 of PCC guidelines. Summary is as follows:

Any off site activity requires verbal approval of the head teacher. Governors must approve the school policy and procedures. Forms PTC must be completed for category A and B visits. Category C visits require more detailed approval from PCC.

- The Party Leader must complete a financial costing sheet for the financial administrator. Together, the financial administrator and the Party Leader will calculate how much money will be required for the trip to take place.
- A letter must be sent to parents explaining what visit is proposed and asking for written permission for their child to attend. A voluntary financial contribution may be required for the trip to take place. Please see the attached suggested format.
- Staff to pupil ratios. PCC guidelines, page 16.

Summary: Category A requires 1:15 for Key Stage 2, 1:8 Key Stage 1, adults to children, not necessarily all qualified teacher status. Category B and C vary depending on the activity.

In the interests of supervision/health and safety no adult assisting on an Educational visit will be allowed to bring a child of their own under the age of 16.

- The individual needs of all pupils must be considered carefully in line with the school's inclusion policy, equal opportunities policy and the proposed activities. PCC guidelines pages 17 – 18.
- Health and safety. PCC guidelines pages 18 – 19. A first aid kit must be carried by at least the Party Leader and by any adult in charge of a small group of children who will not be with the Party Leader during the visit.
- All adults who will be in charge of a small group of children but not under the supervision of a qualified teacher must be police checked.
- Individuals using their private vehicles must hold full driving licenses. The driver is responsible for checking with their insurer to ensure that appropriate cover is in place for the purpose for which the vehicle is being used. All car drivers must be police checked if they are to be left with children unsupervised when driving. If any mileage payment is to be awarded, this must be agreed with the head teacher in advance of the trip. Any payments for parking fees must also be agreed in advance with the head teacher and proof of payments such as tickets purchased must accompany the claim. It is important to read the guidance for driving long journeys, PCC guidelines page 23.
- Emergency procedures in a vehicle – see PCC guidelines page 23.
- Transport must be arranged by the administration staff, who will endeavour to secure the services of a competitive coach company.
- The kitchen manager must be informed on any change in numbers of children so that the correct supplies can be ordered. This must be done at least ten full working days in advance. The names of children requiring free school packed lunches must also be given to the kitchen manager.
- Consider any other people who you will need to inform e.g. music tutors and who will cover for playground duty.
- All written records of the educational visit, including planning, PTC group lists and accident forms must be collected by the group leader and kept in the main office, for a minimum of 3 years.

Guidance for Residential Trips

Please read the Educational Visits Policy and follow the PCC guidelines. In addition, the following steps must be carried out.

- A checklist of information for parents, guardians and carers should be prepared, see PCC guidelines page 27.
- PSOE1 form must be completed.
- PSOE1 Risk Assessment form must be completed. Previous examples can be found on the school's computer network.
- A detailed itinerary for the duration of the visit must be prepared. This itinerary must include contact numbers for all parties involved, such as members of staff, place of activity, the place where the group will be sleeping and contact numbers for the home base (school) such as head or deputy head teacher's home contact numbers.
At all times the itinerary for the trip must be adhered from. Deviations from the approved itinerary/risk assessment procedures may result in the PCC legal cover becoming invalidated.
- A letter must be sent to the Principal Officer, Outdoor Education, at the address given in the PCC guidelines, on the inside of the back page. This letter must explain the procedures that have been carried out above, and be attached to a copy of all of the above forms and a copy of the annually renewed licence held by the outdoor education provider (e.g. Haven Banks). Currently, the outdoor education department at Mount batten require at minimum of one month to approve educational visits. It is essential that approval is given before any visit takes place.
- A PSOE3 form must be completed by an adult on behalf of each child taking part in the visit.
- A code of conduct must be completed by each child and their parent so that standards of behaviour are clarified.
- The Party Leader and adults assisting on the visit must read each PSOE3 form carefully and produce a table showing each child with specified medical, emotional, social or dietary needs, however small. More serious problems must be highlighted. All children on the list must be discussed with all adults attending the visit, prior to the visit and prior to the risk assessment being drawn up. The findings of form PSOE3 will impact the risk assessment.
- A list must be made of all children attending, including their home addresses and telephone numbers.
- A bed plan must be drawn up, showing which child is to sleep in which room. Obviously mixed sex rooms are not allowed. It is desirable to have male teachers and female teachers attending the trip. The teachers should be allocated rooms so that they are strategically placed to help with the smooth running of the evening routine. Children must not share rooms with teachers.

- The Party Leader must take the following paperwork with them on the visit: All PSOE3 forms, the list of names and contacts for the entire group, the medical conditions list, a bed plan and an itinerary, including all relevant contact numbers.
- Copies of all paperwork taken by the Party Leader must be retained by the head teacher during the duration of the trip.
- All adults on the trip must be provided with any of the paperwork held by the Party Leader that they would find useful, e.g. itinerary, medical conditions list.
- During the visit, the Party Leader must contact the school at least once to inform the head teacher of how the trip is proceeding.
- A meeting must be held after school and parents and children invited to hear the Party Leader and/or the head teacher speak about the trip. Representatives from any group involved in the trip may be invited to speak e.g. manager of the youth hostel or the manager of Haven Banks.
- Medical needs. Any medical requirements are detailed on the PSOE3 form. Teachers and parents are able to come to an agreement as to which children will be responsible for administering certain medicines to themselves, e.g. asthma inhalers, eczema creams etc. Medicines that potentially pose dangers if given in excess, such as paracetamol, Calpol etc must be kept by a responsible adult. The school medical policy should be followed. i.e.
(Fully labelled with dosage and kept in a plastic bag by their group leader)

Assistance of support staff on visits (Teaching Assistants)

- All TAs have, as part of their job description and within what is reasonable “to assist in school activities such as plays, trips and outings”.
- On any school trip the teacher is in charge i.e. the responsible person and, as always, will act in “loco parentis”.
- A Ta or parent can be directed, by the teacher, to supervise a group of children, as part of the trip.
- The ratio of adults : children is 1 : 15 (maximum) although a lower ration is considered desirable and should also take into account the activities the children are undertaking, the age of the children etc.
- In the event of an accident occurring during a school trip, it is the LEA which is ultimately responsible. The Headteacher is responsible for the management of the school.
- We would expect the teaching staff to liaise with TAs/parent helpers before the start of a trip and provide them with information as appropriate for the trip.
- If the trip covers hours which the TA does not normally work, TAs should inform the member of staff who is organising the trip. There are various possibilities which could be considered e.g. they could be deployed to other duties for the day, overtime could be paid, support for child care could be arranged or time off in lieu given.
- If the trip is returning later than the end of the school day and child care is an issue, you should speak to the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher.