

## **SUMMERFIELDS PRIMARY SCHOOL**

### **EDUCATIONAL VISIT PLANNING AND APPROVAL POLICY**

#### **RATIONALE:**

Educational visits which occur off site pose particular challenges when ensuring the health, safety and welfare of all involved. This will include pupils, staff and others affected by the activity. Early planning and approval is essential to identify any potential problems and risks that might occur. The health and safety of all involved in the activity is paramount, and as part of the planning for the activity, a full assessment of the hazards must be undertaken to identify and control risk to those participating in all school trips and activities.

It is essential that every person involved in the planning and running of educational visits is familiar with and understands the policy.

#### **Aims**

This policy

- Defines what constitutes an educational visit, and whether a visit is off-site
- Identifies the key people in the planning and approval of the visit
- Provides forms for use in the planning and approval process for educational visits
- Ensures that the identified key people's roles and responsibilities are clearly defined.

#### **Responsibilities**

The council will:

- Advise of updates to their policy and all associated documentation
- Monitor, as part of annual school audits, the implementation and use of this policy
- Review a sample of conducted visits during the annual audit to ensure compliance with the policy
- Liaise periodically with the health and safety advisers to discuss any issues or problems.

The Head Teacher will:

- Nominate a suitable senior member of staff to be the Educational Visit Coordinator (EVC) for the school
- Ensure that the EVC is trained and updated as necessary
- Keep oversight of all educational and off-site visits and audit and review completed visits
- Provide assistance as needed to the council in their monitoring of compliance with the policy

The Educational Visit Coordinator (EVC) will:

- Review educational visit plans and reject or approve as appropriate
- Liaise with their health and safety adviser as necessary

- Ensure that they attend all training and updates as required by the Director of Children's Services or their head teacher

The visit leader will:

- Prepare the educational visit outline plan as far in advance as possible before the activity is due to take place (8 weeks for adventurous, residential or off-island visits)
- Seek provisional authorisation from the EVC
- Amend the educational visit plan with the assistance and advice of the school's health and safety adviser (if necessary)
- Submit the detailed plan for approval by the EVC
- Prepare risk assessments for the various aspects of the activities, including accommodation and "Plan B" activities
- Ensure that all staff involved have the relevant competencies
- Ensure that any activity providers have been suitably vetted for health and safety competence

The group leader(s) will:

- Be responsible for supervising some or all of the participants in the activity
- Ensure that the educational visit plan is followed accurately

The school's health and safety adviser will:

- Give advice to any of the people involved in the planning of any activity
- Advise on risk assessments related to the visit
- Be prepared to give robust, constructive criticism where necessary.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Legal Framework**

Although the guidance document "Health and Safety for Pupils on Educational Visits (HASPEV)" (DfES, 2011) has been withdrawn, much of the guidance has not been superseded and as such remains current. This document follows the principles laid down in HASPEV.

Under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, employers are responsible for the health, safety and welfare at work of their employees. Employers are also under a duty of care to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of others on their premises or anyone who might be affected by their activities. By this definition, the local authority as employer has a duty of care to the local authority schools, its staff, and pupils and to members of the public who might be affected by Educational Visits.

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 requires employers to:

- Assess the risks of their activities
- Implement measures to control those risks
- Tell their employees about these measures.

Under health and safety legislation, employees must:

- Take reasonable care of their own and others' health and safety
- Co-operate with their employers over safety matters
- Carry out activities in accordance with training and instructions
- Inform the employer of any serious risks

### **In Loco Parentis**

Schools have a common law duty towards pupils under the age of 18 known as "in loco parentis".

*Brown vs Nelson and others [1971] LGR 20* found that schools have a general duty to take reasonable steps for the safety of those under their charge and that they "discharge their duty of care if they know the premises and if the premises are apparently safe, and if they know that the premises are staffed by competent and careful persons."

This means that teaching staff must take the same care of their pupils both on and off-site that a parent would take in the same circumstances. A breach of this duty of care leading to injury to a student will be seen as indicative of negligence.

The principle of "in loco parentis" applies to all members of staff, including non-teaching staff, who take responsibility for school pupils. Voluntary supervisors are also covered by this, although the law would expect a higher standard of care from the professionals because of their training and experience.

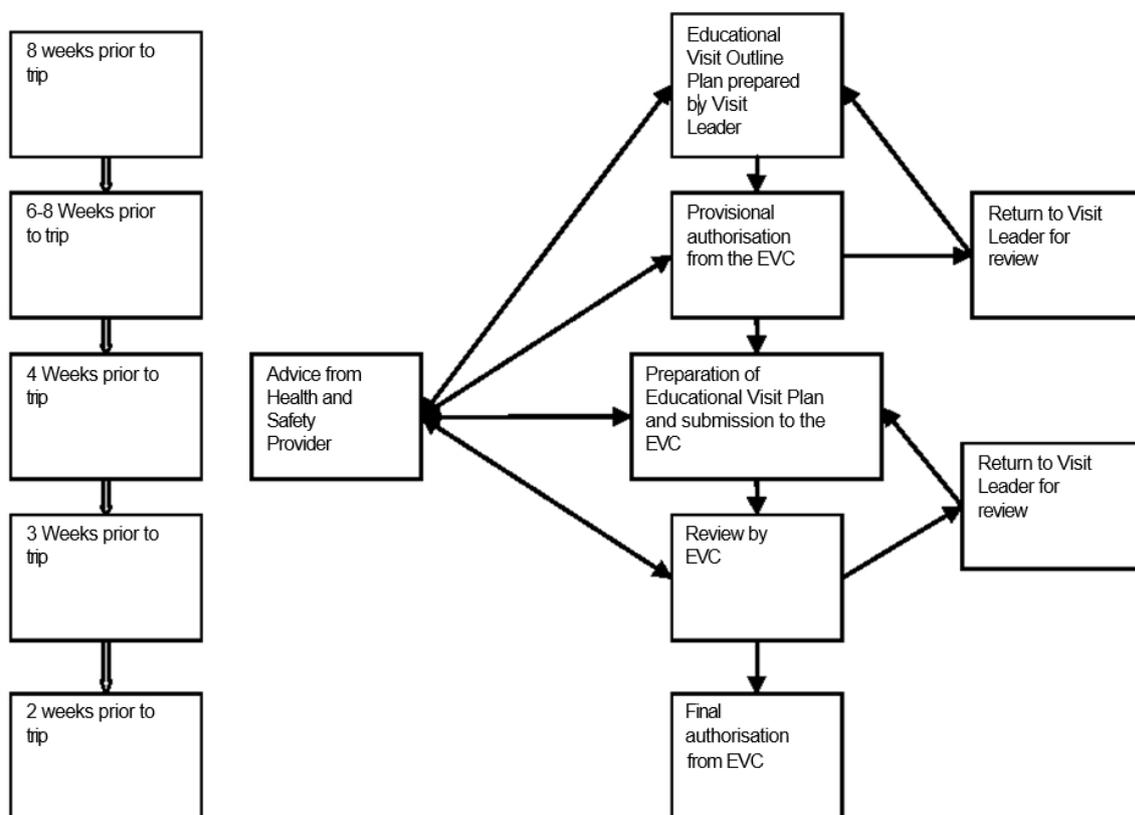
### **DBS Checks**

Adults who regularly supervise children and young people would be undertaking regulated activity. Regulated activity, with the context of Children and Young People means any

activity that includes the teaching, training, instruction, care advising and/or guiding and driving will require an enhanced DBS check to be undertaken. Parents or other workers who are accompanying visits and who are fully supervised by someone with an enhanced DBS check will not require a check to be undertaken.

### Preparation of the Educational Visit Plan

The completion of the Plan is a two stage approval and authorisation process. Provisional authorisation and approval is given by the EVC on receipt of an outline plan. At this stage, the activity organiser can start to prepare a full Educational Visit Plan. The Educational Visit Plan must be completed at least two weeks before any activity is scheduled to allow for proper consideration to be given and advice sought where necessary. The approval process is shown below:



Blank Educational Visit Outline Plan and Education Visit Plan documents can be found at Appendix 1 and Appendix 2.

### Health and Safety Advice

The activity organiser and EVC must seek advice on health and safety issues from their chosen health and safety adviser prior to the submission of and final authorisation of the Education Visit Plan. The health and safety adviser does not have the power to authorise or stop the activity as this responsibility rests primarily with the EVC and ultimately with the council. If the school intends to go ahead with the activity despite advice from their health and safety adviser, the EVC must notify the Health, Safety and Welfare Section at the council of their intent by phone (confirming the call in writing)

prior to the proposed educational visit taking place so that the matter and any associated risks can be assessed accordingly and any required action taken.

As the health and safety adviser's contract is with the school the adviser does not have a duty to inform the council of any issues around disregarded advice but should they wish to do so they should contact the Health, Safety and Welfare Section by email at [hsassistance@iow.gov.uk](mailto:hsassistance@iow.gov.uk).

### **Insurance**

The visit leader must ensure that adequate insurance arrangements remain in place. Additional arrangements might be necessary to obtain insurance cover for activities abroad and activities of a potentially hazardous nature. The visit leader must contact the IWC's Insurance Team in good time via email at [insurance@iow.gov.uk](mailto:insurance@iow.gov.uk) to confirm that the necessary cover is in place and is adequate. Copies of all certificates should be included in the educational visit plan.

### **Transport**

When arranging the hiring of vehicles and drivers, the visit leader should check that the company used has appropriate insurance cover by obtaining written confirmation that the insurance policy applies to all people using the vehicle and all activities and journeys that are undertaken.

Privately owned vehicles should not be used unless in an emergency situation. Any staff or volunteers using their own vehicles must provide proof that their vehicle is safe, has a current MOT certificate and road tax and that their insurance covers them for business use.

### **Hazardous Activities**

Hazardous activities must be led by appropriately qualified, competent and experienced staff. It is acceptable to use group leaders who are not employed by the school, but it is the responsibility of the visit leader to ensure that all group leaders are checked for competence and experience and that their qualifications are certified. All group leaders who will be working unsupervised as part of the planned activity must have had an enhanced DBS check done in the last three years, and proof of that check should be obtained either directly from the group leader if self-employed or in the form of a declaration from the employing company. The declaration should list the employees acting as group leaders, date of DBS check and whether any issues were raised on the check.

### **Visits Abroad**

A foreign activities checklist is available at Appendix 3.

### **Supervision Ratios**

It is important to have a suitable ratio of group leaders to pupils for any visit. The HASPEV guidance recommended that as a baseline for low risk visits, there should be one adult for every six pupils in school years 1 to 3 (under 5s reception classes should

have a higher ratio); one adult for every ten to fifteen pupils in school years 4 to 6 and one adult for every fifteen pupils in school year 7 onwards. IWC has decided that this is appropriate guidance. When determining the ratio for a specific activity, consideration should be given to the following factors:

- Sex, age and ability of the group
- Pupils with a disability/learning difficulty
- Nature of activities
- Experience of adults in off-site supervision
- Duration and nature of journey
- Type of any accommodation
- Competence of staff, both general and on specific activities
- Requirements of the organisation/location to be visited
- Competence and behaviour of students
- First aid cover

Where groups include pupils of both sexes, these must be accompanied by both male and female staff, with the following exceptions:

- Where an educational visit involves a small group on an activity lasting less than twenty four hours, and not involving an overnight stay
- Where appropriate adult help is available at the group's venue and only the journey involves the presence of adults of one sex
- Where an activity involves pupils working without direct supervision.

It is acknowledged that there are occasions when it is appropriate for pupils to work in situations where they are not directly supervised in order to explore, however briefly, a carefully and clearly defined area. In such cases, particular care must be taken to ensure that pupils are appropriately trained, briefed and experienced for whatever is involved.

There must be appropriate emergency procedures and pupils must have the knowledge and ability to use them. Precisely what procedures are necessary depend upon the particular circumstances but these must be considered and agreed prior to undertaking the activity.

### **First Aid Provision**

Details of first aid provision should form part of the Educational Visit Plan. There are no defined numbers of qualified first aides that should be available on an activity, although consideration should be given to:

- Numbers in the group and the nature of the activity
- Likely injuries and how effective first aid would be
- Distance to the nearest hospital.

Whatever decision is made, first aid should be available and accessible at all times.

### **Adventure Activities using Licensed Providers**

When planning to use adventure activity facilities offered by a commercial company or by a local authority, the group leader should check:

- Whether the provider is legally required to hold a licence for the activities it offers and, if so,
- That the provider actually holds a licence.

A licensed provider does not necessarily have to hold a licence for all its activities. Other activities could be accredited under non-statutory schemes. The provider can give information on what activities are licensed.

It is illegal for a provider of licensable status to offer a licensable activity without a licence. The Adventure Activities Licensing Authority can check on the licence status of a provider. Their contact details are as follows:

Adventure Activities Licensing Authority  
17 Lambourne Crescent  
Llanishen  
Cardiff CF4 5GG

Tel: 01222 755715 Fax: 01222 755757

Website: <http://www.aala.org>.

Please note that the proposal to abolish the AALA is currently on hold and that the requirements to be licensed remain in force.

### **Adventure Activities using Non-licensable Providers**

Not all providers are required to hold a licence. Not holding a licence does not imply a lack of competence or disregard for safety.

If proposing to use a non-licensable provider, the visit leader should ensure that the provider is vetted for any potential health and safety issues. Advice should be taken from the school's health and safety provider.

### **Emergency Procedures**

A senior member of staff should be appointed to act as the group's contact out of school hours. This person should have a copy of the educational visit plan. If the visit is residential, adventurous or off Island, a copy of the educational visit plan should be sent to the Health, Safety and Welfare Team at IWC for information who will liaise with Emergency Management at IWC in the event of an emergency.

HASPEV guidance stated, and IWC recommends, that any emergency procedure should instruct the group leaders to:

- Establish the nature and extent of the emergency as quickly as possible
- Ensure that all the group are safe and looked after
- Establish the names of any casualties and get immediate medical attention
- Ensure that all group members who need to know are aware of the incident and that all group members are following the emergency procedures

- Ensure that casualties are accompanied to hospital by a member of staff
- Notify the police if necessary
- Notify the British Embassy/Consulate if an emergency occurs abroad
- Inform the school contact
- Notify insurers
- Notify the provider/tour operator
- Ascertain telephone numbers for future calls
- Write down accurately all relevant facts and witness details and preserve any vital evidence
- Keep a written account of all events, times and contacts after the incident
- Complete an accident report form as soon as possible
- Inform members of the group that no-one should speak to the media
- Inform members of the group that no-one should discuss legal liability with other parties

The main factors for the school contact to consider include:

- Ensuring the group leader is in control of the emergency and establishing if any assistance is required from the school base
- Contacting parents and keeping them as well informed as possible at all stages of the emergency
- Liaising with the head teacher
- The reporting of the incident using appropriate forms if necessary (RIDDOR)
- Escalation for significant incidents such as coach, train, plane crashes, hotel fires, etc.

In the event of an emergency, the group leader should contact the school contact. Any emergency situations arising on school trips can be reported to emergency planning via Wightcare telephone 01983 821105 (24 hours a day, 7 days a week). The school contact, who should normally report the emergency, should ask for the 'Emergency Management Duty Officer'. The emergency planning team will then liaise as necessary with the media, communications, police, emergency services etc.

EW December 2015

To be reviewed December 2016 (or as County advise)