

# St. Comgall's Primary School.



## **Educational Visits Policy**

Last Reviewed January 2019

### **Rationale**

During the school year it is important that children in our school experience a wide range of learning environments. Visits out of school in the locality and further afield are a memorable experience for all children. They are enthused and motivated by the activity and their learning is enriched and enhanced. Taking children out of school is a major responsibility for staff and careful planning is essential to ensure that a visit is safe and enjoyable. The first principle is that ALL visits are EDUCATIONAL. They are intended to be a learning experience for the children.

#### **1. Aims**

To ensure that: -

- (i) The planned visit is purposeful and relevant.
- (ii) That preparations ensure that children gain maximum benefit from the activity.
- (iii) Adequate procedures are in place to ensure children's safety.
- (iv) Emergency procedures are in place.
- (v) A risk assessment is completed.

#### **2. Guidelines**

All visits are planned with reference to 'Educational Visits – Best Practice Guide 2009'.

#### **3. Legal Responsibility**

It is our duty as staff members to ensure the safety and welfare of the children is a priority during all educational visits. The following gives a brief outline of the legal requirements we adhere to: -

#### ***Common Law Duty of Care***

It is incumbent upon staff who are supervising young people to act reasonably in all circumstances so that the personal safety and well-being of those in their care are not jeopardised during the visit.

## ***Health and Safety at Work***

The manner in which such arrangements are developed is through the process of a risk assessment . . . the outcome of which acts as the basis for the organisation to establish that which needs to be put in place to allow the activity to proceed in a way which sufficiently manages the risks to which participants may be exposed.

## ***The Children's (NI) Order 1995***

The central thrust of the Order is that the welfare of the young person must be the paramount consideration and it is this essential principle which underpins effective practice in the area of Safeguarding and Child Protection.

## **5. Roles and Responsibilities**

### **(a) Principal**

- Responsible for granting permission for a visit to take place.
- Ensuring a competent group leader/teacher in charge is selected.
- Ensuring the ratio for adults to children is appropriate.
- Ensuring child protection procedures are in place and teachers have been informed of any cause of concern.
- Ensuring necessary vetting of accompanying adults has been carried out.
- Ensuring a risk assessment has been completed by the teacher in charge of the visit.

### **(b) Teacher in Charge (Group Leader)**

- Obtain prior agreement and approval from the principal before any off site visit takes place.
- Undertake and complete the planning and preparation for the visit including class trip checklist (Appendix 1) and risk assessment (Appendix 2).
- Carry out a pre-visit where appropriate.
- Collect relevant information on children taking part in the trip e.g. dietary and medical needs.
- Ensure the ratio of adults to children is correct.
- Ensure child protection procedures are followed.
- Ensure adequate first aid provision is available.
- Ensure emergency contact details are available to all adults on the trip.

### **(c) Learning Support Staff (other adults)**

- Accept the authority and follow the instructions of the teacher in charge/group leader.
- Endeavour to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group.

## 6. Categories of Educational Visits

- (a) Category 1 - Curriculum based activities that occur on a regular basis within school hours e.g. swimming.
- (b) Category 2 - Day visits that may extend beyond school hours but are not overnight e.g. W5.
- (c) Category 3 - Residential visit of one or more nights away from home e.g. Carlingford Outdoor Pursuit Centre. Approval from the Board of Governors is required.

## 7. Planning

- Visits should, as far as possible, be planned into the curriculum at the beginning of the school year.
- Teachers must have a clear view of the purpose of the visit.
- Arrangements for each visit should be made well in advance.
- Complete the 'Educational Visits Checklist' (Appendix 1).
- Complete a Risk Assessment (Appendix 2).
- Collect parental consent forms for each visit.

## 8. Preliminary Visit

A preliminary visit is recommended, unless regular visits are made and the location is well known to staff. During a preliminary visit, staff should consider the dangers and difficulties that might arise during the visit. Knowledge of the location will inform the risk assessment.

At least six weeks prior to the intended visit (where possible) inform the principal of the time and place of the visit and ensure that it does not clash with any other school events. At the same time notify the school office staff who make bookings, including transport.

The cost of the visit should be calculated and should be discussed with the principal.

## 9. Notifying Parents

- A letter should be drafted to parents on school headed paper. It should contain details of the visit including cost, purpose, travel arrangements, date and times of departure and arrival.
- Parents should be able to make an informed decision as to whether their child should go on the visit.
- Parents must complete and sign a reply slip indicating whether they wish their child to attend the visit or not.
- It is important that parents are informed of any hazardous activities they are consenting to.
- Parents must consent to school's policy of children not carrying mobile phones on any trips. All staff will carry mobile phones for emergencies.

## 10. Funding

A charge cannot be imposed on the parents (with the exception of residential trips), but parents will be asked to make a voluntary contribution.

## 11. Supervision

The minimum requirements for the number of escorts, set out in Education Visits Best Practice 2009 document is as follows:

Key Stage	Ratio
Foundation Stage	1:10
Key Stages 1 & 2	1:15

The Principal and teacher in charge/group leader must be satisfied that the ratio of adults to children is appropriate for the particular educational visit. Extra adult supervision above the minimum recommended level may be deemed necessary in certain circumstances e.g. for any SEN need, behavioural issues, nature of the visit, etc. No visit of any nature should take place without at least 2 adults. Where possible vetted parents will be asked to assist with supervision. If none are available other parents can accompany groups and will not be left unsupervised.

## 12. First Aid

- Before undertaking an educational visit, teachers should complete a risk assessment.
- Adequate first aid equipment must be brought. First aid kits must be checked well before the date of the visit to ensure they are adequately stocked.

- List all the children who need medication. All children who require inhalers and epi-pens should bring their medication with their name on it. Depending on age of children this will be kept by the member of staff with their group or by the child themselves.
- A mobile phone should be brought so that contact may be made with the school during the visit. In the case of residential trips, the teacher in charge/group leader must have contact numbers for the parents of all children on the trip.
- Follow the school's normal first aid procedures.

### **13.Journey**

Manoeuvring a group of children along streets and across roads is a task that carries enormous responsibility.

- Children should be kept under constant supervision.
- When walking in the street, children should walk two abreast and younger children should hold hands.
- There should be a staff member at the front and another at the back. Other adults should walk at intervals along the line.
- Keep children away from kerbs and pavement edges. Always use the safest crossing places available. If the group is large, consider taking them across the road in smaller groups.
- On the coach, children must have their own seat and every person must wear a seatbelt.
- An adult should sit at the front and near the emergency exit.
- There should be no eating or drinking on a coach.
- Ring school if the return journey is delayed and you expect to return later than the expected time.

### **14.Lunch**

The school kitchen will provide lunches for children entitled to free school meals.

### **15.Preparing Children for the visit**

- Discuss safety rules with the children.
- Discuss behaviour rules.
- Discuss the purpose of the visit with the children. Explain to them what they will see and do. Some children become anxious about visits, because they do not know what to expect.

## **16.Risk Assessment (Appendix 2)**

The underlying basis of health and safety care is to control risks. This is effectively achieved through risk assessment. When planning a visit all potential risks to children and adults should be assessed. A record must be kept of the risks identified.

Consideration needs to be given to -

- (i) Identification of hazards.
- (ii) Who might be affected?
- (iii) How risks might be reduced to an acceptable level.
- (iv) Can measures be implemented?
- (v) What contingency plans can be put into place if all else fails.

## **17.Communication with the school**

The teacher in charge/group leader must have a mobile phone with them to notify the school of any problems and if the time of return has been delayed.

## **18.Use of Private Cars**

- Teachers intending to use their cars to transport children must contact their insurance company to ensure that cover is in place.
- Where parties travel by private car the principal is responsible for ensuring that drivers and vehicles are covered by valid insurance and MOT.
- Safeguarding guidelines dictate no adult will travel in a car on a one-to-one basis.
- Staff will comply with current road safety regulations.

## APPENDIX 1

### St. Comgall's Primary School - Educational Visits Checklist

Teacher in charge / group leader:		Venue:	
Class(es) involved:		Date of visit:	

		Yes	No
1.	The proposed visit has clear educational objectives		
2.	All relevant information regarding the proposed visit has been forwarded to the principal.		
3.	Adult / Pupil ratio is appropriate and adults listed.		
4.	All adults have been Police checked.		
5.	Parent consent forms have been collected.		
6.	All relevant information (medical, dietary, contact details, etc.) has been obtained.		
7.	Transport has been arranged from an approved supplier.		
8.	Appropriate management structures are in place in relation to safeguarding/child protection.		
9.	All relevant information regarding the proposed visit has been forwarded to the principal.		
10.	Principal has approved the visit.		

#### Residential Trips Only

		Yes	No
1.	Adequate insurance is in place to cover all aspects of the educational trip.		
2.	The overnight accommodation is appropriate.		
3.	Staff are competent to provide the activities.		
4.	Board of Governors has approved the residential trip.		

## Risk Assessment for

### RISK RATING

SEVERITY	LIKELIHOOD	RISK RATING (SxL)
1 = no injury or illness 2 = first aid injury/illness 3= minor injury/illness (approx. 3 days off) 4= major injury / illness (more than 3 days off) 5 = fatal / debilitating injury	1 = very remote 2 = improbable 3 = possible 4 = Likely 5 = Certain	<b>High 14+</b> <b>Medium 5 – 13</b> <b>Low 1- 4</b>

### **IMPORTANT.**

*The final "Risk Rating" column should be completed by the Overall Visit Leader, and discussed with all other leaders, before giving signed approval.*

*The Risk Assessment should **only** be approved once all significant hazards have been identified, the control measures that will be implemented are agreed, AND the overall risk ratings are considered acceptable.*

*In most circumstances, if the Overall Residual Risk is considered "Med" or "High", the activity/event should be cancelled, or further control measures put in place to reduce the risk to "Low".*

- A. Trip covered by this assessment:
  
- B. Persons/Property exposed to risk: (Pupils and/or staff / parents etc)
  
- C. Those involved in the assessment/role:
  
- D. Background context/Any History of incidents/events/medical information:

**Section E - Risk to Individual Pupils**

1. Identified Risk	2. Severity 1-5	3. Likelihood 1- 5	4. Risk Factor (Severity x likelihood)	5. Further measures required (Yes/No)
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6. Risks scoring 12 or more	7. Existing Precautions	8. Additional Actions	9. Action By/When

**Section F - Risk to the group**

1. Identified Risk	2. Severity 1-5	3. Likelihood 1- 5	4. Risk Factor (Severity x likelihood)	5. Further measures required (Yes/No)

6. Risks scoring 12 or more	7. Existing Precautions	8. Additional Actions	9. Action By/When
	•		

**Section G - Risk to Property**

1. Identified Risk	2. Severity 1-5	3. Likelihood 1- 5	4. Risk Factor (Severity x likelihood)	5. Further measures required (Yes/No)
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6. Risks scoring 12 or more	7. Existing Precautions	8. Additional Actions	9. Action By/When
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