

Meadow Lane Infants School Policy



EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Last reviewed	March 2013
Review Cycle	2 Years

This policy is based upon the Nottinghamshire County Council School Visits policy 2011.

Meadow Lane infant School

School Visits Policy

Introduction

This policy template is written in accordance with Nottinghamshire County Council's Visits Policy and Guidance 2011. It is essential that Governors, Headteachers, Visits Coordinators and the Visit Leaders are familiar with the contents of this policy and Nottinghamshire County Council guidance before planning excursions.

Policy Statement

The Governors and Headteacher of Meadow Lane Infant School accept their responsibility under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and subordinate health and safety legislation and acknowledge the requirement to ensure that participants are kept safe whilst on visits and journeys away from their normal place of attendance.

Statement of Safety Policy

The Governors recognise that the participation of children and young people in a wide range of visits, journeys and experiences is important in promoting learning and development. As part of their responsibilities the Governors and Headteacher will take all reasonably practicable steps to ensure the health, safety and welfare of participants while travelling to, and engaged in, activities away from school whether provided by school or a contracted provider.

Statement of safety organisation

Organisation and responsibilities

Responsibility for all visits rests with the Governing Body and Headteachers within individual schools. The respective roles of each are outlined within Nottinghamshire County Council's Visits Guidance for Children and Young People.

Governing Body

Governors must ensure that all visits are properly planned and the necessary approval obtained before a visit takes place.

Governors may wish to see an outline of all or specified planned visits before they take place or may delegate this to the Headteacher.

The person named below will oversee and monitor this policy.

- Joanne Revill – Head teacher
- Reviewed at F&GP committee on a 2 year cycle

The Headteacher will report to the above committee outlining visits planned and the results of reviews undertaken where appropriate for further consideration at suitable meetings.

Headteacher

The Headteacher will be responsible for ensuring that all visits and trips are planned, organised, controlled, monitored and reviewed in accordance to Nottinghamshire County Council guidance documents and relevant regulations.

Headteachers must authorise all visits and where applicable seek the approval of the Governing Body and the Local Authority for Category C events.

The Headteacher will confirm the qualifications, training records and experience of the Group Leader who will lead the specific visit and the supervisory personnel, and will approve these people as suitable to lead/supervise the visit/s.

The Headteacher will agree, with a named Visit Coordinator (VC), the duties delegated to the VC, or in absence of a VC, fulfil this function themselves.

Visit Coordinator (VC)

The School Visits Coordinators are

Joanne Revill (HT) and Anna Hodkin (DHT)
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They will undertake duties as agreed between themselves and the Headteacher. (Reference to common duties and responsibilities should be made contained within Nottinghamshire County Council's Visits Guidance).

The VC will be conversant with Nottinghamshire County Council's Visits Guidance as well as existing good practice, issued by Government Departments, National Governing Bodies and national interest groups (available as downloadable documents or hyperlinks within Nottinghamshire County Council's EVOLVE system).

Visit Leader

The Visit Leader should be conversant with Nottinghamshire County Council's Visits Guidance, service specific guidance and corporate policy and will comply with these requirements.

The Visit Leader will liaise with the VC throughout the planning and preparation of their trip to ensure that any activities or events that may place staff or other participants at significant risk are assessed and that safety measures are in place prior to the trip taking place.

The Visit Leader will ensure that all parents of children on their trip are provided with all required information, which may include risk assessment information, and that any questions raised are answered prior to the trip taking place.

The Visit Leader named for each visit will have overall responsibility for that visit whilst it is underway.

The Visit Leader will be fully familiar with emergency procedures and contact numbers.

Supervisory staff

All staff assisting with supervision on any trip will be conversant with the Nottinghamshire County Council's Visits Guidance and the specific risk assessment/s for that event.

All staff will ensure that the requirements of any risk assessments, risk control procedures and safe systems are followed.

All staff will ensure that once the trip has started, where any previously unforeseen hazards or risks are identified; they are brought to the attention of the Visit Leader.

Staff will feed back information to the Visit Leader to enable a full review of the trip to be completed.

Arrangements

It is especially important that staff use the most up to date guidance when planning and executing visits away from their normal place of work. The online visit planning and approval system (EVOLVE) has been developed to facilitate this and is regularly updated.

Schools must use this system or implement alternative arrangements that are similarly robust.

Nottinghamshire County Council identifies 3 categories of visits within its Visits Guidance for Children and Young People, which require differing levels of approval:

Category A – Locally Approved Visits

All such events will be approved by the Headteacher and managed in school by adherence to Nottinghamshire County Council visits guidance and school specific operating procedures. This school's operating procedures for visits are:

See procedures (Appendix A)

Category B - Service Approved Visits

Visits not normally forming part of your regular work, such as all day excursions or trips.

All such events will be processed via the EVOLVE system, approved by the Headteacher and managed by adherence to Nottinghamshire County Council visits guidance and school-specific operating procedures. The visits may also be confirmed by filling in the appropriate risk assessment forms and storing these in the HT office.

Category C Service & Local Authority Approved Visits

Residential visits, visits requiring specific competency to deliver or more hazardous events.

All such events will be processed via the EVOLVE system, approved by the Headteacher and be delivered when school is in receipt of Local Authority approval.

Where the school uses external providers for activity provision, suitable assurance must be sought by school to ensure that they are suitable and appropriate for use.

Signed Chair of Governors: Date:

Signed Headteacher: Date:

Appendix A
Procedure for educational Visits (Meadow Lane Infant School)

The school has formally adopted, through its Governing Body, the Nottinghamshire guidance and policy for Educational Visits. Further school procedures have been agreed to ensure that this guidance is adhered to.

Meadow Lane Infant school has a strong commitment to the added value of learning beyond the statutory school day and beyond the school premises. Each year the school will arrange a number of activities that take place off the school site and/or out of school hours, which support the aims of the school and enrich the curriculum for the children. Many of these visits will utilise the richness and diversity of the local environment. A variety of after school clubs are also offered, particularly to Year 1 and 2 children.

The Head teacher is the Visits Co-ordinator (VC). Training for this was undertaken in February 2009 and is valid until February 2012. The DHT is also trained in March 2013 and this will be updated in March 2016.

Each off-site visit must have a designated Teacher-in-Charge who will be responsible for managing the visit as a whole. The Visits Coordinator (VC) must be satisfied that the teacher is experienced and confident enough to manage the visit. It is recommended that a Deputy Teacher-in-Charge also be identified.

Following detailed planning the visit must be authorised by the Head Teacher *before* parents are informed of the visit. A file on the visit will be opened by office staff.

Visits involving overnight accommodation, adventure activities or high risk environments will use the EVOLVE system to ensure that these are should be sent to the appropriate body for approval.

Visits using commercial, charitable or private outdoor activity centres or providers should gain appropriate written assurances from the organisation concerned.

It is a requirement that Risk Assessments be carried out for each school visit. Generic risk assessments are in place for visits which are regularly made. Teachers must check that these cover all activities to be undertaken on their visit and add any additional risk assessment to a school specific risk assessment. The medical and behavioural needs of the specific group should be included. Guidelines for completing a specific R.A. can be found in the Educational Visits file. Leaders should check that activities provided by other organisations are covered by their own risk assessment procedures. **Risk assessments must be completed at least a week before the visit takes place.**

Preparatory visits should be undertaken whenever possible to assess potential hazards as well as maximise the learning opportunities. Teachers should avoid making assumptions from previous visits.

The visit leader **must** discuss the visit with all staff attending at least a week before the visit to organise groupings, adult support and with reference to any particular children attending who may need extra support or have medical needs. Any issues need to be resolved in advance of the trip. All parent helpers must also be in place at least a week in advance.

Those accepting responsibility for supervision are effectively on duty continuously. A clear structure for the adequate supervision of pupils must be in place at all times. A briefing should be held for all volunteers before the visit commences. Teachers, non-teaching staff, parents and other adults may all be helpful but their roles and responsibilities should be clearly defined. Contact details of adults should be kept in the office along with any medical needs they may have. Information regarding any particular needs is given on the initial contact form to school. Proper instructions and pupil lists should be provided and the teacher(s) must retain overall responsibility for supervision. Clear arrangements must be in place for when the pupils return home at the end of the visit.

A ratio of one teacher to 20 pupils should not normally be exceeded. However, the Head Teacher may use discretion to include other school staff (teaching assistants) to fulfil the same supervisory role as teachers. Other adults, including parents, should be used to enhance the overall adult/pupil ratios. All parents accompanying children must register as a Parent Helper at the office. This ensures that a List 99/DBS check is made to ensure the safety of the children.

The teacher: pupil and adult: pupil ratio must be approved by the Head Teacher and VC bearing in mind the following factors:

- the age of the children
- the medical or behavioural needs of the children
- the nature and duration of the visit
- the experience of the teachers and adults
- any potential hazards and the nature of the planned activities
- the number of adults provided by the centre to be visited

At Meadow Lane most visits involving Years 1 and 2 would require a ratio of one adult to 5/6 pupils. For Reception children the ideal ratio is 1 adult to 4 children. When walking a short distance ratios can be slightly lower.

When crossing roads ensure that the adults are well spaced along the line and that they walk on the road edge. Find a safe place to cross and do not cross until all the children are ready. An adult must stand either side of the line in view of the traffic and must not leave the road until all the children have crossed. If the whole school is walking to the junior school/church, etc ensure that we all stay together and that the youngest children are 'sandwiched' in the middle. Adequate adult supervision must be shared out amongst all the children.

Adults will wear high visibility jackets when walking and crossing roads and on trips in open areas particularly with younger children.

Children and adults must wear seatbelts on the coach. Children must not sit on the front seat. Any children with particular needs or travel sickness will sit near the front.

Children should be well prepared for any off-site visit with clear links to the curriculum before and after the trip. A full briefing on the programme, the itinerary and the activities should take place together with any safety briefing. When on the visit, rendezvous points and times should be established and adhered to, and pupils told what to do if separated from the group.

Children should know which adult(s) they will be working with during the visit. Adults will have a list of their group of children and the class teacher and visit leader will have a list of all the children attending the trip. Only adults with full DBS/CRB clearance may take children to the toilets and as much as possible parents should be accompanied by an adult from school.

Expectations of children's behaviour should be high and the school code of conduct should apply at all times.

Parents should receive information about the proposed visit as soon as possible after the Head Teacher and VC have approved the arrangements.

The letter to parents should state clearly:

- the purpose of the visit
- the proposed itinerary and activities

- the date and times of departure and return
- the transport arrangements
- the meal requirements (including free school packed lunches)
- any pocket money limit
- the visit leader
- the recommended clothing, equipment and footwear
- the arrangements for collecting children at the end of the visit
- the level of voluntary contribution being sought
- the following statement, or similar:

The School Fund is subsidising the visit but obviously if we do not receive sufficient payments from parents/carers the visit would be unable to go ahead. There is no charge for children who are in receipt of free school meals.

Specific, written parental consent must be obtained for each visit. Consent forms should be checked by the class teacher and handed in at the office.

Local visits that take place do not need specific consent from parents as this is covered in the initial form that is returned to school. These need to be checked before the children go out, along with the photograph list. These visits could include walking to the library, the junior school, church, the local park, etc. Parents will need to be informed that the children will not be in school and offered the opportunity to come in and discuss any concerns. The parent/child ratios still remain in place.

An accurate list of everyone involved in a visit, Parental Consent Slips and details of the itinerary must be left at the office prior to departure. A head count should be taken regularly.

In case of emergency or likely travel delay, the school should be contacted as soon as possible to agree an action plan. In the case of visits which take place out of school hours, a member of staff will be designated as the school contact (usually the Head Teacher). At least one mobile phone must be taken on the trip.

A First-Aid Kit should be taken on every off-site visit as provided by the appointed first-aider. Additional kits may be needed depending how the visit is organised. Wherever possible, every visit will include at least one adult who is responsible for and has a working knowledge of first-aid. For Reception classes at least one adult must have Paediatric First Aid training.

Any accidents should be recorded and reported following the usual procedures in school including informing parents as appropriate.

Any special medical requirements, including travel sickness, must be noted and the adult(s) in charge of the group aware of any special needs.

The costs of any proposed visit and the voluntary contribution to be requested from parents should be fully discussed with the Head Teacher.

A visits fund may be created within the School Fund to allow some agreed level of subsidy:

- to support certain visits where the proposed voluntary contribution may be seen to be prohibitive
- to support families on income support who are not able to make a contribution
- to off-set the effects of some families choosing not to contribute towards the costs of a visit.
- FSM children will have their visits paid for through the pupil premium.

The Local Authority's Charging and Remissions Policy (See School Prospectus) must be adhered to. For visits taking place mainly in school time, only voluntary contributions may be sought. No child can be excluded from a visit if parents are unwilling or unable to make a contribution. Parents may request to see a breakdown of the costs of any visit and the voluntary contribution.

Participating staff will normally travel free. Contributions asked of parents and others taking part will need careful consideration at an early stage.

Parents will be asked to send contributions in an envelope marked with the child's name and amount enclosed. On days when money is brought to school, the money should be delivered to the office. All money will be recorded and checked by office staff on the day it is collected.

In the case of unavoidable absence, parents may request a refund of part or all of the contribution.

After the visit, the Visit Leader will complete a simple evaluation with the VC. This will be kept in the file in the staff room.

All current documents are available in the Educational Visits Folder in the Head teacher's office and are also saved on the server and in the staffroom on Fronter.

Staff reviewed : March 13

Date ratified:

Date for review: March 15

Signed : Head teacher

..... Chair of F&GP committee