

# CASTLE SCHOOL

## EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY

### Named Person Responsible for educational visits – Harriet Harrison

Castle School believes that school visits are an essential resource for the teaching of a broad and balanced curriculum. We hope that each year group will go on several visits each year linked to an aspect of their education. Alongside visits off-site, the school will invite in speakers, groups, artists or other adults into Castle School to enrich and extend experiences.

In this policy we seek to establish a clear and coherent structure for the planning and evaluation of our off-site visits, and to ensure that any risks are managed and kept to a minimum, for the safety and health of all pupils at all times. Within these limits we seek to make our visits available to all pupils, and wherever possible to make them accessible to those with disabilities. The visits usually take place within the school day.

When planning for a visit, teachers should consult with Harriet Harrison (designated teacher with responsibility for educational visits) to ensure correct procedures are followed.

### Aims

The aims of our off-site educational visits are to:

- enhance curricular and recreational opportunities for our pupils;
- provide a wider range of experiences for our pupils than could be provided on the school site alone;
- promote the independence of our pupils as learners, and enable them to grow and develop in new learning environments.

These visits may be day or half days trip or longer residential experiences.

How visits are authorised

All school trips are co-ordinated between the lead teacher and Harriet Harrison.

They will:

- ensure that risk assessments are in place;
- assign competent staff to lead and help with trips;
- organise related staff training where necessary.
- verify that all accompanying adults, including private car drivers, have had satisfactory police checks, and that any coach company used assures us their drivers too have had police checks;
- make sure that all necessary permissions and medical forms are obtained;
- keep records of visits, and ensure there are regular generic assessments of the risks.
- All off-site activities must take place in accordance with the agreed

instructions.

- Where staff are proposing to arrange an off-site activity, they must seek and obtain the approval of the Principal before any commitment is made on behalf of the school. A comprehensive visit plan should be provided by the member of staff to allow for an informed decision to be made.

It is our policy that all children should be able to participate in educational visits. Where a child with a disability is eligible for a trip, we will make every effort to ensure that s/he is included. We may seek guidance from parents to help us adapt our programme, and we will make any reasonable adjustments to our itinerary to include a child with disabilities. Any such adjustments will be included in the risk assessment.

## Arrangements

Any trip will require a minimum of two adults. However, these are minimum requirements, and may not provide adequate supervision in all cases. A risk assessment must also cover transport to and from the venue. Any private transport company will provide us with their own risk assessments. The group leader will double-check that all adults helping to supervise any residential trip have been subject to police checks. A copy of the completed risk assessment will be given to the Principal.

## Transport

Transport arrangements will allow a seat for each member of the party. It is our policy only to use coaches fitted with seat or lap belts, and to insist that they be worn by all those participating in the visit.

Where private cars are used for transport, the group leader is responsible for checking that the insurance of each driver covers such journeys, and double-checking that each driver has been subject to the normal police checks.

## Communication with parents

The parents of children taking part in an off-site activity are provided with all appropriate information about the intended visit. Parents will have given their permission in writing before a child can be involved in any off-site activities.

## Further health and safety considerations

Before a party leaves school the school office will be provided with a list of everyone, children and adults, travelling with the party, together with a programme and timetable for the activity.

The safety of the party, and especially the pupils, is of paramount importance. During the activity the party leader must take whatever steps are necessary to ensure that safety. This involves taking note of any information provided by medical questionnaire returns, and ensuring that pupils are both safe and well looked after at all times.

Prior to an activity, if it is felt that the behaviour of an individual child is likely to compromise the safety of others or the good name of the school, the party leader should discuss with the Principal the possibility of excluding that child from the activity.

Group leaders must liaise closely with Harriet Harrison and (if necessary) read thoroughly the appropriate guidance for off-site activities which is available on line:

- Educational Visits – A safety guide for learning outside the classroom
- A Handbook for Group Leaders (DfES 2002)
- Group Safety at Water Margins (DfES 2002)

### School Trip Checklist

Staff must complete a School Trip Checklist before any school trip or visit.