

## **The Vale Primary Academy Policy for Educational Visits**

### **Revised January 2014**

#### **Rationale**

At the Vale Primary Academy, we believe that educational visits are used as a purposeful stimulus and support to the learning that takes place in the classroom. An educational visit should be a safely managed, memorable experience, which enriches children's appreciation of themselves, other people and the world around them. It can be the catalyst which can improve academic performance, enhance relationships and spark a lifetime of interest. Venues for visits are chosen on the merit of their educational value and relevance to the age and development of the children.

#### **Links to statutory guidance**

All educational visits undertaken at the Vale Primary Academy are carried out in accordance with the 'SPTA Employer Policy for the Management of Learning Outside the Classroom/Off-site Visits and Activities' (November 2011). Visits must also meet the DfE guidance document (June 2013) entitled 'Health and Safety: Advice on legal duties and powers for local authorities, school leaders, school staff and governing bodies'. This government document should also be read in conjunction with the policy statement from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) entitled 'School trips and outdoor learning activities: Tackling the health and safety myths'. The SPTA requires that all off-site visits are recorded using the online system 'Evolve'. This allows the SPTA to collate and monitor the educational visits being undertaken by the Academies under its sponsorship.

#### **The Role of the Educational Visits Co-ordinator at the Vale Primary Academy**

The Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) is the 'controlling mind' of the educational visit; discussion about the aims of the visit should initially take place between the EVC and Visit Leader, from which the EVC, in consultation with the Principal, will decide whether or not the visit should go ahead. Once the visit information is entered into Evolve, clicking the 'submit' button on the screen will forward a copy of the Evolve visit form to the EVC. The EVC is then able to check the details of the visit and approve it, or forward the visit form to the Academy Principal. The EVC will require a paper copy of the form 'Information required by the Educational Visits Coordinator for Visit Planning' (Appendix 1), for future reference should a similar visit be planned at a later date.

#### **The Vale Primary Academy structure for planning and preparation of an educational visit**

As the following steps are completed, a record of the planning of the visit should be made in the first section of the Vale Primary Academy's form entitled 'Information required by the Educational Visits Coordinator for Visit Planning' (Appendix 1), which is available from the Academy office. This will enable the completion of the Evolve visit form.

- The Visit Leader (usually the class teacher) identifies a venue and decides the aims of the educational visit. Possible date(s) for the visit should be made provisionally.
- The Visit Leader discusses the potentiality of the visit with the EVC.

- The Visit Leader makes contact with the venue to discuss outcomes, dates, class details, cost, additional requirements and availability of risk assessments relevant to the venue.
- The Visit Leader contacts the Academy office to request quotes for transport to and from the venue (if required). The office staff will need the proposed departure and return times, and the location of the visit.
- The Visit Leader undertakes a preliminary visit to the venue (if this is a new visit or there is a likelihood of changes since the Visit Leader last undertook a visit to this venue).  
NB: Often visit venues allow teachers to make preliminary visits free of charge; when the government introduced PPA time (2005) it was suggested that the preliminary visit to an educational venue visit could be taken during this time.
- Obtain risk assessments during the preliminary visit, if not already obtained.
- The Visit Leader should obtain confirmation of transport to and from the visit venue from the academy office (NB: If more than one coach is required, it is imperative that a list of which people are on which coach is kept by the Visit Leader. The same groupings should be observed for both the departure and return coaches).
- The Visit Leader should identify accompanying staff, which must include a qualified first-aider.
- The Visit Leader should obtain from the academy Principal confirmation of the voluntary contribution towards the cost of the visit, to be made by parents/carers.
- Parents/carers should be informed by letter of the details of the visit, and where relevant, consent forms completed (see examples of letters for educational visits, Appendix 2a and 2b). Written consent from parents is not required for pupils to take part in the majority of off-site activities organised by a school (with the exception of nursery-age children) as most of these activities take place during school hours and are a normal part of a child's education at school. However, parents should be told where their child will be at all times and of any extra safety measures required. Written consent is usually only requested for activities that need a higher level of risk-management or those that take place outside school hours. Parents must be told in advance of each activity and must be given the opportunity to withdraw their child.
- The Visit Leader should ensure that all interested parties (accompanying support staff/volunteers) are aware of the aims of the broad details of the visit.
- The Visit Leader must inform the academy kitchen staff that a visit is planned, at least 2 weeks before the date of the visit, if the visit affects usual lunchtime arrangements. Other persons such as peripatetic music teachers should also be informed to avoid unnecessary visits to school.
- The Visit Leader should then log on to Evolve, at [www.evolve.edufocus.co.uk](http://www.evolve.edufocus.co.uk) using the username and password given by the EVC, click on the tab 'Add Visit', and enter the required details.
- Section 2 of the form 'Information required by the Educational Visits Coordinator for Visit Planning' (Appendix 1) outlines items to consider for including on the visit, and requires that a list of the children and adults going off-site is left at the academy office.
- On the day of the visit, the Visit Leader should share with the children and adults the purpose, itinerary and groupings for the day, along with expectations of conduct (see below). Safety issues should be discussed, and opportunities to ask questions about the

visit should be given. Children should understand what they should do if approached by a stranger, become separated from the group and where the rendezvous points are.

- Section 3 of the form 'Information required by the Educational Visits Coordinator for Visit Planning' (Appendix 1) is a post-visit evaluation. Once this is completed, a copy of the whole form should be given to the EVC (see 'The Role of the Educational Visits Coordinator', above). Evolve requires an evaluation of the visit to be completed within 30 days of the visit taking place.

### **Residential Visits**

It is recommended that the organisation of a residential visit begins at least 3 months prior to the date of the proposed visit, therefore giving parents sufficient notice and allowing thorough planning and preparation by school staff. In addition to the structure for preparation and planning outlined above, the following considerations will be needed for a residential visit:

- Details of the sleeping accommodation – to enable organisation of single-sex groups
- Whether both male and female staff will be required to attend
- Accessibility of pupils' rooms by academy staff
- Room safety – electrical connections, lockable windows and doors
- Establishment emergency procedures
- Security arrangements, where a reception desk is not staffed 24 hours a day
- Storage of luggage, clothing, equipment, spending money and medicines
- Provision for sick or disabled pupils, or those with medical or other special need
- The provision for 'down-time'
- If an activity involves caving, climbing, trekking or water-sports, schools must currently check that the provider holds a licence as required by the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 2004.

### **Risk Assessments**

There is no legal or SPTA requirement to produce a risk assessment in a particular format, but there is a legal requirement for the process to be recorded and for suitable and sufficient control measures to be identified for any significant risks. Any risk assessments provided by the visit venue should be reviewed by the Visit Leader giving consideration to the children who are attending the visit. If changes are to be made, and these can be altered electronically, then the risk assessment can be uploaded to the Evolve system. Evolve provides examples of risk assessments which can be amended to suit the particular visit. Note that any example of risk not required through this method should be crossed out, not deleted; any additional risk or control should be added in red font.

### **Ratios**

An assessment of the ratio of adults to children should be made by the Visit Leader on the preliminary visit. There is no specific legal requirement regarding ratio; it is the responsibility of the Visit Leader to ensure that there are sufficient adults to meet the needs of the children according to their age, knowledge and experience, the destination of the visit and the activities planned. Consideration should be made about what would happen to the children in a group

should their group leader become incapacitated. An adult who supports a child with a full-time statement of Special Educational Need should not be included in the ratio.

### **Responsibilities of those attending an Educational Visit**

The expectations of behaviour displayed by children and adults on educational visits should mirror those which we expect in school. The reputation of the school travels with us; children should listen quietly when they are expected to, be courteous and polite to others, respect property and wildlife and display positive attitudes. They should follow instructions, behave sensibly and alert adults to any hazard which they perceive may harm themselves or others. They must not take unnecessary risks. In addition, adults on the educational visit must ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group and maintain control and discipline. Adults may be required to show initiative should an unforeseen incident occur, but must always inform the Visit Leader of their concern.

**Helen Milfull (Educational Visits Coordinator) January 2014**

**Reviewed (J Parkin) January 2014**

**Date of Governing Body Approval: April 2014**

**Date of next review: April 2016**

**The Vale Primary Academy**  
**Information required by the Educational Visits Coordinator for visit planning**

Year Group / Term:	Number of children:	( Boys:      Girls:    )
Venue / Site details: (inc. phone number)		
Date of proposed visit:		
Aims of visit:		
Visit leader (school staff):		
Venue contact name:		
Date of preliminary visit (if applicable):		
Risk Assessment(s) completed? (see hints over page):		
Ratio required: (NB: if a fully statemented child is included on the visit, the designated adult should not be included in the whole class ratio)		
Names of appropriate additional adults, and designation:		
Is one of these adults a recognised first aider? If so, which one?		
Have these adults been briefed about the aims of the visit and what to wear, how to talk and behave?		
Children in uniform or own clothes?		
School departure time:		
School arrival time (return):		
Lunch arrangements:		
Information for parents sent out / consent slips returned?		
Coach company details (if applicable): (inc. phone number)		
Cost of venue / site:		
Cost of coach if applicable:		
Amount to be volunteered by parents per child:		
Emergency contact at school (in case of late/delayed return):		
Kitchen informed if applicable?: YES / NO    Date:		

**(Continued)**

**Appendix 1 (Cont...)**

<b>Items to consider for including on the visit</b>	✓
Booking information	
Fluorescent tabards – for visits within the locality	
First Aid kit – wipes, plasters	
Required individual medicines (inhalers etc.)	
Mobile phone	
Sufficient funds in case of emergency	
Bucket, carrier bags, paper towels	
Spare clothes if necessary	
List of children on the visit (attending school on the day) (Leave a list of the children on the visit in the school office if the whole class is not attending e.g. sports fixtures for selected children)	

<b>After the visit</b>	✓
Aims achieved?	
Time well managed?	
Site staff effective?	
Activities appropriate?	
Value for money?	
Worth repeating in future?	
Any other comments?	

**Hints for completing a risk assessment:**

- Outline each specific activity in which the children will be involved
- Outline the hazards potentially presented by each of the activities
- Outline the control measures that will be taken to minimise these hazards
- Add any other notes about which the adults and children need to be made aware

Generic risk assessments are available on Evolve, which may be altered to fit individual visits. Additional risk assessments done by Visit Leaders or supplied by the visit venue may be added electronically to Evolve.

**Suggested layout of risk assessment:**

<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<i>Name the activity here</i>
<b>HAZARDS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• x</li> <li>• x</li> <li>• x</li> <li>• x Etc.</li> </ul>
<b>CONTROL MEASURES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→</li> <li>→</li> <li>→ Etc.</li> </ul>
<b>NOTES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> <li>• Etc.</li> </ul>

(This layout for risk assessments is on RM Staff: Educational Visits)