

Educational Visits Policy

Young children derive considerable benefit from taking part in visits out of school. During these out of school visits they have opportunities to participate in activities and experiences not available in the classroom setting in the school. These visits help children develop a wide range of valuable personal and social skills while developing language and communication skills.

Visits are planned by the staff to be part of the curriculum programme.

Information for parents

Details of visits will be given to parents in the Nursery Times. This is a monthly publication and a copy is given to each home.

Parents, or those with parental responsibility, will be able to make an informed decision as to whether their child should go on the trip. If their child is not to be included in the trip the teacher in the room must be informed by the parent. If the trip is for the whole school the child cannot stay in school alone and therefore will be asked to stay at home. If the trip is for a shorter time arrangements can be made for the child to remain in school by joining in with another session, however they may be the only child from their session in that room.

Parents should: -

- Be informed of the purpose of the visit
- The date and times of the visit
- Transport arrangements
- Details of the activities their children will be involved in
- Arrangements of supervision including the ratios of children to adults
- Be aware of special clothing or equipment to bring.

This information is included in the monthly Nursery Times. Adult : children ratios are listed in this policy.

Permission

Written permission is obtained for each child to leave school on trips at the start of the school year. It is our policy **not** to ask for individual permission slips for each visit. These slips **must** be returned to school before a child may be permitted to go on any visit.

Adult to Child Ratio

THE RATIO OF 1:8 OR 1:6 OR 1: 4 WILL BE USED FOR OFF SITE VISITS (according to the visit)

In order to satisfy these ratios it will be necessary to include volunteers and parents in the adult ratio. An adult will be over 18 years of age. All volunteers regularly working in school complete an Access NI 'criminal background check and suitability to work with children' form (see enclosed sheet). A parent accompanying their own child on a trip will not be vetted, but **will not be permitted** to help any of the other children. Parents coming on the visits will be briefed by the teacher prior to the visit. Parents will sign the volunteer register log for each trip they attend. They will all receive a Parent Volunteer booklet outlining procedures for trips.

Parent Helpers

PARENTS WHO HAVE VOLUNTEERED TO HELP ON TRIPS WILL BE ASKED TO READ AND SIGN THE PARENT VOLUNTEER REGISTER

The Booklet outlines the following: -

- Who has responsibility
- General Safety
- How to deal with other children
- Health and Safety rules, especially the Basic Walking Rules – hold one hand only
the child walks on the inside
don't walk on the road.

The *ratio 1:8* will be used for trips we deem low risk – those trips when the children leave school on a bus and arrive at the venue without roads to cross or when no hazards have to be negotiated during the trip. Trips such as Mowglis Den and Library visit would be in this category.

The *ratio 1:6* will be used for trips when some risks may have to be negotiated: -

- Beach Trip
- Cutting our Christmas Tree
- Forest School.
- Shopping to Tesco

The *ratio 1:4* will be used when we have to negotiate busy roads, eg: -

- Walk to Enniskillen Model School kitchen.

On all visits roles and responsibilities are defined and set out. On some trips, which involve crossing a road, we request assistance from the PSNI to help us cross the road safely.

Educational Visits Procedures

Step 1 - Identification of educational objectives

Step 2 - Completion of planning

Step 3 - Risk assessment

Step 4 - Briefings for all involved

Step 5 - The visit

Step 6 - Evaluation

Practical Procedures

A copy of the class register, parent contact details & mobile phone will be brought on all trips.

Transport

Buses are hired to transport children. All buses hired are fitted with seat belts. The children are taught that they must always wear their seat belt. The company are insured to transport young children and drivers have been Access NI vetted.

First Aid Kit

A first aid kit is brought on every visit which contains only equipment which has been deemed OK for use with children.

Children should: -

- Be informed of when the visit will be and how they are expected to behave
- Details of the activities they will be involved in
- Health and safety rules – delivered verbally during the session by the teacher
- Arrangements of supervision
- An agreed code of conduct – delivered verbally during the session by the teacher
- Be aware of appropriate clothing.

Parents should: -

- Be informed of the dates, times and purpose of the visit and transport arrangements
- Details of the activities their children will be involved in
- Arrangements of supervision including the ratios of children to adults
- Be aware of special clothing or equipment to bring

This information is included in the monthly Nursery Times. The ratios are listed in this policy.

Risk Assessment

This is a method for examining and subsequently controlling aspects of the visit by allowing staff in the nursery setting to judge the level of risk involved and what needs to be put in place to reduce to an acceptable level to permit the visit to go ahead.

This is achieved by: -

Eliminating the identified hazards altogether

or

Containing the hazards by introducing effective control measures to reduce, to acceptable levels, the risks to which they give rise.

Risk Assessment comprises the following steps: -

- Identifying the hazards
- Evaluating the potential risks
- Establishing additional safety and/or control measures

By far the preferred option in terms of risk reduction is hazard elimination. An example of risk reduction through the installation of control measures might be increasing the recommended staff-children ratio for the visit. An assessment of the trip will be undertaken by the teachers before going on the trip. Teachers will have visited the area before taking the children.

Each special needs child will have an individual risk assessment completed for them signed by the Chairman of the Board of Governors and discussed with and signed by the parent.

All Risk Assessments are held in the Risk assessment file in the office.

Examples of Out of School trips

- Cutting down our Christmas Tree
- Visit to Mowglis Den
- Visiting Castle Archdale
- Looking for Easter Eggs in Castlecoole
- Going to the Beach
- Walking to Enniskillen Model PS kitchen
- Walking to Tesco for shopping
- Visiting parent workplaces.