

# **St James the Great RC (VA) Primary and Nursery School**



## **Educational Visits Policy**

Spring 2008

## **St James the Great RC (VA) Primary and Nursery School Policy for Educational Visits**

### **Rationale**

From St James the Great Mission Statement:

“...the school will provide a framework within which all pupils are enabled to develop the highest possible level of achievement, fulfilling their academic, moral, physical and spiritual potential.”

### **Nature and Aims of Educational Visits at St the Great**

The value of class visits in extending and enriching classroom learning and experience has long been recognised. At St James the Great, planned educational visits form an essential part of the learning programme.

At St James the Great, we aim to:

- Ensure that the children experience a variety of educational trips during their time at St James the Great and extend their activities and learning experience if revisiting.
- Provide links between the ‘real’ world and the classroom and make learning more effective by putting it in context.
- Provide first hand experience where this cannot be done in the classroom.
- Fulfil National Curriculum requirements for field studies in Science, Geography, History and P.E.
- Encourage pupils to give the same high standards of behaviour, responsibility and work in out-of-school learning as they do in school.
- Help the children gain and benefit from an increasing measure of independence from home by developing a programme of visits throughout the school, which builds a progression as to the nature, location and length of time away.

### **Planning for Educational Visits**

The LEA Guidance Procedures for Educational Visits and Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits (a good practice guide) DFES, informs on all aspects of preparation and implementation of school visits.

Thorough preparation for a class visit will include a pre-visit by teacher(s) to: -

- Confirm suitability.
- Confirm its intrinsic interest.
- Help determine its position in the unit of study.
- Establish the focus for the trip.
- Help determine the suitable preparation and follow – up, and kind of work to be done on site.

- Give opportunity for the collection and possible purchase of relevant study material, both for the immediate use of the class and to augment the school's resources.
- Help teachers determine how children are grouped so that they can gain the maximum benefit, both educational and social.
- Carry out risk assessment.

Educational visits give many and varied opportunities for pupils to learn, practise and develop skills in practical ways, for example in: -

- Literacy – listening to guides, asking questions, taking notes, reading information, writing letters.
- Numeracy – following/preparing a timetable, deciding how to spend their money.
- Science – ‘hands on’ experience/investigations, studying plant and animal life.
- ICT – creating guides, studying publishing techniques.
- Design Technology – looking at designs and making models.
- History and Geography – studying the local area, home region and other localities, the seaside, finding their way about.
- Art – studying original works, seeing art not just as decorative but useful, functional, enhancing the environment, as an end in itself.
- Music and Drama and Dance – practising for a concert, attending live music making, seeing professional actors, dancers and musicians.
- P.E. – taking part in tournaments, being spectators at local, national and international events. Participating in Outdoor Adventurous Activities.
- R.E. – visits to church, class retreats, learning about other religions.
- Gifted and talented – writers workshops, lectures, borough trials.

## **Organisation**

Most class trips will take place within the school day and are planned well in advance. Children are organised into groups (taking into account adult: pupil ratios), which are best suited to the type of work to be carried out and the nature of the visit.

Prior to the visit, children take a letter home, which contains details of the place, date, times of departure and return, the reason for, the cost, a suggested amount of spending money and any special requirements (e.g. school tracksuit etc...) of the visit.

Costs are kept to a minimum and cover the price of entry and travel.

The school does not wish to exclude anyone from educational visits on financial grounds and the letter therefore includes an invitation to parents to discuss any financial difficulties.

A permission slip is attached to the letter, which the parent/guardian should sign before the visit.

On rare occasions opportunities arise for a short visit within the school day when there is not time to give prior notice. A cover note signed by the parents/guardians on

their child's entry to school ensures that children can take full advantage of these opportunities.

Where pupils are required to attend a series of meetings, e.g. rehearsals, sports meetings etc... parents/guardians will be advised separately. Details of time, place, method of transport and arrangements for meeting children afterwards will be sent home with the children concerned.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

If visits are to take place safely and efficiently all those involved need to take account of their responsibilities.

Teachers should:

- Obtain the head teacher's agreement before any off-site visit takes place
- Have a clear objective for the visit
- Undertake and complete the planning and preparation of the visit
- Complete risk assessments
- Provide detailed information for parents
- Gain parents written consent
- Have an alternative plan
- Ensure that adequate first-aid provision is available
- Have details of the school contact
- Ensure that pupils are well prepared for the activities they will do
- Ensure that the ratio of adults to pupils is appropriate for the needs of the group
- Ensure that group supervisors are fully aware of what the visit entails e.g. the purpose, the timetable for the day, their role and responsibilities etc...
- Ensure group supervisors have a copy of the emergency procedures
- Ensure that the group supervisors are aware of any special educational/medical needs that the pupils may have and know how to deal with them.
- Consider stopping the visit if the risk becomes unacceptable

Adult volunteers should:

- Be clear of their role and responsibilities throughout the visit
- Do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in their group
- Not be left in sole charge of the pupils except where it has been agreed through risk assessment
- Follow the instructions of the teacher
- Speak to the teacher if concerned about the health and safety of the pupils

The pupils should:

- Behave sensibly and in a responsible manner
- Follow the instructions of the teacher and other supervisors including those at the venue
- Not take unnecessary risks
- Look out for anything that might endanger themselves or others and inform the group leader or supervisor

The Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) should:

- Have an overview of all activities that take place
- Provide advice and support for staff
- Ensure that visits comply with school procedures
- Organise induction and staff training
- Keep records of visits
- Review system regularly
- Monitor practice and procedures

Head teacher

No visits should take place without the knowledge of the head teacher.

Head teacher's should:

- Delegate tasks to the EVC
- Ensure that where necessary, visits have been approved
- Inform the governing body of visits that are being planned
- Ensure adequate child protection procedures are in place
- Ensure that visits are inclusive
- Ensure risk assessments have been completed
- Allow sufficient time for induction and staff training
- Ensure that the school has an emergency plan in place
- Ensure accident/injury and death are reported as required
- Help to ensure that serious incidents, accidents and near accidents are investigated.
- Ensure that all necessary actions have been completed before the visit takes place

Governing Body

- Ensure that guidance is available to inform the school policy
- Ensure that the Head teacher and EVC are supported in matters relating to educational visits.

### **Safety Considerations**

The safety of the children is given the highest priority and is a prime consideration in all preparation. First Aid equipment accompanies the children on every visit.

### **Conclusion**

The purpose of all educational visits is to enhance children's learning experiences, to give opportunities for sensitive and purposeful social interaction with peers and other adults in a safe and supportive framework. When carefully prepared and sufficiently supervised, they provide long lasting memories for all who took part.

### **Background**

This policy was informed by reference to Croydon Council guidance procedures for educational visits, the DFES good practice guide – Health and safety of pupils on educational visits, Hampshire guidance for educational visits and St James the Great staff working party.

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