



Educational Visits Policy

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Policy for Educational Visits

Introduction

The Da Vinci Studio School is keen to ensure that students experience a rich and varied curriculum. Off site visits will be an integral part of the weekly diet facing students and both work placements and visits to the Stevenage Skills Centre and to the local gymnasium will be timetabled weekly events. Visits of this nature are described as Level 1 visits and will be covered using the annual consent form signed by parents. Trips occurring outside the usual course of events will be described as Level 2 or Level 3 visits. Such trips and activities which are located off site, including residential visits and events which carry a higher degree of risk will follow the OEAP (Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel) National Guidelines – <http://oeap.info>

Having taken advice from Hertfordshire County Council, the OEAP guidelines are now recommended by them.

Roles

The Educational Visit Co-ordinator (EVC)

The EVC will agree all LOtC (Learning outside the Classroom) and will be responsible for checking that adequate planning and preparation has gone into ensuring that the risk will be as low a risk as possible and meets its educational objectives.

Applications to conduct Level 2 or 3 visits will be made to the EVC, who will raise the request for discussion at SLG meetings.

If the trip is agreed, it will be the responsibility of the visit leader to complete the appropriate forms (Hertfordshire County Council forms from the Evolve system to be used). The EVC will be responsible for checking that paperwork has been completed fully and accurately and will sign off the visit, before copying the information across to the Principal for final clearance.

On higher risk Level 3 visits, the Principal will share the contents of the paperwork with a nominated off-site visit governor, having first had this agreed by the NHC Risk Assessment Officer.

The Visit Leader

The Visit Leader is responsible for completing the necessary paperwork, including budgetary arrangements, which must be signed and agreed by the Principal. On completion of paperwork, the necessary documents need to be passed to the EVC for sign off.

The following forms require completion:

- Parental letter
- Budget checklist
- OV2 – 8
- Events card to take on trip

When possible, visits will be arranged with providers who hold the LOtC Quality Badge. If no quality mark is held, requests will be made to see published guidance and quality assurance. Preliminary visits to the proposed destination may be needed if insufficient reassurance is provided.

As a general guide, planning time should be as follows:

- Day trip, local (mini bus): half term
- Day trip in England (coach): 1 term
- Residential in England: 2 terms
- Residential abroad: 3 terms

Following a visit, the team leader will be expected to review the experience and report back on its value to the EVC. This will help to decide the value of potential future visits. The leader will also need to report back on any contingency arrangements which were applied, since such eventualities often provide the best evidence for future planning.

Training

Hertfordshire County Council offer training for new EVCs and any member of staff new to the role of organising school visits will be provided with full training. All staff will be introduced to the Off-site Visits Policy during induction.

Staffing Ratios and Supervision Guidelines

Supervision

All adult supervisors must understand their roles and responsibilities at all times. In particular, supervisors should be aware of any students who may require closer supervision; those with specific medical/physical needs or behavioural problems. Supervisors retain responsibility for the group at all times, and will be reminded that there is no such thing as 'no supervision' even during free time.

Volunteer helpers may accompany visits but their role must be clearly understood with training provided if necessary. All volunteers must be over 18 years of age and a CRB check must be conducted if the volunteer will be left in a situation where individual personal care needs are required.

Guidelines:

Supervision works best when:

- *Visit aims and objectives are clearly understood by all parties*
- *Visits and activities have been carefully and thoughtfully planned*
- *All have been involved in visit planning and identifying potential hazards*
- *Clear guidelines for standards of behaviour have been agreed*

For all supervision, the supervisor:

- *Will normally be a learning coach*
- *Is responsible for the safety of their group at all times*

- *Will have a clear plan of the activity to be undertaken and its educational objectives*
- *Needs to anticipate potential hazards and act when necessary*
- *Continuously monitors the appropriateness of the activity, the physical and mental condition of the group members and the suitability of the prevailing conditions*
- *Needs to exercise appropriate control of the group*
- *Will have a clear understanding of the emergency procedures and be equipped to carry them out*

For all supervision, the participant will:

- *Know who their supervisor is at any given time and how to contact them*
- *Have a “buddy”*
- *Have been given clear, understandable and appropriate instructions*
- *Not normally be on their own*
- *Alert the supervisor if someone is missing or in difficulties*
- *Have a meeting place to return to, or an instruction to remain where they are, if separated*
- *Understand the expected standards of behaviour*

Common practice for close supervision Supervisors:

- *Will have prior knowledge of the group*
- *Will carry a list of all group members*
- *Will have a prior knowledge of the venue*
- *Will not normally be on their own*
- *Will have appropriate access to first aid*
- *Will keep the School and/or other interested parties informed of progress as previously agreed*

Staff:Student Ratios

The group size and staff / student ratio is dependent on the duration and nature of the journey and activity, environment, age, temperament, needs of the group, individual needs including medical etc. and, of course, a risk assessment of potential hazards.

A ratio of one tutor to 15 students for UK based trips and 1 tutor to 10 students for residential visits and trips abroad must not be exceeded, unless a formal risk assessment is carried out which indicates that a higher ratio is adequate to provide the level of supervision and safety cover. The risk assessment may indicate that the visit can be adequately covered by one member of staff provided appropriate emergency procedures have been set up. The line manager must ensure that the staff / student ratio is recorded on all documentation.

Consent Form for Level 2 and 3 Trips

Prior to the commencement of the visit, information must be made available to each participant and their parent/carer regarding venue, itineraries, transport arrangements and duration. A specific consent form requiring a signature must be issued to ensure parents have given permission for all aspects of the visit.

Travel

The group leader is responsible for ensuring that arrangements for travel and transport are appropriate and conform with local guidelines, national regulations and legal requirements.

Guidelines: It is recommended that staff do not use their own vehicles to transport students. If personal vehicles are used it is the responsibility of the EVC to ensure MOT and insurance are adequate

The Da Vinci Studio School may hire minibuses from North Hertfordshire College and abide by the following rules:

Staff Driving Minibuses must:

- Refer to NHC Minibus Procedure and Code of Conduct
- Hold a current Herts County Council (HCC) certificate of competence (valid for 5 years)
- Be over 25 years of age
- Hold a full category B (car) licence for more than 2 years
- Have category D1 entitlement – shown as Group A on old licences. If category D1 is not included (usually licences first issued after 01/01/1997) this must be obtained by passing a medical and the Passenger Carrying Vehicle (PCV) theory and practical driving tests
- Ensure a pre-drive check is completed as detailed in minibus procedure
- Ensure that there is a reserve driver if the journey extends beyond a 30 mile radius of college

Hire of Coaches / Minibuses:

- Group leaders must ensure that all hired transport is fit for purpose (roadworthy, maintained, taxed, tested, insured etc) and that all drivers are competent. A listing of 'preferred suppliers' of coaches and minibuses who have been checked for reasons of health and safety can be found on NHC Sharepoint. **You must select a supplier from this approved list.**

Note: All minibuses owned and managed by Herts County Council (HCC) are subject to inspection and test with all drivers certificated. If you are hiring/borrowing a HCC vehicle a health and safety check need not be conducted.

Emergency Reporting and Incident Reporting

Emergency Contact

For every visit the organiser must appoint a designated emergency contact person in the school and ensure that their duties, which will include strategic emergency plans, are agreed and understood.

The designated contact person (usually the EVC) will:

- a) Provide the link between the visit party and the home community.
- b) Hold and have available 24 hours a day, all relevant information including a full list of all people involved in the event.

Guidelines: It is important that the group can reach the school or other members of the group in an emergency. The only way this can be guaranteed is if at least one member of the group is in possession of a mobile phone

The group leader must carry with them an information card outlining the procedures to be followed in an emergency. It is good practice to ensure all students on the trip also carry a card containing relevant useful information.

Inclusion

As a fully inclusive school, the entitlement to participate on trips is open to all Students and realistic adaptations or modification will be undertaken to ensure full access.

Insurance

The school has an annual insurance policy and group leaders need to ensure they take this information on the visit with them. Any requirement for arranging additional insurance for specific visits must be agreed with the finance team at the budget planning stage.

Finance

Trips need to be fully costed before deciding on an appropriate charge for students. Trips should aim to break even and students who are unable to afford a visit will be able to apply for assistance to the Da Vinci Support Scheme. Before issuing invitation letters to students full financial clearance must be obtained.

Procedure for Trips and Visits



