

Clifton Hill School

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| Document | Educational Visits Policy |
| Content | Procedures for offsite visits |
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Setting

Clifton Hill is a Surrey County Council funded community school for students aged 11-19 years who have severe or profound multiple learning difficulties, autistic spectrum disorder, challenging behavior and complex health needs.

This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

1 Introduction

1.1 Clifton Hill School provides many opportunities for its students to enrich and enhance their on-site learning through the use of educational visits and outings. Offsite learning is embedded within and across the curriculum to provide opportunities to deliver core curriculum content which is then reinforced and extended back into the classroom. This encompasses residential trips, environmental studies, sports, physical and adventurous activities, cultural visits and work placements. We consider visits and outings to be an essential and integrated part of the curriculum which are intended to provide the following benefits:

- Personal, social and emotional development
- inclusion
- independence
- living and working with others
- broadening horizons
- self-esteem
- decision-making
- relationship building (staff and young people)
- risk taking
- understanding risk
- experiencing new cultures
- raising aspirations
- responsibility
- motivation
- a chance to share
- lifelong leisure activities
- creativity
- invaluable part of citizenship
- 'real' learning
- team building
- consequences related to actions
- allow success

- learning to cope with setbacks and failure
- bringing the curriculum alive
- magic moments - memories for life - fun
- Play an active part in the community – locally, Nationally, and internationally

- 1.2 The value of off-site educational visits is well recognised by the Governing Body and fully supported throughout the School.

Party Leaders will carry out thorough risk assessments for all educational visits and outings and every attempt will be made to remove barriers to allow all students equal and full access. Risk assessment procedures will, however, take into account the behavioural and medical needs of the pupils, as well as appropriate staffing levels.

All staff will be expected to participate in School visits and outings but attendance on residential visits is on a voluntary commitment basis and is agreed by the EVC.

The EVC will monitor the above principles and report to Governors.

- 1.2.1 Funding is either from parental contributions, FOCH or School budget/School Fund. No pupil will be excluded on the grounds of lack of finance. However, where insufficient funds are available the School reserves the right to cancel the outing.

Staff are expected to pay for their own refreshments but other expenses such as entrance fees should be covered by the cost of the trip.

- 1.2.2 It is emphasised that a culture of safety must prevail and there is a need for careful planning and adherence to statutory procedures. Off-site educational visits must be well managed, information communicated and responsibilities recognised. The educational value of all visits must be taken into account; trips must be well-planned with structured learning opportunities.

- 1.3 This document outlines the specific policies and procedures for the School. It supplements and follows the advice and guidance contained within the following publications:

- OEAP National Guidance (accessible via the Evolve website)
- The Health and Safety Executive in conjunction with the Department for Children Schools and Families (DCSF) published “Health and Safety Responsibilities and Powers” statutory document
- The DCSF document “Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits” (HASPEV)
- DFES “Health and Safety: Responsibilities and Powers”, 2001, applies to all educational visits
- The supplementary guidance published by the DCSF
 - Part 1 – Standards for LAs in overseeing educational visits
 - Part 2 – Standards for Adventure
 - Part 3 – a handbook for Group Leaders

2 Roles and Responsibilities

- 2.1 The Employer (i.e. the LA) retains overall responsibility for health, safety and welfare. This may be delegated to schools.

- 2.2 The Governing Body satisfies itself that the appropriate procedures, risk assessments, and control measures are in place and that the documented guidance notes are being followed. All off-site visits that are residential, abroad or hazardous need to be approved by the Governing Body. Such approval must be recorded in the minutes of the Governing Body.

- 2.3 The Head Teacher is delegated by the Governing Body to approve all off-site educational visits of a perceived low risk, local, daily or regular nature.

- 2.4 The Educational Visits Co-ordinator and deputy (EVC) ensures that **ALL** off-site activities follow the correct procedures. The person with these responsibilities will approve the group leader for every visit and monitor the written risk assessments to ensure good practice, advise and inform the Headteacher that all the relevant and appropriate Risk Management procedures

have been undertaken and completed to a good standard for the trip to proceed. In addition, the following responsibilities and duties are undertaken:

- Ensure all off-site activity meets Employer and establishment requirements
- Make judgement calls about the competence of colleagues to lead visits and the accompanying staff who are supporting the visit
- Support the group leader in identifying the purpose for the visit and the selection, training and briefing of appropriate supervising adults and volunteer helpers.
- Ensure all procedures have been adhered to including completion of the EV checklists identified in the SCC guidance for planning visits. Staff will have a hard copy of these checklists to refer to.
- Ensure that DBS checks are carried out and in place where necessary
- Arrange Emergency Contact Duty Officer and draw up proper procedures to be followed in such an event
- Keep records and make reports of accidents and “near accidents”
- Review and regularly monitor procedures
- Liaise with the LA Head of Strategic Risk Management to ensure that the proposed visit complies with LA regulations.

- 2.5 The Group Leader must be an employee. He / She is responsible for identifying the purpose of the visit and following the checklist published in the LA guidance. The party leader must complete a risk assessment for all off-site visits. Significant risks and their control measures will need to be recorded and filed with the EVC and a copy kept centrally in the school office.

This is taken account of:

- Generic risks as published in this document and the LEA regulations and Notes of Guidance for Off-site Activities.
- Event specific risks as identified from a pre-visit or thorough knowledge or experience of the environment, accommodations, the leader’s competence, the group and other factors such as transport.
- On-going risks identified by the professional staff responding to changing circumstances and the success of planned activity and procedures. The participants and staff will be fully briefed on the purpose and the risk assessment control measures.
- Where an activity is being run by an external service, the Group Leader remains responsible for the safety of students and staff. Should the Group Leader feel that an activity is outside of the school’s Risk Assessment, or that any specific student or staff member is at risk, the Group Leader should cease participation by all/some students/staff in the activity causing concern.

- 2.6 Employees have significant responsibilities. The party leader will define the roles and responsibilities of other staff and young people to ensure effective supervision. Participants are encouraged to consider risks involved in all off-site educational activity and to assist in the design of appropriate risk management strategies that support their learning.

3 Guidance Notes for Off-Site Educational Visits

To ensure proper good practice and compliance with the necessary regulations it is expected that:

- 3.1 All group leaders will familiarise themselves with the published advice and guidance. Further information is available from www.teachernet.gov.uk/visits and the OEAP National Guidance which is accessible via the Evolve website. Training for group leaders will be arranged via the EVC to include all aspects of supervision, ongoing risk assessments (including being prepared to stop an activity that has become too hazardous) and how to deal with an emergency. The School's emergency planning booklet contains an "Off-Site Activity Information Pack" detailing items to be taken on off-site visits, together with action to be taken in an emergency. This "Off-Site Activity Information Pack" must be taken on visits.
- 3.2 In order to plan an off-site activity the EVC should be involved in discussing plans at an early stage. Routine or local visits need to be planned ahead to ensure that the EVC / Head Teacher has sufficient time to authorise. No financial commitment should be agreed until all relevant approvals have been achieved.
- 3.3 Parental consent. Parents are requested to sign a permission form when their child enters the School, allowing the pupil to take part in visits during school time these will be renewed on an annual basis or if the activity / supervision arrangements changes significantly. Additional individual consent must be obtained for any whole day activities, activities which are not routine or are out of school hours. Additional permission must be obtained for outings crossing the lunchtime period or which are different to the routine / local visits. Copies of additional individual consent forms must be available for the Emergency Contact and the Group Leader to take on the visit.
- 3.4 Internal Approval Forms. All class teachers are required to complete a termly visits and outings form for regular visits and must undertake appropriate risk assessments for these outings. In addition, for each outing, either a full day or half day, any updates to the Risk Assessment must be completed and signed by a member of the SMT. A copy of this must be given to the school office by the party leader and filed with the original RA and Outings form and copies of parental permission. Sufficient time must be allowed prior to the outing, for approval to be obtained from the member of SMT:
- Visits less than 5 hrs and those extending over a lunchtime period (= ½- 1day outing) – 2 weeks' notice
 - Visits longer than 5 hours (= whole day including return after school), &/or any hazardous activities - 1 term's notice and governor consent obtained. Less notice may be given in exceptional circumstances, at the discretion of the Chair of Governors or their representative.

- 3.5 For residential visits and those considered high risk (for full list see the separate guidance on the S Drive under Generic Risk Assessment and Outings Forms) or for those that involve a journey over sea or air, approval must be gained by the LA - Surrey County Council. Party leaders must complete the online forms via the Evolve website and attach the relevant risk assessments. These will be submitted first to the EVC, then to the Head Teacher. The online forms must be submitted at least one month in advance and certainly before becoming financially committed. These types of off-site activity also need the Governing Body's approval. The Evolve system keeps a permanent record of visits and evaluations.
- 3.6 Evaluation Report. On return the Group Leader must report to the EVC and an evaluation report must be completed in order to achieve any learning about a 'near miss' or where an incident took place but fortunately did not require the completion of an Accident/Incident report form. Even where a form is completed at the venue, a record still needs to be filed at the 'home' establishment. A general evaluation of the visit will inform future visits and may be a useful check on the value of the risk assessments undertaken. All visits recorded on the Evolve system incorporate evaluations.
- 3.7 External providers will have their own risk assessment documents that should be used to help in this process. For certain activities an Adventurous Activity Licence is legally required. (See the LEA guidance or www.aala.org.uk) If this is the case their licence number only need be quoted instead of actually requiring their documents.
- 3.8 An index of risk assessments will be maintained by the EVC who will ensure that those used for regular outings are reviewed termly. The index will be kept in the school office for reference by any member of staff. This index will be tabled at a meeting of the Premises, Health & Safety Committee of Governors each term.

School quick guidelines for organising Off-Site Activities gives a brief overview of these procedures.