



Penponds school

Educational Visits Policy

January 2017

Review date: January 2018

Introduction

All schools are required to offer children a broad and balanced curriculum that promotes their spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development, and prepares them for the opportunities and experiences of adult life.

At Penponds school we seek to ensure that the National Curriculum is delivered to all children, regardless of social background, race, gender or differences in ability. All are entitled to the development of knowledge, understanding, skills, and attitudes. To enrich the curriculum for our children, we also offer a range of educational visits and other activities that add to and complement what they learn in school.

Organisation

At Penponds school, we follow the guidelines contained within the Cornwall Council Outdoor Policy. A copy of this policy is to be found in the risk assessment folder and is emailed to staff each year. Teaching Staff organising an educational visit should also refer to the DFES guidance contained in 'A Handbook for Group Leaders' which is kept in the back of the LA Guidance file. The school uses the Cornwall Outdoors planning tool which allows staff to plan and submit visits for approval.

The Headteacher is the Educational Visits Coordinator.

The National Curriculum defines what we teach the children in school. This is the basis for each class's programme of learning for each school year. In addition teachers and governors agree the corresponding programme of visits and activities at the beginning of each academic year.

Within each class's programme of work the teachers plan educational visits and activities that support the children's learning. We give details of these visits and activities to parents at the beginning of each term in our school diary. We plan other activities as the school year progresses, and inform parents of these in due course.

Visits and activities usually take place within the school day, and the governing body approves all such visits in advance. We follow the Local Authority's guidelines relating to health and safety, and we ask parents to give consent for their child to take part in any activity that takes children off the school site and out of Camborne.

Consent for local visits is done through the home school agreement which is given to children at the beginning of their school career. For individual visits out of Camborne consent is given through written consent. If we do not receive this consent, the child will be unable to participate.

Charging for school activities – see charging policy

Curriculum links

All learning outside the classroom, educational visits and activities support and enrich the work we do inside the school. There are also a number of people who visit the school to support our work. Some visits relate directly to areas of learning for individual classes, whilst others relate to all our children.

For each subject in the curriculum there is a corresponding programme of activities which includes visits by specialists. All these activities are in line with guidance published by the Local Authority and may include:

- English/Literacy – theatre visits, visits by authors, poets and theatre groups;
- science – use of the school grounds, visits by speakers;
- mathematics – use of shape and number trails in the local environment;
- history – castle visits, study of local housing, local museums;
- geography – use of the locality for fieldwork, village trails;
- art and design – art gallery visits, use of the locality;
- PE – cluster and other sports activities, extra-curricular activities, visits by specialist coaches;
- music – range of specialist music teaching, extra-curricular activities, Music School, concerts for parents to hear;
- design and technology – visits to local factories/design centres;
- ICT – its use in local shops/libraries/secondary schools etc.
- RE – visits to local centres of worship, visits by local clergy.

We also have regular visits from our neighbourhood police officer, fire service and health workers. These visits support the personal, social and health education of our children. We have local religious leaders who take assemblies in the course of the school year. We do this with the full agreement of the governing body.

Residential activities

At our school, children in Years 3, 4,5 and 6 have the opportunity to take part in a residential visit. These activities takes place during term-time and are linked to the National Curriculum, so we do not make any charge for the education. We do, however, make a charge for board and lodging, insurance and specialist instruction for certain activities.

The residential visit enables children to take part in outdoor activities and environmental studies linked to their science work. We undertake this visit only with the permission of the Local Authority and follow the LA Guidance in the organisation of the visit. All specialist activities are undertaken with qualified instructors.

Risk Assessment

The school follows the guidelines on Risk Management in the LA Guidance. The risk assessment should identify significant risks and take measures to control these, through proper planning by staff leading the visit.

A risk assessment must be undertaken prior to all educational visits and off-site activities. The Headteacher delegates this responsibility to the visit leader, normally the lead teacher of the class going on the visit. Each member of staff organising the visit or activity must approve and sign the risk assessment before the visit/activity is allowed to go ahead. The risk assessment must include the SEN/medical needs of the specific group of children participating.

The school has a standard format for risk assessment (see Section 2). Risk assessments should be requested from the Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC). Any amendments need writing on the assessment and handing back to the EVC who will amend on the ECC system for when further visits are organised. A printed copy of the risk assessment should be placed in the file in the main office. All adults accompanying the visit should be given a copy of the risk assessment and made fully aware of their responsibilities.

Pre-visits

In order to undertake a full and comprehensive assessment of risks, a pre-visit is useful but not compulsory. Even where the visit is made regularly, risks should be re-assessed in light of current plans. It is usually the responsibility of the visit organiser to carry out a pre-visit. Pre-visits to residential camps are essential.

Ratio of adults to pupils

At Penponds school we follow LA Guidance (see Cornwall Outdoor Policy) on minimum staff/pupil ratios for visits; In all cases one adult included in the ratios must be a teacher. It must be stressed that these are minimum ratios and that visit organizers must consider the following factors when deciding on the final adult/child ratio: SEN and medical needs; type of activities to be undertaken; experience and competence of all adults accompanying the visit; duration of the visit; competence and behavioural history of the group of children.

Voluntary Help

At Penponds school, we are aware that many educational visits could not take place without the goodwill of volunteer helpers. Volunteers will normally be people well-known to the school as either parents or governors.

Volunteers will be told that they have the responsibility to follow the instructions of the visit leader and that the visit organiser retains overall responsibility.

The school will appoint volunteer helpers as far in advance of the visit as practical and will provide opportunities for those volunteers to meet the pupils, for whom they will have responsibility, learning their names and getting to know them.

The school retains the right to make the final decision as to which volunteers accompany a visit as not all volunteers may be suitable or competent.

The visit organiser is responsible for ensuring that each volunteer knows precisely what their role is and understands that they have a responsibility to carry out that role.

Where children are organised in small groups, a child will not generally be placed in a group for which his/her parent is responsible.

All volunteers accompanying a residential visit will be required to obtain a DBS check when implemented. Voluntary DBS checks are free and organised through the school.

Transport

Parents will always be informed as to the type of transport being provided for an educational visit which is usually the CSIA minibuses or hired coaches.

Coaches - Seat belts must be provided on all seats and it is school policy that each child will wear a seatbelt whilst travelling on a coach. The visit organiser is responsible for the conduct and behaviour of the children whilst they are travelling. The school must ensure that there is sufficient supervisory staff to ensure the health, safety and welfare of the children whilst travelling.

Public transport - can also be used including buses for local journeys, either as private hire or public use. An increased adult/pupil ratio must be considered and close supervision of the children must be ensured.

Private cars- We do not use staff vehicles to transport children to activities unless they are appropriately insured (business class insurance) and registered on our volunteer driving register. Child seats must be used as appropriate in accordance with the law. The school secretary maintains the volunteer driving register.

Check list

The visit organiser should ensure he/she has completed the 'Check List for Visits' and given a copy to the Headteacher no less than 24 hours before the visit is due to take place.

Monitoring and Review

It is the responsibility of our governing body to monitor the effectiveness of this policy. The governing body does this by:

- requiring the Headteacher to report to governors on an annual basis on the effectiveness of this policy, normally in the final Headteacher report of the year.
- taking into serious consideration any complaints regarding educational visits from parents, staff or pupils;