

THE GILLFORD CENTRE

EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY

The school acknowledges that students can derive immense educational benefit by taking part in off-site visits. The knowledge and experience gained beyond the classroom can consolidate and extend the taught curriculum within it. This policy seeks to establish a framework from which students can benefit in a safe, healthy and secure environment

An Off-Site Visit is defined as pupils going 'beyond the school gates' to pursue an activity organised through the school. Activities may take place during or after the school day, at weekends or in school holidays and will be education, curricular or recreational based. All off-site visits must have an educational purpose and pre-determined clear education objectives. All participants in activities will be identified as group members associated with the school.

The school policy recognises that every student should have full access to each visit that is appropriate to their class or Year group, regardless of their abilities, therefore, developing further 'the whole child'.

The Headteacher and EVC are responsible for this policy and procedures for dealing with occasions when groups are engaged on an official visit or journey. This policy and procedures correspond with the Cumbria County Council Guidance, systems and processes for supporting and monitoring "Learning Outside the Classroom" (LOtC) activities.

Each member of staff has been made aware that it is a legal expectation that employees must work within the requirements of their employer's guidance. Cumbria Childrens Services employees must follow the requirements of the "National Guidance" (NG) on the website www.oeapng.info

The purpose of the visit must be clearly defined and be of educational value.

Legal Framework

Health and Safety responsibilities derive from Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and associated regulations. Health and safety legislation is enforced by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 places overall responsibility for health and safety with the employer.

The Local Authority of the **Gillford Centre** is the employer and therefore has employer responsibilities, decisions about visits are delegated to the Head teacher, the Head teacher's agreement must be obtained before a visit takes place.

It is a Cumbria County Council requirement that we as a school must follow the Outdoor Education Advisers' National Guidance for Managing Learning Outside the Classroom (www.oeapng.info) as well as the requirements outlined in the CCC Policy for 'Managing Outdoor and Experiential Learning and Educational Visits' (available on the Evolve system).

Roles and Responsibilities

The **Headteacher** will ensure that the visit leader has completed all procedures. A list of all the Head teachers responsibilities can be found on the website www.oeapng.info.

For every visit a **visit leader** will be identified. The roles and responsibility are set out on the website www.oeapng.info. The leader is responsible at all times, either personally or by delegation, for the planning, safety, supervision, implementation and follow-up of the visit. A visit should not be undertaken unless this vital role is clearly understood and accepted by the person concerned. If there are doubts about situations that occur away from home (e.g. unsuitable instructors, tired coach driver and unsuitable weather conditions, it is the responsibility of the leader to consider the matter and take prompt and decisive action

The role of **parents and Governors** is set out on the website www.oeapng.info

Category of Visit

From 1 April 2011 Cumbria County Council has defined two levels of visits which are set out below:

Level 1

All visits other than those in Level 2 including the examples below:

1. Sports fixture
2. Curriculum swimming
3. Cultural day visits to libraries, museums, theatres, art galleries, tourist attractions and religious sites.
4. Day visits to history, art, drama and music events.

This list above is not exhaustive, and only represents examples.

For example, Leighton Moss, Tullie House, Westmorland Show, Abbot Hall, Manchester Museum are all Level 1 visits.

Level 2

1. Visits abroad
2. Residential visits
3. Visits involving Adventurous Activities or remote locations

For example: Hawse End

Approval and Notification of Activities and Visits

This school uses the Cumbria County Council online system **“EVOLVE”** at www.cumbriaaccvisits.org.uk for notification and approval. A key feature of this system is that visits and LOtC activities requiring approval are automatically brought to the attention of the Local Authority.

Risk Management

As the employer this school has a legal duty to ensure risks are managed – requiring them to be acceptable or tolerable, as it is recognised that elimination is not always possible or reasonable. This requires that suitable and sufficient risk management systems are in place. This school has access to risk assessment materials on the school portal, generic educational visits, risk assessments can be accessed through the Evolve system.

Supervision Guidelines

Agreed Ratios at The Gillford Centre

Appropriate ratios are determined during the risk assessment process.

Parents/Volunteers

Parents, governors and volunteers can be used to achieve the pupil:adult ratio. Such helpers should be carefully selected and ideally be well known to the school and pupil group. Anyone who has not had a CRB disclosure check should not be left in sole charge of pupils. The Headteacher and group leader must assess the suitability of any volunteer.

For the protection of both pupils and adults, all adult supervisors should ensure that they are not left alone with a pupil wherever possible.

All supervisors should be made aware of their responsibilities at all times, in particular any pupils who may require closer supervision. It may be helpful to put this in writing.

Staff may hold a preliminary meeting for volunteer helpers.

Headcounts

Whatever the length and nature of the visit, regular head counting of pupils should take place, particularly before leaving an area or the venue.

Insurance

The Gillford Centre as of March 2014:

A Visits Insurance with: Zurich Municipal
Employers Liability Policy Number: QLA-08AC02-0013

Only coach companies that have appropriate insurance will be used.

Record of Visits

Records of all Level 2 visits will be kept on the Evolve website.

Financial Planning

Refer to Schools Charging Policy

Revised June 2015

Also refer to NG Document 'Charges for Off-Site Activities and Visits in an Educational Establishment'.

Contact with Parents

Parents/Guardians will be informed in advance of all the details of a proposed visit.

Parental consent is not required for visits within the school day. However, schools must inform parents that visits are taking place.

Form D (checklist) can be used for regular visits such as curriculum swimming, sports fixtures, visits to the local library and village halls, etc. **Form C (list of pupils) can be used for Level 2 Visits.**

Transport

If staff cars are used the leader needs to check that they have the necessary business use insurance, and that they have filled in the form for Staff/Volunteer drivers attached as Appendix 1.

If parent cars are used to transport pupils OR other parents, the leader needs to check that they filled in the form for Staff/Volunteer drivers attached in the Appendices.

Car booster seats will be used where children are below 12 years of age and are below 135cm in height.

If a mini-bus is to be used then reference is made to the County Council's regulations and guidance file on mini-buses. Only a member of staff who has passed a mini-bus assessment will drive the mini bus.

GUIDANCE NOTE FOR GROUP LEADERS

IMMEDIATE ACTION FOLLOWING A SERIOUS ACCIDENT OR INCIDENT

A serious accident or incident is defined as:

- An accident leading to a fatality, serious or multiple fractures, amputation or other serious injury;
- Circumstances in which a party member might be at serious risk/serious illness; or
- Any situation in which the press or media might be involved
- All mobile phones removed from students.

Emergency Interventions

Emergency interventions will involve ideally a minimum of two staff employing, where necessary, one or a combination of the strategies from Team Teach in response to an incident. This will occur when all other strategies have been exhausted or the incident requires a rapid physical response (for example a child running onto the road).

Remember that serious incidents are extremely rare, but if one occurs it certainly makes great physical and emotional demands upon you. These guidance notes are designed to help you deal with an emergency.

Remember that you are not alone, the LA or your school will support you as much as possible.

1. Be Prepared

- Carry the Outdoor Visits Emergency Contacts Card – group contact details.
- Ensure that you are familiar with all of the LA guidelines for off-site activities
- Brief your group on emergency procedures before they set off, including details of communications, so that they know how to deal with situations should the part get split up

2. Care of the Group

- Ensure safety from further danger.
- Contact local emergency services immediately and follow their advice.
- Deploy other staff/adults as effectively as possible in continuing to ensure the welfare of your group.

3. Communication

- Contact the schools 24-hour standby person (usually **Liz Dixon**)
- Contact your LA 24 hour helpline number:
 - Normal office hours: 01228 227169
 - Outside normal office hours: 07699 113300 (ask for pager no 786440)

- *In either event, give the following information:*

Your name

Name of group

Telephone number you are calling from

What happened

To whom

Where

When

What has happened since

If a fatality is involved, has this been confirmed?

By whom

Which local emergency services are involved

4. Next Steps and General Advice

- Parents or relatives will naturally be anxious to establish what is happening, but DO NOT let party members (staff or young persons) telephone home until after you have made contact with your LA and this has been agreed.
- DO NOT speak to the press or media. Refer enquiries to the local emergency services handling the incident on the ground, and promise that “an official statement will be made through the County Council Media Team as soon as possible”.

- DO NOT admit liability of any sort to anybody.
- DO NOT allow anyone, apart from medical services, to see any party member without an independent witness being present.
- Retain any equipment involved in an unaltered condition.
- Keep a written record of all that happens.
- Be as compassionate as possible, with anyone involved.
- Remember that no-one, unless they are in a relevant official capacity, has the right to see anyone who does not wish to see them.
- If you change location, remember to let your Headteacher/LA contact person have the new telephone number at which you can be contacted.

Finally, all situations are different. Your Head teacher/LA contact or a Senior Officer of the Authority will make themselves available to offer you advice and support. Use them as much as you need.

SAMPLE LETTER TO STAFF / VOLUNTEER DRIVERS

This establishment greatly values your support in helping to transport participants to and from activities. Without your help, it would be difficult to undertake some of the activities and this would clearly disadvantage children. However, it is a statistical fact that any activity on the highway is far more dangerous than any other environment. It is the duty of the Management to do what we can to minimise the risks associated with road transport and we therefore ask all our drivers (volunteers and employees) to conform to the checklist below, sign and date it. As a safeguard for parents/carers in general, we shall require drivers for all planned visits organised by this establishment to have lodged the completed checklist before they drive other people's children to or from events. This in no way invalidates or curtails private arrangements undertaken between parents.

NAME OF DRIVER

- I have passed my test for the class of vehicle I am using over 3 years ago.
- I have no more than 3 points on my licence.
- My car carries insurance, which is renewed each year on (date) and I have checked with my insurance company that my insurance covers transporting pupils or young people on a voluntary basis.
- The Road Fund Licence is current and always renewed by/on the expiry date on the tax disc.
- The vehicle is regularly serviced, kept in a safe running condition and where required, has a valid MOT certificate.
- I am aware that overloading the vehicle could invalidate my insurance.
- All passengers I shall carry will have access to, and **use** a seatbelt including those in the back seat.
- I am aware that any formal payment for petrol or mileage cost would invalidate my insurance unless it had been previously declared to the insurance company. (Remuneration would be construed as being for "hire or reward" – a separate insurance classification) – **This applies to parents/carers only.**

ADDITIONALLY, FOR THOSE EMPLOYED BY OR FOR THE SCHOOL ESTABLISHMENT:

- My insurance includes business use in addition to social, domestic and pleasure.
- The vehicle I shall be using is/is not* insured in my name. (If you are driving as a "named" driver on someone else's insurance, the cover is usually restricted to social, domestic and pleasure purposes. As an employee, you will need to check that you may use the car for business).
- As a named driver and an employee, I confirm that the insurance covers me for business use*.

(* Delete as appropriate or if not applicable)

Signed Vehicle Reg.No..... Date

APPENDIX 1

The Headteacher / EVC will ensure that:

- All necessary actions are completed before the visit begins
- Child protection procedures are in place
- Risk assessments are completed and appropriate safety measures are in place
- Training needs have been assessed and needs of staff and pupils have been considered
- The group leader has experience in supervising the age group going and will organise the group effectively
- The group leader or another teacher is competent to instruct the activity and is familiar with the location
- Non-teacher supervisors are appropriate people
- Ratios are appropriate
- Parents have signed consent forms where required
- Arrangements have been made for the medical needs and special educational needs
- First Aid provision will be available
- Travel arrangements are appropriate
- Travel times are made clear
- Insurance cover
- Contact details of venue are available
- School contact has been agreed
- Visit leader, supervisors and school contact have a copy of emergency procedures
- Visit leader, supervisors and school contact have the names of all adults and pupils travelling in the group and contact details of parents and teachers and other supervisors next of kin
- There is a contingency plan for delays.

Details of Headteacher and EVC responsibilities can be found under National Guidance on the website www.oeapng.ingo