

# THE FEDERATION OF NETTLESTONE & NEWCHURCH PRIMARY SCHOOLS



## EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY

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Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Chairman Board of Governors  
The Federation of Nettlestone & Newchurch Primary Schools

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*All the governors and staff of The Federation of Nettlestone & Newchurch Primary Schools are committed to sharing a common objective to help keep the children and staff of the school community safe. We ensure that consistent effective safeguarding procedures are in place in order to support families, children and staff of the school.*

## Educational Visits Policy

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## **Introduction**

It is the intention of this policy to meet legislative requirements by providing guidance relating to educational visits and off-site activities for school pupils.

This procedure incorporates the guidance given in February 2014 by the Department of Education in the Policy Briefing "Health and safety advice on legal duties and powers."

It is essential that every person involved in the planning and running of "Off-Site" activities is familiar with and understands the implications of the guidelines.

The term "Off-Site" refers to all activities arranged by the school, which take place outside the boundaries of its premises. Frequent (non-hazardous) trips around the island eg sports fixtures, visits to the theatre, church etc do not require governor permission, but parental permission forms need to be completed.

All other off site trips, including hazardous trips and overnight trips require governor permission, normally at the first available Governor meeting when the trip is conceived.

Exceptionally, when a trip opportunity requiring Governor permission arises at short notice, this may be granted in writing by the Chairman (or his nominated Deputy) and a minimum of four other Governors. In such cases, parental permission forms need to be completed as normal.

#### 4. Legal Framework

Under the [Health and Safety At Work etc Act 1974](#), employers are responsible for the health, safety and welfare at work of their employees. Employers are also under a duty of care to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of anyone else on the premise or anyone who may be affected by their activities. This includes participants in Off Site activities.

This is reinforced by the [Management of Health and Safety At Work Regulations 1999](#).

Inclusion and Entitlement Educational visits are an integral part of the curriculum. All pupils or young people are entitled to participate irrespective of social background, culture, race, gender, differences in ability and disabilities in line with our duties under the Equalities Act 2010. Each pupil or young person has an entitlement to experience:

- ✓ Effective learning opportunities
- ✓ Success in learning
- ✓ Achieving as high a standard as possible
- ✓ A Residential experience.

Teachers will set appropriate learning challenges, responding to pupils' diverse learning needs. The school will make provision, with well-planned **reasonable adjustments** made to support pupils enabling them **where possible** to participate effectively in all educational visits.

##### 4.1 "In Loco Parentis"

School staff have a common law duty towards pupils under the age of 18 known as "in loco parentis". This means that teaching staff must take the same care of their pupils that a reasonable and careful parent would take in the same circumstances. A breach of this duty of care leading to injury or damage to any person can give rise to a claim for negligence.

The principle of "in loco parentis" applies to all members of staff, including non-teaching staff, who take responsibility for school pupils.

#### 5 Insurance

The group leader must ensure that adequate insurance arrangements are in place.

Additional arrangements may be necessary to obtain insurance cover for activities abroad and activities of a potentially hazardous nature. The group leader should carefully examine any exclusions listed in the policy. If there is any doubt about the cover the insurer should be asked for clarification.

##### 5.1 Transport

When hiring coaches etc., the group leader should check that the company used has appropriate insurance cover by obtaining written confirmation that that the insurance policy applies to all people using the vehicle and all activities and journeys that are conducted.

Staff are able to drive school minibuses without any special licence, as long as their employer agrees, and as long as the following conditions are met:

- The staff member obtained their car driving licence before January 1997 **or**
- The staff member obtained their driving licence after January 1997, but has held it for at **least 2 years** AND
  - o Is not being paid to drive the minibus AND
  - o The minibus weighs no more than 3.5 tonnes and is used "not for hire or reward"

## **6 Approval Monitoring**

Completed risk assessments are to be submitted to the Head of School for approval prior to any activity taking place. Residential and off Island visits will need additional approval from SOSA who review all school visits not just those considered adventurous.

## **7 Preparation**

### **7.1 Risk Assessment**

Risk assessments must be completed and included in the submission for approval by the Head of School. Where an activity is not considered to be hazardous (see Section 8) a Risk Assessment is not required to be completed for each trip / incidence. An initial assessment which covers the relevant areas / issues indicated below will suffice.

There are standard risk assessments for our common visits in the school office.

A risk assessment template can be found at:

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/risk/assessment.htm>

The Risk Assessment will be based on:

- the hazards
- who might be affected
- safety measures required to reduce risks to acceptable level

The group leader should take into consideration the following factors when assessing the risks:

- type of visit/activity and the level at which it is being undertaken
- location, routes and means of transport
- competence, experience and qualifications of supervisory staff
- ratio of teachers and supervisory staff to pupils
- group members' age, competence, fitness, temperament and the suitability of the activity

- pupils with a disability/learning disability
- quality and suitability of available equipment
- seasonal conditions, weather and timing
- emergency procedures
- how to cope when a pupil becomes unable or unwilling to continue, or displays challenging behaviour
- the need to monitor the risks throughout the visit
- Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) which apply to persons involved in trips or activities, must be included in the assessment and planning process.

### **Review of Risk Assessments**

As soon as possible after the visit the leader must note on the risk assessment any deficiencies identified (eg. A dangerous road crossing on way to venue.)

This must then be brought to the attention of the Head of School for the risk assessment to be reviewed.

Risk Assessments will need to be reviewed and updated either on an annual basis, or at an earlier date in the light of any significant changes

### **7.2 Safety**

Safety must be the prime consideration in all planning and preparation. Group leaders must be continually aware of the degree of care expected of them. In particular, care should be taken to ensure that the appropriate preparations are made to deal with any emergencies or situations that may arise.

### **7.3 Venue Research**

The group leader must research the background and implications of an Off-Site activity thoroughly. In this context, knowledge of the venues is particularly important. Whenever possible, staff should have visited venues either on previous activities or on preliminary visits. When a venue includes naturally hazardous areas such as mountains and moorlands, coasts, forested areas and sizeable areas of still and moving waters, the need to undertake a preliminary visit becomes vitally important. When a preliminary visit is not feasible, then importance must be placed upon seeking advice and information from the venue.

### **8 Hazardous Activities**

Hazardous activities must be led by staff holding appropriate qualifications. It is permissible to use staff who are not employed by the school, but in this instance, it is the responsibility of the activity organiser to ensure that checks are made to establish they are suitable qualified.

Hazardous activities could include:

- ❖ abseiling
- ❖ caving/potholing
- ❖ climbing
- ❖ hill walking
- ❖ windsurfing
- ❖ paddlesports
- ❖ sailing
- ❖ skiing
- ❖ activities occurring close to, or in, areas such as: quarries, beaches near cliffs, canals
- ❖ etc.
- ❖ any other activities that present hazards comparable to the risks with those activities specified above

This list gives examples of hazardous activities but others may be identified during the assessment process.

For activities identified as hazardous a separate Risk Assessment should be completed for each proposed trip, taking into consideration the areas highlighted in Section 7

## **9 Visits Abroad**

### **Additional factors to consider:**

#### **9.1 Language**

It is recommended that at least one member of staff should know enough of the local language to be able to engage in a basic conversation. It is also advisable for pupils to have a basic knowledge of the local language before the visit.

#### **9.2 Visas / Passports**

The group leader should ensure that all members of the group hold valid passports and visas (if appropriate).

#### **9.3 Foreign Legislation**

The group leader needs to check relevant legislation, particularly on health and safety e.g. fire regulations.

#### **9.4 Culture**

Body language, rules and regulations of behaviour, dress codes, local customs etc. that will be expected and which staff and pupils will need to be aware of.

#### **9.5 Food and Drink**

Group members should be warned of the dangers of drinking tap water and drinks containing ice cubes in certain countries. In some countries it is safer to drink bottled water, and care needs to be taken with raw vegetables, salads and unpeeled fruit, raw shellfish, and undercooked meat or fish.

## **9.6 Money**

How to carry money and valuables discreetly. If larger amounts of money will be needed, it is advisable to take travellers cheques.

## **9.7 Telephones**

How to use phones abroad, money required and code for phoning home.

## **9.8 Vaccinations**

The group leader should find out whether vaccination is necessary and ensure all members of the group have received it in good time. Check whether the country to be visited requires proof of vaccination.

## **9.9 Insurance**

The group leader must ensure that the group has comprehensive travel insurance appropriate to the visit.

## **10 Supervision Ratios**

It is important to have a high enough ratio of adult supervisors to pupils for any visit.

The factors to take into consideration are:

- sex, age and ability of the group
- pupils with a disability/learning difficulty
- nature of activities
- experience of adults in Off-Site supervision
- duration and nature of journey
- type of any accommodation
- competence of staff, both general and on specific activities
- requirements of the organisation/location to be visited
- competence and behaviour of students
- first aid cover

Where groups include pupils of both genders, these must be accompanied by both male and female staff, with the following exceptions:

- where an activity involves a small group on an activity lasts less than 24 hours, and does not involve an overnight stay
- where appropriate adult help is available at the group's venue and only the journey involves the presence of adults of one gender which conflicts with the make-up the group
- where an activity involves pupils working without direct supervision

It is acknowledged that there are occasions when it is appropriate for pupils to work in situations where they are not directly supervised in order to explore, however briefly, a carefully and clearly defined area. In such cases, particular care must be taken to ensure that pupils are appropriately trained, briefed and experienced for whatever is involved, and that the activity has been risk assessed.



There must be appropriate emergency procedures in place and pupils must have the knowledge and ability to follow them. Precisely what procedures are necessary depend upon the particular circumstances but these must be considered and agreed prior to undertaking the activity.

### **11 First Aid Provision**

First aid provision should form part of the risk assessment.

Considerations when identifying first aid needs should include:

- numbers in the group and the nature of the activity
- likely injuries and how effective first aid would be
- distance to nearest hospital
- pre-existing medical conditions

**First aid should be available and accessible at all times.**

**It is recommended that at least one adult accompanying the visit must be first aid trained and qualified.**

### **12 Adventure Activities using Licensed Providers**

When planning to use adventure activity facilities offered by a commercial company or by a local authority, the group leader should check:

- whether the provider is legally required to hold a licence for the activities it offers and, if so,
- that the provider actually holds a current and appropriate licence.

A licensed provider does not necessarily have to hold a licence for all its activities. Other activities may be accredited under non-statutory schemes. The provider can give information on what activities are licensed.

It is illegal for a provider of licensable status to offer a licensable activity without a licence. The Adventure Activities Licensing Authority can check on the licence status of a provider. Their contact details are as follows:

**Adventure Activities Licensing Authority**  
**17 Lambourne Crescent**  
**Llanishen**  
**Cardiff CF4 5GG**  
**Tel: 01222 755715 Fax: 01222 755757**  
**Web site address: <http://www.aala.org>**

### **13 Adventure Activities using Non-Licensable Providers**

Not all providers are required to hold a licence.

Not holding a licence does not imply a lack of safety.

If proposing to use a non-licensable provider, the group leader should obtain in writing from the provider that:

- risks have been assessed and that the provider's staff are competent to instruct and lead pupils of the groups' age range on the activity; a copy of the providers Risk Assessment should be sought and reviewed
- the equipment is suitable for the activity and that its safe condition is checked before each use
- operating procedures conform to the guidelines of the National Governing Body for the activity where this is appropriate
- clear management and safety systems are in place
- there is appropriate provision for first aid
- there are emergency procedures

## 14 Emergency Procedures

A senior member of staff should be appointed to act as the group's contact out of school hours (Home Base Contact). This person should have available all relevant information regarding the group and its whereabouts. A register containing names and telephone numbers of **ALL** personnel on the trip should be kept by the emergency contact person.

An Emergency Contact Information sheet should be held by each member of staff accompanying the group.

If an emergency occurs:

- establish the nature and extent of the emergency as quickly as possible
- ensure that all the group are safe and looked after
- establish the names of any casualties and get immediate medical attention
- ensure that all relevant group members are aware of the incident and that all group members are following the emergency procedures
- ensure that casualties are accompanied to hospital by a member of staff
- notify the police if necessary
- notify the British Embassy/Consulate if an emergency occurs abroad
- inform the school contact
- notify insurers
- notify the provider/tour operator
- ascertain relevant telephone numbers required for future calls
- write down accurately all relevant facts and witness details and preserve any vital evidence
- keep a written account of all events, times and contacts after the incident
- complete an accident report form as soon as possible
- no-one in the group should speak to the media
- no-one in the group should discuss legal liability with other parties

The main factors for the school contact to consider include:

- ensuring that the group leader is in control of the emergency and establishing if any assistance is required from the school base
- contacting parents and keeping them as well informed as possible at all stages of the emergency

- liaison with the Executive Head Teacher
- the reporting of the incident using appropriate forms if necessary; i.e. Reporting of Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations ([RIDDOR](#))

### **15 Related Documents**

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/education/visits.htm>