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Park Primary School Policy



Park's Educational Visits Policy - DRAFT

Reviewed January 2022

Member of Staff Responsible (EVCs)	Ilona Patora/ Imogen Cook
Position	Assistant Head Teachers
Dated (approved by the Governing Board)	TBA
Date of next review	January 2024

This policy must be read in conjunction with Newham's Guidance on Educational Visits (SP54) – a copy of which is available on the school website.

INTRODUCTION

Rationale

Park Primary School is committed to providing a broad, balanced curriculum for all pupils, and outdoor learning and educational visits is a key feature of our provision. We are committed to providing inspirational, real-world educational experiences for our pupils through visits and visitors to enrich and enhance their learning experiences, deepen knowledge and understanding and increase skills and confidence.

This policy will set out the key procedures that need to be followed when planning and undertaking outdoor learning and educational visits, in order to ensure they are not only worthwhile learning experiences, but also undertaken in a safe and responsible manner.

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Entitlement

Park Primary School feels that all of its pupils are entitled to:

- A broad and balanced curriculum, where experiences are creative and relevant, over at least those areas described by National Curriculum with differentiation, relevance, progression and continuity.
- Have equal opportunity to take part in educational visits and outdoor learning, within the local area and off-site, including residential visits.

Definition

This Educational Visits Policy refers to all activities that take place outdoors, on-site and off-site, including residential at home and abroad.

Educational visits, including residential visits, provide a context for learning, requiring children to use their skills, knowledge and understanding in real, and often complex, situations; this helps them understand and remember what they are learning about in a meaningful way and brings the curriculum to life.

We believe that there are several key outcomes from high quality outdoor education:

- **Enjoyment and fulfilment:** children enjoy participating and adopt a positive attitude to challenge and adventure.
- **Confidence:** children gain personal confidence and self-esteem.
- **Social awareness:** children develop their self-awareness and social skills; they appreciate the contributions and achievements of themselves and others.
- **Environmental awareness:** children become alive to the environment, natural and man-made, in which they live, and understand important concepts including sustainable development and conservation.
- **Activity skills:** young people have the opportunity of developing a range of skills.
- **Personal qualities:** children demonstrate increased initiative, self-reliance, responsibility, independence, perseverance and commitment.
- **Key skills:** children develop and extend their skills of communication, problem solving, leadership and teamwork.
- **Health and fitness:** children learn to appreciate the benefits of physical exercise and activity and the lifelong value of participation in leisure activities.

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- Motivation for learning: children display an increased motivation and appetite for learning that contributes to raised levels of attainment and achievement in other aspects of their education.
- Broadening horizons: children broaden their experiences and become open to a wider range of opportunities and life chances.

ROLES IN SCHOOL

Governors

Governors provide support and challenge to ensure that:

- School policy is up to date and effective
- Training is up to date
- The policy complies with Newham's Guidance on Educational Visits
- where approval for visits is delegated to the EVC that risk assessments are in place and effective.

Headteacher

The Headteacher will ensure that:

- Newham's Guidance on Educational Visits is adhered to at all times
- the school policy is up to date and effective
- visits comply with guidance and are notified and submitted in advance
- risk assessments and suitable safeguarding arrangements are in place (including DBS checks) and that these are proportionate
- EVC and staff training is up to date and effective
- staff leading visits are competent and experienced, and are clear about their role and that of any accompanying adults, including volunteers
- arrangements for medical needs and any other inclusion considerations have been met
- transport and insurance arrangements are appropriate and meet requirements
- where the activity or visit involves a third party provider: appropriate checks have been made and assurances obtained; a clear contract is in place setting out what the contractor is to provide; the provider holds sufficient indemnity insurance

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- emergency procedures and contacts are clear and in place
- where charges are made, these are within legal and employer requirements; procedures are in place to account for finance of activities and visits
- serious incidents are reported to NPW as required by their guidance, meeting the requirements of RIDDOR - Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013.
- Governing Body are kept up to date of policy, procedures and visits taking place

Educational Visits Coordinator

The EVC will:

- be appointed by the Head Teacher
- have appropriate training to fulfil the role, and have experience of leading educational visits
- keep the policy and guidance up to date
- support staff; be involved in the planning and management of visits, and monitor planning and delivery of visits; evaluate visits with staff
- oversee the necessary paperwork and risk assessments, ensuring they meet guidance requirements; will maintain records of visits (using EVOLVE)
- ensure the DFE and NPW guidance is adhered to, and keep abreast of advice from Newham's Guidance on Educational Visits
- ensure medical and first aid issues are addressed
- ensure emergency procedures are in place, clear to all staff, and adhered to

Teachers/Visit leaders

Visit leaders will:

- seek approval to carry out the visit
- be responsible for planning, organisation and management of visits in line with school and NPW policy, in liaison with the EV coordinator, including defining the roles of the other adults; provide necessary information to supporting adults.
- organise transport in accordance with NPW requirements, if appropriate, in liaison with the school admin staff

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- organise letters to parents and ensure suitable consent has been sought from parents, including emergency contact and medical requirements etc.
- where possible, undertake a pre-visit to the venue; ensure necessary insurance and health and safety requirements are adhered to; ensure child protection and first aid requirements are in place
- develop the risk assessment, in liaison with the EVC; this may include generic risk assessments and should always include points specific to the activity being planned; ensure risk assessments are understood by all adults on the visit. Where possible involve the pupils in risk assessments, e.g. when discussing how expected to behave on a bus, crossing roads, etc.
- keep a register of all adults and pupils who attended, in order to follow checking in and out procedures
- report any accidents, incidents or near misses
- evaluate visits on EVOLVE
- when working with third-party activity providers it is imperative that leaders avoid 'grey areas', so there should be a clear handover before and after any activity led by provider
- should a provider run an activity in a way that causes concern, stop/consider stopping the activity at the first appropriate moment. Such an intervention should be done with sensitivity and discretion to ensure that it does not result in young people being put at greater risk.

Helpers/Volunteers

Helpers/Volunteers will be:

- subject to an appropriate vetting decision by the Head Teacher/ EVC/ visit leader
- used appropriately and not used to replace a visit leader
- suitably competent and confident to be able to carry out the duties they are assigned
- confident in their understanding of the role and responsibilities that they have been assigned and how these integrate with other staff
- enabled to contribute to the evaluation of all aspects of the visit
- appropriately briefed on:
 - Relevant establishment and visit procedures

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- Group characteristics, including age, health, capabilities, special educational needs, behaviour and any other relevant matters in the context of the visit
- Nature and location of the activity.

Parents

Parents will be:

- kept up to date with policy (this is available on school website).
- kept fully informed of all visits. Information will include:
 - date, timings and venue
 - reason for visit
 - method of transport, if required
 - emergency contact
 - charges/voluntary contributions
 - clothing/footwear needed
 - money, food etc arrangements

PROCEDURES FOR ORGANISING VISITS AND APPROVAL

When planning a visit staff need to:

- seek approval for the visit from EVC, having gathered all relevant information regarding arrangements, activities, risk assessments of establishment (if relevant), costs, transport arrangements. Parent transport is not used, other than to sporting events, and then parents may only transport their own children.
- undertake a pre-visit, if possible and appropriate.
- ensure risk assessments are completed: these will be done with the EVC. Generic risk assessments are in place for a range of activities, including use of transport, local walks, and in planning the visit these should be used to support staff in reviewing potential risks for any activity-specific information to be added to the Park risk assessment (created specially for particular visits) - Appendix 1. These should be kept with the group leader.
- seek parental consent, if required. General consent forms are held by the office and cover a range of visits, including local walks, sporting events, visits during school hours (other than residential). Gather any relevant information about medical needs, SEND, etc

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- submit the risk assessments and planning for the visit, via EVOLVE, for approval from the EVC. This must be done prior to the visit (usually 2 weeks).
- Ensure first aid and medical requirements are planned for
- Understand the emergency procedures
- Ensure adequate supervision is organised (see below)
- Ensure all accompanying adults, including staff and volunteers, have a clear plan of the activity and are clear on their responsibilities; they should know what to do in case of an emergency, and what the risk assessments are; they should have a register/list of their group members and regularly undertake headcounts; they should have a means to contact the visit leader, if required.
- Ensure catering staff are informed in advance if packed lunches are required.
- Monitor the progress of the visit throughout, ensuring all activities and procedures are taking place as planned.
- Evaluate the activity afterwards with the EVC – this may be through discussion or via the EVOLVE system.
- Ensure paperwork is completed in case of any near misses or accidents, and that all parties are informed.

Supervision Ratios

Young people must be supervised at all times and the group leader is responsible for the group at all times. The following ratios are **a guide only**; each activity should be assessed individually for suitable supervision; off-site venues may also have their own supervision requirements. A professional judgement about supervision ratios should be made alongside the EVC.

Low risk activities (where the risk is similar to everyday life)

- EYFS – one adult to every 4-6 pupils
- Key Stage 1 – one adult to every 4-6 pupils
- Key Stage 2 – one adult to every 10-15 pupils

High Risk (adventurous, residential)

- Key Stage 1 – one adult to every 2 pupils
- Key Stage 2 – one adult to every 6-10 pupils

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All children at Park participating in educational visits must wear high visibility jackets to ensure they are easily seen by visit leaders and adults supporting visit leaders. This is very important as at Park children do not wear a compulsory uniform, therefore identification of them in busy areas must be a priority.

MONITORING and RECORD KEEPING

- The policy and guidelines will be regularly reviewed by the Head Teacher and Governing Body.
- The EVC will monitor visits through use of EVOLVE and through coordination with visit leaders
- Records of ALL visits will be kept in the School office as well as electronically on Google Drive

-ALL visits will be recorded on the school electronic diary and entered onto EVOLVE. Parents will be informed of these visits in advance via dojo message and/or letters sent home.

- In addition, all off-site visits will be recorded on EVOLVE in line with the planning procedures above. This will be done in advance of the visit and will include all necessary risk assessments, including some generic ones held in school (e.g for transport arrangements). Parents will be informed of these visits in advance via letters home, and these are covered by the permission forms completed by parents when their child is enrolled into school.

- Residential visits will be recorded using EVOLVE. Activity specific permission will be sought for these visits, and activity specific risk assessments will be developed. Parents will be informed of these visits well in advance and meetings will be held to give parents details of activities, etc.

INDUCTION AND TRAINING

- Newly qualified staff will be given the opportunity to undertake peer monitoring as part of their induction year, if required, in order to gain experience in organising and managing visits. They will always be accompanied by experienced support staff and/or teachers in their ECT year.
- The EVC will keep their training up to date and will keep abreast of developments from NPW, DFE and from national best practice.
- All staff will be made aware of their responsibilities via staff INSET and policy update.

It is the responsibility of visit leaders to be aware of current policy and Newham's guidelines.

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RISK MANAGEMENT AND RISK ASSESSMENT

Risk management, in the context of outdoor learning and off-site visits, is a two stage process:

1. The identification of the potential benefits to be gained from an activity, along with any risks to the health and safety of those involved.
2. The implementation of a plan to best realise these benefits, using professional judgement to ensure that the level of risk does not exceed that which can be justified by the benefits.

The fact that most human activity involves risk, and that this cannot be eliminated unless activities are not undertaken is recognised by both the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and the Department for Education (DfE):

“HSE fully recognises that learning outside the classroom helps to bring the curriculum to life – it provides deeper subject learning and increases self-confidence. It also helps pupils develop their risk awareness and prepares them for their future working lives. Striking the right balance between protecting pupils from risk and allowing them to learn from school trips has been a challenge for many schools, but getting this balance right is essential for realising all these benefits in practice”. (School trips and outdoor learning activities: Tackling the health and safety myths, HSE).

“School employers should always take a common sense and proportionate approach, remembering that in schools risk assessment and risk management are tools to enable children to undertake activities safely, and not prevent activities from taking place. Sensible risk management cannot remove risk altogether but it should avoid needless or unhelpful paperwork”. (The Department for Education’s advice on health and safety for Schools updated February 2014).

There are two broad categories that require risk management and planning:

1. Routine visits that involve no more than an everyday level of risk and are covered by establishment procedures and policy. Such visits should require minimal planning or preparation beyond what is needed to make best use of the learning opportunity. In a school context, they are simply lessons in a ‘different’ classroom.
2. Visits requiring additional planning, and some level of specific risk assessment. A visit moves into this category because one or more aspects cannot be managed adequately by existing procedures and policy. This may be due to distance from the establishment, the nature of the activities, the environment or venue(s), the nature of the particular group, the need for specialist leader competencies, or any combination of these. For some visits this will involve detailed planning over an extended period of time. The additional steps needed to manage these aspects should be identified and recorded.

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Risk management involves answering two basic questions:

- What could go wrong?
- What are we going to do about it?

This process happens at three levels:

Generic Risk Assessment

- Policies and procedures that apply across a range of visits (recorded).
- This is guidance or practice that remains constant regardless of the nature of the visit and they form part of an establishment's policy and procedures. It covers the management of risks identified as relevant to all visits involving similar activities. See the appendices for examples of generic risk assessments.

At Park Primary School this will cover:

- Visits in local area, including crossing the road
- Visits to the local library or leisure centre (swimming)
- Visits to West Ham Park (Forest School, outdoor learning)
- Sporting events
- Travel to visits
- Visits to local places of worship
- When using a generic risk assessment it is the responsibility of the group leader to ensure it is fit for purpose and whether additional activity-specific information needs to be assessed for risk and added.

Visit-specific Risk Assessment

- Carried out before the visit takes place (recorded)
- This is the identification and management of any risks not already covered through generic risk management. If existing generic documents cover everything then there is no need to repeat anything.
- It is unique to each occasion and should address staffing, activity, group, environment and distance (using the SAGED guidance below).

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- These could record all significant findings for a particular visit or they may simply record issues not covered by existing generic documents.
- In the absence of generic documents, any significant findings should be included in the visit specific record.
- At Park we use electronic notification through EVOLVE.

Dynamic/ongoing Risk Assessment

- Carried out continuously throughout the visit (not necessary to record)
- This refers to the ongoing monitoring of all aspects of the visit/activity by the visit leadership team. The group and the level of risk must be monitored and assessed throughout and, if circumstances dictate, activities should be curtailed or amended (e.g. change to plan B). In practice, it is often these ongoing decisions of the Visit Leader(s) that determine whether the group remains safe and whether the activity is successful.

Risk Management Implementation

At Park we want to ensure that we effectively manage the benefits and risks created by any learning opportunity in such a way that maximises the benefits, while ensuring that any remaining risk is proportionate.

We must be clear about who does what within the planning and management of outdoor learning and off-site visits, and to provide staff with sufficient guidance, training and support to do this effectively. The ways to achieve this should be neither paper intensive nor overly bureaucratic but should be practical and focus on real and significant risks.

At Park we will ensure that:

- Visits and outdoor learning are an integral part of the work of the school.
- Leaders are given time and support to gain experience in a planned and progressive fashion – not 'thrown in at the deep end'.
- Leaders plan and manage visits within their own, and the visit leadership team's experience, knowledge and capability.
- Benefits and learning outcomes are clearly identified and maximised as much as possible.
- Appropriate training and advice is available to the Head Teacher, the EVC and to Leaders.
- Straightforward and practical plans and procedures exist to cover the generic risk management of 'routine' visits.

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- Appropriate information on any visit is shared with colleagues, participants, parents etc.
- All leaders and, where appropriate, young people are involved in the planning process.
- Risk assessment is a part of the overall planning process and not 'tagged-on' afterwards.
- Risk assessment recording is not unduly onerous, but is supportive and helpful for the leadership team.
- Visits are approved or authorised as required.
- There is a prepared 'Plan B', should things go wrong. For most routine visits this may simply be to return to base.
- Visits are monitored and reviewed, and, where appropriate, any lessons learned are shared and acted upon in future visits.
- Where consent is required, parents are provided with sufficient information to make an informed decision about their child.

'SAGED'

The following acronym is useful when considering risk assessments, and any visit plan should be based on an understanding of the possibilities and limitations presented by the particular combination of the following:

- **Staffing**: who is needed/available? The plan must work within the limits of available numbers, abilities and experience.
- **Activities** to be undertaken: what do you want the group to do and what is possible?
- **Group characteristics**: prior experience, abilities, behaviour and maturity, any specific or medical/dietary needs.
- **Environment**: Whether indoors or out; how contained and controllable; do not overlook environments to be passed through between venues. For residential visits consider the accommodation and surrounding area. For outdoor environments, consider remoteness, the impact of weather, water levels and ground conditions, etc.
- **Distance**: Including any transport needs, and the implications of remoteness from support arrangements at the home base. How would the visit be supported in an emergency?

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES AND INCIDENT REPORTING

When we look at how things can go wrong on an Off-Site Visit, it is possible to consider emergencies in four categories, depending upon the nature of the incident. Planning and

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preparation for Off-Site Visits should ensure an appropriate response to an emergency in any of these categories, at any time of day or night.

- **Incident**: a situation that is dealt with by the Visit Leadership Team. This may, perhaps, involve some communication back to school or to parents, and some support from the EVC/Head Teacher but the visit Leader remains in control and is able to cope.
- **Emergency**: an incident which overwhelms the coping mechanisms of the Visit Leadership Team and which requires the School's Emergency Plan for Off-Site Visits to be initiated. This may involve some communication with the Employer (NPW) and support from it, but the school takes control of the situation and is able to cope. An incident is an emergency where:
 - A group member has suffered a serious injury
 - A group member is at risk
 - A group member has gone missing for a significant period
 - Any other incident beyond normal coping mechanism of the visit leader
- **Critical Incident**: an incident which overwhelms the coping mechanisms of both the Visit Leadership Team and the school, and which requires the Establishment Emergency Plan and the Employer Critical Incident Plan to be initiated. The Employer takes control of the situation and supports the school and the visit staff/participants. For example:
 - An incident meets the criteria as laid down in the NPW policy
 - Goes beyond the ability of the school to cope.

Responding to a critical incident

- The Visit Leadership Team should stabilise the situation as far as possible.
- The Visit Leadership Team should alert the School Emergency Contact.
- The School Emergency Contact should decide the level of response required and, when necessary, initiate the Emergency Plan and alert the Employer's Emergency Contact.
- The Employer's Emergency Contact should initiate the Employer's Critical Incident Plan for Off-Site Visits.
- **Major Incident**: an incident which is declared as a major incident by the Police, who will take control, and where Newham's Major Incident Plan is initiated. Both the School's and the Employer's Response Plans will be required in order to coordinate with the Police or other authorities.

Key points

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Deciding what to do in the event of an accident or emergency should form part of the planning and preparation of every Off-Site Visit, and be written down as Emergency Procedures for the visit. All members of the Visit Leadership Team should be familiar with these.

- All staff should carry information of who to contact in case of an emergency – EV7 Emergency Card – Group Leader should be carried at all times by the Group leader.
- Staff should carry the school mobile phone. They should also ensure school has all necessary up to date contact numbers.
- In cases of incidents and emergencies staff will contact the school office during the day or the agreed emergency contact (24 hours) in case of residential visits.
- School will then respond in line with NPW Policy and Guidance for Educational visits, and if necessary Newham Guidance for Critical Incidents.
- If necessary emergency services will be called, e.g. ambulance by the leader and/or school
- School will contact parents in case of any emergency and the designated emergency contact will be responsible for this. The Emergency Contact will hold all the relevant information, including contacts, close at hand at all times the visit is in progress (paper copies, in case electronic information is inaccessible)
- All adults on the visit should know who the visit leader is and young people should also know what to do in case of an emergency
- For residential visits plans must take into account the possibility of an incident occurring out of normal working hours. The procedures of the establishment will also be followed.
- All information about incidents will be recorded, in line with NPW policy.

BEHAVIOUR

- School policies on behaviour and safeguarding will be followed at all times.
- All children will be reminded of behaviour expectations and they will mirror those expected in school.
- Pupils will be reminded of safety procedures prior to all visits and the timetable of the day will be explained to them. It will be made clear who is the group and overall visit leader.
- For pupils who have challenging behaviour issues, a risk assessment will be undertaken and all possible measures will be put in place to ensure the child is included in the school visit. A child will only ever be excluded in extreme cases from outdoor visits if their

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behaviour poses a risk to themselves or other pupils and adults. This assessment will be undertaken in consultation with parents/carers.

INCLUSION

- This policy presumes an entitlement of all pupils to participate in events, and is in line with the Equality Policy
- Accessibility issues will be considered as part of the planning process and realistic modification or adaptations will be made wherever possible.

INSURANCE

- The school is covered by the LA insurance and all visits are covered by the Employer's Liability and Public Liability insurance.
- See NPW policy for further information on when additional insurance is required, e.g for residential and overseas visits.

FINANCE

- See the charging policy for information
- When arranging a visit, the cost effectiveness and value for money that the activity offers will be part of the planning process.
- Parents will be asked for contributions towards the cost and school will support with funding, whenever possible.
- Visits will only be cancelled if the majority of costs cannot be met or supported by school funds.
- No pupils will be excluded from visits (other than residential or those outside of school hours) if parents cannot pay.

TERRORISM THREATS - CENTRAL LONDON VISITS

Factors to consider

When planning a visit, visit leaders will conduct a risk assessment as normal, however they will consider a number of factors to help them manage risks before and during a visit, including:

- Considering increasing supervision ratios from normal arrangements
- Staying alert to local and national news before and during the visit

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- Assessing the needs of students with special educational needs or disabilities and their ability to react and respond to dynamic situations
- Researching the venue/s to avoid occasions when large crowds are likely or political demonstrations are planned in the area
- Being additionally vigilant in crowded places such as shopping malls, travel hubs and stadiums
- Depending on threat level, considering changing either the date or visit location to a time or location that carries less risk
- Checking government advice on terrorist threats to the UK

Key contacts:

- Head Teacher – Natasha Ttoffali
- EVC – Ilona Patora/ Imogen Cook
- School Management Support - NPW/ The Education Space

[Appendix 1 – Park Primary Risk Assessment specific to the visit](#)