

Farrowdale House

INDEPENDENT PREPARATORY SCHOOL

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Educational Visits Policy

This policy applies to the whole school including the EYFS

1. Overview

At Farrowdale House School, we believe that learning outside the classroom is an essential component of our curriculum. It gives our pupils a unique opportunity to develop their resourcefulness and initiative and to spend time together in an informal environment. Each trip is different. Some are directly related to the curriculum, others are designed to promote social awareness, or to have enhance physical skills, self-reliance and team working. Others will extend their knowledge of the world. The common factor is that they are making an essential contribution to your child's development and education in the broadest sense of the word.

Safely managed educational visits with a clear purpose are an indispensable part of a broad and balanced curriculum. They are an opportunity to extend the learning of all pupils, including an enrichment of their understanding of themselves, others, and the world around them. They can be a catalyst for improved personal performance, promote a lifetime interest and in some cases lead to professional fulfilment. Educational visits are to be encouraged.

Educational visits should be available to all pupils and should be organised accordingly, with particular consideration being given where possible to any pupils with a disability, especially when selecting venues and organising transport.

This policy has been written with reference to *Tackling the health and safety myths* (published June 2011). Health and Safety on Educational Visits- DfE 2018

We regularly take pupils on day trips to, for example, historic sites, museums, sports venues and local areas illustrating particular features to support the curriculum. Annually we run a 2/3day Junior residential visit to PGL/JCA. We regularly participate in choir activities. (Church, library, over 60's club and Manchester cathedral).

2. Information for parents

Trips and visits that are due to take place over the coming term are emailed home. The school will provide a copy on request. You will always be notified in advance:

- if your child is going to be out of school during the school day in order to visit a local museum, theatre, nature reserve or historic site.

We will always seek your permission if the visit involves an extra charge, the parent supplying a packed lunch, late return to school or collection from another venue.

We send details of planned trips and activities well in advance to all parents of pupils of the relevant year group or cohort. For a trip or visit that involves staying away from home, either in the UK or overseas, we always send parents a full briefing before their child embarks on such a trip.

CONSENT

At point of entry to the school, parental consent is given on the Pupil Information form, to allow our pupils to partake in local trips and visits. We require your specific, individual written consent if we are to take your child on a trip or visit that involves an overnight stay, collection from a different venue, or an overseas visit. Please note that we are unable to take your child without a completed and signed consent form, which includes details of where you may be contacted in an emergency. This form will be sent to you well in advance and must reach the school 3 teaching days before the start of the trip.

SAFETY

Safety is of paramount importance at Farrowdale House. Staff, as well as the venue being visited, carries out a thorough risk assessment. We expect you, as parents, to support the school in ensuring that your child follows the instructions given either by a member of staff, or by a qualified instructor, and uses the proper equipment. We reserve the right to send any pupil home early, at their parents' expense, if they decline to follow reasonable instructions given for their own safety, or do not follow the school's behaviour code.

3. Guidance for Staff Involved with School Visits

INTRODUCTION

We have a number of trips, out of school activities and visits at Farrowdale House School, which are an important part of our educational ethos. We expect that every member our staff endorses the educational value of activities outside the classroom. We encourage everyone possible to participate in them and to help with the arrangements. We always welcome suggestions from staff for new trips.

ROLE OF THE EDUCATION VISITS COORDINATOR (EVC)

The head teacher is the Education Visits Coordinator (EVC) within the school. The proprietor supports the head in the process of approving visits, ensuring that they are spread through the different age groups, and the school year. They, if required, help staff involved with organising trips, with, for example, the checking that the annual parental consent form for day trips and the specific consent forms for residential trips are correctly signed and ensuring that records of all previous visits (which can be borrowed) are filed and suitable kept. They also keep reports of any accidents or near misses. The trip leader must report these to the appropriate person at the end of the trip.

All staff must consult with the EVC regarding any trip – this includes costs, ratios, risk assessment, activities, etc.

No trip is to be planned without the consent of the head teacher. A trip will NOT take place if the head considers that it adversely affects the balance of their curriculum provision. This includes sport and music activities. If staff have a concern, this must be discussed with the head.

ROLE OF THE GROUP LEADER

Every planned trip or visit will have a nominated Group Leader ("GL") who is responsible for organising and running. A Deputy GL will also be nominated. The member of staff who is charge of a trip's organisation must plan each trip or visit, no matter how short, in advance, completing the relevant documentation (Planning and approval form and Risk Assessment). He or she will always have had experience of accompanying school visits before taking on the role of Group Leader. For trips that involve an overnight stay and/or outdoor pursuit activities, Group Leaders are to liaise with the EVC to on conducting risk assessments, the emergency procedures, the school's insurance cover, budgeting for visits and the circumstances under which a visit might be terminated or curtailed, for instance if weather suddenly deteriorated. With the exception of the very shortest visits, such as to our local library or museum, we expect all Group Leaders either to hold a valid First Aid certificate themselves or ensure that one of the other teachers accompanying the visit holds one. The school will arrange and fund First Aid courses. At Farrowdale House the completed forms are held by the EVC.

PERSONAL LIABILITY AND INSURANCE

The law places the Group Leader "in loco parentis". It explains that their responsibility is to "act as any reasonable parent would do in the same circumstances." Staff who take part in visits and activities outside school may feel concerned about the possibility of being held personally liable if an accident should occur.

However, they can be assured that Farrowdale House, as their employer will always stand behind them in the unlikely event of an accident occurring, provided they have exercised reasonable care and followed the school's guidelines.

PREPARATORY ARRANGEMENTS

All excursions must be approved by the EVC. The Group Leader should complete the planning and approval form for the visit. The amount of advance preparatory work needed will obviously vary considerably with the type of activity. Very little preparation may be needed for walking with a group of pupils to a local library, spending an hour there and walking back in time for school lunch. By contrast, a residential or trip to another country requires considerable research and preparation. Repeat visits and shorter visits will need less planning, and can be arranged at shorter notice, though it is always desirable to give parents as much notice as possible when planning visits for.

For school trips that take place during a school day, staff should refer to the FHS Risk Assessment Policy on school trips/visits protocol. The FHS Risk Assessment MUST be complete, in full detail, and signed off by the head, no later than a week prior to the trip. Venue and activity Risk Assessments MUST be obtained from the venue being visited. The relevant paperwork for those accompanying the trip must also be completed.

RESIDENTIAL VISITS

For longer residential visits the procedure that follows is designed to cover all the planning that a Group Leader needs to undertake. It is designed to be as comprehensive as possible. *Text in italics indicates that the action may not be required (or the timescale may be shortened).*

At least 6 to 9 months in advance

- Seek advice from the Head (the EVC), discuss preliminary plan, including purpose, location, transport, hotels, activities, itinerary, number & age of participants with the EVC
- Complete the Planning and approval form to obtain permission and advice from the EVC on suitable dates, precedents etc
- Calculate the staff to pupil ratio, (see below)
- Prepare a draft itinerary
- Liaise with school office to cost mode of transport for all legs of the journey.
- Prepare fully inclusive costs for the visit, including an appropriate contingency for delays and emergencies. (The costs of the accompanying staff must be included).
- Check that the provider of adventurous activities is licensed and the individual instructors possess a recognised qualification from a national body, such as the Adventure Activities Licensing Authority.
- Obtain clear statement from the Centre about their responsibilities for the safety of the pupils before making any commitment. Ask for copies of their risk assessments
- Prepare the risk assessment(s), (see below),
- *Check the school's insurance cover, (see above) if the visit involves hazardous activities.*
- Find other members of staff who are willing to participate in the trip.
- *If parent volunteers participate in a residential: Arrange for any volunteers participating in the trip to obtain an enhanced DBS disclosure. (The proprietor will make the necessary arrangements).*
- *Carry out a reconnaissance visit if the location is not one that the school has visited before. (If a reconnaissance visit is impossible, a reference from another school that has visited the site may suffice).*
- *Establish the minimum and maximum numbers for the visit to be viable (bearing in mind that the costs of the accompanying staff will be divided amongst the participants)*
- *Ascertain the medical requirements*
- *Establish when the deposits are required by tour operators/activity centre etc, and ensure that the size of the deposit requested from parents is sufficient to cover these costs (including the costs of deposits for accompanying staff)*
- *If necessary, attend a First Aid course beforehand.*

Staff/Pupil Ratios

The numbers for any trip are, however, at the Head's discretion.

The Risk Guidance on staff pupil ratios is as follows:

(Nursery/Reception) = 1 adult for every 4 pupils

(Years 1-3) = 1 adult for every 6 pupils

(Years 4-6) = 1 adult for every 10-15 pupils

Other factors that may be considered are:

- the sex, age and ability of the group
- the nature of the activities
- the experience of the teachers/leaders or competence on specific activities
- the duration of the journey/visit and the type of accommodation
- first aid cover available

The Risk Assessment

All Group Leaders at Farrowdale House understand and know (instruction has been received) how to conduct risk assessments on the potential hazards involved in a visit, trip or activity that they are planning. Professionally operated licensed activity centres and tour operators specialising in school visits will conduct their own risk assessments. The Group Leader should ask for copies at the planning stage. Provided that he/she is satisfied, it will meet the requirements of Farrowdale House, for the activity part of the visit. Additional risk assessments will probably be needed to ensure complete coverage of all aspects of the visit. Risk assessments carried out by the school for previous visits can generally be updated and re-used, unless there has been a change of circumstances. At Farrowdale House, the Office maintains a dossier of generic risk assessments that cover theatre and museum visits and most of our regular visits.

The FHS Risk Assessment MUST be completed, in full detail, tailored to the trip and signed off by the head no later than a week prior to the trip. Venue and/or activity Risk Assessments MUST be obtained from the venue being visited. Refer to the Risk Assessment Policy

After Permission is Granted:

- Write a preliminary letter to send to parents and guardians of the target age group, outlining the purpose of the trip, the programme and the expected maximum cost. Ask for expressions of interest and acceptance, together with a preliminary deposit by a specific date.
- Book transport for trip – school office to arrange
- Complete planning and approval form – give a copy to office for filing
- Brief the pupils about the visit, its dates and purpose
- Check names of all pupils wishing to participate. Discuss with the appropriate EVC concerns about special arrangements that may be required for handling any specific medical or SEN issues.
- Arrange with the Office the payment method for the trip; invoiced with fees or direct payment. Ask the Office to set up a unique cost folder in the school accounts for the trip.
- Arrange for the office to pay deposits on hotels, activity centre etc.

At least Three Months in Advance

- Finalise the costs with travel company etc.
- Insist that all coaches are fitted with seat belts.
- Work out the cost for parents (including contingency to cover delays etc).
- Arrange for the Office to pay the balance to the hotel, travel company etc..
- Brief and prepare the pupils in advance.
- Ensure that they are given plenty of advance notice if they need special equipment (e.g. water sports).
- Where relevant, collect the balance directly from the pupils and pass to the Office for crediting.

Six Weeks in Advance

- If a residential trip, arrange a meeting with parents to brief them on all aspects of the trip, including:
- The itinerary, including the meeting and collection points.
- Contact details for the centre.
- The money, kit and equipment that the pupils need
- The medical requirements.

- The expected standards of behaviour, and the potential risks of irresponsible behaviour
- Remind parents those pupils who ignore or flout the behaviour code risk being sent home at their parents' expense. Pupils remain subject to school rules throughout the visit.
- Arrangements for handling illness and accidents, and arrangements for informing parents in such circumstances.
- Arrangements for communicating with parents in the event that the return is delayed.
- The need to notify the school in the event of contact with an infectious disease within four weeks of travelling.
- The reasons why a completed consent form is essential.
- Send all parents a copy of the consent form with specified return date
- (If appropriate,) book packed lunch from Catering Department
- Brief pupils on expectations of standards of behaviour and cultural differences.
- Book traveling first aid kit(s) from the school office.

Two Weeks in Advance

- Ensure that all participating staff are comfortable with their domestic and the school arrangements
- Chase parents who have not returned their consent forms. Remind them that their child cannot participate unless the form is received within 5 working days of departure
- Check all tickets/itinerary for accuracy. Store them in the school safe until collection
- Meet with the other members of staff to discuss the itinerary, the risk assessment, the respective roles of the Group Leader and other accompanying staff, and emergency procedures.
- Prepare trip information packs for the School Office and for each member of staff, that contain the following information:
 - The itinerary (including address, phone numbers etc of all locations where the party is staying).
 - The Group Leader's mobile,
 - Mobile numbers of all participating staff,
 - A party list
 - A list of pupils, together with copies of their parental contact forms (which includes details of each pupil's medical conditions),
 - Room allocation list
 - Group list
 - Emergency contact numbers for the Head Teacher, Proprietor, and Senior staff members designated to be on-call. A copy of the tickets, travel insurance document (including emergency contact details).
 - A copy of the risk assessment.

The Day Prior to Departure/The Day of Departure

- Collect tickets and monies from the safe.
- Give trip information packs to designated school recipients and to other staff participants
- Remind pupils about the rendez-vous, dress code, standards of behaviour and what to do if they become separated from the party etc.
- Collect travelling first aid kit(s). Check contents.
- Ensure have appropriate mobile connectivity to school
- Ensure all who need to know have the name, address and phone number of the accommodation
- Remind pupils about appropriate behaviour and the potential risks associated with behaving incorrectly

DURING THE VISIT OR ACTIVITY

Primary responsibility for the safe conduct of the visit rests with Group Leader. He or she has sole responsibility for amending the itinerary in the event of unforeseen delay or sudden deterioration in weather conditions. He or she will liaise with the centre providing accommodation and/or other facilities. S/He may delegate part or all of the responsibility for the following to one or more of the accompanying staff:

- Carrying out a head count on getting on and off each form of transport, entering or leaving a museum, restaurant, activity centre, hotel etc.
- Checking that all pupils wear their seat belts.

- Checking the fire exits and escape routes at the hostel. Ensuring that every pupil walks through the emergency escape route at the accommodation.
- Ensuring that sleeping accommodation is suitable and located together.
- Setting times for pupils to be in their rooms at night. Conducting checks (using the other staff).
- Setting agreed times and locations for checking pupils when they work or are allowed out in small groups.
- Enforcing expected standards of behaviour.
- Looking after valuables
- Storing cash and tickets securely.
- Keeping an account of all expenditure.
- Recording all accidents and near misses.

Each member of staff should carry their Trip Information pack in case of an emergency.

ILLNESS OR MINOR ACCIDENTS

If a pupil has a minor accident or becomes ill, the Group leader, or another member of staff will take him to the local hospital or clinic. At Farrowdale House School we expect the Group Leader to phone the pupil's parents if their child has suffered an accident or injury that is serious enough to require medical treatment – as opposed to minor cuts and bruises.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Staff are to refer to the Critical Incidents Policy.

In the event of a serious accident resulting in the death or injury of one or more of the pupils and staff, the Group Leader's first priority would be to summon the emergency services, and to arrange for medical attention for the injured. One of the accompanying members of staff should accompany the injured pupil(s) to hospital. Ensuring that the rest of the group were safe and looked after and informing the Head Teacher or Proprietor of what had happened, would be the next tasks for the Group Leader, who would need to give as full, calm and factual account as the circumstances permitted. Where the full facts had not yet emerged, he or she should say so, and ensure that follow-up communications with the Head Teacher are maintained. He/she would also need to arrange (perhaps using the Deputy Leader or another member of staff) for the school's insurers to be contacted as quickly as possible. A full record should be kept of the incident, the injuries and of the actions taken.

At Farrowdale House, depending on the nature of the incident, we may implement our own model communications plan for informing as swiftly as possible both the families of the injured, and the families of those who are unhurt. We recognise that in an era of instant communications, it may not be possible for us to be the first to break the news. Nevertheless, we firmly believe that we have an important duty to speak personally to the parents of any pupil who has suffered some injury or mishap. We will use mass communication methods (SMS and messages on our Dojo) for communicating with those whose children are not affected.

Communication with the media should be left to the Head Teacher. The Group Leader should refer the media to the school. The default position is that no member of staff, whether involved with the trip or not, should speak to the media. However, if comment is unavoidable through being an involved party, it should be factual, calm and no attempt made to cover gaps in knowledge. Pupils are not to talk to the media.

DELAYED RETURN

If a visit is delayed, the Group Leader should phone the school office, or the Head Teacher/Proprietor (out of school hours), who will in turn phone all the parents on their contact numbers to alert them to the delay and the revised time of arrival.

ON RETURN

The Group Leader is to complete if required any accidents and near misses on his/her return. Personal observations and lessons learned are always valuable. The Group leader should return all school property together with a report of any lost or damaged property.

Expenditure

The Group Leader is responsible for returning any unused cash to the Office. The Group Leader is also responsible for producing a schedule of all expenditure on the trip.

The Head will be responsible for the approval of all educational visits. There will be a named and approved Group Leader (and where appropriate, a named Deputy) on all educational visits. This group leader will be specifically competent for the role. Working with the Head teacher as necessary, the Group Leader will be responsible for all aspects of the planning, risk assessment and organisation of the visit. The Group Leader will assume full responsibility during the visit, including ongoing risk assessment. All vehicles in which children are being transported, and the driver of those vehicles, are adequately insured.

- The standard of care required of a teacher is that which from an objective point of view can reasonably be expected from teachers generally applying skill and awareness of children's problems, needs and susceptibilities.
- The law expects that a teacher will do that which a parent with care and concern for the safety and welfare of his or her own child would do.
- The law demands that each teacher will maintain a standard which a caring teaching profession would expect of itself.
- A teacher must ensure supervision of the pupils throughout the journey or visit as professional standards and common-sense demand.
- Reasonable steps must be taken to avoid exposing pupils to dangers which are foreseeable and beyond those with which the pupils can reasonably be expected to cope.
- The need for direct supervision must be judged by reference to the risks involved in the activity being undertaken. Instructions given to pupils are not always enough. The possibility that they may disobey has to be taken into account together with the risk they may encounter if they disobey.
- Whoever has responsibility for the visit must make all proper preparations and ensure that the party leaders and helpers have the ability, experience, training and health to undertake the responsibility of the care and welfare of pupils in a different environment.
- Where the school visits a residential or outdoor Activity Centre, the teacher can reasonably allow children to be supervised by the Centre's own staff, provided that he/she is satisfied that they are able to do so safely. To assist with the process, the Activity Centre's Risk Assessment should be carefully analysed. Similarly, if teachers have taken reasonable steps to ensure that the premises where children stay are safe, then, in normal circumstances, no more needs to be done.
- Teachers should not participate in a journey or visit which they believe is not being adequately prepared and organised.
- All staff organising a journey or educational visit should closely follow the school's policies and procedures.
- Liability goes with fault. In the case of a pure accident, no-one bears liability

3.2 For Parents

Informed parental consent is required for all educational visits by young people up to the age of eighteen years unless a specific recorded decision to the contrary.

Parents will be given sufficient written and supplementary information about an educational visit to enable them to make an informed decision and give written consent together with medical and emergency contact details. Whenever appropriate for higher risk, residential a briefing meeting with parents will be arranged.

If the transport is a private arrangement made by parents with a third party, then it is the responsibility of the parents to ensure they are satisfied with the arrangement, and the school will make this clear to the parents. The school will always make any transport arrangements clear to parents as part of the EYFS welfare requirements. Additionally, parental permission is requested on the school's contact form each year.

Expectations with regard to behaviour and codes of conduct will be explained to parents. This information will include the necessity of meeting additional costs and making collection arrangements in certain circumstances.

3.3 For Pupils

Wherever appropriate, pupils should be involved with the planning of an educational visit, establishing codes of conduct, assessing and managing risk and evaluating their own learning, development, attitudes and behaviour.

Pupils should be adequately briefed about aims, expectations and codes of conduct for all educational visits. Ongoing briefings are an important element of learning and safety.

4. Other Policies to be read in conjunction with the Educational Visits Policy

- Critical Incident Policy

Policy Reviewed September 2022