



Ackton Pastures Primary Academy Educational Visits Policy



2023 - 2026

Ackton Pastures Primary Academy			
Headteacher	K Mason	Date	September 2023
Chair of Governing Body	H Causier	Date	September 2023

RATIONALE

At Ackton Pastures Primary School we believe that learning outside the classroom is an essential component of the delivery of our curriculum. Our educational trips are many and varied but each has a clear purpose in offering our pupils unique opportunities to develop their resourcefulness and initiative, to extend their learning and to spend time together in other formal or informal environments.

At Ackton Pastures, the expectation is that all children take part in at least one educational visit within an academic year to enhance their experience of an area of the curriculum they are studying.

It is the School's duty to ensure that all educational visits are safely managed and that the health, safety and welfare of pupils, staff and volunteers are maintained in accordance with the guidelines provided by the DfES.

All visits and journeys take place with the full knowledge and consent of the Headteacher and may also be approved by the School's Governing Body. The Governing Body is kept informed of all educational visits through the Headteacher's reports at full Governing Body meetings.

Approval is not given unless the value and safety of the activity has been established.

PLANNING VISITS

All visits are planned and registered using the school's chosen system. Group Leaders fill in the necessary paperwork and risk assessments before sending them to the Headteacher for approval. They use the EVOLVE system to record this process, including approval.

RISK ASSESSMENTS

An essential element of any visit is the fact that it is a different environment and will exercise the children's sense of adventure. Such activities cannot be entirely risk free. The aim therefore must always be to contain risks to acceptable levels.

When planning a visit staff will carefully consider things such as:-

- risks generic to any visit (ALL VISITS)
- transport (TRAVEL)
- the type of activity and the level at which it is being undertaken
- the location
- the quality and suitability of the available equipment
- seasonal conditions, weather and timing.

The adult-in-charge will then consider which appropriate risk assessments should be attached before submitting for approval to the Headteacher.

Members of staff have access to a bank of generic risk assessments for different educational visit situations which can be found in the Staff Shared folder (RISK ASSESSMENTS). These must all be edited to fit any proposed visit.

NB an 'ALL VISITS' risk assessment and a 'TRAVEL' risk assessment must be attached for all visits, along with any others that are relevant.

PLANNING A VISIT

The planning and organising of a visit are usually the responsibility of the class teacher or, in the case of cross-phase/year group visits, the KS coordinator. However, the Headteacher has overall responsibility.

When planning visits, we consider:-

- the aim of the visit
- its fitness for the current curricular needs
- the value of it as an educational experience

RECONNAISSANCE

Whenever practicable, it is valuable to visit venues to evaluate the suitability and potential for meeting the aims and objectives of the venture and to assess potential areas of risk. Sometimes, it is possible for these preliminary visits to take place, but visits are not precluded if this is not the case.

However, thorough checks will always be made to ensure that the experience will be safe, enhancing and good value for money.

STAFFING & STAFF/PUPIL RATIOS

The Department for Education (DfE) issues guidelines for educational visits regarding staff/pupil ratios. At Ackton Pastures, we have determined our own ratios so that we try to endeavour to keep ratios broadly in line with:

in EYFS the ratio is 1:5

in KS1 the ratio is 1:6

in KS2 the ratio is 1:8

However, depending on the nature of the visit, extra adult supervision can be arranged. For any visit, this will be at the discretion of the adult-in-charge or the staff at any given venue.

Voluntary helpers, such as parents, grandparents or Governors, may be used to assist teachers with the organisation and supervision during visits. Their role must be clearly defined. However, teachers retain primary responsibility for supervising the party at all times.

It is valuable if at least one accompanying adult holds a valid first aid certificate.

DAY VISITS

Parents are notified of day visits through letters sent out by the teacher-in-charge. These will detail the purpose of the visit and its intended outcomes. Parents will respond to acknowledge the intention of the visit, to give permission for their child to attend and to agree to the voluntary contribution. All children are expected to take part as these visits form an important part of their educational experiences. They are used to launch or enhance a unit of work from our non-core curriculum.

These educational visits are funded by voluntary contributions from parents but are frequently subsidised by classroom budgets or school. If school does not receive the voluntary contributions, visits may have to be cancelled. Parents will be informed of ALL arrangements for each visit to ensure the smooth running of it.

When composing letters, teachers will do so in communication with Admin staff who will advise as to wording in terms of funding (for example Pupil Premium subsidies). The office staff will also be given copies of all letters so that they are able to deal with any parental enquiries.

RESIDENTIAL VISITS

Outdoor and environmental education encompasses learning, living and moving in a wide variety of situations outside the classroom. The places in which these activities are undertaken include urban, rural and remote settings on land and sometimes on water. Within a safe and structured framework, outdoor and environmental education can make a significant contribution to the educational development of all our children. Well-structured outdoor education and residential experience can provide a focus for learning within the whole curriculum and through individual subject areas.

Parents are given the choice as to whether their children take part in these visits as they are extra-curricular. Residential visits are expected to be paid for in full by parents.

All residential activities must be approved by the Headteacher who, in turn, will seek the approval of the Multi Academy Trust, well in advance of the visit. Full details of the journey and activities must be given for the trust to satisfy themselves of the value and safety of the activity.

PARENTAL CONSENT & MEDICAL FORMS

For any school visit lasting more than a day, a parental consent form will be completed and medical information supplied.

The school will exercise the right to refuse to take children on visits/journeys if parents do not sign the relevant paperwork.

RESIDENTIALS – KEEPING PARENTS INFORMED

It is imperative that parents are given full and complete written details about the visit. This will include:

- dates and times
- the destination and location, mode of travel and accommodation
- its purpose
- the content of the programme
- the code of conduct expected of children
- details of all accompanying adults as well as information regarding the training and experience of residential centre staff
- special clothing or equipment required
- insurance
- emergency procedures for contacting parents
- updates on Facebook

Additionally, children should be briefed on:

- the code of conduct expected
- the aims and objectives of the visit

Briefing meetings for parents and children can help to reinforce this information in advance of the visit.

INFORMATION FOR RETENTION AT THE SCHOOL

For both residential and day visits, the adult-in-charge will ensure that full details of the visit are retained at school by key personnel who can be contacted if there are changes of plan or if there is an emergency. Staff must ensure that they keep emergency contact details for pupils and staff with them at all times.

Details to be left at school during any visit include:-

- the itinerary and contact telephone number for the group
- contact names, addresses and telephone numbers of parents and carers
- parental consent forms
- insurance documents
- a copy of the contract with the centre, if appropriate

VISITORS TO SCHOOL

As well as taking our children out to enhance their educational experiences, we also welcome visitors to our school for topic days and workshops. These are usually found through communications to school, websites, promotional emails, flyers etc. When a visitor is booked, the teacher-in-charge will have already checked their suitability through recommendations, feedback from other users or the content of their promotional materials.

On arrival, visitors are:

- asked to sign in
- given a visitor's badge
- asked for a copy of their DBS

During these sessions, the teacher-in-charge still has overall responsibility for the behaviour of the children.