

# Plat Douet School Educational Visits Policy



**September 2021**

At Plat Douet School every learner is entitled to a curriculum rich and varied, challenging and inspiring, which enables every individual to reach their fullest potential to the highest possible standard and allow all pupils to 'be the best they can be'.

### **Aims and Purposes**

Educational visits play a major role in the education and development of all students. They can contribute significantly to personal and social education through the use of problem-solving methods and approaches, and through encouraging responsibility, self confidence and self reliance.

The aim of this policy is to encourage educational visits by providing staff with a system which will give them the confidence to plan and carry out such trips knowing they are following recognised best practice and have done all they can to ensure a safe and successful visit.

Each year the school arranges a number of educational activities and visits that take place off the school site and/ or out of school hours, which support the aims of the school. These include:

1. Out of hours clubs
2. Inter school team sports, such as football and netball
3. Regular nearby visits (libraries, parks, shops, places of worship, beaches)
4. Day visits for particular year groups (theatre, museum, environmental activities)
5. Residential visits and activities, which might be classed as adventurous.

### **The purpose of risk assessment.**

The main purpose of risk assessment is, by identifying sources of potential harm, to ensure the safety of pupils and adults when any activity is being undertaken. By completing risk assessments we are fulfilling our obligations as required by the CYPES in their publication 'Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits'.

For those in positions of responsibility a competently produced risk assessment will offer protection from claims of liability.

There are a number of other benefits to be gained from carrying out the assessments, for example as a further way to ensure that any trip is valid from an educational point of view.

### **Inclusivity**

Plat Douet School believes in giving equal opportunity for all pupils and we will always endeavour to include all pupils in any off-site visits. Carrying out a risk assessment with special reference to particular pupils will enable us to identify measures which might need to be applied in order to make such inclusions possible.

We recognise that in certain cases it might not be possible to allow individual pupils to partake in off-site visits if it is judged that the risk level is unacceptable or that suitable measures to allow inclusion are not reasonable.

### **Organising off-sites visits**

The teacher(s) responsible for organising any off site visits or residential trips will ensure that:-

- The Headteacher is notified about the proposed trip at the beginning of the term, or at least a fortnight before it is due to take place
- Pupil/adult ratios are arranged appropriately, and will, in certain circumstances, be set by the Headteacher, whose advice on ratios will always be sought before organising a visit/trip.
- We will generally follow the guideline of:-
  - Key Stage 2: 1 adult to 12 pupils (1 adult to 10 pupils on residential visits)
  - Key Stage 1 & Reception: 1 adult to 6 pupils
  - Nursery: 1 adult to 4 pupils

- When pupils are using a coach hired from a commercial company, they will always use seat belts if they are fitted. When belts are not available, pupils will not sit in the centre seat at the rear of the coach, besides an emergency exit, behind the driver or in a seat that does not have another seat as a buffer in front of it (i.e. the middle seat on the back row or the front seat on the left hand side of the bus). This measure is to ensure that, in the event of a sudden stop to the coach, pupils are not exposed to the added danger of being thrown forward. Where possible, an adult must sit at the front of the coach and besides an emergency exit elsewhere on the coach.
- Wherever possible a car should be taken in case of emergency (definitely on a full day trip). Ideally this would be a member of staff or a CRB checked parent. If ratios permit then a member of staff should accompany the parent in the car. In the case of a non-CRB checked parent needed to transport children on a trip then the parents must be informed of that parents name prior to the trip.
- When transporting the children by car (parent or staff member) there should, where possible, be more than one child in the car.
- Mileage can be claimed by parents and staff.
- We will only accept pupils travelling in the front seats of cars when it is necessary, and only KS2 pupils of appropriate height will be allowed to take a front seat. Those children who are less than 1.35m (4ft 5 inches) must use a booster seat of travelling by car.
- A mobile phone MUST be taken on all visits.
- Letters are sent to parents/guardians prior to a trip taking place in order to outline the timings and events of the trip, as well as fully explaining what we expect of the pupil's readiness, for example in their clothing and other items to be taken with them. See the next section for further information about these letters.
- At Plat Douet we arrange that parental permissions for the pupils to take part in educational visits are sought at the start of the child's school career. Additional consent will be required for after school clubs and visits.
- Form 1 (permission) will be completed online and sent to the Department for approval and submitted as soon as possible.
- Form 2 will be completed by the Head Teacher prior to the trip and reviewed. This document will be filed in school.
- For residential visits a further parental permission form is completed.

### **Letters from the school to parents**

These will include:-

- The requirement for suitable clothing and footwear, stressing the importance of headwear and of coats when relevant.
- The requirement for protection from overexposure to the sun and wind. Note that we consider appropriate clothing a better protection to sunburn than creams or lotions.
- An explanation that the application of sun cream is to be the parents' responsibility and should take place before the pupil arrives at school. Staff may need to remind pupils to reapply sun cream that their parents have provided on longer trips (i.e. the Year 6 Corbiere Walk). Staff may need to apply sun cream for younger pupils.
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- A clear indication of any food or drink that should be taken on the trip, together with an indication of what should not be provided to the children - e.g. glass bottles, sweets or fizzy drinks.
- The requirement of the parents that they should provide statements about any special health concerns (or any conditions that the school may not be aware of) that need to be shared with the teaching staff, including details of any asthmatics and how they might need/use their inhalers.
- Notification that some pupils may be carried in a private car driven by someone other than from the pupil's family.

### **Other Organisational matters**

The teacher(s) responsible for organising any off site visits or residential trips will further ensure that:-

- Any adults who may have responsibility for pupils away from the supervision of teachers are approved through a police check. They will also check that any adults driving pupils in their own cars are covered by a suitable insurance.
- Immediately prior to the trip all pupils and adults meet and are made aware of the programme and of any special concerns or precautions that need to be followed.
- In a separate meeting all adults involved in the visit/trip are made fully aware of their roles and responsibilities. The trip leader should ensure that all adults are aware of the contents of the risk assessment prepared for the event. All adults supporting a trip should be provided with a 'Hi-Viz Jacket'.
- A First Aid kit is taken on all visits. It is best to give notice to the First Aider that a kit will be needed ahead of time. The contents of the first aid kits will be appropriate to the type and duration of the visit as well the age of the pupils taking part.
- On Residential Visits, a nominated person with suitable and current first aid qualifications will always be present. The person(s) so named will be identified in risk assessments, and, where necessary, in applications and other submissions to the residential site administrators.
- Additional safety measures to those already in place in the school may be necessary to support pupils with medical needs during visits. Arrangements for taking medication and ensuring sufficient supplies for residential visits may be required.
- Wherever possible, a pre-visit has been carried out by one or more staff members, including any route to and from the main venue. (For annual trips this still needs to be carried out as there may be changes to the location or to the route to it) On occasions the school will accept that the risk assessment will be carried out by other agencies, for example by the company operating a residential site. In those cases a pre-visit would not be required.
- A risk assessment is completed and a copy handed in to the EVC (External Visits Coordinator) 24 hours prior to the trip.
- Following the visit, a review should be carried out to see if the risk assessment needs to be changed and to help build up the experience that is necessary in order to make competent assessments.

### **When are Risk Assessments required?**

Risk assessments will be created for all occasions when pupils, staff or other adults associated with the school are away from the school site but on school business. For visits and trips linked to curriculum matters these will be created specifically for that event. However for a range of other school activities which may be repeated on a very regular basis, for example sports matches, one assessment may be submitted to cover a number of separate events.

### **Completing the Risk Assessment**

Completing the risk assessment should be seen as a positive procedure that ensures the full protection of the pupils and adults taking part in the visit or activity. At all times the questions should be considered:-

"What would someone ask of me if there were to be an accident, and I was accounting for my actions? Have I taken all reasonable steps to prevent or avoid any dangers?"

Making the assessment is always a balance between considering trivial concerns or using common sense and showing that you have actively considered all realistic dangers whilst ignoring possible but improbable events.

In a preamble to the main body of the assessment it may be helpful to list a range of factors such as dates, times, numbers involved etc. as well as a basic outline of the event. This will help to avoid unnecessary repetition and aid a full understanding of the actions decided upon.

If the trip involves a walk, perhaps along a public road, a statement about the actual route to be followed should be included, highlighting points of special concern.

The time of day, the state of the tides and the weather, with all its possible conditions and changes, should be considered in any planning of visits and in the risk assessment made.

Risk Assessments will include, for reference, a list of telephone numbers which may need to be contacted during the visit in the event of problems or emergencies. On residential trips these lists will include a full list of addresses and telephone numbers of next-of-kin, parents and/or guardians of the pupils and staff. Copies of the assessments will be carried by group leaders and other adults taking part in the trip.

### **The Risk Assessment Tool**

There are many versions of the matrix which we use to assess the level of risk. They all plot the likelihood against the degree of harm.

Risk Assessment Tool	Slightly Harmful	Harmful	Extremely Harmful
Highly Unlikely	Trivial Risk	Tolerable Risk	Moderate Risk
Unlikely	Tolerable Risk	Moderate Risk	Substantial Risk
Likely	Moderate Risk	Substantial Risk	Intolerable Risk

The visit or trip needs to be broken down into sections, with any noted risks identified and described. These sections may concern one component of the visit, for example one part of a route being followed, or one building or one activity. A separate section may also be about one or more pupils who require special consideration for health or behaviour reasons.

Then a judgement needs to be made of both the likelihood and the potential harm level within each section. Making these judgements will be a matter of experience and will be stronger if made with the cooperation of colleagues.

From these two levels a degree of risk is made. Depending on this degree decisions need to be made about any actions or procedures to be followed.

Risk Level	Action and Timescale
Trivial	No action and no documentary records need to be kept.
Tolerable	No additional controls are required. Consideration may be given to a more cost effective solution or improvement that imposes no additional cost burden. Monitoring is required to ensure that controls are maintained.
Moderate	Efforts should be made to reduce the risk, but the costs of prevention should be carefully measured and limited. Risk reduction measures should be implemented within a defined time period.  When the moderate risk is associated with extremely harmful consequences, further assessment may be necessary to establish more precisely the likelihood of harm as a basis for determining the need for improved control measures.
Substantial	Work should not be started until the risk has been reduced. Considerable resources may have to be allocated to reduce the risk. Where the risk involves work in progress, urgent action should be taken.
Intolerable	Work should not be started or continued until the risk has been reduced. If it is not possible to reduce risk even with unlimited resources, work has to remain prohibited.

### **During the visit**

Although it is important that a comprehensive assessment is made prior to the visit, it is imperative that members of staff are always ready to respond to changes in the risk levels during the event, and that they are prepared to move away from the agreed actions. Any such changes will be reported to the Headteacher as soon as possible and will also feature in the review to the visit.

Review Date:  
January 2023