

Thomas Hickman School



Educational Visits Policy

Policy Agreed: September 2010

Adopted by Governing Board Meeting on 22nd October 2024

Educational Visits Policy

Introduction

The staff and governors at Thomas Hickman School believe that school visits are an essential resource for our Flying Start curriculum. We aim to provide a 'contagious and courageous' curriculum and school visits are one aspect of this. Each class teacher will plan for one trip/event/experience per Field of Study, per half term. When planning for a visit, teachers should consult with the relevant subject co-ordinator and ensure that it is bespoke to their year group.

Children will partake in a variety of excursions and experiences that bolster their educational journey. These enrichment activities play a significant role in enhancing the children's cultural capital. Cultural capital is fundamental for the comprehensive development of children and young people. Engaging them with diverse cultural experiences and knowledge not only enriches their academic learning but also fosters their social, emotional, and cultural awareness.

Types of visits

There are five types of school visits undertaken by pupils at Thomas Hickman School. Each type of visit requires a signed permission form from parents.

- **Local** – within one mile of the school site
These include: traffic surveys, local fieldwork in the immediate locality etc
- **Other visits within the UK**
These are defined as trips which require some form of transport, but do not require an overnight stay. Most day trips fall into this category but it excludes trips to farms and zoos.
- **Visits involving animals**
These would include day trips to farms and zoos where the pupils may come into close contact with animals.
- **Residential visits**
These visits involve at least one overnight stay requiring staff to have 24 hours a day supervision responsibilities. An example is the visit to Shortenills Environmental Studies Centre.
- **Residential visits involving adventurous activities**
An example of this is the visit to a PGL Centre, where the pupils may undertake activities such as abseiling, rafting, archery, high-level rope courses etc.

Planning a visit

1. Making an exploratory visit (A "reccy")

Exploratory visits form an important part of the planning of educational visits. They ensure that there is good prior knowledge of the places to be visited and that site-specific risk assessments are appropriately completed.

Many of the locations visited by the pupils have been visited before by staff members. However, some factors may change from year to year and it is advisable to re-assess the risks each time.

2. Financial planning

The financial planning for a trip should include a financial plan and this should be submitted for review to the Bursar before any firm bookings are made.

Parents should be made aware a voluntary contribution is not compulsory and that children of parents who do not contribute will not be discriminated against. It is permissible to ask parents to contribute more than the minimum amount in order to subsidise those pupils whose parents have not contributed.

Financial assistance is available through the William Harding Charity. If parents / carers would like to explore this option, then there is an option on the trip response letter where they are kindly asked to tick a box stating they would like support with funding. THS then provide them with further information and an application form.

As a last resort, the visit may have to be cancelled if there are not enough voluntary contributions and the shortfall cannot be made up, but we avoid this at all costs.

3. Lunch arrangements

Pupils should bring a packed lunch for day visits.

Lunch should be bought in using a recyclable bag i.e. paper to it can be disposed of. Those entitled to free school meals can have a packed lunch arranged for them **provided the school office is notified no later than the Wednesday morning two weeks prior to the visit.**

4. First Aid arrangements

When undertaking any school visit, it is the responsibility of the Group Leader to ensure that any pupils with particular medical needs, such as asthma or allergies, have their medication given to their group's adult supervisor. In Key Stage 2, it is recommended that children carry their own 'yellow bag', which contains their medication, while the group leader should oversee its management.

Travel sickness tablets to be administered before the return journey must also be given to the child's adult supervisor. Administration is only permitted once parents or guardians have completed the managing medicines form, which can be obtained from the office.

The Group Leader is responsible for ensuring that an adequate first aid box, paper towels, disposable gloves and bucket to deal with travel sickness, is taken on each visit. Adequate notification of a visit should be given to Medical Officer so that one can be arranged.

The medical officer will also provide staff with individual risk assessments for children with medical needs. These are signed and dated by the parent / carer before the trip takes place.

The group leader will carry an extra medical bag. This bag will include emergency adrenaline auto-injectors and an inhaler, which should only be utilised in emergencies and under the guidance provided during calls to 999.

5. Travel arrangements

It is important that the transport provider used is reputable. When booking transport, the Group Leader is responsible for ensuring that there are adequate seats for one per child/adult, and that each seat has a seat belt. However, seat belts are not legally required on buses, and therefore this type of vehicle is not appropriate for long journeys.

Staff must complete a 'coach booking' form no less than six weeks before the visit. In this form, they must indicate whether a wheelchair ramp or access to a toilet is needed on the coach.

The group leader will ensure that staff are strategically located throughout the coach, with staff / parent helpers assigned to the fire exits and stationed at the front.

Children will be arranged in alphabetical order, unless they are known to experience travel sickness. Those affected by travel sickness will be seated closer to the front of the coach.

6. Levels of supervision

A member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) will participate in school trips to provide support for all staff. It is recommended that the SLT lead does not manage a specific group, but instead focuses on overseeing the overall activities of the day. Children requiring assistance with self-regulation may be accompanied by the SLT lead.

The minimum levels of supervision are set by the LEA.

RECEPTION AND YOUNGER PUPILS									
Number of pupils	1-6	7-12	13-18	19-24	25-30	31-36	37-42	43-48	49-54
All visits *	1 teacher & 1 adult	1 teacher & 1 adult	1 teacher & 2 adults	1 teacher & 3 adults	1 teacher & 4 adults	2 teachers & 4 adults	2 teachers & 5 adults	2 teachers & 6 adults	2 teachers & 7 adults

PRIMARY PUPILS									
Number of pupils	20 or less	21-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61-70	71-80	81-90	91-100
Local & UK visits *	1 teacher & 1 adult	1 teacher & 1 adult	1 teacher & 2 adults	1 teacher & 3 adults	1 teacher & 4 adults	2 teachers & 4 adults	2 teachers & 5 adults	2 teachers & 6 adults	2 teachers & 7 adults
Residential visits *	1 teacher & 1 adult	2 teachers	2 teachers & 1 adult	3 teachers & 1 adult	3 teachers & 1 adult	4 teachers & 1 adult	4 teachers & 2 adults	5 teachers & 1 adult	5 teachers & 2 adults

* Group Leader must be a teacher

7. Use of parents/volunteers

The Group Leader is the teacher appointed to take authority over the whole group. The term “adult” in the tables above refers to other members of the teaching staff, including Assistant Teachers, or parent helpers who have undergone a Criminal Records check. A list of those adults with suitable clearance is available in the school office. No adult volunteer/helper should ever be left in sole charge of their group.

Other volunteer helpers may be used, but such persons should never be left in sole charge of pupils. Staff must verify with the pastoral team that adult volunteers are appropriate for attendance.

All adult helpers should be provided with a list of the pupils in their group, and other relevant information, such as a site map and a written copy of a simple brief outlining their role and responsibilities during the visit. A master list of all groups should be kept by the Group Leader and at least one other and the Group Leader should also have a copy of the EVOLVE paperwork. All paperwork given to a supervising adult shall be collected once the trip has concluded.

The risk assessment should be shared, and signed, with all accompanying adults before the trip leaves.

Adult helpers should also be aware of any particular risk assessments which might apply and any emergency procedures (location of a first aid kit, how to summon help if a child/adult is injured etc)

The use of mobile phones is strictly forbidden. Should a parent wish to obtain a photograph of their child, the group leader will take the photo using the class iPad. If a volunteer needs to use their phone, they must first inform the group leader and then move away from the children.

8. Briefing of the pupils/ parents

Pupils should be made aware of the following:

1. Our BIRDS philosophy travels with us.
2. They should wear school uniform (if appropriate)
3. They should stay with the adult they are assigned to AT ALL TIMES.
4. Explain what they are going to do during the day, and what they might expect to see.
5. Inform them of any safety rules which might apply (such as handling animals, touching objects etc)

To facilitate the prompt identification of the children, all will be required to wear a purple cap or hat, a THS wristband featuring the school phone number, and, on certain occasions, a high-visibility purple jacket.

To encourage the involvement of all stakeholders, it is advisable to organise a parent information session prior to specific trips. For instance, trips to the London Eye in Year 1 and Young Voices in Year 5. This initiative serves to inform both children and parents about how these excursions may differ from their past experiences.

Entering the visit details on the EVOLVE system

All local visits and day trips must be entered on the County's Educational Visits On-Line (EVOLVE) system at least 14 days prior to the visit.

Thomas Hickman School has a set of generic risk assessments which cover most arrangements for local and day visits. Some locations will also have pre-prepared risk assessments for their facilities, and these should be also be entered.

Staff are required to modify the standard trip risk assessment by incorporating any additional risks identified during the reconnaissance. This document will also feature photographic visuals of the identified hazards.

The medical officer will deliver bespoke risk assessments for any child with a pre-existing medical condition.

A copy of the EVOLVE paperwork, countersigned by the Head teacher, will be returned to you as confirmation that the visit has met with the required guidelines.

Post-visit assessment

All excursions and experiences will be assessed through staff evaluations and student feedback, via pupil and staff voice. This process will aid in determining whether the same trip or experience will be scheduled for the subsequent academic year.

Children will reflect on all trips and experiences in their designated exercise books, demonstrating what they have learned.

Pre-Trip Check List
(Appendix 1)

Have you:

1. Identified and visited the venue prior to the trip taking place:
 - Ensure at first hand that the venue is suitable to meet the aims and objectives of the school visit;
 - Assess potential areas and levels of risk (some locations will also provide you with standard risk assessments for the facilities)
 - Ensure that the venue can cater for the needs of staff and pupils in the group;
 - Become familiar with the area before taking a group of pupils there;
 - Assess the facilities/equipment the group will need to take on the visit;
 - Assess the facilities/equipment provided at the venue, such as toilets, or provision of drinking water;
 - Assess the facilities provided for lunchtime if the weather is inclement or very hot.
2. Checked Diary dates with the School Manger/Operations Manager who will advise of any conflicts with other events and liaise with the Head and Deputies. All visits and trips will be added to the school online diary.
3. Identified what SLT member will be available to accompany you on the trip. The name of the SLT member must also be added to the online diary. The SLT member will not have a group on the day.
4. Obtained quotes and ascertained the total cost.
 - Transport costs (fill out form and hand to office manager to get quotes.) Identify on the coach form if a toilet or wheel chair access is needed.
 - Entry costs for the visit (accompanying adults may go free, but additional adults may be charged) This will be transferred onto a 'costings form' and agreed to before the trip is conformed.
 - Optional extras (such as workshops etc)
5. Write a letter informing parents at least 5 weeks before of;
 - Dates of Visit and when any parental contribution is required by, including William Harding support
 - Venue and justification
 - Clothing required
 - Travel arrangements including times
 - Cost (including parental contributions)
 - Lunch arrangements
 - Ask parents to fill out the Parental consent form (without this the child may not travel)
 - Requesting parent / carer volunteers (All volunteers must be checked by the pastoral team before parents are notified that they can join the day.)
6. Made the necessary arrangements for lunch provision
 - Packed lunches will need to be packed in a recyclable, disposable bag.
 - Those entitled to free school meals can have a packed lunch arranged for them **provided the school office is notified no later than the Wednesday morning two weeks prior to the visit.**
 - Staff should, following pre-visit, be aware of provision on visit site for lunch.
 - Many venues provide lunch areas or rooms in wet weather. School will endeavour to book these when available.

- 7. 3 weeks before and daily
 - Check income is being received and chase or if risk advise Head of possible cancellation
- 7. 2 weeks before
 - Check income if money raised is not enough to cover costs cancel visit. If cancelled please ensure both venue and transport have been cancelled and there is no cost to the school.

On the day Check List (Appendix 2)

Have you got:

- A completed class list of children attending the trip (updated register that includes all new starters)
- Children's medical records / individual medical risk assessments that are signed by the parent / carer
- All permission slips
- All emergency contact numbers (up to date list with any new starters listed)
- The first aid kit (one per coach)
- Emergency autoinjectors adrenalin pens and inhaler (carried by the SLT member)
- A mobile phone for emergency use
- Do all the adults know their duties? (including a group list of children they are responsible for and any medical conditions they might have)
- Purple hats, wrists bands with school telephone numbers, purple high vis for all children.

On the coach:

- Children will not sit in front seats, seats adjacent to emergency exits or seat directly in centre of back seat facing aisle.
- Adults will distribute themselves and use strategic seats along coach.
- Leader of group will sit at front and communicate with driver.
- Children will enter coach, in alphabetical order, move to the back and fill up seats from the back avoiding nominated unsafe seats.
- Lunches will be stored safely in closed compartments or on laps or in a central storage area not on open overhead shelves.
- Seat belts will be worn at all times, staff will ensure all children are safely belted before coach sets off.
- Children will remain seated and belted for duration of journey and until told to un-belt and get up.
- Children at the front will exit first, those behind will wait until seats in front are vacated.
- Adults will distribute themselves by arrangement some on coach to assist with collection of belongings and some off to receive children as they alight from coach.
- Children prone to travel sickness will sit near the front with a nominated adult in attendance.
- A register will be conducted before the coach departs, alongside a head count.

Whilst there, the Group Leader is primarily responsible for safety of all children and adults. Any problems should be reported to the Group Leader immediately.

Toilets

- Children may not visit the toilet unless accompanied by an adult.
- Adults should check the toilet area is safe before children enter.
- Adults should encourage children to wash their hands.

- Adults will assess the appropriateness of using male toilets.
- Adults may need to ask another Group leader to supervise the remainder of their group when they need to use the toilet.
- Children must be counted in and out of the toilets. A register will be taken after toilet use and an additional headcount will be taken.

Lunch arrangements

- Staff should ensure they have black bin liners/carrier bags and non-alcohol wipes/sprays available.
- Where possible children should use the toilet and wash hands before eating.
- Where facilities are unavailable or unsuitable wipes should be used.
- Children must be vigilant about not dropping or leaving litter.
- Staff must monitor the area before and after lunchtime.
- Lunch arrangements for day visits, during inclement or very hot weather, should also be considered.
- Register the children before and after eating lunch.