Dormers Wells Junior School Educational Visits Policy

DWJ wholly complies with the London Borough of Ealing “There and Back Again” document and the DFE’s “Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits”.

Our aim is that all visits from school should be:

- Safe
- Educational
- Enjoyable

Rationale

Well planned and executed educational visits provide our pupils with valuable experiences which enhance their learning at school. Providing a variety of ‘real-life’ opportunities for our children enables them to achieve a fuller understanding of the world around them through direct experience.

Purpose

Educational visits will have a clearly defined educational purpose and can provide stimulus and support to work being covered as part of the school curriculum. It may be that a visit provides an effective stimulus at the start of a unit of work; alternatively, teachers may decide to use an educational visit at any time during a project to enhance and support the curriculum. Wherever or whatever the venue, teachers should ensure that the educational benefit to the children are maximised.

PLANNING EDUCATIONAL VISITS

The organisation of an educational visit is crucial to its success. With rigorous planning, organisation and control, a visit should provide a rich, learning experience for the pupils.

Whether the visit is to a local park, museum, swimming pool, or includes a residential stay, it is essential that careful planning takes place. This involves considering the dangers and difficulties which may arise and making plans to avoid them.

The following guidelines support the planning and implementation of Educational Visits organised at DWJS.

Parents - information and consent

Parents should be given information about the purpose and details of the visit at least two weeks in advance.

Parents need to be aware that the teachers on the visit will be acting in their place – ‘in loco parents’ – and will be exercising the same care that a prudent parent would.

For residential trips, parents will be invited to a briefing session. Special arrangements may be necessary for parents for whom English is a second language.

Parental consent

Routine visits in the locality of the school are covered by the parental consent in the Admissions pack. DWJS Junior School will seek consent for all other visits. A parental consent form must be returned for each child in the group.

If parents wish to withhold consent, they will be invited to meet with or speak with the Deputy or Head Teacher to discuss their concerns. If consent is withheld, the pupil will not be taken on the visit but the curricular aims of the visit will be delivered to the pupil in some other way, wherever possible.

If the parents give a conditional consent the Deputy or Head teacher will need to consider whether the child may

Article 2: non-discrimination  
Article 3: the best interests of the child  
Article 12: respect for the views of the child  
Article 28: right to education  
Article 31: right to leisure, play and culture
be taken on the visit or
not. **Risk Assessments**

A risk assessment will be carried out at least two weeks in advance of the visit to identify hazards, who may be affected by them and the steps needed to reduce the risks to an acceptable level. The risk assessment should also think through “Plan B” scenarios.

Risk Assessment forms and the Educational Visits Checklist are available from the Ealing Grid for Learning website. Generic risk assessments for some activities are available on the EgFL website and can be adapted for school use.

The Risk Assessment should be discussed with and authorised by the Educational Visits Co-ordinator or Deputy or Head teacher. The Educational Visits Folder is held in the Head teacher’s Office.

All venues should provide their own risk assessments to the school and these will be used to inform any decision making and staffing; for example, if a venue does not supply first aid trained staff, the school will ensure that they provide first aiders to accompany children.

**First Aid**

First Aid provision should be considered when assessing the risks of the visit. For the majority of trips, a member of staff with first aid qualification will accompany the visit. A decision based on the risks and children involved should be made for each visit. For adventurous activities and residential trips, there should be at least one trained first-aider in the group.

First aid kits should be taken on all visits. If the visit involves splitting into groups, a kit should be taken for each group. Any medication required by pupils should be taken on trips and visits.

**Staffing Ratios**

It is important to have a sufficient ratio of adult supervisors to pupils. The following ratio of adults to children is recommended:

- 1 adult to 10 pupils

In practice, the ratio should be determined by factors such as type of activity, any SEN or medical needs, experience of the staff, venue, transport and weather conditions.

Whatever the length and nature of the visit, regular head counting of pupils should take place. The Visit Leader should establish rendezvous points and tell adults and pupils what to do if they become separated from the party.

**Preparing Pupils**

Providing information and guidance to pupils is an important part of preparing for a school visit. Pupils should have a clear understanding about what is expected of them and what the visit will entail. Pupils must understand what standard of behaviour is expected and why rules must be followed. Lack of control and discipline can be a major contributory factor when accidents occur. Pupils should also be told about any potential dangers and how they should act to ensure their own and other’s safety. Pupils should be involved in planning, implementing and evaluating their own curricular work and have opportunities to take different roles within an activity. This could include considering any health and safety issues.

If there is the possibility that a pupil may be excluded from the visit due to behaviour issues, a meeting would be arranged with the Deputy or Head teacher in advance to discuss concerns and agree what action is to be taken. Parents will be informed in advance if their child’s behavior precludes them from participating in a school visit.

**Pupils with special educational and medical needs**

The Head teacher will not exclude pupils with special educational or medical needs from school visits. Every effort will be made to support them whilst maintaining the safety of everyone on the visit. Special attention will be given to appropriate supervision ratios and additional safety measures may need to be addressed at the planning stage. Adult to pupil ratios may need to be adjusted where a pupil has additional needs.

**Types of Visits:**

**Adventurous Activities**

Article 2: non-discrimination Article 3: the best interests of the child Article 12: respect for the views of the child Article 28: right to education Article 31: right to leisure, play and culture
If the school is leading an adventure activity, such as canoeing, the LA must ensure that the group leader and other supervisors are suitably qualified to lead and instruct the activity before they agree that the visit can take place. Qualifications can be checked with the National Governing Body of each sporting activity.

Pupils should be assessed to ensure that they are capable of undertaking the proposed activities. During the visit, they should not be coerced into activities they fear.

### Residential Trips

Residential trips will be planned well in advance and arrangements will be overseen by the Health and Safety Manager. Parents will be invited to a briefing session to discuss the details of the trip and to meet the staff attending.

The Visit Leader should be an experienced, senior member of staff. Residential trips must be approved by the Governing Body and by the LEA via the LA agreed protocols. Approval will be arranged by the Health and Safety Manager.

### Coastal visits

Group leaders and other teachers should be aware that many of the incidents affecting school children have occurred by or in the sea. There are dangers on the coast quite apart from those incurred in swimming.

Swimming and paddling in the sea or other natural waters are potentially dangerous activities for a school group. Swimming in the sea on a coastal visit will not be allowed in any circumstances. Paddling will only be allowed as part of a supervised activity and only in recognised bathing areas which have official surveillance. Pupils should always be in sight of their teachers. One teacher should always stay out of the water for better surveillance.

### Water Margin Activities

Where pupils might participate in learning activities near or in water, such as a walk along the riverbank, collecting samples in ponds or stream or paddling in shallow water, then the guidance contained in the DCFS ‘Group Safety at Water Margins’ will be followed.

### Farm visits

DWJS recognises that farms can be dangerous even for the people who work there. Taking children to a farm will be very carefully planned. The risks to be assessed include those arising from the misuse of farm machinery and the hazards associated with E. coli food poisoning and other infections.

The proposed farm will be checked to ensure that it is well managed; that it has a good reputation for safety standards and animal welfare and that it maintains good washing facilities, clean grounds and public areas. An exploratory pre-visit should be carried out.

### ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

#### The Head teacher and Governing Body

The Governing Body will approve the Educational Visits policy and will ensure it is reviewed every 3 years

The Head teacher will approve residential visits.

The Head teacher will ensure a suitable Educational Visits Co-ordinator is appointed.

The Head teacher will ensure suitable Visit Leaders are appointed.

The Head teacher will sign off the Risk Assessment for all visits.

#### Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC)

The Educational Visits Co-ordinator will be trained by the LA and is responsible for ensuring visits comply with “There and Back Again” which lays out protocols and procedures for visits.

The Head teacher will sign off the Risk Assessment. It is the EVC’s responsibility to ensure that risk assessments are completed in good time and presented to the Head teacher for signing.

#### Visit Leader

Article 2: non-discrimination Article 3: the best interests of the child Article 12: respect for the views of the child Article 28: right to education Article 31: right to leisure, play and culture
There will be a named Visit Leader who is responsible overall for the supervision of the visit and will be appointed by the Head teacher. This will usually be a Senior Teacher.

The Visit Leader is responsible for ensuring a pre-visit is carried out and that a Risk Assessment is completed and approved by the Educational Visits Co-ordinator (or Head teacher) at least two weeks in advance of the visit. The Risk Assessment will include the ratio of adult to children supervision and the number of first aiders or appointed persons needed. The Visit Leader will brief all staff and helpers involved in the visit and they will all sign the back of the Risk Assessment.

The Visit Leader is responsible for ensuring contact details, mobile phone, first aid kit and pupil medication are taken on the visit.

The visit leader must ensure that all children and adults are fully accounted for before departing from a visit. If any problems occur, feedback must be given to the EVC at the earliest opportunity.

Other teachers and staff involved in a visit:

Teachers and staff on school-led visits act as employees of the LA and will, therefore, be acting in the course of their normal employment during their normal hours. They will be acting under an agreement with their Head teacher and Governors if some of their time on the visit falls outside normal hours.

Parent Helpers:

Parent helpers are welcome on Educational Visits and must be List 99 checked. Those helpers who are not CRB checked will not be alone with children and must be guided by school staff at all times.

For more information regarding Educational Visits please see:

(1) The Educational Visits folder which is kept in the SHhead teacher’s Office and contains:

- The Educational Visits Policy
- Risk Assessment and other forms
- Educational Visits Checklist
- DWJ's procedures and guidance
- There and Back Again document
- DfE’s “Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits”

(2) The Educational Visits Pack which has been issued to all Year Group leaders. A copy is kept in the Head teacher’s Office.

Approved by the Governing Body on:

Review:

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the school’s Charging and Remissions and Health and Safety policy.