

Carrick Primary School



Educational Visits Policy

December 2023

Carrick Primary School

1. Vision Statement

Forward Together “Ar aghaidh le cheile”

Mission Statement

In Carrick Primary School we aim to provide a safe, caring and stimulating environment to realise and celebrate the academic and non-academic potential of all our pupils. We expect our pupils to work hard and encourage parents to assist us in helping children to learn and to become lifelong learners.

Aims of Carrick Primary School

We aim to:

- develop and strengthen each pupil’s understanding and love of Catholic values by promoting the Catholic ethos throughout the school;
- create a safe, enjoyable learning environment, in which effective learning is facilitated and quality teaching is provided;
- implement all aspects of the Northern Ireland Curriculum;
- help our pupils to develop a positive attitude towards life and a love of learning;
- value, respect and nurture every child in our care;
- encourage pupils to respect themselves and others and to support and care for one another;
- equip our children with the necessary life skills to enable them to participate in a fast changing society;
- endorse the United Nations’ Convention on the Rights of the Child and work towards the implementation of policies and practices which reflect the Convention;
- involve the parents, Board of Governors and wider community in the life of the school and in the holistic development of the children in our care.

Educational Visits Policy

Introduction

This policy covers all educational visits that occur within, around and also outside the school premises. This ranges from walks around the locality to visits to places further afield. It also includes Outdoor and Adventure Activities/Trips.

The term '**Educational Visits**' refers to:

'all academic, sporting, cultural, creative and personal development activities, which take place away from the young persons' school, and make a significant contribution to learning and development of those participating'

UNICEF Rights Respecting Schools programme:

We are a school committed to promoting the rights of our children. Our work in this aspect of school life promotes the following articles:

Article 3: The best interests of our children must be a top priority in all our actions.

Article 13: We have the right to find out things in various ways as long as it doesn't harm or offend others in any way.

Article 31: We have the right to play and rest.

Aims and Objectives for Educational Visits

Our fundamental aim at Carrick Primary School is to provide the best possible education for all our pupils. It is the aim of the school to place a high value on diversity, treating every member of the school community as an individual, and meeting the needs of all, taking account of gender, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, sexual orientation, age, ability, disability and social circumstances. In doing this, we aim, therefore, to raise the achievement of all the children in the school.

Educational Visits and Outdoor and Adventure Activities are an integral part of the children's education at Carrick Primary School. They offer opportunities to enrich the curriculum, enabling the children to have first-hand experience of a wide range of topics and activities.

Context for Policy

In Carrick Primary School we appreciate the enhanced opportunities provided for our children by engaging in school trips and educational visits and are eager to offer our children a range of additional experiences to enhance their education beyond the normal school day. Such educational visits help children to develop a wide range of valuable personal and social skills. Safety is of paramount importance and to ensure clarity and consistency of good practice, it is the policy of Carrick Primary School to take the following actions before,

during and after all school trips/educational visits. This policy has been written in the best interests of all involved and in accordance with EA Guidelines (October 2017).

Legal Context

The employing authority is legally obliged to ensure that the health and safety of its employees and pupils is safeguarded. This duty is imposed through occupational health and safety statute, specifically under the 'Health and Safety at Work (N.I.) Order' 1978, and places responsibility upon employing authorities to ensure that their management arrangements in general, but also those arrangements which encompass specific activities such as educational visits, are adequate to protect the health and safety of all those in any way affected by such employer's undertakings.

The manner in which such arrangements are developed is through the process of a risk assessment, the outcome of which acts as the basis for the staff to establish what needs to be put in place to allow the visit to proceed in a way which sufficiently manages the risks to which participants may be exposed.

The Board of Governors of a school has a statutory duty under Article 7 of the Education and Libraries (NI) Order 2003, to safeguard and promote the welfare of registered pupils at the school at all times when the pupils are in lawful control or charge of a member of staff of the school.

The legal framework to protect children from harm is primarily provided by the Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995, which became law on 4 November 1996, and repeals virtually all pre-existing legislation concerned with child protection. The central thrust of the Order is that the welfare of the pupil must be the paramount consideration and it is this essential principle which underpins effective practice in the area of child protection.

The following basic principles of child protection must always be borne in mind when undertaking an educational visit:

- The pupil's welfare must always be paramount and this overrides all other considerations;
- All pupils have the fundamental right to be protected from harm;
- Pupils have a right to be heard, to be listened to and to be taken seriously;
- Careful consideration must be given to pupils who have special educational needs, as such children may be especially vulnerable.

Categories Of Educational Visits

Trips undertaken by the pupils of Carrick Primary School will not involve an overnight stay and will be in categories 1 and 2 of the E.A. guidelines.

Category 1: Basic

Visits which take place on a regular basis and occur largely within establishment hours e.g. sporting fixtures, swimming pool visits and outings.

Category 2: One-off day /evening excursions

Such trips may include field study trips, theatre visits, business/education visits, regional sporting fixtures.

Nature of Educational Visits

The school organises a wide range of Educational Visits. These may include:

- Walks around the village of Burren, including visits to the local church, to the Heritage Centre, to local areas which are of historical interest and to the Village Green;
- Visits by coach to schools/venues for sporting or musical events;
- Visits by coach to places of interest to support the curriculum;
- Day visits to places of historical, environmental, religious or other interest to support specific curriculum areas.

Risk Assessments

In Carrick Primary School we undertake a Risk Assessment before every trip (Appendix 1). Educational visits cannot be entirely risk-free. The aim, therefore, must be to contain risks within acceptable levels. Care must be taken not to expose the child to unacceptable physical or psychological risk, particularly on those occasions when the educational visit aims to exercise the individual's sense of adventure. Fundamental to the planning process of any educational visit is the process of risk assessment. Staff at the venue should be asked to provide evidence that they have undertaken a risk assessment and that it is a safe location for the children.

Procedure for Running Educational Visits

A set procedure is followed for all Educational Visits, although the nature of each visit will determine the level of preparation required. A visit will proceed only when the Group Leader is satisfied that all reasonable preparations have been made.

Risk assessments are made for all Educational Visits. This necessitates that the Group Leader, where possible, has made a pre-visit in order to be able to plan for the visit and to conduct a Risk Assessment appropriately. Risk Assessments must be simple, manageable, proportional, suitable and sufficient. The system must:

- identify significant hazards;
- assess the risk of harm;
- put control measures in place;
- check if anything else is needed;
- use simple risk assessment language – high/medium/low;
- consider the site and its environment, the group, the activity and the leaders.

Supervision and Staff Ratios

Supervisory roles should be closely aligned to the roles and responsibilities undertaken by staff on a visit. Pupil to staff ratios for educational visits are not prescribed in law. There will be a full complement of adult supervision and this will reflect the E.A. guidelines, as closely as possible.

These guidelines are as follows:

	AGE GROUP	RATIOS
PRIMARY	Foundation Stage (P1/P2)	one adult for up to a maximum of ten children
	Key Stages 1 and 2 (P3-P7)	one adult for up to a maximum of fifteen children

Among the supervisors there should, where possible, be one who is trained in First Aid.

There should be a staff member who is identified as the group leader. All staff should have contact number for each member of staff accompanying the group. They must also have a contact number for the school and for the Principal and Vice Principal. Each supervisor should have a written list of names of the children in their care.

Vetting

In the context of educational visits, we follow the school's Child Protection Policy and procedures. All supervision will be undertaken by staff members who have had a full police check carried out by E.A. Students from Higher Educational Institutes who are on placement in the school and have had appropriate police checks carried out by their training institution may also be supervisors on trips.

Transport

The management of the school must be satisfied that all the transport arrangements meet the legal statutory requirements for the type of journey proposed. Only companies approved by E.A. will supply transport. The transport selected must provide each child with a single seat and while in a bus, taxi or car the child must be protected by a seat belt. Where leaders or parents choose to transport pupils in their cars, we will:

- satisfy themselves that the vehicle is licensed and insured for purpose – this could involve asking for a copy of the insurance details;
- seek the agreement of the parents of the pupils involved – this should be in writing;
- satisfy themselves that private car users do not carry more passengers than the number of seat belts available;
- do so in accordance with the school's Private Car Transport Policy.

Communicating with Parents

In Carrick Primary School we have an effective, two-way communication process between the school, centre and parents for all visits. This ensures that parents are made aware of the purpose and nature of the visit and parents will be invited to inform the school about any particular needs or issues in relation to their child and particular educational visits.

Information to parents may include:

- dates of the visit or series of visits;
- destination details;
- times of departure and return and whether parents will be required to meet their children on return;
- the location from where the pupils will be collected and returned;
- mode(s) of travel including the name of any travel company;
- information regarding lunch and/or spending money (where relevant);
- the cost of the trip, (which will be kept to a minimum). Parents will be informed about any costs for school trips. However staff will inform the Leadership Team if a child seems to be unable to meet the payment, so that appropriate pastoral arrangements can be made;
- a request for written parental consent for the trip.

Parental Consent

Parental consent must be obtained for all educational visits (See Appendix 4 for sample note for parents).

Volunteers in a Supervisory Role

To satisfy staffing ratios, it may be necessary to involve persons other than staff members as volunteers, e.g. parents. These adults can play a very valuable part in ensuring the safety of group participants while on a visit. However, prior to any visit they should be clear about their role and responsibilities during the visit.

Critical Incidents

A critical incident may be defined as any sudden and unexpected incident or sequence of events which causes trauma within a school community and which overwhelms the normal coping mechanisms of that school. In the event of a critical incident occurring during a school visit, the school's critical incident management plan will be implemented.

Prior to the Visit

All staff will be made aware of the Educational Visits Checklist (Appendix 3). The group leader must ensure that a Risk Assessment is completed prior to the trip. All staff must also have a list of all names of the children on the trip. He/She must also check that there are Health Plans/Medicines for those children who may require them, in accordance with the school's First Aid and Medication Policy. The Group Leader will collect a cheque from the office for venue payment, where required. The group leader must ensure that staff have black bags for rubbish collection and a roll of tissue paper and sick bags in case a pupil becomes unwell on the bus. The First Aid Kit should also be brought on the trip. All staff on the trip should have a contact number for the school and for the Principal, a contact number for each member of staff on the trip, and also a list of the children's names who are participating in the trip.

During the Visit

Children should be within the sight of a supervisor at all times. Class groupings should stay together except where the venue requires them to break into smaller groups. Supervisors should be aware of any dietary requirements or medical/physical needs of any of the children in his/her group. In the event of a child needing significant medical attention whilst on the trip or travelling to/from a trip, the school will be contacted as soon as possible after assistance has been given or help has been requested. On returning to school the supervisor should remain with the child until he/she has been collected by an adult or a check has been made with parents to ensure that the correct procedures for going home are being followed.

Reporting back on return to school

The Group Leader should report back to Mrs Cassidy, Mrs Duffin, Mrs McCann or Mr Murdock on return to school and provide a brief account of the trip. Any incidents, accidents or injuries that have occurred should be reported. Accidents/injuries should be recorded in the School Accident Book which is kept in Mrs Cassidy's office. The Principal/Vice Principal will advise if any further action is to be taken with reference to either accidents and/or incidents which occurred on a trip. Any significant incidents should be recorded on the Incident Record Form (see Appendix 2).

Personnel

The school's Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) is the Principal, Dr Anne Cassidy. Mrs Duffin (Vice Principal) will adopt this role in the absence of the Principal. For each visit, a Group Leader will be identified.

Board of Governors

The Board of Governors is responsible for:

- ensuring that guidance is available to inform the school policy, practices and procedures relating to the health and safety of pupils on educational visits;
- ensuring that the Principal is supported in matters relating to educational visits and that she has the appropriate time and expertise to fulfil her responsibilities;
- asking questions about a visit's educational objectives and how they will be met;
- ensuring that visits are approved as necessary before bookings are confirmed;
- ensuring that the Principal has taken all reasonable and practicable measures to include pupils with special educational needs or medical needs on an educational visit;
- ensuring that they review procedures with the Principal on an annual basis.

The Principal

The Principal is responsible for:

- ensuring approval for visits is given, including liaising with the EA/CCMS where appropriate;
- ensuring that the Governing Body is made aware of visits;
- ensuring that arrangements are in place for the educational objectives of a visit to be inclusive, being aware of the need for best value;
- ensuring that all accreditation or verification of providers has been met;
- ensuring that visits are evaluated to inform the operation of future visits;
- ensuring that each visit has an appropriately competent Group Leader;
- ensuring that all staff members are aware of the school's policy and procedures in relation to educational visits;
- ensuring that the school has an emergency procedure in place, in case of a major or critical incident, which has been discussed and reviewed by staff and Governors. This emergency procedure must include getting appropriate support and advice from the EA/CCMS (see the school's Critical Incident Policy).
- ensuring that the risk assessment and the Educational Visits checklist have been completed appropriately

Group Leader

The Group Leader has overall responsibility for the supervision and conduct of the visit, including direct responsibility for the pupils' health, safety and welfare. The Group Leader must:

- be approved to carry out the visit and be suitably competent and knowledgeable about the school's and EA's policy and procedures;
- ensure educational visits meet the employer's and school's requirements;
- assess the competence of prospective leaders and staff;
- plan and prepare for the visit and assess the risks;
- assist in the completion of the Educational Visits checklist and the risk assessment;
- organise training and induction (where necessary);

- define the roles and responsibilities of other staff and pupils and ensure effective supervision of what they do.
- ensure parents are informed and have given appropriate consent;
- organise emergency arrangements;
- keep records of visits, accidents and incident reports;
- ensure the children's medical needs can be fully met on the trip;
- review systems, monitor practice and evaluate school trips.

Volunteers

Volunteers who are not staff members must:

- understand and agree the expectations in relation to their role;
- understand their relationship to the pupils, staff and group leaders;
- recognise the limits of their responsibility;
- ensure that they are not left in sole charge of pupils unless this has been formally agreed through the risk assessment;
- follow instructions from teachers;
- raise concerns for pupil welfare with the Group Leader.

Emergency Procedures

It is the responsibility of the Group Leader and the Principal to ensure that emergency arrangements are in place for all Educational Visits. This includes:

- ensuring that all involved know who the emergency contact is in the school, and in the EA;
- having access to the Critical Incident Policy;
- ensuring that parental contact information is up to date and accessible.

Policy Review

As with all policies, it is the responsibility of the Board of Governors to evaluate the effectiveness of this policy and the practice that it describes. On a day to day basis this responsibility is delegated to the Principal who will report back to the Governors as appropriate.

This policy is a working document, and will be reviewed every three years, in consultation with pupils, staff, parents and Governors, so sooner if required.

Signed: Dr A Cassidy (Principal)

Signed: Mr G Murdock (Chairperson of Board of Governors)

Date: December 2023

Review Date: December 2026

Carrick Primary School, Burren

Appendix 1: Risk Assessment for School Trips

Trip: _____ **Location:** _____ **Bus:** _____

Completed by: _____ **Date:** _____ **Review Date:** _____

No	Hazard	To Whom	Severity	Likelihood	Risk	Risk Level Assessment
1	Lost Child	Pupils	4) Very Serious	1) Very Unlikely	4	Medium/Substantial. Activity can proceed, but with caution, ensuring controlled measures maintained. Efforts should be made to control the risk.
2	Road Traffic Accident	Staff and Pupils	4) Very Serious	1) Very Unlikely	4	Medium/Substantial. Activity can proceed, but with caution, ensuring controlled measures maintained. Efforts should be made to control the risk.
3	Travel Disruption	Staff and Pupils	1) Minor	3) Likely	3	Low/Tolerable. Activity can proceed. Control measures must be monitored and reviewed as require to ensure they remain suitable and sufficient.
4	Abduction of Child	Pupils	4) Very Serious	1) Very Unlikely	4	Medium/Substantial. Activity can proceed, but with caution, ensuring controlled measures maintained. Efforts should be made to control the risk.
5	Minor Accidents	Staff and Pupils	1) Minor	3) Likely	3	Low/Tolerable. Activity can proceed. Control measures must be monitored and reviewed as require to ensure they remain suitable and sufficient.
6						
7						
8						

No	Existing Precautions	No	Who	When
1	Child Protection procedures in place	13	Carry out individual risk assessments for individual activities	Principal/Teacher in charge of group
2	EA guidance in place re trips	14	Pre visit of site and activity	
3	School policy for educational visits followed	15	Signed permission slips for each pupil	

4	Proposals for educational visits agreed by Principal, Governors and EA as appropriate		Additional precautions		
5	Teacher/pupil ratios observed at all times				
6	Fully stocked first aid kit available at all times				
7	Bring emergency contact numbers				
8	Bring Health Plans and Medical Boxes (where needed)				
9	McAnulty's Bus (where needed)				
10	High Viz Jackets on pupils				
11	Bring class lists				
12	Carryout Individual risk assessments for individual activities				
13	Pre visit of site and activity				
14	Parental consent for each pupil participating				

Carrick Primary School

Appendix 2: Educational Visit Incident Record Form

Name of Group Leader: _____

Staff on Trip: _____

Venue:

Date, Time and Location of Incident _____

Please state in your own words what happened, including the names of those involved, the time of the incident and what actions were taken, including details of First Aid, Police or Medical involvement:

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Carrick Primary School

Appendix 3: Educational Visits Checklist

A priority at all times is the Health and Safety of the pupils in our care. It is essential to remember and adhere to the procedures which we have in place to ensure the staff members' and the pupils' wellbeing.

School Trips' Checklist

Pre-Trip Visit Completed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Choose a venue/location for the Trip.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Check with the secretary to ensure that other school trips have not already been booked on the same date.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Check the availability of the venue/location and provisionally book the trip.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Inform the secretary and the kitchen staff of the date and times of the trip and also the number of children attending.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Count up numbers of children and staff going on the trip (Recommended ratios: Foundation Stage 1:10 KS1 1:15 KS2 1:15)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Inform the Principal about the trip to enable additional staff to be released from school to attend the trip, if necessary.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Draft a note for parents about the trip and send a copy to the Principal.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Inform parents about the trip, collect signed permission slips and retain these until after the trip.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Book bus(es) for trip ensuring that each participant (Pupils and Staff) has an allocated seat and that all seats have a seatbelt.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Group Leader completes the Educational Visits checklist (Appendix 3) and leaves a copy into the Principal.	<input type="checkbox"/>

Complete, check, amend (where necessary) and sign the risk assessment for this trip.	<input type="checkbox"/>
On the day preceding the trip, confirm buses and the venue(s)/location(s).	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dietary Requirements collated (if applicable).	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Day of trip.</u>	
Each teacher will complete the class register, noting down anyone absent, leave a copy with the School Secretary and take a copy on the trip.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Collect the First Aid Kit and any medicines and health plans which may be required ensuring that there are two Epipens in the medical box of each child with anaphylaxis.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ensure that at the principal and the office staff have contact numbers for each staff member and volunteer on the trip.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Check that all children on the bus have seat belts and that these are worn throughout the journey. Remind the children not to unclick their belts until they have reached their destination.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ensure that some staff members are seated at least halfway down the bus to facilitate active supervision.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ensure that pupils are <u>never</u> left unsupervised.	<input type="checkbox"/>
In the event of any accident/incident (other than very minor accidents/incidents) please notify the Principal immediately who will take the appropriate action.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Notify the Principal and the office staff if the trip is running behind schedule. Parents can then be informed via textlocal.	<input type="checkbox"/>

Carrick Primary School
Appendix 4
Sample School Trip Consent Form

Dear Parent,

The Primary ___ children are going on a school trip to _____ on _____, the children will be leaving school at 9.15am and will return by 2.00pm.

The trip costs £_____. The children need to bring a packed lunch. Please complete the permission slip below and return it to your child's teacher by _____.

Many thanks,

Class Teacher

I consent to _____ (name in full) taking part in the Educational Visit to be held on _____.

I confirm that he/she is medically fit to participate.

I enclosed £_____ to cover the cost of the trip.

Signed: _____ (Parent/Guardian)

Date: _____