

Rathmore Primary School



Educational Visits Policy

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| Date Ratified: | May 2025 |
| Date of Review: | In line with the school's schedule for policy review. |

This policy has been written following a consultation process, ratified by the Board of Governors and communicated to the school community as required. It will be monitored and reviewed as part of the school's policy review schedule.

Rathmore Primary School Educational Visits Policy

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1. INTRODUCTION

The aim of this document is to assist those involved in the planning and management of educational visits, through the clarification of policy and procedures, identification of roles and responsibilities and the exemplification of best practice.

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'.

- EA Educational Visits Interim Guidance for Schools 2017

Rathmore Primary School believes that educational visits play an important part in the curriculum offered to the pupils in schools. Children derive considerable benefit from participating in a wide range of external experiences, particularly those not normally available in the classroom.

Day visits have been to places of particular interest within easy travelling distance of the school. Such visits are related to specific areas of the curriculum. They may involve single classes, primary year groups or collaboration with other schools.

Residential visits have, in recent years, taken place in P6 and P7 year groups.

2. AIMS

- 2.1 To offer all pupils real life experiences that relate to the curriculum area under study.**
- 2.2 To encourage pupils to extend their skills and knowledge in a wider context.**
- 2.3 To encourage a sense of adventure and develop self-confidence.**
- 2.4 To promote independence and resilience.**
- 2.5 To develop and encourage thinking skills and personal capabilities of all pupils.**
- 2.6 To foster pupils' personal development and mutual understanding.**

3. LEGAL CONTEXT

Rathmore Primary School is legally obliged to ensure that the health and safety of its employees, and pupils in their care, is safeguarded at all times.

The Board of Governors 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 basic principles of child protection must always be borne in mind when undertaking an educational visit particularly where it includes a residential element. The pupil's welfare must always be paramount and this overrides all other considerations.

Data Protection

A range of information is required for the purpose of organising and reviewing an educational visit. This information is covered by the provisions of the Data Protection Act, 1998. Amendments may be required to satisfy the general data protection regulations 2018 (GDPR). A signature on such a form is deemed to be an authorisation to allow the school to process and retain the information for the purpose(s) stated.

4. CATEGORIES OF EDUCATIONAL VISITS

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 (non-hazardous)

e.g. field study trips, theatre visits, business/education visits, regional sporting fixtures
e.g. visits to residential centres, field centres and school exchanges

CATEGORY 3 Residential visits of one or more nights within the UK or Ireland. (non-hazardous)

Eg.visits to residential centres, field centres and school exchanges

CATEGORY 4 Residential visits outside the UK or Ireland (non-hazardous)

e.g. international exchange visits, sporting events, cultural activities and international community work

CATEGORY 5 Hazardous activities – residential and non-residential as exemplified below:

- Hill walking
- Fieldwork
- Cycling/mountain biking
- Orienteering
- Rock climbing/abseiling
- Caving and potholing
- Kayaking

- Open canoeing
- Windsurfing
- Dingy sailing
- Sub-aqua
- Skiing/snowboarding
- Horse riding
- Angling
- Water-skiing
- Rafting rowing
- Surfing
- Bouldering/gorge walking
- Swimming in open water
- Coasteering
- Stand-up paddle boarding

Category 1 and Category 2 recurring and one-off (non-hazardous) visit

Step 1 Identification of Educational Visit - Objective

Rathmore Primary School identifies an area or areas of the curriculum for which an educational visit(s) may be an essential or relevant component.

Step 2 Approval, Implementing Appropriate Risk Management and Completion of Planning Checklist

Details of the proposed visit(s) are submitted, by the group leader to the Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC), on the EV Form forwarded to the Principal for approval. They should be approved, and noted by the Board of Governors (where appropriate), before they proceed.

A Risk Assessment Form will be completed to ensure that all visits are organised in accordance with current school policies (e.g. Health and Safety and Child Protection).

Step 3 Informing the Parents

Parents should be informed about the educational visits their children will participate in. Once parents have been informed of these visits they will be asked to give their consent in writing.

Step 4 Maintaining Records

Copies of all forms (e.g. EVA form with checklist) and any other relevant information should be filed at the school by the EVC. Consent forms should be kept on file by the Group Leader.

In the case of an incident/accident occurring, all appropriate documentation from the Employing Authority must be completed (Educational Visit Incident Record Form).

Procedures Step by Step for Visits in Categories 3, 4 and 5

Step 1 Identification of Educational Visit - Objective

Group Leader identifies an area or areas of the curriculum for which an educational visit(s) may be an essential or relevant component.

Step 2 Approval, Implementing Appropriate Risk Management and Completion of Planning Checklist

Details of proposed visit should be submitted by the Group Leader to the EVC (and forwarded on to the Principal for consideration in consultation with the Board of Governors). The Educational Visits Proposal Form (EVP) and Risk Management Form should be used for this purpose and any relevant information attached e.g. details of the residential centre to be used. Under normal circumstances, a minimum period of notice of not less than 8 weeks is recommended. Detailed planning can proceed once initial approval has been granted.

The appropriate sections of the planning checklist should be completed by those with key responsibilities for the visit.

Step 3 Briefings

Staff, volunteers, parents and pupils, should be briefed about all aspects of the educational visit. Once parents are fully aware of the visit details they will be asked to give their consent in writing. The exemplar Consent Form may be used for this purpose.

Step 4 Information Collated

It is important to gather together all relevant information about the pupils participating in the visit. This should be collated by the group leader and the originals retained by the school. An Educational Visits Group Details Form should be used for this purpose.

Step 6 Final Approval Secured

Visits in this category can only proceed once final approval has been secured from the Principal and the Board of Governors. The EVP form should be signed by both the Principal and the Chair of the Board of Governors to confirm approval and endorsement of the arrangements for the visit.

Step 7 Maintaining Records

Copies of all forms and relevant information should be filed at the school. Any changes to the original approved visit must be agreed, as appropriate, prior to the event taking place.

An Educational Visit Incident/Accident Form may be used by accompanying staff to keep a record of the pertinent information required of any incident or accident that occurs during an educational visit.

The Group Leader should also ensure that all documentation required by the employing authority in relation to any incidents or accidents is completed as appropriate. This must be forwarded to the employing authority as soon as is practicable.

Step 8 Evaluation

On return it is important to undertake an evaluation of the key aspects of the visit. The completed evaluation should be forwarded to the relevant personnel and maintained by the school for future reference. A Post Visit Review Form will be used for this purpose.

5. RISK ASSESSMENT

Fundamental to the planning process of any educational visit is the process of risk assessment.

This is achieved by either:

eliminating the identified hazards altogether: -

for example, by choosing not to use a water sports centre if the centre staff do not possess current life-saving qualifications or

managing hazards by introducing effective control measures: -

for example, by ensuring that participants are led by competent and experienced

instructors when participating in adventurous activities

Risk Assessment comprises the following steps:

5.1 define the activity to be undertaken

5.2 identifying the hazards associated with the activity

5.3 identifying the people who may be at risk

5.4 evaluating the potential risk

5.5 establishing additional safety and/or control measures

5.6 disseminating information to all relevant persons and compile information packs as appropriate

Group Leaders will complete a Risk Management Form as part of the Planning Process.

6. SUPERVISION AND STAFF RATIOS

Ratios – Suggested Starting Points

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

The key factors which should be taken into consideration in the establishment of appropriate ratios are as follows –

- nature and location of activities to be undertaken
- age and ability of the group
- pupils with special educational and/or medical needs

Please note that in the case of an overnight stay parents must be informed prior to the visit if there is either no male or female leader accompanying the pupils.

7. VETTING

In the context of educational visits, it is essential that the Child Protection Policy and procedures are followed. The need to vet volunteers should be made on the basis of their having ‘substantial access to children’. Participation in an educational visit, particularly those with a residential element, would provide such access. Schools should refer to the DE Circular 2012/19 regarding the vetting requirements for school volunteers as part of the new Access NI Disclosure and Barring Arrangements. Also refer to DE Safeguarding and Child protection – A Guide for Schools (April 2017) document.

Therefore, it is required that all adults, who accompany groups of pupils under the age of 18 are vetted in line with DE Circular 2012/19 with regards to vetting checks for volunteers working in schools.

8. TRANSPORT

The Senior Leadership Team of the school, must be satisfied that all the transport arrangements meet the legal statutory requirements for the type of journey proposed.

Areas to Consider:

- that the operator holds a valid Operator’s Licence (this can be checked out by contacting the Department of Infrastructure or looking at their web site);
- the mode of transport is appropriate to the needs of the pupils;
- there is adequate supervision during transit;

- those involved in driving hold the relevant licence to drive the vehicle;
- those involved are insured appropriately;
- guidance on the transport arrangements relevant to the particular group, e.g. age and/ or developmental needs.

Where schools require the use of outside operators to provide transport, it is crucial that they are satisfied that the operator(s) can demonstrate how they meet the above criteria.

Where leaders or parents choose to transport pupils in their cars, organisers of the visit should:

- 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 Child Protection Policy.

9. INSURANCE COVER

The Principal will ensure, well before the group departs, that adequate insurance arrangements are in place.

The Education Authority will cover the legal liability of controlled and maintained schools in respect of personal injury claims. It is however, recommended that schools should take out additional travel insurance in relation to educational visits outside of Northern Ireland. Other schools should check with their insurance broker as to the extent of cover provided under their public liability insurance policies. Parents should be advised as to the extent of any additional insurance taken out by the school.

The Education Authority or insurance broker can advise on particular types of insurance requirements and other arrangements:

- medical cover for leaders and group members;
- specialised risk activities;
- activities abroad;
- participants with medical conditions;
- cancellation or other emergency situation.

The group leader should scrutinise carefully the conditions, list of exclusions, and limits on cover in any policy provided by an outside organisation. If there is any doubt, the insurer should be asked for clarification before departure. The group leader may need to seek further advice from the employing authority or insurance company if not completely satisfied with the insurance cover.

No person acting on behalf of a school should sign an indemnity for any outside body against liability without it first being checked and approved by the relevant employing authority.

10. USE OF INDEPENDENT PROVIDERS

The term independent providers refers to other organisations or companies which provide a service that is outside the direct control of the employing authority e.g. tour operators, specialist activity providers, residential centres etc.

Where a school has opted to use the services of an independent provider the Principal must ensure that:

- employing authority policy and procedures are followed in relation to the use of such providers;
- providers are reputable and have the necessary insurance in place for the services they provide;
- staff involved in the delivery of the service are competent and are aware of their roles and responsibilities in relation to the group and child protection;
- risk assessments are available for the activities the group will partake in;
- adequate emergency and contingency plans and procedures are in place in the event of unforeseen circumstances.

These prerequisites should be ascertained in writing from the external provider as part of the school risk assessment.

Note: *A compulsory licensing scheme for Outdoor Activity Providers, which endorses the provider's competence to deliver activities to young people (under 18s) exists in England, Scotland and Wales. Group leaders should therefore take cognisance of their chosen provider's licence and note the activities which they are licensed to offer. Not all activities require a licence. Further details can be obtained from the Adventure Activity Licence Authority.*

There is no such requirement or structure in place at present for the licensing of outdoor activity providers in Northern Ireland

11. CODE OF CONDUCT

In advance of an educational visit, accompanying staff, volunteer supervisors, pupils and parents should all be made fully aware of the code, including possible sanctions. All pupils participating in an educational visit must agree to abide by the code of conduct at all times during the visit.

After carrying out a behavioural risk assessment, Rathmore Primary School has the right to refuse any pupil from participating in the visit, whose involvement may be considered to be a danger to him/herself or to the group.

Under no circumstances should persons other than official group members join the party.

12. COMMUNICATING WITH PARENTS

An effective, two-way communication process between the school, centre and parents is important for all visits. Effective communication will ensure that parents are made aware of the purpose and nature of the visit and will ensure that parents inform the school about any particular needs and issues of their child relevant to the visit.

Information to parents will include (where appropriate):

- the aims and benefits of the visit;
- 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 where the pupils will be collected and returned;
- mode(s) of travel including the name of any travel company;
- the size of the group and the level of supervision;
- details of accommodation;
- details of provision for special educational or medical needs;
- names of leader, of other staff and of other accompanying adults;
- the planned programme of activities;
- agreed arrangements for non-emergency contact during the visit;
- arrangements/protocols for parents to make contact with the child;
- arrangements/protocols for the school or pupils to make contact with their parents;
- a list of potential circumstances when a parent will be contacted by the school e.g. when a pupil:
 - reports feeling unwell and the symptoms/condition is giving cause for concern;
 - requires medical attention;
 - is injured as a result of an accident or emergency;
 - is involved in a serious breach of the established code of conduct for the educational visit.
- the code of conduct for the visit detailing expected standards of behaviour and sanctions;
- arrangements for the early return of a pupil for any reason during the visit;
- clothing and equipment to be taken;
- what pupils should not take on the visit or bring back;
- advice on pocket money and how it is allocated during the visit;
- the information required from parents about their child;
- details on the cost of the visit;

Information should (where relevant):

- be sent as far in advance of the visit as practicable;
- involve convening a meeting to clarify detail if appropriate. This is particularly important for residential visits, or when the pupils are to travel abroad or engage in adventure activities or visits to demanding environments. Where a briefing meeting is required, alternative arrangements might need to be made for parents who cannot attend or who have difficulty with communication.

Parent Consent

Parental consent must be obtained for educational visits. This may be done on a blanket basis for regular visits or on a one-off basis for non-regular visits. The contents of a consent form for a parent to sign will vary according to the type of visit.

Medical Consent

For visits that require parental consent, parents should be asked to agree to the young person receiving emergency treatment, including anaesthetic or blood transfusion, as considered necessary by the medical authorities. If parents do not agree to this, the Principal may decide to withdraw the child from the visit given the additional responsibility this would entail for the group leader.

Contact with Parents during the Visit

All parents of pupils taking part in an educational visit should be briefed (category 3, 4 and 5 visits) or provided with (category 1 and 2 visit) with a copy of the communication procedure in advance of the visit. (e.g. Parent to contact school office in an emergency/emergency contact number of parent on reply permission slip.)

Parents should therefore:

- know the destination details;
- be aware of the emergency contact arrangements.

Pupil Contact with Parents

There should be clearly defined arrangements/protocols for pupils to make contact with their parents.

Parents should be made aware of and consent to the mobile phone protocol if applicable.

13. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The successful planning and implementation of an educational visit requires a contribution from a number of key personnel and groups. Careful co-ordination and clarity of roles are vitally important.

The duties, roles and responsibilities of staff are clearly defined in advance of any educational visit, articulated, recorded in writing and understood by all those leading and/or assisting with such visits. This includes those responsible for the provision of first aid, administration or medication and communication with parents.

This section outlines the roles and responsibilities of each.

School

The responsibility for any educational visit rests with the school organising the activity.

The Principal

It will normally be the Principal, with the agreement of the board of governors, from whom permission must be obtained before a visit takes place.

Senior Leadership Team

Under the direction of the Senior Leadership a designated Educational Visits' Co-ordinator (EVC) will have a central role to play in endeavouring to ensure that the best practice, in relation to educational visits, is developed and implemented within the school.

In pursuance of this aim the EVC should:

- ensure that visits have specific educational objectives;
- be satisfied that risk assessment has been carried out and that appropriate safety measures are in place;
- ensure that all arrangements comply with the organisation's Child Protection and Health and Safety Policies;
- ensure that the Principal demonstrates how proposals comply with best practice;
- assess and submit visit proposal for Board of Governors approval;
- ensure that an acceptable code of conduct for pupils is in place.

Educational Visits' Co-ordinator (EVC)

The Principal may assume the role of the EVC or designate this role to a member of the Senior Leadership Team. The EVC should assume the role of, or designate an appropriately competent member of staff, to act as the group leader for any educational visit. This person will have overall responsibility for the supervision and conduct of the visit, the health and safety of the group and ensure that clear lines of accountability are established.

This may be addressed in a number of ways depending on the size and nature of the school, for example in a larger school another member of the senior leadership team may be designated as the EVC for all visits e.g. vice principal.

Whichever the case, it is recommended that the responsibility for ensuring that the criteria outlined below are addressed, rests with the person designated as the EVC.

Ultimately, it is the Principal, with agreement of the board of governors, whose permission must be obtained before a visit takes place.

The EVC should be satisfied that:

- there is an acceptable code of conduct pupils;
- the visit complies with best practice as outlined in this guidance document;
- a competent group leader is selected;
- child protection procedures are adhered to in the planning process, including the vetting of volunteers;
- all necessary arrangements and preparations have been completed including risk assessment, before the visit begins;
- all relevant checks have been undertaken if an independent provider is to be used;
- the group leader has experience in supervising pupils of similar age and ability to those participating and will organise and manage the group effectively;

- where relevant, the group leader or one of the leaders is suitably qualified and competent to supervise and/or instruct the pupils during specific activities;
- the group leader has taken reasonable steps to familiarise him/ herself with the location/centre where the activity will take place;
- prior to any educational visit, all volunteers should be clearly advised of their role and responsibilities during the visit and this should be communicated in writing to them and all accompanying staff;
- the ratio of leaders to young people is appropriate;
- proper procedures have been followed in planning the visit;
- there is adequate and relevant insurance cover;
- the group leader has the address and phone number of the venue to be visited and has a contact name;
- a school contact has been nominated (normally the Principal or EVC) and the group leader has details;
- that an emergency contingency and critical incident plan has been created and that the group leader, accompanying staff, volunteers and nominated school contact are aware of the agreed emergency contingency arrangements;
- the group leader, leaders and nominated contact have all relevant information on the group members;
- establish any arrangements which may be required for the early return of individual participants.

The Principal should be clear concerning their role if taking part in the visit as an accompanying staff member. **The group leader should remain in overall charge of the visit.**

Group Leader

A member of staff should be designated by the Principal or EVC as group leader. This role should be allocated to a senior member of staff.

The group leader will have overall operational responsibility for the supervision, discipline and conduct of the participants for the duration of the visit and should be experienced in organising such visits, the supervision of pupils, and all relevant health and safety matters.

They should be able to direct and supervise pupils and be suitably qualified/competent to instruct them in activities, as appropriate.

The group leader has a crucial role to play in the successful and safe completion of an educational visit.

The group leader should:

- obtain prior agreement and approval before any off-site visit takes place;
- appoint a deputy, if appropriate, with the consent of the Principal;
- adhere to best practice as outlined in this guidance document;
- undertake and complete the planning and preparation for the visit including the briefing of leaders, pupils and parents;
- ensure that all relevant checks have been undertaken if an independent provider is to be used;
- take steps to become familiar with the location/establishment where the activity will take place;
- inform parents as to the terms and conditions of any additional insurance cover taken out by the school;

- undertake and complete an appropriate risk assessment;
- collect relevant information on the pupils proposed to participate in the visit to assess and confirm their suitability;
- ensure the ratio of leaders to pupils is appropriate for the needs of the group and the nature of the activity to be undertaken;
- clearly define the role of each member of accompanying staff and volunteers and ensure that all tasks have been clearly assigned;
- have proper regard to the health and safety of the pupils and ensure that adequate supervision is provided at all times;
- ensure that the established code of conduct for both staff and pupils is adhered to;
- ensure child protection procedures are followed;
- ensure that adequate first-aid provision will be available;
- ensure that, during the visit, leaders have up-to-date emergency contact details of: - nominated contact - parents
- ensure that accompanying staff and volunteers and the nominated contact are aware of the emergency procedures;
- ensure that the group leaders have the details of group members' special educational or medical needs, which will be necessary for them to carry out their tasks effectively;
- consider stopping the visit if the risk to the health or safety of the pupils is unacceptable and have in place procedures for such an eventuality;
- regularly review visits/activities.

Accompanying Staff

Accompanying staff on educational visits are responsible to the school whether the visit takes place within normal hours or outside those hours.

Accompanying staff must endeavour to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group and act as any reasonable parent would do in the same circumstances.

'In Loco Parentis' applies to all adults who work with pupils.

Accompanying staff should:

- accept the authority and follow the instructions of the group leader;
- under direction of the group leader, assist with the organisation of activities and discipline of the pupils;
- ensure that the established code of conduct, for leaders and participants is adhered to;
- consider stopping the activity and notify the group leader, if they think the risk to the health or safety of the group members in their charge, is unacceptable.

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.

Volunteers should:

- be vetted on the basis of having substantial access to children;

- participation in an educational visit, particularly those with a residential element, would provide such access;
- endeavour to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group;
- not be left in sole charge of group members except where it has been previously agreed as part of the risk assessment;
- follow the instructions of the group leader (which may be provided in writing) and other accompanying staff, and help with control and discipline;
- speak to the group leader or accompanying staff if concerned about the health or safety of the pupils, at any time during the visit;
- endeavour to ensure that the established code of conduct, is adhered to (see section 12).

Nominated Contact at School Base

Dealing with unexpected situations can be aided by a central figure, (possibly the Principal/EVC, if not on the visit, or another senior member of staff if not on the visit) who will act as the contact person for both the group and the pupils' families.

Nominated contact should:

- retain details of the place to be visited, contact personnel and telephone and mobile numbers as appropriate;
- retain a copy of the contact details of all the pupils' parents;
- retain a copy of the contact details of the Principal/group leader;
- be fully briefed and aware of his/her responsibilities including the action to take in the event of a serious incident.

Parents

Parents should be able to make an informed decision as to whether their child should go on the visit. However, in the interests of the overall safety and success of the visit the ultimate decision as to who participates rests with those involved in organising the visit. The group leader should ensure that parents are given sufficient information in writing and are invited to a briefing session, where appropriate.

Parents should:

- sign the consent form;
- provide the school with an emergency contact number(s);
- provide the school with relevant medical/dietary details, including any medication currently being taken in writing (by means of the consent form) and any other relevant information (about their child's emotional, psychological and physical health) which may affect their participation in the visit);
- help prepare their child for the visit, for example, by reinforcing the visit's code of conduct;
- agree the arrangements established for a member of the group returning home due to unforeseen circumstances.

Special arrangements may be necessary for parents who have particular or special needs, for example, those who are hearing impaired or whose first language is not English.

Responsibilities of Pupils

The group leader should, when briefing the pupils, make it clear that they have to act in accordance with the code of conduct at all times.

Where appropriate, pupils should be fully involved in the planning process.

Please refer to the Model Code of Conduct in Appendix 5. Further consideration may need to be given to this matter when dealing with pupils with behavioural issues.

Responsibilities of Employing Authority

The employing authority will generally retain a number of responsibilities:

The employing authority may provide:

- advice and support for governors, Principals, teachers and other appropriate staff;
- guidance on best practice;
- training, as appropriate;
- insurance cover, as appropriate.

14. EMERGENCY/CONTINGENCY ARRANGEMENTS

Rathmore Primary School acknowledges that establishing emergency procedures is an essential part of planning an educational visit. Everyone involved in the educational visit will be made aware of the procedures that are to be followed in the event of an emergency.

Contingency planning relates to areas and circumstances which should be anticipated in advance of an educational visit, e.g. unsuitable weather, transportation problems, cancellation of an event, illness or injury etc. It should also define roles and responsibilities for all staff involved in the organisation of the trip including senior managers remaining in school.

Visit organisers should ensure that a clear communications plan is established with key contact numbers available. All staff members and parents of those taking part in the visit should be briefed and be provided with a copy of the procedure. It should clearly define the circumstances where contact should be made.

In the event of a medical emergency designated staff responsible for managing first aid/ medical emergencies will have knowledge of:

- medical conditions;
- parental advice relating to a medical condition;
- an emergency contact number for parents;
- how to access any medical equipment e.g. the defibrillator at the facility;
- the emergency procedures within the facility.

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.” (iMatter Every School a Good School. A Guide to Managing Critical Incidents in Schools).

In the event of a critical incident (as defined above) occurring during a school visit the Critical Incident Policy will be implemented.