

information for teachers

Planning a field visit

Fieldwork can encourage people to think more carefully about the environment they are visiting, the community and biodiversity it supports and their own impact upon it. It should be fun and leave lasting impressions on those participating.

The following check points should help you in planning and delivering successful fieldwork experiences and are also useful tips for general visits.

Permission

- Obtain permission from the land owner or manager before entering a site. (Some contact details below)

Undertake a pre-trip site visit

- Check out access, toilet locations, parking, potential costs.
- Is there adequate parking?
- Activity planning – what activities will you undertake, where can you do these and what equipment will they require?

Risk assessment and safety

- Check school/ group policy on risk assessments.
- Complete a risk assessment and share this with other leaders.
- Seek guidance from site managers.
- Obtain relevant permission from participants.
- Plan your emergency procedure.

Plan group numbers

- Can the site accommodate you all?
- Confirm the numbers of adults or leaders will you need.
- Do any group members have special requirements for supervision?

Recording and monitoring

- Find a way to record and monitor your experiences whilst on a visit
- Can you take photos?
- Involve everyone in feedback during and after the visit

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Risk Assessment data

Activity: Heathland Field visit	Date of activity:	Assessment carried out by:	Date of assessment:
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Hazard Identification, Control Measures and Risk Ratings

Hazard	Risk	Who is at risk	Control Measures		Likelihood of Occurrence 1 = Unlikely 2 = Occasional 4 = Frequent	Severity 1 = Superficial 2 = Minor 4 = Major 6 = Fatal	Risk Rating L x S
			In place	Whose responsibility?			
Uneven ground, steep & slippery slopes	Trips Slips Falls	All participants	Advise suitable footwear and check on day. Staff to carry First Aid kit and mobile phone. Notify staff of any participants with mobility problems or specific needs.	Lead teacher / group leader	2	2	4
Walking through wooded areas	Falling branches Falling trees	All participants	Check sites & route before arrival, remove debris. Change of route / cancellation of visit in severe high winds.	Lead teacher / group leader	1	4	4
Weather conditions	Effects of cold Exposure Hypothermia	All participants	Advise appropriate clothing for conditions, especially waterproofs. Cancel in severe weather conditions.	Lead teacher / group leader	1	4	4
	Poor site conditions.	All participants	Inspect and assess site on day before the visit. Plan alternative route if dangerous. Cancel if severe conditions.	Lead teacher / group leader	1	4	4
Loading and unloading from vehicles	Collision with vehicles	All	Arrange safe drop-off spot with site manager. Supervise unloading & loading of vehicles. Move to safe area as soon as possible.	Lead teacher / group leader	1	6	6
Road Traffic	Collision with vehicles	All	As above. Use hi-viz clothing and supervise road crossings. Warn participants regarding sensible behaviour in advance of visit.	Lead teacher / group leader	1	6	6
Sharp objects e.g. litter / thorns / barbed wire etc	Cuts & infection	All	Seek information from site manager regarding problems. Avoid handling or contact. Walk in single file / pairs on narrow sections of footpath. Carry first aid kit.	Lead teacher / group leader	1	2	2
Uneven ground, steep & slippery slopes	Trips Slips Falls	All participants	Advise suitable footwear and check on day. Staff to carry First Aid kit and mobile phone. Notify staff of any participants with mobility problems or specific needs.	Lead teacher / group leader	2	2	4
Stings (certain plants, animals)	Bites and stings, allergic reaction, anaphylaxis	All	Notify staff of pupils / staff with allergies, and carry relevant medication. Carry first aid kit and mobile phone and have emergency procedure in place.	Lead teacher / group leader	1	4	4
Dogs and Dog faeces	Bites, attack, Infection	All	Avoid contact with dogs. Advise regarding potential dangers. Highlight presence of faeces on site.	Lead teacher / group leader	2	4	8
Pupil behaviour	Unsafe behaviour, missed safety instructions, injury	Pupils Teachers / Parents	Inform staff / pupils of points from risk assessment. Maintain control of the group, adapt or cancel activities if unruly or unacceptable behaviour. Supervise pupils during breaks and free time. Keep group in sight of leaders at all times.	Lead teacher / group leader	1	4	4

Check list:

- Make contact with relevant site managers prior to any site visit to plan visit and activities and seek relevant permissions
- Obtain specific site information and risk assessments in advance and adapt this generic assessment as appropriate
- Establish emergency vehicle access to sites and safe exit routes in event of an emergency
- Every group should be accompanied by a qualified first aider if possible.
- Staff should carry a first aid kit and a mobile phone at all times.

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