

Setting the standards for safe, successful fieldwork for all

We subscribe to the Geographical Association and Field Studies Council Fieldwork Code of Practice which ensures our fieldwork...

...has quality

To create a purposeful, enjoyable experience through which learning becomes fun we are committed to ensuring high-quality fieldwork experiences for all through:

- Careful and imaginative planning
- Thorough preparation, including exploratory pre-visits and briefing of all participants
- Use of appropriate, sufficient and well-maintained equipment
- Responsible conduct
- Productive follow-up
- Thorough post-fieldwork review

...is safe

To ensure a safe fieldwork experience, we recognise that safety is the responsibility of everyone, and that we must have a duty of care and act responsibly towards:

- Ourselves
- People in our care
- People caring for us
- Equipment and its use
- Parents and carers
- Institutions and organisations with whom we deal

...is sustainable

We recognise that we are all agents of change.

To ensure that we maintain, and enhance if we can, the diversity of environments for future generations, as well as developing a respect for environments, we will take responsibility for our actions and their impact on:

- Those we influence
- The immediate environment
- Those who live or work in the area
- Those who own land/resources in the area
- The wider world
- Those who have worked here before us
- Those who come after us

In short, we accept the duty of care and the role of being 'in loco parentis' with all their implications for the education, safety and future well-being of those in our charge in the best quality learning environment we can attain.

This poster sets out a code of practice which has been prepared by the GA Field Studies Working Group on behalf of the Geographical Association and Field Studies Council and sits at the very heart of the *Fieldwork File* publications. It is designed to be used across all key stages, in any educational institution, by anyone who is involved in the preparation, organisation and undertaking of fieldwork, or in reviewing current school policies. It must be used in conjunction with your current school and LEA guidelines.

If your institution subscribes to this code of practice you can display the poster where parents and other interested parties can see it, to give them an assurance of the quality and standards you are working to and the aims to which you aspire.

Here, the code of practice is developed further, particularly in more practical terms.

Quality

The following factors all contribute to a high-quality, memorable fieldwork experience, with many transferable characteristics.

Accountability

Site assessment

- Identify suitable places for fieldwork.
- Review these choices regularly.
- Check/evaluate each site for suitability, facilities, safety (including Risk Assessment) and sensibility.

Responsibility

Ensure the leaders understand the implications of their role in terms of:

- Use of current guidelines on school visits.
- Responsibility for planning/organising/booking/relevant documentation;
- Responsibility of making, wherever relevant, a clear delegation of responsibility to other support staff;
- The duty of care and being 'in loco parentis'.

Ensure that other staff understand their role and responsibility in support of the leader and towards themselves and others.

Ensure that participants understand their responsibility towards themselves and others.

Curriculum value

Plan fieldwork to give clear value to both the subject area and, as far as possible, the wider curriculum.

Ensure that other relevant staff members are made aware of this wider contribution.

Resource value

Make optimum use of teachers'/learners' time and effort. Ensure that the benefits of the activities outweigh the costs (time, money, resources) involved.

By taking the above into account during planning, preparation and follow-up, you will be able to justify fieldwork as an appropriate activity which gives best value.

Programmes

Sites of excellence

Select the best sites for the learning which we want to achieve, taking into account the balance of cost and benefit.

Integration

Fieldwork will form an integral part of your planned schemes of work.

Planning for progression

Plan your fieldwork programme to ensure progression throughout the key stage.

Ensure your planned activities offer progression rather than repetition.

Entitlement

Ensure that all students/pupils have equal opportunities to participate in a range of fieldwork activities.

Objectives

Your objectives will be:

- Realistic in terms of time and resources available;
- Appropriate to the needs of the learners; and
- Achievable by the learners while still providing sufficient challenge.

This will allow purposeful, differentiated activities throughout your fieldwork.

Delivery

Ensure that:

- Leaders are properly experienced;
- All teachers and learners gain relevant experience;
- Support and training within the school and access to certificated courses is offered to staff as part of a programme of continuous professional development;
- Leadership appropriate to the age and experience of the participants will be provided.

High quality experience

Balance technical delivery of specific objectives with excitement, awe and wonder.

Employ a variety of teaching and learning styles to meet the expectations of both teachers and learners.

Safety

Safety depends on your acting responsibly towards yourselves and others and recognising and complying with good practice. Achieving safe, yet challenging, fieldwork experience requires recognition of the importance of:

Duty of care

Accept, with full understanding of the implications, the duty of care and of being 'in loco parentis'.

Personal responsibility

Ensure that all participants recognise the impact of their actions not only on themselves but on the group as a whole, according to their level of development.

Group responsibility

Strive to ensure that members of the group recognise and carry out, according to their level of development, the duty of care to each other.

Use of provider

Make use, where appropriate, of reputable providers to support or deliver the fieldwork. Ensure they have fulfilled their duty of care.

Competence

Hazard and risk

You should have identified and recorded the significant hazards and risks. Ensure the safe conduct of groups through:

- Setting clear expectations and responsibilities;
- Making sure everyone is aware of the expectations and responsibilities;
- Having appropriate materials and contingency plans to cope with minor accidents and emergencies;
- Having effective procedures for dealing with major incidents.

Practicalities

Organise your transport and facilities adequately, both on site and en route.

Take steps to ensure that you are sufficiently knowledgeable and personally prepared to support and care for your group, and that everyone is personally prepared and properly equipped.

Sustainability

By exercising care and concern for the environment, you will help students/pupils to develop into citizens who recognise their responsibilities to the environment and to future generations.

Recognition of fragile and sensitive sites

Formulate criteria to identify sensitive sites.

Managing site usage

- Monitor the impact of your activities on the sites you use.
- Recognise and assess overuse of sites.
- Ensure that you plan to carry out your activities at suitable times.
- Identify which times/periods/seasons should be avoided.
- Minimise the impact of your group on the fieldwork location.

Education for sustainable development

Promoting respect

Create opportunities to develop young people's care and respect for natural and built environments.

Promoting positive attitudes

Help and encourage young people to:

- Clarify their attitudes;
- Consider their actions;
- Develop critical thinking;
- Recognise the validity of different points of view.

This code of practice underpins each part of the *Fieldwork File* series:

- Managing safe and successful fieldwork* offers cross-phase practical guidance on applying the code of practice to your own fieldwork as appropriate to your needs.
- Fieldwork File: EY-KS2 pack* offers advice and ideas for curriculum-based field trips in a range of environments appropriate for Early Years and Primary pupils.
- Fieldwork File: KS3/4 pack* offers advice and ideas for field trips in a range of environments suitable for Secondary students.

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