



'Everyone is valued as an individual'

'Love your neighbour, as yourself' - Mark 12:31

Policy on Off-Site Visits

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Off-site visits are activities arranged by or on behalf of the school, and which take place outside the school grounds. The governors and teaching staff believe that off-site activities can supplement and enrich the curriculum of the school by providing experiences which would otherwise be impossible. All off-site activities must serve an educational purpose, enhancing and enriching our children's learning experiences.
- 1.2 In this policy, we seek to establish a clear and coherent structure for the planning and evaluation of our off-site visits, and to ensure that any risks are managed and kept to a minimum, for the safety and health of all pupils at all times. Within these limits, we seek to make our visits available to all pupils, and wherever possible to make them accessible to those with disabilities. The visits usually take place within the school day.

2 Aims and objectives

2.1.1 The aims of our off-site visits are to:

- enhance curricular and recreational opportunities for our pupils;
- provide a wider range of experiences for our pupils than could be provided on the school site alone;
- to promote the independence of our children as learners, and enable them to grow and develop in new learning environments.

These visits begin with short excursions into the local area in the Early Years, and progress to residential experiences in Key Stage 2.

3 Curriculum links

3.1 For each subject in the curriculum, there is a corresponding programme of activities (which includes visits to the school by specialists).

4 Residential activities

4.1 Children in KS2 have the opportunity to take part in a residential visit. This activity is in school time and linked to the National Curriculum, so we do not make any charge for the education. We do, however, make a charge for board and lodging, visits and activities. Financial support may be given in some cases in line with the charging policy.

4.2 The residential visit enables children to take part in a range of outdoor activities. We undertake this visit with Category C authorisation from a named OEAP Adviser from EvolveAdvice.co.uk.

(OEAP Advisers have proven expertise and professional understanding of National Guidance and the training and expectations set by current good practice). Qualified instructors for all specialist activities are provided by the residential.

- 4.3 The school has public liability insurance through Northamptonshire County Council. However this cover does not extend to last minute illness where a child is unable to attend a residential and a refund is requested by parents. We therefore recommend that parents take out separate holiday insurance for their child. Personal belongings such as cameras and ipods are also the responsibility of the child and are not covered for loss or damage by the school's public liability insurance.

5 How visits may be authorised

- 5.1 The head teacher will appoint a party leader to be responsible for running the activity. This will normally be a teacher employed at the school.
- 5.2 The school's EVC (educational visits coordinator), along with the Headteacher, will be involved in the planning and management of off-site visits. S/he will:
- ensure that risk assessments are completed;
 - support the head teacher and governing body in their decisions;
 - assign competent staff to lead and help with trips;
 - organise related staff training;
 - verify that all accompanying adults, including private car drivers, have had satisfactory police checks, and that the letter from our coach company (see 6.5) assures us that their drivers, too, have had police checks;
 - make sure that all necessary permissions and medical forms are obtained;
 - keep records of visits, and ensure that there are regular generic assessments of the risks, where there are frequent visits to local venues (e.g. a swimming facility).

Staff arranging or otherwise involved in off-site activities must familiarise themselves with the regulations, advice and procedures published by the LA and National Guidance from OEAP (Outdoor Education Advisers Panel).

- 5.3 Our named outdoor visits adviser is: EvolveAdvice.co.uk. Our adviser is a registered and accredited member on the OEAP. (<https://oeapng.info/>). OEAP advisers have proven expertise and professional understanding of National Guidance and the training and expectations set by current good practice.
- 5.4 Our school has systems in place via EvolveAdvice.co.uk to scrutinise and approve all visits, including Category C, (high risk visits, adventurous, international, residential or involve planned use of water outdoors).
- 5.4 Where staff are proposing to arrange an off-site activity, they must seek and obtain the approval of the head teacher before any commitment is made on behalf of the school. A comprehensive visit plan should be provided by the member of staff to allow for an informed decision to be made.
- 5.5 Where the activity involves a period of more than 24 hours, an overnight stay, or a journey by sea or air, the head teacher will seek the approval of the governing body and the Adviser from EvolveAdvice.co.uk before permitting the activity to take place.
- 5.6 It is our policy that all children should be able to participate in educational visits. Where a child with a disability is eligible for a trip, we will make every effort to ensure that s/he is included. We may seek guidance from parents or carers to help us to adapt our programme, and we will make

any reasonable adjustments to our itinerary to include a child with disabilities. Any such adjustments will be included in the risk assessment.

6 Risk assessment

- 6.1 The following are the 10 key points the HSE (Health & Safety Executive) www.hse.gov.uk says should be considered when preparing a risk assessment for a school visit:
1. What are the main objectives of the visit?
 2. What is 'Plan B' if the main objectives can't be achieved?
 3. What could go wrong? Does the risk assessment cover:
The main activity; 'Plan B'; travel arrangements; emergency procedures; staff numbers, gender, skill mixes; generic and site-specific hazards and risks (including for Plan B); Variable hazards (including environmental and participants' personal abilities)
 4. What information will be provided for parents?
 5. What consents will be sought?
 6. What opportunities will parents have to ask questions? (including any arrangements for a parents' meeting – residentials and major cities/venues).
 7. What assurances are there of the leader's competencies? (EVC training; cascaded training to staff; research OEAP website; Headteacher monitoring of visit leader and checks)
 8. What are the communication arrangements?
 9. What are the arrangements for supervision, both during activities and 'free time' – is there a code of conduct?
 10. What are the arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the visit?
- 6.2 Comprehensive risk assessments are carried out by the group leader before the proposed visit. It will assess the risks which might be encountered on the visit, and will indicate measures to prevent or reduce them. The risk assessment should be based on the following considerations:
- What are the hazards?
 - Who might be affected by them?
 - What safety measures are needed to reduce risks to an acceptable level?
 - Can the group leader put the safety measures in place?
 - What steps will be taken in an emergency?
- 6.3 Staff planning an off-site activity should make a preliminary visit to the venue, in order to carry out an on-site risk assessment. It is important to take into account the probable weather conditions at the time of year proposed for the trip, and the party leader should take careful account of the facilities available, with due regard to the proposed size of the group. S/he should also assess the site's suitability with regard to the age and any particular needs of the children. S/he will also consider the venue's own approach to security and to health and safety. Venues providing instructor-led activities will have their own risk assessments for particular sessions, and these assessments may be adopted if it is impractical for the group leader to experience the activity beforehand, or if s/he lacks the skills required to make informed judgements about the risks it may involve. Venues/Residentials should be KAADI or LOTC approved.
- 6.4 A 'Plan B' risk assessment will be completed for all Category C visits and visits to major cities or venues. Terrorism security advice for trips to London and major cities or venues will be followed. For example. Guidance from the Department for Education - *'Recognise the terrorist threat' March 2017*.
- 6.5 It is important to assess and record any health, safety or security issues that are identified during the preliminary visit. Any such issues will be taken into account when the final decision is taken

on whether the visit should proceed, and the Visit Plan must state both the extent of any risks involved, and the measures that will be taken to reduce or eliminate them. The cost of these preliminary visits will be borne by the school, and should be built into the overall financial arrangements for the visit itself.

6.6 An activity should have sufficient adults taking part to provide the following recommended ratios from the DCSF, (Department for Children, Schools and Families), and NUT (National Union of Teachers):

- 1 adult to 10 or less pupils in Years 4 to 6;
- 1 adult to 6 or less pupils in Years 1 to 3;
- 1 adult to 3 pupils in Early Years.

The above ratios are not prescribed in law.

Any trip will require a minimum of two adults. These are our minimum requirements, and may not provide adequate supervision in all cases, therefore each visit will be assessed accordingly.

6.7 A risk assessment must also cover transport to and from the venue. The coach company we use on a regular basis has provided us with a letter detailing all the health and safety measures it routinely takes, including:

- the provision and required use of seat belts;
- proper vetting of the driver by the police;
- proper insurance for the driver;
- details of first aid and emergency equipment;
- breakdown procedures.

6.8 The group leader will double-check that all adults helping to supervise the trip have been subject to police checks.

6.9 Where an activity is more than 24 hours, a copy of the completed risk assessments will be given to the head teacher, the governing body, our OEAP Adviser from EvolveAdvice.co.uk, EVC and all adults supervising the trip. H&S committee review generic risk assessments as necessary.

7 Transport

7.1 The costing of off-site activities should include any of the following that apply:

- transport;
- entrance fees;
- insurance;
- provision of any special resources or equipment;
- costs related to adult helpers;
- any refreshments that the school has opted to pay for.

7.2 Transport arrangements will allow a seat for each member of the party. It is our policy only to use coaches fitted with seat or lap belts, and to insist that they be worn by all those participating in the visit.

7.3 Private cars are only used through individual arrangements between parents.

7.4 All staff members are included in the school business travel insurance when attending work at a different location i.e. meetings, courses, trips, residentials etc.

8 Communication with parents and carers

- 8.1 The parents/carers of children taking part in an off-site activity should be provided with all appropriate information, including clothing requirements about the intended visit. Parents or carers must give their permission in writing before a child can be involved in any off-site activities.
- 8.2 Funding for off-site activities is provided mainly by parental contributions (voluntary), with a limited subsidy from the parent–teacher association. This must be made clear to parents and carers in all correspondence about an educational visit at the planning stage.
- 8.3 No child may be excluded from an activity because of the unwillingness or inability of the parent to make a contribution. Parents and carers will be informed of this principle through the school prospectus and letters sent home about intended visits.
- 8.4 The timetable for the payment of contributions should allow for the head teacher to make a decision about the financial viability of the activity in reasonable time.

9 Further health and safety considerations

- 9.1 Before the visit takes place the party leader must ensure that emergency contact numbers for all parents are up to date.
- 9.2 All trips and Residentials should have at least one adult attending who is first aid trained. (First aid training in KS1 and KS2 and Paediatric first aid training in the Reception class). A first aid kit must be taken on all visits with the appropriate equipment. The EVC will regularly check all first aid kits are up-to-date. A spare asthma inhaler and pump will be provided in the first aid kit. All relevant medication and consent forms will also be taken, (specific to individual children).
- 9.3 All adults accompanying a visit must be made aware, by the visit leader, of the emergency procedures which will apply. All adults will be provided with the 'Emergency Procedure Card'. The visit leader should carry the school mobile phone and each adult should be provided with each members contact number and an emergency telephone number. This will normally be the school number, but where an activity extends beyond the normal school day, the home telephone number of a designated emergency contact should be provided.
- 9.4 Before a party leaves school, the school office should be provided with a list of everyone, children and adults, travelling with the party, together with a programme and timetable for the activity.
- 9.5 The safety of the party, and especially the children, is of paramount importance. During the activity, the visit leader must take whatever steps are necessary to ensure their safety. This involves taking note of any information provided by up-to-date medical questionnaire returns, and ensuring that children are both safe and well looked after at all times.
- 9.6 Prior to an activity, if it is felt that the behaviour or needs of an individual child is likely to compromise the safety of others or the good name of the school, the visit leader should discuss with the head teacher the possibility of excluding that child from the activity/visit/residential.

10 Visit leaders' planning

10.1 Visit leaders must read thoroughly the appropriate guidance for off-site, adventurous and water activities:

- DfES - Health and Safety: Responsibilities and Powers (DfES/0803/2001)
- RoSPA (The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents. Planning and Leading Visits and Adventurous Activities 2013: <https://www.rospa.com/rospaweb/docs/advice-services/school-college-safety/school-visits-guide.pdf>
- HSE (Health & Safety Executive) Risk Education: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/education/index.htm>
- HSE (Health & Safety Executive) Guidance on Education Visits: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/education/visits.htm>
- DfE - Health & Safety: advice on legal duties and powers February 2014 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-and-safety-advice-for-schools>
- OEAP National Guidance - <https://oeapng.info/>
- EvolveAdvice.co.uk - <https://www.evolveadvice.co.uk/>
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2018 - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

They must consult the LA's documentation detailing procedures and requirements, including guidance on Emergency Planning and Crisis Line organisation, and must draw up a Visit Plan which records in writing (including standard forms, where appropriate) the arrangements that have been made.

11 Visit Plan

11.1 The Visit Plan for intended educational visits must include the following:

- risk assessments including a 'Plan B';
- report on preliminary visit;
- names, ages, contact details, permission forms, medical records and other relevant details of all those going on the visit;
- travel schedule;
- accommodation plan (if applicable);
- full plan of activities;
- fire precautions and evacuation procedures;
- intended arrangements for supervision;
- emergency card/contacts and procedures;
- general communications information;
- guidance for party leaders;
- guidance for the emergency contact and head teacher;
- medical questionnaire returns;
- first-aid boxes.

12 Monitoring and review

12.1 This policy is monitored by the governing body and will be reviewed as necessary.

Signed: Nicola Fountain – Head teacher
Amanda Cordell-Edwards – EVC
Abi Ewen – Health & Safety Governor

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