



Off-Site Activities and Visits Policy

May 2021	Review Date: May 2024
	Reviewed by: FGB
Signed:	Mrs Simrit Otway, Headteacher
Date:	
Signed:	Mrs Charlotte Whittle, Chair of Governors
Date:	

Regulations and Guidance

The schools policies and procedures are formulated in conjunction with the advice, guidance and training provided by the Hampshire County Council Outdoor Education, PE and Sport Service and their documentation and published guidance. As such, the regulations and guidance found in the green 'Off-site activities and educational visits' folder or on the EVOLVE website **MUST** be referred to when planning and organising any off-site activity or trip. The Law must be followed regarding the use of seatbelts and booster seats.

Introduction

Outdoor and off-site learning is an important part of a broad and balanced curriculum. It offers staff the opportunity to enrich and enhance the children's learning in a safe and organised manner. It provides children with the chance to experience exciting and challenging activities outside the classroom, leading to more motivated and inspired learners.

A range of activities are planned and used in our schools. These include (*examples in brackets*):

- On-site, out of classroom activities (*using the school grounds to enhance learning*)
- Local ventures in walking distance (*visiting the church, countryside and neighbourhood*)
- Day or part-day ventures (*visiting local schools, events, museums, galleries, theatres, field visits and locality studies involving transport*)
- Residential (*trip to Stubbington*)

Organisation and Management

All visits must be agreed by the Headteacher. Governors will be informed of off-site activities that require approval and are kept informed of specific events and successful ventures through the Headteacher's Report and school newsletters.

An Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) is always in post and it is their responsibility to keep up to date with the Outdoor Education, PE and Sport Service. The current EVCs are

the PE leader and Headteacher. A copy of HCCs 'Off-site activity and educational visits' folder is kept in the school office.

Many straightforward visits are managed entirely in accordance with other school policies and, apart from simple additional considerations, the site and transportation of children, are managed as they would be in the school context. We aim to take the ethos, culture, and challenge to learn in school into all our outdoor learning and off-site contexts.

Approval

Stage 1: Internal Approval

All off-site activities and educational visits should be approved by the Headteacher. Group leaders are required to request approval from the Headteacher for each visit. If the activity is local, non-residential and non-hazardous and has been approved by the Headteacher the visit may then go ahead. Parents must be informed. If the visit is a local visit within walking distance, parents can be informed through text, newsletter or email.

Stage 2: Local Authority Approval via EVOLVE website

After gaining approval from the Headteacher at Stage 1, Local Authority Approval must be gained if the activity involves *pupils in residence away from home for one or more nights, in this country or abroad, or for any adventurous or unusual activity that is classified as potentially hazardous*. Only centres and providers that are approved by the **Outdoor Education Unit** may be used. Approval for these activities must be sought at the earliest opportunity (at least 8 weeks before departure). The EVC must apply for approval through the EVOLVE website. The headteacher is then required to approve the final application online.

Risk Assessment and Risk Management

Group leaders are expected to make a pre-visit inspection of the site to be visited, to take **advice** from somebody who has previously visited the site or to gain the relevant information from a reliable source (e.g. The Outdoor Education website). A 'Risk assessment and risk management record' (Appendix B) must be completed for each visit. The EVC/Headteacher must be given a copy of this in advance of the visit. Group leaders must follow **generic establishment policies** when out of the school (e.g. the school's Behaviour Policy), undertake a **specific risk assessment** (the site, group, leaders, activity, transport) and endeavour to carry out **ongoing risk assessment** during the visit (assessing and reassessing circumstances as they happen).

Communication with Parents

Parents should be kept informed of any and every off-site activity and, where specific consent is required, be given a good understanding of the purposes, nature and programme of the visit on which to base their decision. Parents can then exercise their right to give or withhold consent. Information on routine and local visits within walking distance can be given at the start of the year or term where parents can give their general consent.

Parents must be informed in writing and consent obtained when transport is required from the school site where the visit is within the school day, when it is an unusual or nonregular occurrence or when the visit goes beyond the normal school day. A checklist of information to parents is available for use ('Off-site Activities and educational visits folder or on the EVOLVE website). The statement of consent, found in the 'Off-site activities and educational visits' should be included. Current medical information is required at the start

of every year and parents should be given the opportunity to update the Medical Form each year. It is the responsibility of the parents to ensure that information they give is accurate and up to date. If parents decide to withhold or fail to communicate their consent, the school will make every effort to contact the parents to discuss the matter. The school may be able to offer financial support where necessary, in accordance with the school's Charging Policy.

Inclusion

We are inclusive schools and we will make every reasonable effort to make sure that all children can access outdoor learning opportunities and off-site visits. Where visits are provided as part of the statutory National Curriculum, the inclusion of all is required. Where visits are an enhancement or enrichment activity, inclusion of all is desired but not required. Where enhancement or enrichment activities are a clear choice, as an 'extra' or 'optional', then choice and other factors may mean that not all attend. In addition to curriculum-focused decisions, we must also take into consideration the Health, Safety and Wellbeing of a child as well their effect on other children and staff. Where a child is at risk of not being able to attend an off-site visit, the child's parents will be alerted by the group leader as soon as possible and every reasonable step will be taken to enable that child to take part. Alternative supervised arrangements within school however will be made for children unable to take part in a trip or visit.

Safeguarding

The school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy follow and include off-site activity, including residential activity. In particular, staff should be aware of guidance on:

- Acceptable behaviour and avoiding unnecessary contact
- Appropriate employment checks on volunteers other responsible adults who support these ventures
- External providers. These can be drawn from the Outdoor Education, PE and Sport Service's vetted database, which confirms that safety management checks are in place. New providers should be referred to the Outdoor Education, PE and Sport Service using the appropriate form

Incidents and Emergencies

The Children's Services Incident and Emergency 'Establishment Plan' has been used as the basis for all incident and emergency response.

A first aid kit should be taken on all off-site activities that are not within 5 minutes of school or First Aid station. Standard **Health and Safety** rules apply, wherever the visit. An adult trained in Paediatric First Aid **MUST** accompany all trips with children attending from the Foundation Stage.

Group leaders should be familiar with the procedures to be followed in the event of a serious accident/ incident or fatality. **Group leaders MUST** have lists of names, telephone numbers and addresses of next of kin of all members of the group. A mobile phone should be carried. Similar lists **MUST** be kept at school, including any last minute amendments. A 'base contact person' **MUST** be nominated before the visit who can also be contacted 'out of hours'. In the event of a serious accident/ incident, the **group leader** and **base contact person** should follow the advice given on the 'HCC Emergency Procedures' cards. **No statements to the press/ media should be made.**

Responsible Adult : Child Ratios

Activity	Qualifications/staffing	Maximum ratios	Notes
Local visits – in the local area, close to support at the base	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An experienced group leader (recommended) Other qualified leader(s) number as required Other responsible adult(s) in support A minimum of two leaders required, unless exceptional circumstances are agreed 	Under 5 1:6 Under 8 1:8 8 – under 18 1 per activity or supervision group (maximum 1:20)	A minimum of one qualified leader is needed for every group or class. They can then be supported by other qualified leaders or responsible adults. Minimum ratios are not recommended ratios. Small working groups of 6-12 remain the target
Day visits – more than 60 miles or one hour from base	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An experienced group leader (recommended) Other qualified leader(s) number as required Other responsible adult(s) in support A minimum of two leaders required 	Under 5 1:6 Under 8 1:8 8 – under 18 1 per activity or supervision group (maximum 1:12)	
Residential visit, UK or abroad	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An experienced group leader (recommended) Other qualified leader(s) number as required Other responsible adult(s) in support A minimum of two leaders required Large or complex visits must have an experienced leader 	Under 5 1:6 Under 8 1:8 8 – under 18 1 per activity or supervision group (maximum 1:12) These ratios do not include the centre/residential base staff	As above, however it is recommended that the ratio of qualified leader to responsible adult support is low, 1:1 or 1:2 Where the visit is residential, the residential conditions should apply

NOTE

Group Leader

- the person who has overall charge of the venture

Qualified Leader

- a teacher, nationally qualified youth worker or lecturer (also some NVQ Level 3 qualified personnel)

Volunteers and other

Responsible adult(s)

- any other adult, known to the establishment, who is deemed by the head of the establishment to be responsible enough to support the venture.

Parents are welcome to support the group leader on trips and visits where their support is appropriate and by invitation. Parents and other volunteers, acting as responsible adults, must be clear about what is expected of them, their responsibilities, who to report to, how to communicate to children, how to manage their behaviour, what to do in an emergency with an understanding of their 'duty of care'. The group leader must ensure that all adult helpers

are supervised throughout the trip/visit. In most cases the adult helpers may have already completed a volunteer application form, a DBS check carried out.

Transport (including advice on seatbelts and booster seats)

Coaches and minibuses should only be booked from reputable companies. Coaches and minibuses **must** have seat belts and be used by all children and adults. There is no requirement to provide a 'booster seat' for such journeys unless the child is travelling in the front passenger seat, in which case one must be used. On organised trips, where a regular service bus is used and which is designed for standing passengers, a seat belt need not be used unless it is provided. Supervising adults should spread themselves throughout the coach. Advice for long coach journeys and other modes of transport (rail, air, ferries, boats and ships) must be sought from the 'Off-site activities and educational visits' file. Drivers of minibuses engaged in school business must have completed the MIDAS training course successfully.

The **group leader** is responsible for making arrangements for the transport booking to be confirmed a week before departure. The use of private cars, driven by group leaders or volunteers, may be permitted by the Headteacher. The vehicle must be appropriately insured and road worthy. A 'car insurance confirmation' form must be completed beforehand. Further details can be found in the 'Off-site activities and educational visits' file. All children, from the age of 3 and up to 135cm in height must, BY LAW, use appropriate child restraints (booster seats) where seat belts are fitted in the front and back seats of private vehicles. Children need to be in a high backed booster until they reach the height of 125cm, after then, they can use a backless one. Children must use an adult seat belt in a rear seat only if correct child restraint is not available for a short distance in an unexpected necessity, if two occupied child restraints prevent fitting a third in the back or when travelling in a taxi. It is strongly recommended however that all children travelling on a school trip have equal access to the appropriate safety equipment.

Monitoring and Review

Monitoring of the quality of learning and teaching includes outdoor learning and off-site visits. Feedback from **staff** contribute to the review of quality learning experiences and providers outside the classroom and help form recommendations for the future. The Headteacher regularly reports to the **governors**, in the form of the Headteacher's Report to Governors or through specific items on a committee or Full Governing Body meeting agenda. Good practice is celebrated with **staff** in staff meetings and INSET days as well as through informal procedures with any complaints being referred to the Headteacher, if appropriate. This policy should be reviewed every three years, or as required if regulations, guidance or circumstances change.

DECLARATION FORM

Safeguarding statement

At this school, we strongly recognise the need for vigilant awareness of safeguarding issues. Staff, pupils, parents and governors should feel secure that they could raise any issues or concerns about the safety or welfare of children and know that they will be listened to and taken seriously. This will be achieved by

maintaining an ethos of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and protecting staff. This is supported by clear behaviour, anti-bullying and child protection policies, appropriate induction and training, briefing and discussion of relevant issues and relevant learning in line with current legislation and guidelines.

The school may require parents or volunteers who have regular unsupervised access to young people to be checked through arrangements with the Disclosure and Barring Service.

All drivers must:

- Hold a valid driving licence for the type of vehicle being driven
- Be fit to drive
- Have no medical condition which affects their ability to drive
- Have a valid MOT for any vehicle older than 3 years old
- Ensure that any vehicle is roadworthy, including brakes, lights, tyres, bodywork, wipers, mirrors etc.
- Ensure that any vehicle used has current road tax
- Ensure that they adhere to the appropriate speed limit
- Ensure that all seat belts are working and worn by everybody in the vehicle

Insurance:

- Maintain valid insurance, as a minimum, for third party liability
- Check with their insurance company and inform them that the driver occasionally conveys children on school activities. (This is unlikely to affect the cost of your insurance premium.)

Safety:

- Be familiar with, and drive in accordance with, the Highway Code at all times
- Drive safely and observe the speed limit
- Before driving not to consume alcohol or drugs which may impair driving
- Ensure that all passengers wear seat belts as appropriate
- Use child proof locks on rear doors where necessary
- Child seats such as booster seats are to be used at all times according to the height and age of each child in the vehicle

I have read and understood the above requirements and agree to comply with them. I agree to inform the school if circumstances change and I can no longer comply with these arrangements.

Signature:

Date:

Name (Please print)

Number of seats in vehicle:

School office use:	✓	Expiry Date:
Evidence Seen:		
Insurance		
MOT		