

St. John's C of E Primary School



Off-Site Activities and Visits Policy

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Off-Site Activities and Trips Policy

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. This guidance is based upon the National Guidance from the OEAP. As such, the regulations and guidance found in the green 'Off-site activities and educational visits' folder (kept in the school office) 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. Children **MUST** use a child car seat until they're 12 years old or 135 centimetres tall, whichever comes first. Children over 12 or more than 135cm tall must wear a seat belt.

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, allotment and neighbourhood*)
- Day or part-day ventures (*visiting local schools, events, museums, galleries, theatres, field visits and locality studies involving transport*)
- Residential ventures (*visiting further afield in the UK when pupils sleep away from home or when sleep in school for sleepover type ventures*)

Organisation and Management

All visits must have an educational nature with an outcome linked to learning and be agreed by the **Headteacher** prior to booking. **Governors** will be informed of off-site activities and 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 trained **EVC** is Kirsty Hiseman. A copy of HCC's '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 learning 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 at least 10 weeks before the date of the visit for day visits and 2 weeks before local visits. This approval should be sought before booking visit. Group leaders are required to complete 'Internal approval' form (Appendix A) for each visit. If the activity has been approved by the **Headteacher**, the visit may then go ahead. The visit approval form, along with any invoices **MUST** then be given to the **School Business Manager**. Parents must be informed with at least 8 weeks' notice for visits outside the local area or any visit involving transportation. The letter template for visits must be used to ensure consistency and correct wording. Letters **MUST** be checked by the **Headteacher** and **School Business Manager** before being issued to parents. If the visit is a local visit within walking distance, parents can be informed by text, letter or email within a suitable notice period of 3 days.

Stage 2: Local Authority Approval via EVOLVE website

ALL non-local visits must be logged on EVOLVE at least 4 weeks prior to visit taking place. After gaining approval from the **Headteacher** at Stage 1, visits must be logged on EVOLVE in order that the **EVC** and **Headteacher** can check the relevant information has been logged, risks have been assessed and minimised where necessary. **Local Authority** approval must also 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. **Local Authority** 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 2 part 'Risk assessment and risk management record' (See 'Off-site activities and educational visits' folder) must be completed for each visit. This must be uploaded to EVOLVE as part of the approval form and the **Headteacher** must be given a copy of this in advance of the visit (at least 1 week before date of visit). A 'Child Specific Risk Assessment' (See 'Off-site activities and educational visits' folder) should be used for children in conjunction with **parents** if deemed necessary. **Group leaders** must follow school 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).

Group Leaders will hold a pre-visit meeting for all adults assisting for any off-site activity so that clear guidelines are established and so that this policy is understood and adhered to. Group Leaders are responsible for ensuring that all necessary equipment is taken and returned e.g. medical bags, Hi-Viz jackets, throw bags etc.

ALL Group Leaders will hold the relevant qualification 'Leading Off Site Visits'/ 'Outdoor Leader Course' issued by Hampshire County Council Outdoor Education, PE and Sport Service. This qualification must be updated every three years.

Completed Documentation

A copy of all documentation (Internal form, risk assessment, children's names and addresses) must be left at the school office.

If there is more than one vehicle being used, give the office a list identifying each child's mode of transport (e.g. coach 1, coach 2)

Communication with Parents

Parents MUST be kept informed of any and every off-site activity. Where specific consent is required they must be given a reasonable time frame (as detailed above) and 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** are given a copy of the most recent Synopsis of Travel Insurance (Found on EVOLVE) at the start of every year or on entry or when a residential off-site visit is taking place.

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 non-regular occurrence or when the visit goes beyond the normal school day. A 'template letter' and checklist of information to parents is available for use ('Off-site Activities and educational visits' folder). The statement of consent, found on the 'template letter' and in the 'Off-site activities and educational visits' folder 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. When we ask parents for the cost of the visit, it must be clear that all transportation costs are a voluntary contribution. It must be stated on the letter to parents though, that if not enough voluntary contributions are made, the trip will not take place.

Inclusion

We are an inclusive school 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. A 'Child Specific Risk Assessment' (See 'Off-site activities and educational visits' folder) should be completed for the child in conjunction with **parents**. 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 Policies 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 **MUST** be taken on **ALL** off-site activities. 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 the most appropriate adult with **relevant experience** who is 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. Mobile phones 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 and contact the Hampshire Outdoor Team for support. **No statements to the press/ media should be made.**

All inexperienced adults (e.g. ECTs, SCITT students, new staff) should have the opportunity to shadow/ observe appropriate adults with relevant experience leading an off-site visit and attend Outdoor Leader training when appropriate.

Responsible Adult: Child Ratios

Guidance given for supervision ratios. These are minimum ratios – adult: child supervision may be increased where necessary.

Activity/Visit	Staffing/Qualification	Minimum Ratio
Day visits that take place in the local area and/or further from school base without an adventurous element (see below)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An experienced Visit Leader • Qualified and experienced leaders, minimum Outdoor and Visit Leader Certificated • Other responsible adult(s) to support A minimum of two leaders required, unless in exceptional circumstances	Reception: 1:6 Key Stage 1: 1:8 Key stage 2 and above: 1:12 For very local and/or low risk visits a higher ratio (maximum 1:20) may be considered for Key Stage 2 and above
Visits in open country, near water, a significant distance away from buildings and/or shelter/away from immediate support Adventurous Activities	Qualified and experienced leaders, minimum Outdoor and Visit Leader Certificated <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other qualified leader(s) • Volunteers and other responsible adult(s) • There should be a qualified First Aider for any self-led activity 	Reception: 1:6 Key Stage 1: 1:8 Key Stage 2 and above: 1:12
Residential visit, UK or abroad	An experienced group leader <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least one Outdoor and Visit Leader certificated (or equivalent) leader is recommended • Other qualified leader(s) • Other responsible adult(s) in support • A minimum of two leaders required Large or complex visits must have an experienced leader	Reception: 1:6 Key Stage 1: 1:8 Key Stage 2 and above: 1:12 These ratios do not include the centre/ residential base staff

Parents are welcome to support the **group leader** on trips and visits where their support is appropriate and by invitation. The **group leader** must ensure that **parents** and other **volunteers**, acting as **responsible adults**, are 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'. **Mobile phones must only be used in an emergency and must NOT be used to take photos by any adult on the visit.** 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 and references obtained. Parents of children taking part in the trip may also be asked to take responsibility for other children, unless asked specifically to accompany their own child. The **group leader** may also ask parents to supervise groups of children not including their own child.

Transport (including advice on seatbelts and booster seats)

Coaches should only be booked from reputable companies. Coaches and minibuses **MUST** have seat belts and be used by all children and adults. Hampshire County Council and the Law must be followed regarding the use of seatbelts and booster seats. 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' folder. Drivers of minibuses engaged in school business **MUST** have completed the MIDAS training course successfully. If children are taken out on the school minibus, parental consent **MUST** be obtained.

The **group leader** is responsible for arranging the transport booking and to confirm booking at least a week before departure. The use of private cars, driven by **group leaders**, other **employees of the school** 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' folder. **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. Booster Seats are advised for children 15kgs and up (from approx. 4 years) with Booster Cushions for children from 22kgs (from approx. 6 years).** 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.



Internal Approval Form

All visits must have an educational purpose and be agreed by the **Headteacher**. This form should be completed and submitted to the Headteacher at least **10 weeks** before the intended visit (**2 weeks** for local visits). Risk Assessments should be handed to the Headteacher prior to the off-site activity at least a week before the intended visit

Year Group			
Purpose of visit			
Venue		Telephone:	
Approx. Cost of Admission			
How many children will be involved?			
Group Leader			
How many staff and helpers (please name if known at this stage)			
Mode of transport		Telephone:	
Date and time of departure			
Date and time of return			
Any further costs			
HT Approval	Yes	No	HT Signature:
	Reason why if denied:		