



Off-Site Activities and Excursion Policy

Definition

Off-site activities are those activities arranged by or under the auspices of the school which take place outside the boundaries of the school.

The school believes that off-site activities complement and enhance the curriculum by providing experiences which would be impossible within the school boundaries.

Staff arranging or otherwise involved in off-site activities must make themselves familiar with the school's **Off Site Activities and Excursion Procedures**. All off-site activities must take place under the terms of this policy, following the advice and procedures outlined.

This policy takes account of the guidance issued by the DCSF (Health and safety of Pupils on Educational Visits).

Planning

Where staff are proposing to arrange an off-site activity the approval of the Head must be obtained before any commitment is made on behalf of the school. Sufficiently detailed proposals should be provided by the member of staff to allow for an informed decision to be made.

Where the activity involves a period of more than 24 hours, an overnight stay or a journey by sea or air, the Head will need to be fully aware of all proposed arrangements before sanctioning the activity.

Wherever possible the staff planning an off-site activity should make a preliminary visit to the venue in order to familiarise themselves and make a proper assessment of its suitability, bearing in mind the age of the children, the size of the group, the time of year (and probable weather conditions) and the suitability of the facilities. The costs of such a visit may be reclaimed and should be included in the overall cost of the activity.

The costing of off-site activities should include any costs associated with the visit which would normally fall on the school e.g. transport, entrance fees, insurance, provision of any resources or equipment specific to the activity. This should include the costs related to adult helpers.

The Head will appoint a party leader to be responsible for running the activity. This will normally be a teacher employed at the school. A designated deputy leader will also be needed for each party.

When taking children on residential visits, the male / female composition of the staff needs to be considered. All residential trips with both boys and girls must have at least one male and one female adult present.

An activity which is sanctioned must be staffed to at least the ratio outlined in the **Off Site Activities and Excursion Procedures**.

Transport and Travel

Transport arrangements should provide a seat for each member of the party. It is the policy of the school to use coaches with seat/lap belts.

Where private cars are used for transport the party leader is responsible for ensuring that the insurance of each driver covers such journeys. Parental permission should be sought in all such cases.

The parents of children taking part in an off-site activity should be provided with appropriate information about the activity. Where the activity is taking place entirely within a normal school day it is sufficient to obtain an acknowledgement that the parents are aware of the arrangements. Where the activity extends beyond the normal school day written permission from the parent must be obtained.

Costings

Funding for off-site activities is provided mainly by parental contributions. Where a child may be excluded from an activity because of the unwillingness or inability of the parent to make a contribution, this matter should be raised with the Head.

The timetable for the payment of contributions should allow for the Head to make a decision about the financial viability of the activity in reasonable time.

Administrative Arrangements

A full risk assessment must be undertaken, as outlined in the **Off Site Activities and Excursion Procedures**. All adults accompanying a party must be made aware, by the party leader, of the emergency procedures which will apply. Each adult should be provided with 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.

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/timetable for the activity. Home contact details should be recorded on this form.

When outside bodies are employed to lead the children, leaders need to check that the centre is licensed by contacting the Adventure Activities Licensing Authority.

Equal Opportunities

Where practically possible, children should not be barred from participating in both day and residential visits. A view should be taken by the leader of the party and by the Headmaster, in discussion with the child's parents and the managers of the venues involved, whether a child's participation would compromise either his / her or the party's safety.

Consideration needs to be given to the level of disability, the provision of access at the centre(s) visited and the terrain to be covered.

A residential visit may also be inappropriate for children requiring a high level of medical support. Special consideration will need to be given to children requiring medication for Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder. Teachers are not required to administer medication; therefore a residential visit may not be appropriate. Children requiring inhalers, as part of their daily routine should not be barred from participation provided that their full medical details are supplied on their medical form.

The Headmaster reserves the right to refuse permission to join a residential visit should a child's behaviour have proven to be unsatisfactory on previous visits.

Off site Incidents

The school will appoint a member of the SMT as the emergency school contact for each visit. All major incidents should immediately be relayed to this person. All incidents and accidents occurring on a visit should be properly reported upon return to school. The party leader should take appropriate action to ensure that pupils injured or hurt while on a school visit are given appropriate medical attention. They should attempt to make contact with the parents or guardians of the injured pupil prior to seeking such attention, if this is possible. Arrangements for the collection of medical information prior to the excursion or trip are outlined in the **Off Site Activities and Excursion Procedures**.

Should an accident or incident occur, it is important that details of the circumstances and actions of those present are noted. This should be done as soon as possible rather than waiting until returning to school. An accident book, kept in the sick room, should be used for this purpose.

It is imperative that staff undertaking trips do not make any comments to the press regarding any incident. The Head, Bursar or named member of the SMT should be the conduit of such information.

Safety Responsibilities

The safety of the party, and especially the children, is of paramount importance. During the activity the party leader must take whatever steps are necessary to ensure that safety.

Prior to an activity, if it is felt that the behaviour of an individual child is likely to compromise the safety of others or the good name of the school, the party leader should discuss with the Head the possibility of excluding the child from the activity.

For all trips a First Aid box, fully equipped as per the requirements stipulated in the First Aid Policy, must be taken on all trips.

A member of staff with a first aid qualification should accompany the trip. On all trips involving EYFS children a member of staff with a current full Paediatric First Aid certificate must accompany the trip.

Appropriate checks must be made on volunteers accompanying trips or involving overnight stays. In the case of the latter, a full CRB check will be required, along with the other checks detailed in the Recruitment Policy.

More detailed guidance on procedures and requirements follow.

Off Site Activities and Excursion Procedures

1. **Excursions** which require specific consent include visits or journeys beyond the immediate locality of the school which are not of the normal school routine. Prior to all off-site activities, reference must be made to the 'Off-Site Activities and Excursions Policy'.

2. **Planning**

Details of all visits must be submitted to the Head for approval well in advance using the standard request form.

Approval for excursions will only be given after other appropriate members of the teaching staff have been consulted to assess the impact of the excursion on classes and or teaching.

Where possible, excursions should be planned before the start of a school term so that the information can be included on the school calendar.

All visits and journeys during term must be made with due regard to their educational value. Visits and journeys held in the school holidays may be recreational in purpose.

3. Conduct

All pupils on a school visit should conduct themselves in such a way as to bring credit to themselves and to the school. It is the responsibility of the teacher or teachers in charge of the group to ensure that all pupils are properly briefed, in advance, of the standards expected of them during the visit, and to see that these standards are maintained throughout.

4. Procedure

Seek approval from the Head using the standard request forms (Completed Application, Head's Form – Form 1).

Inform all pupils and parents of the excursion.

Undertake pupil (and parent if necessary) briefing. For excursions which involve overnight stays, this briefing must be in writing.

Check insurance arrangements with the Head if the excursion involves overnight stays, outside experts, overseas travel and / or risky, dangerous or unusual activities.

For excursions which take place outside office hours, appoint a School Contact Person and ensure group supervisors have details of the school contact.

Arrange for all pupils to have a signed consent form. A full set of Consent form. A full set of consent forms (or a digest giving a list of participants and emergency contacts) is to be given to the school office, to the school contact person and to the teacher in charge of the excursion. Also ensure that supervisors have details of pupils special educational or medical needs which will be necessary for them to carry out their tasks effectively.

Write a detailed itinerary for the excursion. Give a copy of the itinerary to the school office and to the school contact person.

Ensure that group supervisors and the school contact have a copy of the emergency procedures.

Undertake a complete and comprehensive 'Risk Assessment' (Form 2 – Copy this document if further assessments need to be undertaken).

Ensure supervisors / pupil ratios are appropriate for the needs of the group (see section 7).

Await authorisation from the Head Teacher (Form 1).

All forms are to remain attached throughout the process and upon completion of procedure 4.12, are to be followed to Excursion Policy Co-ordinator

5. The itinerary must include the following information

- exact times of the excursions
- method of transport including the name (s) of each company, etc.
- place and time of departure
- place and time of return
- emergency contact at the destinations
- emergency school contact person
- list of all participants

6. The briefing should include the following information:

- name of teacher in charge of the excursion
- exact times of the excursion
- name of the teacher in charge of the excursion
- method of transport
- place and time of departure

- place and time of return
- details of contingency plans for late return
- emergency school contact person
- a list of equipment, suggested clothing, passports, E111s, etc.
- a statement about pocket money
- a statement about medicines
- a statement about expected standards of conduct and specific rules (where appropriate) about smoking and alcohol

7. Staffing Ratios

The number of supervisors (teachers, helpers, parents) required will depend on the nature of the excursion, the numbers, ages, maturity, competence, behaviour, reliability etc, of the pupils. The following table may be used as a guide:

AGE GROUP / ACADEMIC YEAR	ADULT / PUPIL RATIO
2 YEAR OLD	1 TO 2
KINDERGARTEN	1 TO 4
RECEPTION	1 TO 5
YEARS 1 TO 3	1 TO 6
YEARS 4 TO 6	1 TO 10

Note: On residential visits, the ratio should be 1 to 10 on the proviso of additional qualified staff.

All staff and volunteers taking part in a trip need to have been cleared within the school's normal vetting procedures. No person will be allowed to take part in a residential visit without having been CRB checked.

8. Advice to those taking an excursion

- 8.1 Communicate ground rules to the party. This should cover matters such as: hygiene and safety, catering arrangements, fire procedure, locations of telephones, care of equipment and belongings, map of locality, use of free time, rules, procedure for medical attention, list of sleeping arrangements, location of adults and group leader.
- 8.2 Pocket money. Don't put money into a private account under any circumstances. The amount of pocket money should be fixed with a maximum and minimum amount. If money is over a certain amount (stipulated by the party leader) there should be an arrangement for an adult to look after it. It is suggested that, in this case, money should be documented and signed for. Cash should be kept in a safe if possible.
- 8.3 Any additional expenses incurred during the trip must have a receipt.
- 8.4 If you use your own car to transport pupils, it is essential that your insurance extends to use for business purposes including the transport of school children. Parents should be informed in advance if you know that a private car will be used. In an emergency situation you will need to use your best judgement.

- 8.5 A first Aid kit must be carried for all excursions (except those which are local and low-risk).
- 8.6 All pupils must know how and where to contact a responsible adult.
- 8.7 The teacher in charge of the excursion must know, at all times, where each party member is, and with whom.
- 8.8 All medication should be handed in to a group leader.
- 8.9 On departure, the group leader needs to ensure such things as the tidiness of the area / rooms, security, equipment returned or secure, damage and breakages noted and reported, keys returned.

9. Risk Assessment:

The underlying basis of health and safety care is to control risks. This is effectively achieved through risk assessment.

When planning an off-site visit all the potential risks to the pupil and adults undertaking that visit should be assessed and, where it is 'reasonably practicable', elimination of or alleviation of those risks achieved. This should be undertaken before the visit is started (well in advance).

The five major considerations for risk assessment are:

- a) identification of hazards
- b) who might be affected
- c) how can risks be reduced to an acceptable level
- d) can these measures be implemented
- e) what contingency plans can be put into place if all else fails

(Forms 2 is the relevant form to be completed).

10. Pre-visits:

In order to undertake a full and comprehensive assessment of risks, it may be essential to undertake a pre-visit. Even where the visit is made regularly, risks should be reassessed from time to time. When undertaking risk assessments, consider these variables;

- a) the number of pupils involved
- b) the age of the pupils, their sex, ability and general behaviour
- c) the previous experience of the group in undertaking off-site visits
- d) the time of the day and the time of year
- e) the total arrangements
- f) the hazards of environment being visited
- g) the numbers, experience and quality of accompanying staff and volunteers
- h) the nature of the activity

11. Evaluation

An Evaluation must be completed by all Party Leaders as soon as is possible after the completion of the trip or excursion. (Form 3)

APPLICATION FOR THE APPROVAL OF EDUCATIONAL VISITS BY THE HEAD

Not all sections will be relevant to every proposed visit:

School/Group: _____

Group leader: _____

The group leader should complete this form as soon as possible once the preparations are complete. The group leader should have already received approval of the proposed visit in principle and should have regularly updated the Head on the progress of the preparations. The group leader should obtain parental consent.

When approval is given, one copy should be retained by the head teacher and another by the group leader. The Head should be informed of any subsequent changes in planning, organisation, staffing. If required, the head should seek approval from the Governing Body.

1. Purpose of visit and specific educational objectives:

2. Places to be visited:

3. Dates and times:

Date of Departure: _____

Time: _____

Date of Return: _____

Time: _____

4. Transport arrangements: Include the name of the transport company and vehicle registration number(s).

5. Organising company/agency (if any): Include licence reference number if the body is registered with the Adventure Activities Licensing Authority.

Name: _____

Address:

Tel: _____

Licence No if registered: _____

6. Proposed cost and financial arrangements:

7. Insurance arrangements for all members of the proposed party, including voluntary helpers: Include the name of the insurance company. (Only necessary if additional insurance is required)

Insurance Cover: _____

Policy No: _____

Address: _____

8. Accommodation to be used:

Name: _____

Address:

Name of head of centre (if available): _____

9. Details of the programme of activities:

10. Details of any hazardous activity and the associated planning, organisation and staffing:

11. Names, relevant experience, qualifications and specific responsibilities of staff:

12. Names, relevant qualifications and specific responsibilities of other adults accompanying the party:

13. Name, address and telephone number of the contact person in the home area who holds all information about the visit or journey in case of an emergency:

14. Existing knowledge of places to be visited and whether an exploratory visit is intended:

15. Size and composition of the group:

Age range: _____

Number of boys: _____

Number of girls: _____

Adult to pupil ratio: _____

Leader/participant ratio: _____

16. Information on parental consent:

Information on whether the group leader has received all consent forms duly completed and signed (parental consent may precede or follow approval):

Please attach copy of information sheet sent to parents, the parental consent form, and the risk assessment form.

17. Names of pupils with special educational or medical needs:

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Group leader full name: _____

Form 1

CONFIRMATION FROM HEAD TEACHER FOR VISIT TO GO AHEAD

To be completed by the Head teacher

To the group leader:

1. I have studied this application and am satisfied with all aspects including the planning, organisation and staffing of this visit. Approval is given.

a. Please ensure that I have all relevant information including a final list of group members, details on parental consent and a detailed itinerary at least seven days before the party is due to leave.

b. Your report and evaluation of the visit including details of any incidents should be with me as soon as possible but no later than 14 days after the party returns.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Head teacher full name: _____

A copy of the completed application form and details of any subsequent changes should be retained by the Head. A copy should also be available for the responsible authority (Governing Body).

Form 2

RISK ASSESSMENT FORM

Risk Assessment for

Hazard	
Risk Factors	
Controls	

Hazard	
Risk Factors	
Controls	

Hazard	
Risk Factors	
Controls	

Assessment and Action plan prepared by: _____

Date: _____

Form 3

EVALUATION OF THE VISIT TO BE COMPLETED BY THE GROUP

LEADER FOR FUTURE REFERENCE

School Group: _____

Group Leader: _____

Date(s) of Visit: _____

Venue: _____

Evaluation

You may wish to make reference to

1. The Centre's pre-visit organisation:
2. Travel arrangements:
3. Content of education programme provided:
4. Instruction:
5. Equipment:
6. Suitability of environment:
7. Accommodation:
8. Food:
9. Evening activities:
- 10 Courier/Representative:

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Group leader's full name: _____

To be detached and completed after all ventures and given to the Excursions Coordinator.