

Blakedown C E Primary School

Educational Off-Site Visits

Policy Number 1.6

Trips & Visits



Trips & Visits Policy

(see also Health, Safety & Welfare, Safeguarding, Inclusion Policies, Safer Use of digital images)

1 STRATEGY

- 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 the children's learning experiences.
- 1.2 Our policy guides staff to identify the best additional experiences for the children so that they are able to learn in and through a variety of ways, ensuring that they feel a sense of **joy** during their learning and **achieve** the best outcomes they possibly can and **serve** fully as positive members of society. They will start to identify how they and others are '**fearfully and wonderfully made.**' Psalm 139.
- 1.3 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 POLICY

- 2.1 The aims of our off-site visits are to:
 - 2.1.1 enhance curricular and recreational opportunities for our pupils;
 - 2.1.2 provide a wider range of experiences for our pupils than could be provided on the school site alone;
 - 2.1.3 promote the independence of our children as learners, and enable them to grow and develop in new learning environments.
- 2.2 These visits begin with short excursions into the local area in the Early Years, and progress to residential experiences during Key Stage 2.
- 2.3 Curriculum Links: For each subject in the curriculum there is a corresponding programme of activities (which includes visits to the school by specialists). All these activities are in line with guidance published by the LA:
- 2.4 English - theatre visits, visits by authors, poets and theatre groups, extra-curricular drama;
- 2.5 Science - use of the school grounds, visits by science providers for specific workshops; visits to botanical gardens and or farms;
- 2.6 Mathematics - use of shape and number trails in the local environment, orienteering, maths challenge competitions;
- 2.7 History - castle visits, study of local housing patterns, local museums;

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- 2.8 Geography - use of the locality for fieldwork, village trails, rivers, countryside;
- 2.9 Art and design - art gallery visits, use of the locality, visits by creative artists;
- 2.10 PE - a range of sporting fixtures, extra-curricular activities, visits by specialist coaches;
- 2.11 Music - a variety of specialist music teaching, extra-curricular activities, local schools' orchestra, concerts & performances;
- 2.12 Design and technology - visits to local factories or design centres; local High School;
- 2.13 IT - its use in local shops/libraries/secondary schools etc;
- 2.14 RE - visits to local centres of worship, visits by local clergy & community members;
- 2.15 PSHE and Citizenship - visits by local police officers and health workers, NHS, NSPCC, canal and river representatives, railway representatives, RAC and AA.
- 2.16 Residential Visits
 - 2.16.1 Children in Year 4 & Year 6 have the opportunity to take part in residential visits. These activities provide opportunities for the children to develop team work, independence, problem solving and resilience whilst also developing a range of skills which includes those related to PE and the creative arts. Charges are made for the board and lodging, insurance and specialist instruction for certain activities. Parents in receipt of state benefits are exempt from payment or are offered support via the pupil premium.
 - 2.16.2 The residential visits may enable children to take part in outdoor and adventure activities as part of their PE work. Or, it may support development of arts based skills in drama, dance, art, design and music. We undertake these visits only with the agreement of the LA. We provide qualified instructors for all specialist activities that we undertake.

3 PROCEDURE

- 3.1 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.
- 3.2 The school's educational visits coordinator (EVC), will be involved in the planning and management of off-site visits.
The EVC leaders will:
 - 3.2.1 ensure that risk assessments are completed;
 - 3.2.2 support the Head teacher and governing body in their decisions on approval;
 - 3.2.3 assign competent staff to lead and help with trips;
 - 3.2.4 organise related staff training;
 - 3.2.5 verify that all accompanying adults, including private car drivers, have had satisfactory police checks;
 - 3.2.6 make sure that all necessary permissions and medical forms are obtained;

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- 3.2.7 keep records of visits, and ensure there are regular generic assessments of the risks (for example road-crossing) where there are frequent visits to local venues (for example a swimming facility).
- 3.2.8 Staff arranging or otherwise involved in off-site activities must familiarise themselves with the regulations, advice and procedures published by the LA (and available from the school office). All off-site activities must take place in accordance with the LA's instructions.

3.3 Where staff are proposing to arrange an off-site activity, they must seek and obtain the approval of the Head teacher or EVC 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 using Appendix B - Initial Trips Request.

3.4 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 before permitting the activity to take place.

3.5 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 to help us 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. (see Disability Discrimination and Inclusion Policy for details).

3.6 Risk Benefit Assessment

3.6.1 A comprehensive risk benefit assessment is 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 assessment should be based on the following considerations:

- 3.6.1.1 What are the hazards?
- 3.6.1.2 Who might be affected by them?
- 3.6.1.3 What safety measures are needed to reduce risks to an acceptable level?
- 3.6.1.4 Can the group leader put the safety measures in place?
- 3.6.1.5 What steps will be taken in an emergency?

3.6.2 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

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trip, and the party leader should take careful account of the facilities available, with due regard to the proposed size of the group. They should also assess the site's suitability with regard to the age and any particular needs of the children. They 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. The LA will not have given its approval for the visit unless it is satisfied with the venue, its instructors and their risk assessment procedures.

3.6.3 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.

3.6.4 All risk benefit assessments should be completed at least one week before the visit so that these can be shared with the whole staff and with all helpers attending the trip well before the day. All risk benefit assessments and key letters should be uploaded to the EVOLVE system where they have to be authorised by the Headteacher and EVC.

3.6.5 An activity should normally have sufficient adults taking part to provide the following minimum ratios:

3.6.5.1 1 adult to 10 pupils in Years 4 to 6;

3.6.5.2 1 adult to 8 pupils in Years 2 & 3;

3.6.5.3 1 adult to 5 pupils in Early Years & Year 1.

3.6.5.4 Any trip will require a minimum of two adults. However, these are *minimum* requirements, and may *not* provide adequate supervision in all cases. Pupil to adult ratios should also consider the environment and activities being undertaken as well as the mix of needs of the children being taken.

3.6.6 A risk benefit 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:

3.6.6.1 the provision and required use of seat belts;

3.6.6.2 proper vetting of the driver by the police;

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- 3.6.6.3 proper insurance for the driver;
- 3.6.6.4 details of first aid and emergency equipment;
- 3.6.6.5 breakdown procedures.

3.6.7 The group leader will double-check that all adults helping to supervise the trip have been subject to police checks (see 3.2.5 above).

3.6.8 Volunteers or helpers who have not undergone EVC training should not be solely responsible for groups or pupils during a visit. If a trip requires groups to separate from the main leader, reconsideration of who attends the trip must be taken. This may mean that trained EVC staff from across school are required to attend. This should be avoided on the whole as the effect of fewer support staff in school will have an impact across school. This needs to be highlighted on the initial planning request sheet - Appendix B.

3.6.9 A copy of the completed risk benefit assessment will be given to the Head teacher, our educational visits coordinator, and all adults supervising the trip. The risk assessment will be shared and agreed with all staff at least a week before the trip.

3.7 Transport

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

- 3.7.1.1 transport;
- 3.7.1.2 entrance fees;
- 3.7.1.3 insurance;
- 3.7.1.4 provision of any special resources or equipment;
- 3.7.1.5 costs related to adult helpers;
- 3.7.1.6 any refreshments the school has opted to pay for.

3.7.2 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.

3.7.3 Where private cars are used for transport, the group leader is responsible for checking that the insurance of each driver covers such journeys, and double-checking that each driver has been subject to the normal police checks (see 3.2.5).

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3.8 Communication with parents

- 3.8.1 The parents of children taking part in an off-site activity should be provided with all appropriate information about the intended visit. Parents must give their permission in writing by submitting an electronic form before a child can be involved in any off-site activities.
- 3.8.2 Funding for off-site activities is provided mainly by parental contributions (voluntary except in the case of residential visits), with a limited subsidy from the school fund on occasion. This must be made clear to parents in all correspondence about an educational visit at the planning stage, usually at the start of the year within the parent briefings.
- 3.8.3 No child may be excluded from an activity because of the unwillingness or inability of the parent to make a contribution. Parents will be informed of this principle through the school website and letters sent home about intended visits.
- 3.8.4 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.

3.9 Further health and safety considerations

- 3.9.1 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.
- 3.9.2 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.
- 3.9.3 Contact details of every adult attending the trip should be filled in on the Emergency Contact Card issued by Worcestershire and kept on the adult at all times.
- 3.9.4 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. This involves taking note of any information provided by medical questionnaire returns, and ensuring that children are both safe and well looked after at all times.

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- 3.9.5 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 teacher the possibility of excluding that child from the activity.
- 3.9.6 More detailed guidance on procedures and requirements can be obtained from the Local Authority's Off-Site & Hazardous Activities File held in the school office.

3.10 Group leaders' planning

- 3.10.1 Group leaders must read thoroughly the appropriate guidance for off-site activities:
 - 3.10.1.1 Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits: A Good Practice Guide - (DfES 1998) and its supplements;
 - 3.10.1.2 A Handbook for Group Leaders (DfES 2002)
 - 3.10.1.3 Group Safety at Water Margins (DfES 2002)
- 3.10.2 They must consult LA 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.
- 3.10.3 Use of initial planning sheet (Appendix B) and school check-list (Appendix A) to ensure all actions have been processed.

3.11 Visit plan

- 3.11.1 The visit plan for intended educational visits must include the following:
 - 3.11.1.1 risk assessment;
 - 3.11.1.2 report on preliminary visit;
 - 3.11.1.3 applications for approval of visit;
 - 3.11.1.4 general information;
 - 3.11.1.5 names, ages, contact details, permission forms, medical records and other relevant details of all those going on the visit;
 - 3.11.1.6 travel schedule;
 - 3.11.1.7 accommodation plan (if applicable);
 - 3.11.1.8 full plan of activities;
 - 3.11.1.9 fire precautions and evacuation procedures;
 - 3.11.1.10 intended arrangements for supervision;
 - 3.11.1.11 insurance arrangements for all members of the group;
 - 3.11.1.12 emergency contacts and procedures;
 - 3.11.1.13 general communications information;
 - 3.11.1.14 guidance for party leaders;
 - 3.11.1.15 guidance for the emergency contact and head teacher;

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- 3.11.1.16 medical questionnaire returns;
- 3.11.1.17 first-aid boxes.

4. Photography and use of images (including hand held devices)

It is important to note that members of staff or adult volunteers do not use their mobile phones or personal handset devices on trips and are prohibited from taking photographs with their personal handsets.

This is in line with school's Safeguarding policy and Guidance for the Use of Images policy. Members of staff do, however, use school iPads or cameras to take photographs as evidence. These photographs are used in children's portfolios, in class displays and on the school website. All parents are asked to state if they give permission for their child's image to be used on the school website through the paperwork in their initial starter packs.

5. MONITOR AND REVIEW

- 5.1** This policy is monitored by the governing body and will be reviewed every two years or before if necessary.

Checklist for planning a trip



Before booking a trip have you...?

- ❖ Completed initial trip plan request (Appendix B)
- ❖ Proposed a date and checked with Headteacher and office diary
- ❖ Got quotes for visit and coach (office staff will support with this), have an approximate costing per child
- ❖ Been there before? If not arrange a preliminary visit to consider risks and familiarise yourself with the location. Does it meet learning objectives set?

What next?

- ❖ Once trip has been agreed, meet with EVC to discuss trip organisation and key information e.g. ratios
- ❖ At this point the trip can be confirmed and OS4s sent out to parents
- ❖ Start organising adult helpers
- ❖ Upload risk assessments and letters to EVOLVE for Headteacher authorisation
- ❖ Share risk assessment at the next staff meeting

Before you go have you...?

- ❖ Completed emergency contact list for all adults and left a copy in the office
- ❖ Got all adults to read and sign the risk assessment
- ❖ Completed an emergency contact detail card and given to all visit leaders
- ❖ Got all first aid/medical needs met

After the trip

- ❖ Evaluate trip on EVOLVE within a week of the trip
- ❖ Share any ideas to improve safety for future trips
- ❖ Shred any paperwork

All resources available in the EVC file on the staffroom shelf or in the 'planning a trip' folder on the 'Everyone' server

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Appendix B

Initial Trip Plan Request

Rationale: (Why are you planning a trip, what is the purpose and proposed outcomes for pupils?)

Venues/providers comparison (minimum of 3):

1.	2.	3.
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Reasons for final choice:

Are there any pecuniary interests linked to this decision?

Date handed to EVC/HT:

Decision: