



## School Trips and Visit Policy

### Introduction

Educational visits are an excellent opportunity to enrich the curriculum. Most visits take place safely and without incident, however, we are all aware that very occasionally things can and do go wrong. Therefore, it is very important that all trips and visits are properly planned and organised so that all staff involved take reasonable steps to ensure that risks are minimised. The document summarises the current, relevant, health and safety law with respect to how it affects the Headteacher, staff and students of Offenham CE First School.

Offenham CE First School has adopted "OEAP National Guidance" as visit guidance. This guidance is endorsed by HSE and a number of professional associations. It can be found on the following web site:

[www.oeapng.info](http://www.oeapng.info)

### Definition

For the purpose of this policy, a school trip or visit is defined as any occasion when a student or group of students are away from the school site on an educational, and/or social, school related activity and under the supervision of a member of staff. In order to avoid unnecessary repetition, the word 'trip' will largely be used throughout this policy but where this occurs, please understand 'trip and/or visit', as appropriate.

This policy pays attention to the following guidance:

- Students should be able to experience a wide range of activities. Health and Safety measures should help them to do this safely, not prevent them
- It is important that students learn to understand and manage the risks that are a normal part of life
- Common sense should be used in assessing and managing the risks of any activity. Health and safety procedures should always be proportionate to the risks of an activity
- Staff should be given the training they need so they can keep themselves and students safe and manage risks effectively

The Headteacher, Mrs Nicol, is the trained EVC at Offenham CE First School.

She has copies of all relevant documentation and staff must consult the EVC before, during, and after a School trip or visit.

The EVC **must** therefore be notified of all occasions when a student or group of students leave the School premises, either accompanied by members of staff or to meet members of staff at

a pre-arranged location. This forms a key part of the duty of care we owe to students. It is not easy to give a definitive list of such trips but examples include trips to museums, galleries and theatres, trips to educational settings, both in the evenings and at weekends, and sporting events. If staff are in doubt about the nature of a trip or visit, then they should seek the advice of the EVC.

**All staff must provide complete information relating to a School Trip to the EVC.**

The EVC **must** also give permission before any trip can take place. Staff wishing to organise a trip **must** meet with the EVC and discuss the trip in detail before permission is given. It is essential that the EVC also checks the School Calendar where trips have not previously been included. Any visits likely to have a significant impact on the day to day running of the School need to be approved by the EVC.

**Staff must not spend any money or inform students or parents that a trip or visit is going ahead until it has been formally approved.**

### **Planning and Preparation**

#### **The Timing of Trips and Visits**

It is essential to the smooth running of the rest of the School that trips are properly planned and arranged to ensure minimal disruption to all, both those on the trip and those left behind.

Teachers are strongly encouraged to plan their pattern of trips and visits for the coming academic year as early as they can, preferably by May half term. This allows clashes to be kept to a minimum. Trips and visits planned well in advance must be included in the School calendar. Events listed in the School calendar take priority over non-calendared events. The earlier a trip is planned, the more likely it is to be approved

Staff organising a trip must consult as widely as possible with colleagues who might be affected and think carefully about the possible impact of a trip.

#### **Informing Other People**

It is essential that all people concerned with the trip are fully informed at appropriate times. Once the planning has been completed and the trip has been approved, the full details of the trip must be prepared. These details are prepared in unison with the EVC and the school admin staff, to ensure all relevant parties are aware of all information regarding the trip.

The EVC will inform Claire Roberts – COO of DOWMAT should a trip involve:

- An overnight stay (on or off school grounds) or a residential of more than one night
- A provision of an adventurous activity
- An activity where the EVC would like further guidance

#### **Communicating with parents**

Parents must be informed in writing about all trips. Written consent is also required for students to take part in activities in the local area organised by the school including local field trips and a consent letter will be sent out covering local trips at the beginning of the year. Trip leaders must have an alternative option planned for any student whose parents decline

permission to go on a trip.

### **Informing the School**

The School must also know all the relevant details for a trip well in advance of the departure date. For days trips this should be at least one week before the trip departs. When meeting with the EVC a basic risk assessment procedure should also take place (see below). Relevant information should be provided to the EVC, and to reception staff, prior to, during and after a trip as appropriate. The trip leader **must** ensure that he/she is in possession of all parental consent forms, medical forms and all contact number details throughout the trip. Copies of these should also be left on the premises with reception staff or the EVC.

The EVC acts as the school contact for the trip.

### **The Cost of School Trips**

Employees with visit responsibilities must take account of the legal framework relating to charging, voluntary contributions and remissions as set out in sections 449 to 462 of the Education Act 1996.

The school asks for voluntary contributions to make daily/sports trips viable, and may cancel such trips should there be insufficient funds.

The school charges for board, lodgings and travel on residential trips and includes insurance.

All school trips are covered by inclusive insurance.

### **Vetting and DBS Checks**

Staff and volunteer leaders who work frequently or intensively with, or have regular access to young people must undergo a DBS check as part of their recruitment process.

For the purposes of this guidance:

- frequently is defined as "once a week or more"
- intensively is defined as 4 days or more in a month or overnight.

However, it must be clearly understood that a DBS check (or other vetting procedure) in itself, is no guarantee as to the suitability of an adult to work with any given group of children.

The placement of an adult within a situation of professional trust (where children could be vulnerable to physical or mental exploitation or grooming) should always be on the understanding that an overview based on a common-sense risk-benefit assessment process has been considered.

### **Requirement to Ensure Effective Supervision**

Employees with a visit leadership role must meet legal and good practice requirements with regard to Effective Supervision. In general terms, the Law does not prescribe activity-specific staffing ratios; but it does require that the level of supervision and group management is "effective".

Effective supervision should be determined by proper consideration of:

- detailed staffing requirements
- nature of the activity – activities to be stated on parental letter so parents know exactly what their child will be doing on the educational visit.
- nature and ability of the group (including the developmental age, special learning needs, behavioural, medical and vulnerability characteristics etc);
- nature of the environment and whether it is subject to rapid change and prevailing weather
- distance from base support
- gender issues

## **Inclusion**

Every effort should be made to ensure that outdoor learning activities and visits are available and accessible to all, irrespective of special educational or medical needs, ethnic origin, gender or religion. If a visit needs to cater for young people with special needs, every reasonable effort should be made to find a venue that is both suitable and accessible and that enables the whole group to participate fully and be actively involved.

Visit Leaders should take all reasonably practicable measures to include all children. The principles of inclusion should be promoted and addressed for all visits and reflected in establishment policy, thus ensuring an aspiration towards:

- an entitlement to participate
- accessibility through direct or realistic adaptation or modification
- integration through participation with peers

EVCs and Visit Leaders should be aware of the extent to which Inclusion is or is not a legal issue.

Under the Equality Act 2010, it is unlawful to:

- treat a disabled young person less favourably;
- fail to take reasonable steps to ensure that disabled persons are not placed at a substantial disadvantage without justification.

## **Risk Assessments**

A risk assessment is a careful examination of what, in your work, could cause harm to people, so that you can weigh up whether you have taken enough precautions or should do more to prevent harm.

It is not a legal requirement to complete a risk assessment for every activity or trip. Some activities, especially those happening away from School, such as mountaineering, canoeing and sailing, involve higher levels of risk. In these cases, an assessment of significant risks should be carried out. The School must ensure that the person assessing the risk understands the risks and is familiar with the activity planned. The School should take a common sense and proportionate approach, remembering that the purpose of risk assessment and management is to help students to undertake activities safely, not to prevent activities from taking place.

It is important to remember that places such as outdoor pursuits centres, leisure centres, museums, theatres, etc., should carry out their own risk assessments for the facilities they provide. If copies of these are obtained by members of staff, then this will reduce the burden of the risk assessment process.

The risk assessment must be based on the following considerations:

What are the hazards?

What safety measures need to be in place to reduce risks to an acceptable level? Can the trip

leader put the safety measures in place?

What steps will be taken in an emergency?

While every trip will have its own particular risks that must be assessed, research has shown that the following are the most commonly found dangers, so are worthy of particular consideration when doing a risk assessment for any trip away from School.

For trips that will involve outdoor or adventurous activities staff are reminded to request copies of risk assessments from the service provider well in advance of the trip and to refer to these in their own risk assessments.

<b>Hazard</b>	<b>Risk</b>	<b>Control measures</b>
Separation from the party	Getting lost	Regular head count, small groups. Must stay with an adult.
Leaving party member behind	Risk of assault or abduction	Check numbers before every departure.
Road crossing	Being hit by vehicle	All groups to line up parallel with kerb and cross as one. Ensure good sight line. Staff to arrive first at kerbside.
Road traffic	Falling off path into traffic	Keep buffer zone between group and kerb.
Sea/lakes	Drowning	Group maximum of 6. Adults trained.
Sand	Damage to eyes	Students briefed and strong action at first sign of throwing.
Sun	Sunburn	Hat, sun block, parental letter, supervised use.
Heat	Heat stroke or dehydration	Pre-visit and establish access to shaded area. Plentiful supply of liquids.

Trains	Falling into the path of a vehicle	Keep buffer zone between group and train.
--------	------------------------------------	---

## Transport

Careful thought must be given to planning transport to support off-site activities and visits. Statistics demonstrate that it is much more dangerous to travel to an activity than to engage in it and establishments must follow the specialist guidance provided in WCC transport policy. All national and local regulatory requirements must be followed.

The level of supervision necessary should be considered as part of the risk management process when planning the journey, giving proper consideration to issues of driver-distraction when considering what supervision is required for the specific group of passengers being transported in a minibus.

The Visit Leader should ensure that coaches and buses are hired from a reputable company. Transporting young people in private cars requires careful consideration. Where this occurs, there should be recorded procedures.

Booster seats are not compulsory when children travel in a coach, only when they travel in a car. Only if parents sign to say they wish their child to use a booster seat do they have to supply one otherwise school are happy to take the children on the coaches without booster seats.

It is important to note that school cannot use the booster seats with a back on as these will not safely fit on the coach seats. Whilst these are compulsory in cars they are not compulsory in coaches.

However, if due to medical reasons a child needs to have a backed booster seat then this will be accommodated after discussion with EVC/Head Teacher and letter received from parent/carer verifying medical need.

Where possible three-way seatbelts must be worn in coaches. Where the coach company cannot supply a three-way seatbelt then children can travel in a coach and use lap / sash seatbelt.

## Reconnaissance Visits

If possible, an exploratory visit should be made by a teacher before any trip is undertaken. A key factor in reducing risk is knowledge of the place to be visited. Whilst such visits may not always be practical, staff should make every effort to consider such an undertaking.

A member of staff who is to lead a group on an outdoor activity should make a special effort to carry out a reconnaissance visit. If this is not possible then a minimum measure would be to obtain specific information by letter from the venue and from reputable organisations who can provide such information.

## Factors to Consider in Planning a Trip

Planning should reflect the consideration of legal and good practice requirements, ensuring:

- The plan is based on establishment procedures and formally adopted guidance.
- All staff (including any adult volunteer helpers) and the children to be involved, have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities, including their role in the risk management process.
- Those in a position of parental authority have been fully informed and, where appropriate, formal consents have been obtained. Parents are made aware of activities that their children will be doing.
- Proportionate assurances have been obtained from any providers (making full use of national schemes that accredit that assurances have already been obtained by credible inspection regimes).
- Designated emergency contact(s) have been identified that will work on a 24/7 basis where required.

- All details of the activity provision are accessible to the emergency contact throughout the period of the activity.

At a very early stage of the planning process, the provisional staffing team should carry out a planning exercise in order to identify the benefits and learning outcomes of that activity (or range of activities) might achieve. If the outcomes are to be evaluated with any rigor (an Ofsted expectation), then it will be essential that these outcomes are prioritised, and appropriately targeted. A record of these outcomes will help keep the plan focussed and also be a vital part of the risk management process in providing some objectivity in a "Risk Benefit Analysis". Once the targeted outcomes have been recorded, it will then be possible to identify appropriate on-going review and evaluation strategies, including performance indicators.

To reduce bureaucracy and encourage activity, establishments need to take account of the legalities regarding a requirement for formal consent. When an activity is part of a planned curriculum in normal curriculum time and no parental contributions are requested, then a formal consent is not necessary. However, in the interests of good relations between the establishment and the home, it is good practice to ensure that those in a position of parental responsibility are fully informed.

This supports the move towards developing activity-specific policies at establishment level for regular or routine activities. Such policies should be robust and equate to "operational guidance" that makes it clear how the activity should be planned and delivered, meeting all necessary recommendations and requirements, as well as assuring educational quality.

Visit leads to plan and to state which curriculum objectives will be covered on the visit and how they will be used back in school to enhance learning. The curriculum objectives, what the children will be learning while on the trip and follow up lessons are stated on trip proposal form and letter to parents / carers

The degree of complexity of a particular plan or policy (along with its supporting procedures) will need to reflect the nature and complexity of several variables that can impact on any given activity. These variables can be remembered as "STAGER" as explained below.

- Staffing requirements – trained? experienced? competent? ratios?
- Timing and Travel – which company are we using for travel? what time is the trip? late return to school
- Activity characteristics – specialist? insurance issues? licensable?
- Group characteristics – prior experience? ability? behaviour? special and medical needs?
- Environmental conditions – like last time? impact of weather? water levels?
- Remoteness - distance from support mechanisms in place at the home base – transport? residential?

### **The Value and Evaluation of Off-site Activities and Visits**

The Ofsted report "Learning Outside the Classroom – How Far Should You Go?" (October 2008) makes statements in the strongest terms to support the value of off-site activities and visits, including the fact that it raises achievement. Governors, Managers, EVCs and Visit Leaders are strongly recommended to familiarise themselves with the main content of this report. However, it also highlights the finding that even where outdoor learning is highly valued and provided to a high standard, it is rarely evaluated with sufficient rigor – i.e. in the way that classroom learning is evaluated. It is an expectation of this guidance document that the organisation and learning outcomes of all visits and off-site activities are properly evaluated.

#### **Advice**

Staff seeking advice should in the first instance consult the EVC or Headteacher.

Staff leading groups on Offsite Visits must consult the staff server section entitled EVC and Visit [www.oeapng.info](http://www.oeapng.info)

Complete the necessary paperwork and pass to the Headteacher/EVC in advance of the visit.

Complete LEA forms as required and School checklist.

### **GDPR**

School will ensure that parents give informed consent to share their children's data with external providers, ie they know that you may share names, medical details etc with other agencies.

The following line has been added to the parent trip letter.

'I give permission to share my child's data with the external providers if required'

There is a GDPR action point included in the checklist for trip leads to complete prior to trip.

### **Food consumption on trips**

Parents to state if children will be bringing a packed lunch from home or require a packed lunch from school on the trip letter.

No hot lunches to go on school trips.

Visit leader and all adults participating in the trip to be aware of medical and dietary needs of children in group. These are to be stated on class overview sheet.

Packed lunches will be offered to those children in receipt of FSM

### **Terror Threats and Attacks**

In the event of a terror threat or attack staff to turn off mobile devices and to find nearest landline, when possible, to contact emergency services (if needed) and to make contact with school. Visit leaders to follow given advice from emergency services and to follow emergency guidelines which are on the back of the given CRIB CARDS.

### **Emergency Procedures**

Teachers in charge of students have a duty of care to make sure that the students are safe and healthy. They also have a common-law duty to act as a reasonably prudent parent would. Teachers should not hesitate to act in an emergency and to take lifesaving action in an extreme situation.

Emergency procedures are an essential part of planning a school visit. If an emergency happens the priorities are to:

- Assess the situation
- Safeguard the uninjured members of the group
- Attend the casualty
- Inform the emergency services and everyone who needs to know of the incident

### **Guidance on Emergency Procedures**

A copy of the following guidelines must be taken by all party leaders and their deputies.

- Establish nature and extent of emergency
- Make sure that all members of the party are accounted for and safe
- If there are injuries, establish their extent and administer first aid (if you have been trained or feel capable – but be aware of consequences that might follow were you to give incorrect treatment).
- Establish names of the injured and call relevant emergency services.
- Advise other party staff of the incident and that emergency procedures are in operation.
- Ensure that an adult from the party accompanies casualties to hospital.



- Ensure that the remainder of the party are adequately supervised throughout and arrange for their early return to base.
- Arrange for one adult to remain at the incident site to liaise with emergency services until the incident is over and all children are accounted for.
- Control access to telephones until contact is made with the School Headteacher/Emergency contact – DOWMAT representative and until they have had time to contact those directly involved. Pass full details of the incident (name, nature, date and time of incident, location of incident, details of injuries, names and telephone numbers of those involved, action taken so far).
- Telephone numbers for future communication identify alternate telephone numbers in case telephone lines become jammed).
- The School will arrange to contact the parents of those involved. In serious incidents, the parents of all party members should be informed.

#### **Media:**

- A designated person should act as the point of contact with the media to whom all involved should direct questions – this will be managed by DOWMAT.
- Under no circumstances should the name of any casualty be divulged to the media.
- The Party Leader should write down as soon as practicable all relevant details. A record should be made of any witnesses. Any associated equipment should be kept in its original condition.
- Legal liability should not be discussed or admitted.
- All accident forms should be completed and other parties informed as appropriate.
- Inform parents of any delays that will be necessitated

#### **After the Trip**

The trip leader must inform the EVC (or whoever has been delegated as the school contact) that the party has returned safely and ensure that all the students are safely collected from School or have a means to get home.

If any difficulties or incidents occur on a School trip, the EVC must be informed as soon as possible after the trip returns so that appropriate follow up action can be taken quickly.

An evaluation of the trip should be written.