



“I have come in order that you might have life – life in all its fullness.”
John 10:10

Off-Site Visits and Activities Policy

Policy accepted by FGB on:	16/3/2016
Next review:	Spring 2018
Signed (Chair of Governors):	
Statutory policy: <u>Yes/No</u>	On school website: <u>Yes/No</u>

OFF-SITE VISITS AND ACTIVITIES POLICY

(This policy is based on the Somerset LA model policy dated April 2015.)

1. Introduction

Off-site visits/activities are arranged by or on behalf of a Local Authority School, Academy or Educational Establishment, and would normally take place away from the establishment grounds. Off-site activities for children and young people can supplement and enrich their education by providing experiences that would otherwise be impossible. All off-site activities must serve an educational purpose, providing experiences beyond the classroom that enrich learning and personal development.

In this policy, we seek to establish a clear and coherent structure for the planning and evaluation of our off-site visits in order to manage and minimise risk, ensuring the safety and health of all pupils at all times. Within these limits, we seek to make off-site visits available to all pupils and, wherever possible, to make them accessible to those with disabilities. The visits usually take place within the school/working day.

2. Aims and objectives

The aims of our off-site visits are to:

- enhance curricular and recreational opportunities for our pupils;
- provide a wider range of experiences for our pupils than could be provided on the school site alone;
- promote the independence of our children as learners, and enable them to grow and develop in new learning environments.

3. Curriculum links

For each subject in the curriculum, there is a corresponding programme of activities that may include visits to specialist venues. All activities should be in line with guidance published by the Local Authority.

4. Residential activities

Residential visits enable children and young people to take part in a wider range of outdoor and adventurous activities. Residential visits must only be undertaken with the endorsement of the Local Authority.

5. Roles and responsibilities

The key role involved in the planning and management of all off-site visits is the External Visit Coordinator (EVC). The Headteacher will ensure that the EVC is trained and able to:

- ensure that risk assessments are completed and, when appropriate, individual safety plans and safe working practices are implemented;
- support the governing body in any decision on approval;
- assign competent staff to lead and help with trips;

- verify that all accompanying adults have been DBS checked;
- make sure that all consent and medical forms are obtained;
- keep records of visits and provide after-visit evaluation to aid future visits.

The school's trained EVC is Sarah Daffurn. Other key stakeholders involved in an off-site activity are listed below. Further guidance on the roles and responsibilities for each stakeholder can be found on the SCC Outdoor Education website:

- Governing Body/Senior Management Group
- Head/Manager
- Visit Leader
- Teacher, Youth/Children Worker, Other Employee
- Adult Volunteer
- Young People
- Parent/Carer.

6. How visits are authorised

Staff proposing to arrange an off-site activity must seek and obtain the approval of the Manager, Headteacher and Governing Body (as necessary), in advance, before any commitment is made on behalf of the school.

7. Classification of external visits

External/off-site visits fall under one of three categories:

Category A – non-adventurous, local activities.

Category B – Adventurous activities, residential activities that require an overnight stop, or off-site visits that take place abroad.

Category C – Duke of Edinburgh's Award activities.

Category A visits/activities

Approval for Category A visits and activities, has been delegated by the Governing Body to the **Headteacher and/or EVC. Governors must review delegation arrangements annually as part of Health and Safety Policy for the school.** The Delegated Responsibilities Form can be found on the SCC Outdoor Education website.

Category B visits/activities

Approval for Category B visits or activities must be obtained from the Governing Body and the Headteacher before they take place. Endorsement is also required from the Outdoor Education Adviser for the Local Authority.

Further guidance on the classification of visits can be found on page 3 of the **Notification, Approval and Endorsement** document, found on the Outdoor Education website.

8. Planning a visit or activity

The Visit Leader must ensure that the visit or activity is planned in advance and within sufficient time to ensure approval is granted.

When planning **Category A** activities, a record of the trip or activity on the European Education Consultants website is optional. However, a record within the school or establishment of a planned off-site activity should be kept, via the completion of a form such as the Visit Information Collection Sheet (see below).

Category B and C activities should be carried out using the European Education Consultants (EEC) Health and Safety Management system for Risk and Educational Visit management, as the system provides a means to approve applications online for both the establishment's EVC and Local Authority.

9. Visit plan

The visit plan for intended visits must include the following:

- risk assessments for transport, site of visit and activities;
- curriculum/development objectives;
- supervision/pupil ratios;
- itinerary;
- supervisory details;
- emergency contact details.

9.1 Risk Assessment

All relevant risk assessments must be carried out by the Visit Leader before any proposed visit or activity takes place. Existing risk assessments should be checked to ensure that they are still suitable and sufficient.

As before, EEC provides comprehensive frameworks for venues and activities and should be used for visit/activity planning.

Key issues from the completed risk assessments or safe working procedures must be shared with adults/supervisors involved in the visit/activity.

9.2 Transport

Risk assessments must be carried out for the mode of transport. When hiring a coach or minibus, only use companies that have been endorsed by Transporting Somerset.

If using a self-drive minibus, whether owned, leased or hired, drivers must have received training within the last four years through Transporting Somerset. Please contact the Driver Training Coordinator on 01823 358133 for further information.

If using staff vehicles, ensure that Driver Risk Assessment (F14a) has been completed before the visit.

Using vehicles belonging to parents is discouraged. If, however, the decision is made to use a parent's vehicle, the driver risk assessment (F14a) must be completed and a DBS check performed before the visit/activity takes place.

9.3 Communication with parents

The parents of young people 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 before a child can be involved in any off-site activities.

10. Further Health and Safety considerations

Adults accompanying the group(s) on the visit/activity must be informed of the emergency procedures by the Visit Leader and provided with an emergency telephone number. This will normally be the establishment number, but where an activity extends beyond the normal working day, the telephone number of a designated emergency contact should be provided.

The school/establishment office is to be provided with a list of everyone, pupils and adults, travelling with the group, together with a copy of the itinerary for the activity (print out of the summary sheet from software).

The safety of the group(s), especially the pupils, is of paramount importance. During the activity, the Visit 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 pupils are both safe, well and looked after at all times.

Prior to an activity, if it is felt that the behaviour of an individual pupil is likely to compromise the safety of others, the Visit Leader should discuss with the Headteacher/Manager measures to put in place to enable the pupil to take part, especially if part of the curriculum. An example of these measures could be an Individual Safety Plan supporting extra supervision.

11. Monitoring and review

It is good practice to monitor and review the successes and failures of your off-site activities in line with your curriculum/development objectives. This is to ensure that off-site visits provide enrichment and positive experiences that off-site visits are designed to deliver.

An external review form is available on the SCC Outdoor Education website.

12. Further guidance and help

Health & Safety Executive: "School trips and outdoor learning activities":

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/services/education/school-trips.pdf>

Council for Learning Outside the Classroom:

<http://www.lotc.org.uk/>

Outdoor Education National Advisors Panel:

<http://oeapng.info/>

Appendix 1: Visit Leader's Check List

Must Do:

- Complete the purpose of visit that outlines clear educational aims and objectives.
- Document the Year group/Key Stage of the young people in the purpose of visit and educational objectives area.
- Check any relevant, generic, risk assessments and share with visit supervisors.*
- Any required new risk assessments to be completed and shared with visit supervisors.
- All supervisors to be listed and appear in the ratio box.
- All attendee numbers to be recorded in the ratio box.
- If the activity is adventurous and is being led by a qualified staff member from your school, ensure that they have completed an EV3 form.
- Ensure both the insurance box and the category of visit is selected.
- Itinerary to be completed for each stage and time, and dates to be consecutive.
- Emergency contact number to be recorded for the visit – home and away.
- The visit must be submitted for approval within the specified time period.
- Check the communications page to ensure that information is recorded and actions taken.
- Ensure that the External Visit Coordinator is aware of the trip and has given approval (Local authority for Category B and C activities).

* **Note:** Risk assessments should be completed for each activity and in most cases they will be generic. Regular activities, e.g. Coach Travel should be reviewed on an annual basis by the Health and Safety Coordinator.

Visit Leaders need to ensure that they have looked at the relevant risk assessments for the activity and shared them with all supervisors who are involved; it will NOT require reviewing or completing a new one for each visit.

Should do:

(Helpful to trip planners in the future.)

Add links to information regarding the trip to be found on your school website into the links page.

Add the location of documents regarding the trip to be found within your school into the documents page.

Engage the young people in the planning and risk assessment elements of the organised activity to enrich the off-site visit experience.

Add your required risk assessments to an action plan via the assessment page.

On return rate your external provider and add comments on their performance by visiting the Provider details.

On return rate your transport operator and add comments on their performance by visiting the Operator details.

Monitor and evaluate the visit or activity to identify successes/whether the aims were met/learning areas for future trips.