

**POLICY OFF-SITE VISITS AND ACTIVITIES**

THURLBEAR PRIMARY SCHOOL

## **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 enriches 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.

## **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 that could not be provided on the school site alone;
- Promote the independence of our children as learners, enabling them to grow and develop in new and different learning environments.

## **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, or Governing body in the case of Academies.

## **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.

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The key role involved in the planning and management of all off-site visits is the External Visit Co-ordinator. The establishment head will ensure that it has a trained External Visit Co-ordinator, whose role is to:

- Ensure that risk assessments are completed and, when appropriate, individual safety plans and safe working practices.
- 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:** Mrs J Yellowley

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:

<https://slp.somerset.org.uk/sites/sccoea/SCCOEA%20Documents/Roles%20and%20Responsibilities.pdf>

- Governing Body
- Head/Senior Leadership Team
- Visit Leader
- Teacher, Other Employee
- Adult Volunteer
- Young People
- Parent/Carer

## **HOW VISITS ARE AUTHORISED**

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

### **Category A Visits/Activities**

Approval for Category A visits and activities, has been delegated by the Governing Body to the **Head Teacher and/or EVC**. *(Delete as appropriate)*. **Governors must review delegation arrangements annually as part of Health and Safety Policy for school.**

**Delegated responsibilities form:**

<https://slp.somerset.org.uk/sites/sccoea/SCCOEA%20Documents/Governor%20to%20Head%20Delegation%20for%20Category%20A%20Visits.pdf>

### **Category B Visits/Activities**

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

### **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

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, or via the following link: [Classification of Visits](#)

### **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](#).

**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.

**Link to EEC:** <https://www.eeclive.co.uk/public/plogon.asp?aid=14>

**Link to Outdoor Education and External Visits Website:**  
<https://slp.somerset.org.uk/sites/sccoea/SitePages/Home.aspx>

## 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.

## 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.

## 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.

Please also consider the use of a second support vehicle, where possible, to account for emergencies or contingency planning when on an off-site visit.

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 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.

### **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.

### **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 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 or dietary 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 Head Teacher/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.

### **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:

[https://slp.somerset.org.uk/sites/sccoea/SiteAssets/SitePages/Templates%20and%20Forms/EVR\\_External\\_Visit\\_Review.doc](https://slp.somerset.org.uk/sites/sccoea/SiteAssets/SitePages/Templates%20and%20Forms/EVR_External_Visit_Review.doc)

This policy is monitored by the appropriate Committee of the Governing Body and will be reviewed every two years, or before if necessary.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

### **FURTHER GUIDANCE AND HELP**

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

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

Learning outside the classroom:

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

Outdoor Education National Advisors Panel:

<http://oeapng.info/>

### Visit Leaders Check List

Must Do:

Ensure that the purpose of your visit has 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 critical supervisors are listed and appear in the ratio box. Other supervisors or additional support must be listed in the application.

All attendee numbers to be recorded in the ratio box.

If the activity is adventurous and is being led by a qualified member of staff from your educational establishment, ensure that they have completed an EV3 form

Ensure both the insurance box and the category of visit is selected.

Itinerary to be completed denoting travel stages (to and from venue) and a stage(s) denoting planned activities and supervision arrangements.

Emergency contact number to be recorded for the visit - home and away.

The visit must be submitted for External Visit Co-ordinator approval prior to the date of departure and in good time for OEA approval (Category B and C visits).

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: A risk assessment must be completed for the planned activity, whilst a generic risk assessment can be used to cover an activity that is regular or will be run by one or more groups or classes.** *(Example – a residential to Kilve Court would require a Kilve Court risk assessment and coach or minibus travel risk assessment)*

**Regular activities, e.g. Coach Travel should be reviewed on an annual basis by the health and safety co-ordinator.**

**Visit Leaders need to ensure that they have looked at the risk assessments relevant to the activity and shared them with all supervisors who are involved – it will NOT require reviewing or completion of a new assessment 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 web site into the links page (<http://www.school.somerset>)

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 completed risk assessments to the 'assessments' page of your external visit application.

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