



Off Site Activities and Educational Visits

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INTRODUCTION

Educational 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 our children's learning experiences.

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, but on occasions, take place after school and may or may not include hazardous pursuit activities. Our school adopts the LA guidance and uses their proforma when planning Educational Visits.

AIMS

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.

REFERENCES

Off-Site Activities Regulations and Guidance Notes produced by Hampshire County Council.

CONTENT

Supervision

Before any activity takes place the approval of the governing body shall be obtained. This approval has been delegated to the Headteacher who has the authority to approve off-site activities. The Headteacher is the Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC).

The Headteacher will give approval if satisfied that the activity is appropriate and efficiently organised and supervised. Activities must:

- Have significant educational value
- Be suitable to the pupils concerned - having regard to their ages, abilities, disabilities and aptitudes
- Be linked to the normal work of the pupils by preparation and follow up activities
- Not unduly interfere with the work of the other pupils at the establishment

Residential and hazardous pursuit's activities require additional approvals and reference must be made to the Off-Site Activities Regulations and Guidance Notes produced by the LA. These will be registered for approval online through Evolve (Hampshire are part of this).

Teachers will lead groups. Overall ratios of young people to adults shall not exceed the limit specified below (Hampshire Guidelines):

- For pupils under 8 there will be no more than 8 minors to 1 adult
- For pupils aged between 8 and 18 there will be no more than 20 minors to 1 adult
- For activities beyond a 60 mile radius including the Isle of Wight there will be no more than 10 minors to 1 adult, with a minimum of 2 adults for all groups unless there are exceptional circumstances

For some activities the Headteacher may require tighter ratios than those specified above. For activities involving hazardous pursuits there are mandatory ratios specified for different activities, which are detailed in the Safety in Hazardous Pursuits document produced by the County Council.

Health and Safety Management

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to ensure that:

- Leaders going off-site have read the current relevant sections of the Off-Site Activities Regulations and Guidance Notes produced by the LA.
- Leaders being responsible for instructing, leading or teaching any hazardous pursuits have read and are familiar with the current safety regulations and guidance for the activity as described in the current Safety in Adventurous Activities 2015 produced by the LA.

Planning off-site visits

A risk assessment is mandatory and 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 risk assessment should be based on the following considerations:

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- What are the hazards?
- Who might be affected by them?
- What safety measures are needed to reduce risks to an acceptable level?
- Can the group leader put the safety measures in place?
- What steps will be taken in an emergency?
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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 trip, and the group 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 risk assessment must also cover transport to and from the venue, including:

- The provision and required use of seat belts and booster seats (if necessary)
- Proper vetting of the driver by the police
- Proper insurance for the driver
- Details of first aid and emergency equipment
- Breakdown procedures

The group leader will double check that all adults helping to supervise the trip have been subject to police checks.

These risk assessments are approved and signed off by the Headteacher. These are filed in school.

A copy of the completed risk assessment will be given to all adults supervising the trip.

Transport

Mini-bus travel

- A second adult is required in the vehicle apart from the driver.
- On long trips an adequate number of rest periods lasting at least 15 minutes will be planned for. Ideally the second adult will be qualified to act as a relief driver.
- All drivers will complete a MIDAS assessment or a course of training and assessment of a similar national standing.
- By law seatbelts or lap restraints must be used by passengers if they are fitted in the vehicle. This responsibility rests with the driver to ensure compliance.

Travel by coach

The school will always book coaches fitted with seatbelts. Teachers will ensure that seatbelts or lap restraints are in use during travel. Supervising staff will be spread throughout the coach.

Information to parents

Parents will be kept informed of any off-site activity in writing. Parents will have full particulars and school advice before they are asked to give consent.

For young people under the age of 18 years consent may only be given by the parent who has parental responsibility or an adult who has delegated powers via a care order.

Hampshire County Council - insurance scheme

Hampshire County Council's policy for off-site activity insurance adequately covers the requirements of the school and it is not normally necessary for schools to make independent insurance arrangements for the usual range of off-site activities.

Record of groups who are off-site

The party Leader will ensure he/she has:

- A completed checklist for school visits
- Contact details for all pupils and adults on the day of the visit
- Contact details for the school and place of visit
- Details of all first aid and or medical requirements
- A detailed itinerary of all activities
- Details of who is travelling in which vehicle along with registration numbers of vehicles and the names and telephone numbers of any travel company
- First Aid Kit
- Mobile telephone

Accompanying adults will have copies of all the party Leader's paperwork and a First Aid Kit. In the case of a residential visit, one file holding details of all first aid and or medical requirements for those on the visit, including adults, will be held by the party Leader.

There is a base contact person available throughout the duration of the time off-site. This is particularly important to co-ordinate outside of normal working hours where it may be a person's home. If the stay is for more than 1 night 2 different adults will be arranged.

In addition to a full copy of all the paperwork held by the party Leader, the contact person will have available details for contacting the Director of Children's Services' representative in the event of an emergency.

Emergency Action

The emergency telephone number for contacting the Director of Children's Services representative is:

Daytime (office hours) - 01962 876218 or the Emergency Planning Team pager - 07623 960259.

Evenings/Weekend/24 hours - 07623 960259 (HCC Emergency Planning Team pager).

In the event of any incident or emergency, school staff will go direct to the Emergency Planning Team pager, who will take responsibility for coordinating any support required.

Use of mobile phones

The party leader will carry the school mobile telephone (or if not available, use their own mobile telephone) to ensure communication as required.

Crossing the road

The risk assessment will identify specifically how the party will cross the road.

Activities that involve residence away from home

A risk assessment will ensure effective provision in relation to statutory requirements. All relevant documentation will be completed by the party leader before being authorised by the Headteacher. This is then authorised by the LA on the Evolve system.

Health Issues in the outdoors

First Aid will be administered where appropriate by trained staff. Parents will be informed.

Theme parks and adventure playgrounds

The school has due regard to specific LA advice on the above in both the organisation and participation of off-site visits proposing to incorporate the use of these facilities into an off-site visit.

Medical examination

It is generally an assault to subject someone to a medical treatment or examination without a valid consent. A child under 16 can give consent to treatment provided that the individual child has attained the necessary degree of maturity, intelligence and understanding to comprehend the nature of the treatment proposed. Anyone not in this category will generally be treated or examined only with parental consent.

A refusal of treatment by above categories can be overridden by a person having parental responsibility, but a refusal of treatment by a child must be taken into account by doctors in deciding what the best interests of the young person are. A medical professional can override the parental refusal of treatment of a child in an emergency.

No parent has the absolute right to veto treatment of their child if there is a requirement to act in an emergency. A Leader acting in loco parentis may do what is reasonable in all the circumstances of the case for the purpose of safeguarding or promoting the child's welfare.

If parents are contacted by telephone and refuse consent, but the medical professional recommends that this refusal be ignored **because of the emergency**, the emergency medical advice will be followed.

Off-site activities which involve a hazardous pursuit

A list of those activities deemed to be hazardous is given in the Off-Site Activities Guidelines and Procedures produced by the LA. Teachers will consult with this list where an activity is considered hazardous.

Monitoring and review

Visit leaders are encouraged to review visits, taking into account the successful and less successful parts of the visit, and considering ways in which the visit could have been improved. Informal conversations might take place between the visit leader and EVC regarding the outcome of the visit.

GUIDANCE TO STAFF ON CONDUCT

First aid Staff will try to make sure that they are never alone with a young person. If clothing has to be removed, they will try to ensure that an adult of the same sex as the young person is present.

Activities If staff have to hold or have physical contact with a young person for safety reasons, they will be open and clear about it and explain clearly, in advance, what they are going to do.

Swimming Staff will be male and female wherever possible. Supervision of changing will be carefully managed by staff.

Residential The party leader will ensure that there is effective deployment of staff for Calshot Activities Centre. Where possible, one adult of each sex will be present where mixed groups are involved.

Dropping off Staff will avoid being left in the vehicle with one young person.

Be sensitive If a young person volunteers information about abuse to a member of staff, it may sometimes be done obliquely rather than directly. An abused young person is likely to be under severe emotional stress and the staff member may be the only adult whom the young person is prepared to trust. When information is offered in confidence, the member of staff will need to display tact and sensitivity in responding to the disclosure.

The member of staff will need to reassure the young person and retain his/her trust, while explaining the need for action, which will necessarily involve other adults being informed. (See Child Protection Policy).

Misinterpretation If a member of staff acts in such a way that actions may be open to misinterpretation then they will report it to the Headteacher as soon as possible.