

## OFF-SITE ACTIVITIES POLICY

### The aims of our off-site activities are to

- Inspire and enhance curricular opportunities for our children;
- provide a wider range of experiences for our children than could be provided on the school campus alone;
- promote the independence of our children as learners, and enable them to grow and develop in new learning environments;
- ensure that Health and Safety measures are in place so that children are able to experience a wide range of activities safely.

### Supervision Ratios

An activity taking place away from the school campus (including Forest School activities in Slays Wood etc) should have sufficient adults taking part to provide the following minimum ratios, with a minimum of two adults regardless of number of children taking part:

- 1 adult to 15 children in Elder Class;
- 1 adult to 10 children in Willow Class;
- 1 adult to 8 children in Oak Tree Class;
- 1 adult to 6 children in Sycamore Class;
- 1 adult to 4-6 children in Quince Tree Class (Kindergarten)  
(minimum 1:4 (2 year olds) and 1:6 (3 & 4-year olds))

(The orchard, wildlife area and half-acre are part of the school campus and are not considered 'off-site').

### Exploratory visit

Wherever possible the group leader should undertake an exploratory visit to:

- ensure that the venue is suitable to meet the aims and objectives of the school visit;
- assess potential areas and levels of risk;
- ensure that the venue can cater for the needs of the staff and children in the group;
- ensure that the group leader is familiar with the area before taking a party of young people and to consider parking, refreshment and toilet facilities.

### General policy

- Any off site activity must be approved by the Principal.
- The school will inform parents about the trip, times, destination, appropriate clothing, lunch arrangements, pocket money etc. This does not apply to regular timetabled activities or visits during the normal school day to a local venue for educational purposes, etc.
- At the beginning of each school year parents/carers are asked to check emergency contact names and phone numbers to be used in an emergency. These are recorded on a database held in the office.
- The minimum adult:child ratio recommended in this Policy must be met.
- Only parents who have been DBS cleared will be permitted to transport children other than their own unless accompanied by a member of staff.
- The office must hold a copy of the current insurance certificate if any cars are being used to transport children or staff (this applies to both parent and staff vehicles.) Staff insurance must also show that 'use in connection with the policyholder's business' is included.
- For a new activity, a specific assessment of significant risks must be carried out. Significant findings of the assessment must be recorded in a standard Risk Assessment format.

## Regular off-site activities (forest school, sports field etc)

- Regular off-site activities and those that form part of the normal school day curriculum, for example forest school, use of the sports field, care home, and other local visits during the school day, do not need a separate risk assessment. Any risks of these activities will have already been considered in the school's main risk assessments, policies and procedures. A regular check to make sure the precautions remain suitable is all that is required.

## Procedure for off-site activities

- The person organising the activity should ensure that parents have had full details about the trip, times, destination, purpose, appropriate clothing, lunch arrangements if appropriate, pocket money etc., however this is not required for regular timetabled activities or visits during the normal school day to a local venue for educational purposes (see above), etc.
- **Kindergarten:** Parents must sign and return a 'permission' slip for their child to take part in the trip. Parents should be asked for details of contact numbers that apply *on the day* of the trip.
- **Sycamore Class:** For reception children in the Sycamore Class, parents must sign and return a 'permission' slip for their child to take part in the trip (EYFS requirement). For year 1 children, parents should return an acknowledgement of the arrangements (recommendation but not a requirement) however specific 'permission' is not required for KS1 trips unless it is a requirement of the venue or nature of the activity (ie hazardous). Parents should be asked for details of contact numbers that apply *on the day* of the trip.
- **Oak Tree, Willow, Elder Class:** Parents should return an acknowledgement of the arrangements (recommendation but not a requirement) however specific 'permission' is not required for KS1 and KS2 trips unless it is a requirement of the venue or nature of the activity (ie hazardous). Parents should be asked for details of contact numbers that apply *on the day* of the trip.
- A list of the children and adults in the group should be given to the school office on departure. The list should also include the drivers of any private vehicle involved. In the case of coach hire - the contact details for the coach company should be included.  
Where separate '*on the day*' contact numbers for parents have been collected these should be given to the office.
- The group leader should have a copy of the list of the children and adults in the group. However, the group leader **MUST NOT** take other information regarding the children (ie emergency contacts. etc) away from the school premises. The only information relating to individual children which can be taken on the trip is the medicines form, giving the name and dose of medications.
- The group leader should ensure that they have arranged a school 'home-contact' who will have access to the children's emergency contact details, this would normally be the school office for activities during the school day, but in case of a late or delayed return, contingency arrangements must be made so that the group leader has a contact to get in touch with, who has access to the children's emergency contact details.
- The group leader should ensure they have the mobile telephone numbers of all adults helping and also contact numbers for the school (see above) in case of emergency.
- The Principal should be provided with a programme and timetable for the activity (if applicable).
- The group leader will take the off-site (or other suitable) first aid kit.
- The group leader is responsible for ensuring children have access to inhalers and other medication where necessary whilst on an off-site activity and to be aware of any specific medical conditions e.g. food allergies.

- The group leader will ensure they have their mobile phone, it is fully charged and switched on. If the group leader's mobile is not available, the group leader must ensure they have informed the school office regarding this and make sure the school has been given a suitable alternative mobile phone number for the group to be contacted in an emergency.
- Hi-Viz jackets should be worn by adults during off-site activities which involve supervising children near traffic or crossing roads and when travelling in vehicles (see below).
- The group leader will ensure accompanying adults have read the information sheet for parents helping on school outings and explained their responsibilities and on-going awareness of risks. However, no personal information, other than 'group lists' should be given to parents. The group leader should check that accompanying parents have a mobile phone for emergency use and the school telephone number.
- All adults must routinely conduct regular head counts, especially when embarking/disembarking from coaches and after lunch/ toilet breaks.
- The group leader must report any incident or accident, in writing, on return to school.

### **Off-site activities involving car, minibus or coach transport**

- All children must wear a seatbelt and a member of staff must check these are correctly fastened.
- When travelling in a car, each child must provide a car booster seat or use one provided by the school. Children should not be transported without a booster seat if there is a requirement for them to do so.
- When travelling by minibus or coach, all children should have a booster seat unless they meet the minimum age/height restriction and the driver is satisfied they can sit safely without a booster seat. The group leader/driver's decision in this is final.
- Children should be reminded of safety rules including sitting correctly so that the seat belt is properly functioning (ie not climbing or turning to other children behind them) and not to distract the driver or drivers of other vehicles.
- On a visit involving coach transport the following should be easily accessible:  
Plastic gloves; First aid kit; Drinking water and beaker; Paper towels and hankies; and 'sick bags'.
- All coaches hired by the school will have seat belts fitted.
- Where transport is by car (teacher or parent) the school requires a copy of the vehicle insurance.
- Only parents/helpers who have been DBS cleared will be permitted to transport children other than their own unless accompanied by a member of staff.
- The group leader should ensure drivers know where they are going and in normal circumstances remind drivers that they should travel within sight of each other in case of emergency or breakdown. When the minibus is part of a group of vehicles, the minibus should be the leading vehicle.
- Hi-Viz jackets must be worn by all members of staff (or parents) when travelling in cars, minibuses or coaches as part of an off-site activity.
- At other times, Hi-Viz jackets do not need to be worn during an off-site activity unless considered necessary as part of the risk assessment for the specific trip (ie walking along a busy road, travelling on public transport, hazardous venue such as an airfield, etc)

## Information to children

- The group leader must make sure that the children understand key safety information:
  - the aims and objectives of the visit / activity;
  - how to avoid specific dangers and why they should follow rules;
  - why safety precautions are in place;
  - what standard of behaviour is expected from children;
  - who is responsible for the group;
  - what to do if approached by a stranger;
  - what to do if separated from the group;
  - emergency procedures;
  - rendezvous procedures.
- If considered necessary when carrying out the risk assessment, each child in the group can be given a card, wristband (or other suitable method) giving details of the school mobile phone number and a school landline phone number. The school mobile for this purpose is kept in the office and should be collected before the trip. The group leader must ensure they take this with them and that it is fully charged and switched on.
- Children must not be given a label showing their name or contact number which can be read by other members of the public.

## Children with special educational and medical needs

- The school will wherever possible include children with special educational or medical needs on school off-site activities. Every effort will be made to accommodate them whilst maintaining the safety of everyone on the activity. Special attention should be given to appropriate supervision ratios and additional safety measures may need to be addressed at the planning stage. In the event that an activity may be considered unsuitable for a child with special educational or medical needs, the school will advise the parents accordingly. In these circumstances, alternative provision should be made for the child to join another class in the school during the trip.

## Reference

In drawing up this policy, the principles of the following guidance have been used to ensure effective practice:

- *Departmental advice on Health and Safety for Schools (DfE February 2012)*
- *School Trips and Outdoor Learning activities (Health & Safety Executive June 2011)*

The above documents replace the guidance *Health and Safety: Responsibilities and Powers (2001)* and *Health and Safety of groups on Educational Visits (1998)* both of which have been withdrawn.

## Monitoring and review

This policy is monitored by the Principals and staff of the school and will be reviewed in line with the school's Policy review cycle.