



# St Peter's

BUDLEIGH SALTERTON CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

## Policy for the Management of Outdoor Education, Visits and Off-Site Activities

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Next review: Summer 2020

### 1. Introduction

*Education in its broadest sense is not just about delivering a curriculum. It is about giving children the chance to extend their life skills. It is about developing their confidence. It is about fostering their resilience and sense of responsibility. And – let us not forget – it is about the enjoyment, engagement and excitement of venturing out into the real world, with all its capacity for uncertainty, surprise, stimulation and delight. English Outdoor Council, 2010*

This policy covers all off-site visits and activities organised through the school and for which the Governing Body and headteacher are responsible.

**The Governing Body endorses the Devon County Council & Torbay Council policy document “Outdoor Education, Visits and Off-Site Activities Health and Safety Policy 2020” (also known as OEVOSA) as the basis for the school’s health and safety policy for the management of visits and off-site activities.**

The Governing Body seeks to ensure that every pupil has access to a wide range of educational experiences as an entitlement. As part of this entitlement the Governing Body recognises the significant educational value of visits and activities which take place away from the immediate school environment.

The Governing Body aims to enable this school to become an educational environment in which all members of the school community can thrive, regardless of race, religion, culture, gender or individual need. We intend to apply this aim to the planning and management of all visits and off-site activities.

Visits and off-site activities support, enrich and extend the curriculum in many subject areas, encourage cooperation, teamwork and the application of problem solving skills and develop independence and self-confidence.

Residential opportunities, physical challenge and adventure can have a particular part to play in the development of personal and social qualities for all young people. Outdoor education helps young people to be physically active and to understand how to assess and manage risk.

The management of visits and off-site activities places particular responsibilities for the health, safety and welfare of all participants on the Governing Body, headteacher, the party leader, members of staff and volunteers, pupils and parents. The school also has responsibilities to other members of the public and to third parties. This policy on visits and off-site activities therefore complements the wider school health and safety policy.

It is a priority of this school that all visits and off-site activities are safe, well-managed and educationally beneficial.

### 2. Responsibilities of the Headteacher

The Headteacher will:

- 1) ensure all visits and off-site activities have specific and appropriate educational objectives
- 2) have overall responsibility for the approval of all visits and activities, based on compliance with the OEVOSA document and recognised good practice, even where this task may have been delegated to another named person
- 3) ensure that all off-site visits, and especially residential visits, are carried out with reference to the School Safeguarding Policy and Staff Code of Conduct
- 4) ensure that there is a suitably experienced and competent Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) to oversee adherence to the OEVOSA policy and that the tasks associated with this role are clearly outlined in this policy (see below).
- 5) ensure off-site programmes are led by competent staff who are appropriately experienced to assess the risks, manage the activity and manage the specific group. Note: The visit leader must be an employee of the establishment and present on the school visit.
- 6) provide relevant induction, training and other Continuous Professional Development opportunities for staff involved in the provision of visits and off-site activities
- 7) ensure that for all off-site visits and activities risks have been assessed, the significant findings of these assessments recorded and any appropriate safety measures implemented accordingly
- 8) provide a regular report to the governing body summarising the range of proposed visits and those which have already taken place

The single most important factor in ensuring the safety of participants involved in a visit is the competence of the visit leader. When assessing the competence of a member of staff to lead a visit, the headteacher should consider these questions:

- 1) What is the reason for the visit?
- 2) Is the leader an employee?
- 3) Does the leader have sufficient understanding of their responsibilities?
- 4) Does the leader understand the purpose of the Standard Operating Procedures and how to amend as required?
- 5) Does the leader have the necessary organising ability?
- 6) Is the leader competent in risk assessment and risk management?
- 7) Does the leader have suitable prior knowledge of the young people they will be responsible for?
- 8) Does the leader have sufficient experience of leading similar visits?
- 9) Does the leader have appropriate qualifications, is suitably up to date and fit to lead the programme?
- 10) Where an external provider is used, has the visit leader agreed a clear contract, including the supervision of the young people?
- 11) Does the visit leader have the experience needed to manage and maintain discipline of groups of children?

### **3. Responsibilities of the Educational Visits Coordinator**

Although holding the ultimate responsibility, the Headteacher has delegated specified tasks to a suitably experienced and competent EVC. The EVC is responsible for carrying out the following agreed tasks and attending the relevant training and update training provided by the Local Authority (LA).

The functions delegated to the EVC are:

- 1) to be the principal contact with the LA over planned visits to establish monitoring systems to ensure that educational visits are undertaken in accordance with OEVOSA and the school
- 2) specific arrangements named in this policy
- 3) to ensure that the management of visits and off-site activities is informed by an appropriate risk assessment
- 4) to draw up the Standard Operating Procedures for 'routine and regular' visits and activities
- 5) to manage and update the Evolve website, including updating staff lists and training records
- 6) to ensure that approval and endorsement arrangements for all visits are in accordance with OEVOSA requirements
- 7) to provide staff with support, advice and information that they need to comply with OEVOSA requirements
- 8) to ensure that leaders and staff have any relevant qualifications and are competent to lead and support particular visits and activities as outlined in OEVOSA
- 9) to ensure that procedures to inform parents and to obtain their consent where necessary are in place
- 10) to ensure that appropriate emergency arrangements are in place for visits and off-site activities
- 11) to review accident and incident reports relating to visits and off-site activities to ensure that any lessons are learnt
- 12) to ensure that any third party provider / contractor / coach has been vetted for competence in accordance with the requirements of OEVOSA.

### **4. Responsibilities of the party / visit leader**

The Visit Leader will:

- 1) Wherever practicable, the Visit Leader will conduct a pre-trip visit. The Visit Leader will ensure that the proposed locations for the visit are suitable for the activity and manageable for the group and meet the needs of the pupils (including toilet and First Aid locations). If this has not taken place, the Visit Leader has stated in the enhanced risk assessment what pre-trip communication there has been between them and the provider and/or venue and how the risks have been assessed/managed.
- 2) Inform parents about the visit and gain their consent in accordance with arrangements described in OEVOSA
- 3) Obtain authorisation (including signing and dating the risk assessment) for trips from a Level 3 trained safeguarding officer.
- 4) Obtain authorisation (including signing and dating the risk assessment) for trips from the EVC or Headteacher
- 5) Obtain approval and, where appropriate, LA endorsement for the visit in line with OEVOSA and the specific arrangements of this policy prior to undertaking the activity
- 6) Inform all peripatetic teachers, intervention teachers and the school kitchen of the impact of the visit or activity on their provision.
- 7) Submit a budget for all costs and revenues to the School Business Manager
- 8) Seek clarification and authorised to use Pupil Premium Funding to financially support those pupils who are eligible.
- 9) Request funding and/or voluntary donations as required
- 10) Assess the risks (including safeguarding risks) to staff, young people and members of the public presented by the visit or activity in order to identify and implement any safety measures. This process will be undertaken in line with the arrangements described in paragraph 8 of this policy
- 11) Arrange staffing for the trip and inform teachers and the School Business Manager of any internal staffing changes e.g. taking staff who have lunchtime or cleaning responsibilities, taking teaching assistants from other classes.
- 12) Read the Standard Operating Procedures and complete the enhanced risk assessment where the Standard Operating Procedures are not adequate for the proposed visit/activity. This will include, but not be limited to, identifying safeguarding risks (e.g. photo consent, parental contact) and medical risks (including food allergies and the use of epi-pens). In addition this will include establishing appropriate emergency and contingency arrangements for the planned visit or activity which will include the identification of sufficient First Aid cover

- 13) Seek assistance from other members of staff (and possibly parents) prior to the trip if they are unsure about the needs (medical, dietary, behaviour) of pupils on the trip.
- 14) Vet any third party provider / contractor / coach for competence in accordance with the requirements of OEVOSA. For adventurous activities this will include checking that the provider has completed a SOE5 and having read this document that the visit leader is satisfied with the responses/information provided on the SOE5.
- 15) Submit the Standard Operating Procedures onto Evolve.
- 16) Check the weather forecast less than 24 hours before the trip and then again as required. Review the risk assessment based on this information and make any necessary changes (e.g. send text to parents about clothing for wet weather).
- 17) Brief all supervising staff, volunteers and pupils in roles, responsibilities and expectations  
· have overall responsibility for the supervision and conduct of the visit or activity.
- 18) Collect First Aid kits, check for appropriate content and then distribute to relevant staff prior to the trip.
- 19) Collect and share emergency contact details/mobile phone details for other members of staff and the school, including the designated Safeguarding Officer.
- 20) Share Critical Incident Cards with members of staff and volunteers so that they are aware of how to respond in the event of any emergency. Contact the Headteacher in the event of a critical incident.
- 21) The Visit Leader will ensure that adults have an accurate register of pupils on the trip (taking into account pupils who are absent/not present for another reason).
- 22) Follow the standard operating procedures and ensure that all other staff, volunteers and pupils do so also.
- 23) Continually re-assess risks during the activity and make adjustments accordingly.
- 24) Carry out specific activities in accordance with the detail of OEVOSA.
- 25) Administer First Aid if the designated First Aider and/or if appropriately trained.

#### Attendance

It is now unacceptable that the Visit Leader should stay at school whilst another member of staff goes out with the pupils.

#### Specific responsibility in relation to safeguarding

In the event of a safeguarding issue or concern being identified during the visit, the visit leader should follow the school's child protection/safeguarding policy and procedures. All staff and volunteers on the visit should be made aware of these before the trip or activity takes place.

Arrangements should be in place to enable contact with the school's Designated Safeguarding Officer outside normal school hours if necessary. Contact details should be available to all staff/volunteers on the trip (as well as the visit leader) in case the safeguarding concern is about the visit leader.

## **5. Responsibilities of additional members of staff taking part in visits and off-site activities**

Members of staff, volunteers and parent helpers will:

- 1) Read the Standard and Enhanced Operating Procedures, including medical information and safeguarding information.
- 2) Take time to understand their roles and responsibilities prior to taking part in a visit or activity.
- 3) Ensure that they have emergency contact details for other members of staff and the school, including the designated Safeguarding Officer.
- 4) Follow Standard and Enhanced Operating Procedure and ensure that all other staff, volunteers and pupils do so.
- 5) Assist the Visit Leader in actions to ensure the health, safety and welfare, including safeguarding, of others including young people on the visit.
- 6) Alert the Visit Leader when staff, volunteers and pupils do not follow the Standard and Enhanced Operating Procedures.
- 7) Immediately alert the Visit Leader to any safeguarding concerns or make contact with the school's Designated Safeguarding Officer if the concerns relate to the Visit Leader themselves.
- 8) Continually re-assess risks during the activity, make adjustments accordingly and alert the Visit Leader to any changes to the risks.
- 9) Follow any instructions from the Visit Leader in response to a re-assessment of risks.
- 10) Administer First Aid if the designated First Aider and/or if appropriately trained (staff only)

## **6. Approval of off-site activities**

The Headteacher and EVC shared the role of checking and approving off-site visits. However, overall responsibility, as stated above, rests with the Headteacher.

- 1) All visit leaders must complete the spreadsheet on the Visit and Trips Master Document which acts as an aide-memoire to for the trip organisation process e.g. informing peripatetic teachers.
- 2) Read the Standard Operating Procedures and complete the enhanced risk assessment where the Standard Operating Procedures are not adequate for the proposed visit/activity. This will include, but not be limited to, identifying safeguarding risks (e.g. photo consent, parental contact) and medical risks (including food allergies and the use of epi-pens). In addition this will include establishing appropriate emergency and contingency arrangements for the planned visit or activity which will include the identification of sufficient First Aid cover
- 3) Obtain authorisation (including signing and dating the risk assessment) for trips from a Level 3 trained safeguarding officer.
- 4) Obtain authorisation (including signing and dating the risk assessment) for trips from the EVC or Headteacher
- 5) Obtain approval and, where appropriate, LA endorsement for the visit in line with OEVOSA and the specific arrangements of this policy prior to undertaking the activity. See below in relation to Category B and Category C.
- 6) Submit the Standard Operating Procedures and Enhanced Operating Procedures (Risk Assessment) onto Evolve.

## 7. Approval of off-site activities – Category B and Category C

Approval for the following trips must be obtained from the LA within the given timescales.

- a) Category B (adventurous day visits) – 2 weeks in advance
- b) Category B (adventurous residential visits) – 2 months in advance
- c) Category C (overseas visits) – 3 months in advance

Definitions of Category B and Category C trips will be found in “**Outdoor Education, Visits and Off-Site Activities Health and Safety Policy 2020**”

## 8. Ratios

Pupil ratios are a risk management issue and should be determined through the process of risk assessment. It is not possible to set down definitive staff/participant ratios for a specific visit.

A common acronym for managing this area is SAGE; (Staff, Activity, Group, Environment).

### Staff

- Why these staff?
- Staff competence/qualification/training
- The consequence of a member of staff being indisposed, particularly where they will be the sole leader with a group for any significant time, or where the group is remote from the school such as an overseas visit

### Activity

- Why this activity?
- The nature and purpose of any planned activities
- The nature and duration of the visit and the planned activities
- Travel to and from

### Group

- Why this group?
- The nature of the group including the number of young people and their age, level of development, gender, ability and needs (behavioural, medical, emotional and educational)

### Environment

- Why this place?
- The location and environment in which the activity is to take place
- The type and appropriateness of accommodation
- Supervision requirements required by providers

The following ratios should be considered as a starting point for consideration rather than being definitive; although if the ratio is exceeded, an explanation should be put in the ‘enhanced risk assessment’ column of the Standard Operating Procedures.

The Local Authority recommends that there should be at least two adults on all visits. However, where there is only one adult supervising a visit, (i.e. PE fixtures at another school), the employer must consider the implications within their establishment’s Lone Working and Safeguarding policies and annotate the reasons why one member of staff is acceptable in the SOP’s enhanced risk assessment’ column.

When staff are ‘lone working’ with pupils they should consider what advice is given to pupils in the event of the visit leader becoming incapacitated.

### Early Years

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework (updated April 2017) no longer sets out different requirements for minimum ratios during visits from those required on site. Ratios during visits should be determined by risk assessment which should be reviewed before each outing. The appropriate ratio on an outing is likely to be higher than the legal minimum required for on-site supervision but this should be based on the risk assessment, type of outing, qualification of the teacher, age of the pupils and pupils’ needs.

Recommended minimum ratio of 1 adult to 6 group members.

Category A (as defined in OEVOSA) visits for age 6 and above

Recommended minimum ratio of 1 adult to 15 group members.

There may be occasions, particularly in the use of school transport, journeys between school sites or in the neighbourhood of the school, where the above ratio may reasonably be changed as decided by individual headteachers, based on an assessment of risk. Headteachers should be able to justify their ratio decision.

#### Category B (as defined in OEVOSA) visits for age 6 and above lead by external provider

Recommended minimum ratio of 1 adult to 15 group members.

#### Category B (as defined in OEVOSA) visits for age 6 and above lead by employees of St Peter's CoE Primary School

Refer to specific guidance in Outdoor Education, Visits and Off-Site Activities Health and Safety Policy 2020.

#### Category C (as defined in OEVOSA) visits for age 6 and above

Recommended minimum ratio of 1 adult to 10 group members.

#### SEND

The Individual Health Care Plan for each young person who has special needs will help to determine the degree of additional support they need for off-site activities. Young people with special needs, like all young people, should be encouraged to participate in as rich a variety of outdoor education as possible.

### **10. Dynamic Risk Assessment**

Whatever the visit category, the risk assessment process should continue during the visit. This ongoing process of risk assessment is sometimes referred to as a 'dynamic risk assessment'. This involves professional judgements by all those involved in the visit in response to changing circumstances during the visit.

The ongoing risk assessment involves staff monitoring the control measures and adapting them as required. These ongoing decisions will determine the safety of the group and the success of the activity. It is not expected that Visit Leaders write down this ongoing risk assessment. However, after the visit the Visit Leader should record significant findings as a note on the visit form, in order to inform future visits.

### **11. Consent**

When consent for a specific visit is required this must be informed consent, whereby parents are given full details of the planned visit including locations and planned activities.

The Local Authority policy is that schools should gain visit-specific consent for:

- Visits including adventurous activities
- Residential visits
- Overseas visits

### **12. Responsibilities of pupils**

Whilst taking part in off-site activities pupils also have responsibilities about which they should be made aware by the party leader or other members of staff, for their own health and safety and that of the group. Young people should:

- Avoid unnecessary risks;
- Follow instructions of the party leader and other members of staff;
- Behave sensibly, keeping to any agreed code of conduct;
- Inform a member of staff of significant hazards.

Depending on the age of pupils and the profile of the trip e.g. single adult leading groups, the Visit Leader may elect to share Teacher Down emergency response cards to pupils. If this action is followed, it is the responsibility of the Visit Leader to share these cards with pupils prior to the trip so that they are familiar with the procedures. Furthermore, it is the responsibility of the Visit Leader to ensure that pupils carry these cards i.e. don't leave them on the coach.

### **13. Responsibilities of parents**

Parents have an important role in deciding whether some visits or off-site activities are suitable for their child. Subject to the activity (refer to the County Policy or Headteacher for guidance) their agreement to the activity parents should:

- support the application of any agreed code of conduct;
- inform the party leader about any medical, psychological or physical condition relevant to the visit;

- provide an up to date emergency contact number;
- sign the consent form (if necessary).

#### **14. The provision of training and information**

A copy of this policy and associated school procedures will be made available to all staff within the school who may be responsible for leading off-site visits and activities and to any parent requesting a copy.

The Headteacher will make additional information available to staff to help ensure the safe management of off-site activities, including the Devon /Torbay policy statement “Outdoor Education, Visits and Off-Site Activities 2020” and access to the Devon LDP website: [www.babcock-education.co.uk/ldp](http://www.babcock-education.co.uk/ldp) and Evolve.

Appropriate training will be made available to leaders and other adults taking part in off-site activities in order to reflect identified school health and safety priorities and educational priorities.

The Headteacher will maintain a record of the qualifications held by staff and volunteers involved in outdoor activities including first aid, life-saving, mini-bus driving and specific hazardous activities.

#### **15. Action in the case of emergency**

The Headteacher will ensure that emergency arrangements are in place, known to staff and in line with Council policy, to cover the range of activities undertaken from the school and the times at which they take place. This will include a minimum of two emergency contact numbers for designated senior members of staff or the governing body out-of hours.

##### **Critical Incident Visit Leader Action Card**

The Visit Leader and all accompanying staff should have a copy with them at all times.

##### **Critical Incident First Contact Card**

The person who answers the phone in the school office or the back at base contact will not be expecting a call from the visit leader saying they are in trouble. As soon as a call for help is received the respondent should take this contact card and get the information required from the visit leader.

The following people should have access to the First Contact Card

- School office – clearly marked
- In the possession (at home) of SLT or anyone acting as Back at Base contact

##### **Critical Incident Senior Manager Action Card**

Establishment staff may be unpractised in dealing with critical incidents on visits, this action card provides prompts and advice for managing your response to critical incidents.

The following people should have access to the Senior Manager Action Card

- School office – clearly marked
- In the possession (at home) of SLT or anyone acting as Back at Base contact

First aid provision and training of staff will be in accordance with good practice.

There is a legal requirement for a first aider trained in paediatric First Aid to be present for all outings involving pupils up to 5 years of age.

#### **16. Accidents and incidents**

Any accidents and incidents that occur during off-site visits and activities will be reported and recorded in accordance with the school health and safety policy. Devon County Council will be informed of notifiable accidents and incidents which occur in DCC maintained schools. Accidents and incidents will subsequently be reviewed within the school to identify any learning points.

#### **17. Inclusion**

Planning for visits and activities must also take account of the Special Educational Needs (SEN) and Disability Act 2014, The Equality Act 2010 and Supporting Pupils with a Medical Condition.

The Visit Leader and the school should seek to anticipate the needs of pupils who are disabled as well as the needs of specific pupils.

Specifically, Visit Leader and the school must not:

- treat a disabled pupil less favourably than another for a reason related to their disability and without justification
- fail, without justification, to take reasonable steps to avoid placing disabled pupils at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with their non-disabled peers

The Visit Leader and school must:

- plan ahead to meet the needs of all disabled pupils
- identify potential barriers to inclusion
- work collaboratively with disabled pupils, their parents and others
- identify practical solutions through a problem-solving approach
- ensure that staff have the necessary skills to respond effectively
- monitor the effects of adjustments on a pupil's progress.

## 18. Curriculum Visits involving Religious Education or Sex and Relationship Education

Parents have a right to withdraw their children from Religious Education lessons, from collective acts of worship and from some elements of Sex and Relationship Education, but not from the National Curriculum.

This means that parents do not necessarily have the right to withdraw their child from a visit to, for example, a place of worship, if this visit forms part of the school's delivery of the National Curriculum. It is therefore important for visit leaders to be clear about the purpose of the visit, including the wider personal, social and cultural benefits and its link to the curriculum.

## 19. Consent, Informed Consent and Waivers

**Teachers must not sign providers' consent forms on behalf of parents/guardians.**

If the provider's terms and conditions of bookings require informed consent forms to be signed by parents/guardians, they should be forwarded to parents/carers with an explanatory letter from the establishment.

If it is reasonable and indeed preferable for a provider to highlight any particular hazards or risks that an activity may represent and clearly explain these to participants (or their parents or guardians). This is acceptable as it does not set out to limit the provider's responsibility, nor ask the participants to 'waive' their rights. This is considered informed consent.

Conversely a 'Waiver or 'Disclaimer', is where a provider is effectively trying to avoid any responsibility for accidents or claims in any circumstances. **Such documents should not be signed.** These documents have no legal status as the provider cannot absolve itself or its legal responsibilities in law. By asking participants to sign a waiver it demonstrates that the provider is not prepared to take full responsibility for their staff or service and therefore such providers should be avoided.

## 20. Voluntary Contributions for School Activities

Nothing in legislation prevents a school governing body or local authority from asking for voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or any school activities. **However, if the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the governing body or head teacher should make this clear to parents at the outset.**

'Charging for school activities Departmental advice for governing bodies, school leaders, school staff and local authorities', Department of Education, October 2014

The following template will be included in all letters:

*St Peter's CoE Primary School would like to request a voluntary donation of £\_\_\_ to cover the costs incurred for this trip/visitor. You are under no obligation to make any contribution. Pupils who receive the Pupil Premium will have the cost of this trip/visitor paid by their funding.*

*However, if insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund this trip/visitor by (date) \_\_\_\_\_ then in accordance with Department of Education guidance we must be cancel the event.*

## 21. GDPR

When sharing personal or sensitive information the school should do so in accordance with our GDPR policy. This policy does not prevent Visit Leaders or accompanying adults having ready access to information such as medical conditions, parental contacts etc.

It is acceptable to anonymise pupil information such as; "Charlie B has a nut allergy and carries an EpiPen" so long as all accompanying adults can identify any specified children.

Parental consent forms should include information about the school's GDPR policy, or reference to it.

This has been extracted from 'Planning an off-site visit: A guide for Visit Leaders, EVCs and Head Teachers', Devon County Council and Torbay Council establishments and subscribing Academies

## **22. Staff children on visits**

Where the children of staff members are also on the visit, consideration must be given to any possible conflict of interest.

If children of staff members are on the visit then that staff member should not be the Visit Leader.

## **23. Alcohol on School Trips**

Members of staff, and volunteers, are not permitted to consume alcohol whilst on school trips.

Incidents of actual or suspected alcohol consumption should be reported to the Visit Leader in the first instance who will in turn report this information onto the Headteacher as soon as is practicable.

If the Visit Leader has consumed alcohol, then the member of staff should report directly to the Headteacher.

If the Headteacher has consumed alcohol, then the member of staff should report directly to the Chair of Governors.

## **24. Contact for support**

The first point of contact for support through Evolve and for health and safety in outdoor education is:

Devon Health & Safety Service, Devon County Council, Great Moor House, Bittern Road, Sowton Industrial Estate, Exeter, EX2 7NL

Tel.:01392 382027

Email: [healthandsafety@devon.gov.uk](mailto:healthandsafety@devon.gov.uk)

## **25. Monitoring and review policy and practice**

The Governors will review this policy:

- Every two years
- At such time as there are significant changes to guidance on the management of Outdoor Education, Visits and Off-Site Activities should significant issues be brought to the attention of the Governors through the report of the Headteacher.