

Weston Park Primary School



Off Site Activities Policy

Date of last review: September 2015

Date of next review: September 2017

Off-site Activities Policy

Policy Statement:

This policy should not be read in isolation, but in conjunction with other school policies and the LA Regulations and Guidance Notes 2003. The Regulations and Guidance Notes are available from the school office and **MUST** be read by the group leader before any off-site activity takes place.

An off-site activity is any activity that takes place outside the school site.

At Weston Park Primary school we believe that off site visits are an important enrichment to the curriculum we offer. Through them we are able to increase children's awareness of the local area and community, to offer experiences they may otherwise not have and to encourage children to make sense of learning in an appropriate context.

Off-site visits are regulated by strict health and safety requirements. We ensure that all visits adhere to the regulations set out by Hampshire and Southampton. (See appendices for details.)

Aims:

- To enhance the curriculum we offer and to place learning in context
- To offer hands on experience
- To provide a broader range of experiences that can be offered on the school site
- To promote independence by enabling them to learn and develop in new learning environments

How we meet these aims:

All year groups plan a range of off-site activities throughout the year. The majority of these visits will be in the local area but do also include opportunities to work further afield.

Visits are always linked to learning with intended outcomes, activities and links to pre and post learning clearly identified.

All visits are at the discretion of the Headteacher, once educational value and safety have been assessed and agreed.

Visits must be accessible to every child. Where appropriate, guidance is sought from parents to help us adapt the programme so that reasonable adjustments can be made and form part of the risk assessment.

Costs to parents need to be carefully considered when planning off-site activities and we should always strive to give reasonable notice and achieve maximum value for money;

Preparation is imperative to the success of off-site activities and planning must be in accordance with our off-site activities guidelines and those of the LA;

The safety of the pupils is the most important consideration. It is vital to maintain safety consciousness and safe working practices.

Guidelines for implementation

Every teacher leading an off-site activity MUST read the Off-site Activities and Educational Visits folder kept in the Headteacher's office before seeking approval for the trip.

These guidelines apply to every activity that is organised by the school which takes place outside the school site. They relate to all kinds of off-site activities, irrespective of whether the activity takes place during normal school hours, evenings, weekends, or holidays, and whether or not they include hazardous activities. They therefore apply to such diverse activities as sports fixtures when playing away, pupils walking along roads close to the school, day trips and residential visits.

Responsibilities

See page 17 of LA Guidance. In particular, note the responsibilities of the Group Leader. The Educational Visits Co-ordinator is the Headteacher.

The Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC)

The EVC will:

- Keep an updated list of staff and their qualifications
- Keep a list of staff with First Aid qualifications
- Keep a record of educational visits and risk assessments for each off-site activity
- Discuss visits with group leaders prior to the trip, to include risk assessments, behaviour management and emergency procedures.

Approval

Before any coaches or locations are booked the approval of the governing body shall be obtained. At Weston Park Primary school this approval has been delegated to the Headteacher who has the authority to approve off-site activities. Before the Headteacher will give approval she must be satisfied that the activity is appropriate and will be efficiently organised and supervised.

Appropriate activities:

- have significant educational value;
- could not be undertaken as effectively on school site;
- are suitable to the ages; abilities and aptitudes of the pupils concerned;
- are linked to the normal work of the pupils by preparation and follow-up activities.

Lead teacher:

- what is the teacher's personal level of skill in the activity to be undertaken and his/her own level of fitness
- the activity must be well within the teacher's capability and experience
- has the teacher:
 - an organising ability and a real sense of responsibility and leadership
 - knowledge of the children
 - an experience of the age range
 - an experience of the activity
 - an experience or knowledge of the situation and the area to be visited
- appropriate assistant leaders who are clear about their own roles and responsibilities

Later in the planning the Headteacher will again need to be consulted on details, costs, etc. before letters are sent to parents. Standard letter formats are available from the school office.

All arrangements for the activity must be notified to the Headteacher on the **Weston Park Form** for final approval **at least 1 week before the day**. This form is included as Appendix 1. A full itinerary and list of police-checked adults and pupils in their groups must be appended to the form. **Failure to do so could result in cancellation of the activity**. Changes caused by absent pupils must be notified as soon as possible on the day.

Planning and Preparation

All off-site activities should be made known to the Headteacher by Phase leaders at the beginning of each academic year.

Every teacher planning an off-site activity must read the relevant sections of the LA Guidance as well as this school document. LA Guidance is available from the Headteacher.

Detailed planning for each activity must take place at every stage of the planning process.

It is essential that the group leader visits the locality beforehand. This is particularly important where safety factors are involved or where residential accommodation is needed.

Pupils should be involved in the planning at some stage. They should know the aims and purpose of the visit, what activities are planned and how they are to be carried out. They should also know what is required of them at every stage. They should be aware of any hazards and be fully briefed in all relevant procedures.

If the school deems that a pupil repeatedly fails to adhere to the school behaviour code, the Headteacher reserves the right to withdraw the child from attending an off-site activity or a school club. The school will aim to inform parents/carers of any such decision 5 working days prior to the event. Where reasonably possible the school may provide an alternative activity.

Supervision

The Headteacher should ensure that there is adequate supervision taking into account the LA Guidance, the programme of activities and the environment to be visited. Unless there are exceptional circumstances, each group should be accompanied by at least one teacher from the school and the overall ratio of pupils to adults should not exceed the limit specified below.

- Reception 1:5
- Years 1 - 3 1:6
- Years 4 - 6 1:10

For activities involving hazardous pursuits there are mandatory ratios which are detailed in the LA guidance.

A minimum of 2 adults should normally accompany any group going off-site. There must also be a spare adult on every trip

Where an off-site activity involves the use of parents, or other assisting adults, it is imperative that their role is explained to them and that appropriate guidance is given during a full briefing session. Untrained adults should never be solely responsible for groups in high-risk situations e.g. by water.

All volunteer adults will be supervised at all times by school staff and unless enhanced DBS checks have been completed by the school volunteer adults will have no unsupervised contact with pupils.

Parents supervising an off-site activity must not bring other children (e.g. pre-school children) with them.

Briefings to adult helpers should include, for example:

- Procedures at all road crossings. N.B. Walking along urban roads is probably the most dangerous activity that pupils and adults undertake.
- Behaviour management
- What to do if a pupil becomes separated from the group
- Whether or not pupils are to walk in single file, as a group, run, etc.
- The necessity for regular head counts throughout the day. When counting pupils onto transport the numbers should always be double-checked.
- Procedures for the safe collection of children by parents at the end of the trip.
- NB Some confusion can occur at this point, particularly if parents are allowed to take children direct from the coach. Teachers retain responsibility at this point.
- Emergency procedures

The Headteacher needs to approve the staff undertaking any supervision at activity centres. Most centres make it clear that their instructors accept responsibility only for specific activity sessions. All other supervision is the responsibility of accompanying staff **and the duty of care remains with school staff throughout**. This duty of care requires a teacher to take an active role and all reasonable measures to ensure that each child is safe from any unacceptable risk. Negligence in law means doing something that a reasonable adult in the same circumstances would not do, or failing to do what a reasonable adult would do. Normal practice would require there to be an adult from our school with each activity group.

NB All supervising adults must be approved by the Headteacher. Students and young people on work experience will not necessarily be approved. Teachers must not approach parents or school staff (e.g. TAs) without the prior approval of the Headteacher.

Guidance on Conduct

When going off-site adults may well find themselves in situations which may cause their intentions or actions to be misinterpreted. Teachers should try to anticipate and avoid potentially difficult situations where possible.

It is important to use common sense in every situation, but situations where adults need to exercise caution may include:

First Aid	Ensure a member of school staff is present if first aid treatment is required.
Activities	If an adult has to hold or have physical contact with a pupil for safety reasons, they should explain clearly, in advance, what they are going to do. If the physical contact is different from that which was explained in advance e.g. because of an emergency, then the child should be told why it was different.
Swimming	Pupils should be supervised in changing rooms by school staff only.
Residential	There should be 2 adults on duty in sleeping areas. Where mixed groups are involved, one adult should be of each sex if possible.
Misinterpretation	If an adult feels that any of their actions may have been open to misinterpretation they should report it to the Headteacher as soon as possible.
Safety in Numbers	It is wise to ensure that no adult is left alone with a child.

Crossing the Road

Only the Police, Traffic Wardens and School Crossing Patrols have the right in law to control traffic. If a member of staff assumes responsibility for seeing children across the road they must discharge this activity to the very best of their ability. The LA recommended way to cross is for the group to cross in waves, but teachers should use their own discretion and cross in crocodile if they consider it safer. See page 80 of the LA Guidance.

Minibus Travel

There must be a second adult in the vehicle apart from the driver. The driver must not be distracted from driving by the behaviour of pupils. On long trips, e.g. more than 2 hours, the driver must take regular adequate rest periods of at least 15 minutes.

The Headteacher will require any minibus driver to have completed the MIDAS assessment. Seatbelts must be used. The responsibility for this lies with the driver.

Travel by Coach

The school should always book coaches fitted with seatbelts. It is the responsibility of teachers to ensure that all fitted seatbelts are in use at the start of each journey and after stops.

To ensure adequate supervision, adults must be spread throughout the coach and not seated together. Some EEC legislation now makes this a legal requirement.

Pupils must remain seated and the driver must not be distracted from driving.

Pupils must not be seated next to emergency doors or on the middle seat in the back row.

Private Cars

Private cars must not be used to transport pupils unless the parents of all pupils concerned consent to this and know the name of the driver. The owner of the car must state in writing that she/he has the appropriate level of insurance cover and a valid licence, MOT, etc for this activity. Standard letters are available from the school office and must be signed by all drivers.

Teachers transporting pupils in their own cars need to be insured for business use. Their insurance cover must be seen by the Headteacher. A form for those transporting pupils in their own cars is available from the school office and must be signed before the trip.

Information to Parents and Parental Consent

Teachers should ensure that parents are kept fully informed regarding any off-site activity. This information should always be given in writing and the mode of transport made clear.

Parents should have the full particulars of a visit before they are asked to give their consent. See page 86 of LA Guidance for a useful checklist.

Parents should complete a medical form for residential visits and give their written consent for emergency medical treatment. A standard letter is included in the LA Guidance.

If parents refuse their consent for any off-site activity then the child must not be taken off-site.

If parents make consent conditional, thereby creating an unacceptable risk or unnecessarily burdening staff, then the child should not be taken off-site.

Details of regular/local visits may be given to parents at the start of Year R.

Behaviour Off-Site

Our expectations of pupil behaviour off-site are the same as in school and group leaders need to be very clear about the steps that they will take in the event of poor behaviour. These will be very similar steps to those in our behaviour policy.

If a pupil is poorly behaved, the Headteacher may call the parent and ask them to collect their child.

If a child's behaviour in school could cause risk to that child or others in the group, then the child should not be taken off-site unless the Headteacher is satisfied about the child's future conduct.

Risk Assessments

A Risk Assessment must be made for each trip, detailing actions to be taken to reduce any significant or medium risk. Exceptions may be those trips that are taken frequently, for example swimming lessons. Information on risk assessments is available from the Headteacher. The format is enclosed as Appendix 2 and worked examples are available in the LA Guidance page 57 onwards.

Record of Groups Off-Site

When any group goes off-site the party leader must ensure that:

All accompanying adults have lists showing:

- all adults and pupils on the trip (**full names**)
- the distribution (if in separate groups or vehicles)
- the planned itinerary
- their own group responsibility
- the location contact point
- the name and telephone number of the base contact person.

There is a base contact person available throughout the duration of time off-site. If the stay is for more than 1 night then 2 different adults should be arranged.

The base contact person (and the group leader) should have:

- the information held by all adults on the trip (as above)
- the name and address of any travel company
- access to next of kin emergency telephone numbers
- details for contacting the LA representatives in the event of an emergency.

Mobile Telephone

When organising an off-site activity the group leader must arrange to carry a fully charged mobile telephone. In an emergency, time is often of the essence.

First Aid, Health and Medicines

At least one of the party should be an appointed First Aider. However, this is not always possible, as the rest of the school should not be left without first aid cover.

First Aid boxes must be carried in the ratio of 1 per coach. **It is the responsibility of the school office to ensure that the boxes are complete before the day of the journey.**

If first aid is given on the trip it must be recorded on return to school.

The group leader is responsible for ensuring that all necessary medicines, inhalers and Epipens are taken with them on the visit. This applies equally to short visits off site (e.g. football away game, walk to the local shops). All medicines must be carried by teachers and not by parent helpers. Therefore pupils requiring medicines should be in the teacher's own group, as child and medicine should not be parted.

Leaders need to be aware of naturally occurring infections in the outdoors such as Tetanus, Wounds Disease and Lyme Disease. For example, all abrasions should be cleaned and covered, pupils should shower after water sports and hands should be thoroughly cleaned before eating.

Farm Visits - see LA Guidance.

Use of Swimming Pools - see LA Guidance.

Payment for Off-Site Activities

Parents are asked to make voluntary contributions. Some parents find this difficult or impossible due to their financial situation. As a school we should therefore:

- limit the number of off-site activities for each class during the course of a year
- let parents know the costs at least 3 weeks in advance for day trips and 6 months for residential trips
- encourage all parents to pay
- encourage parents who cannot pay to see the Headteacher. The Headteacher may reduce or remove the charge in accordance with our Charging Policy. Only the Headteacher can offer this.
- keep accurate lists of parents who have paid.

Residential Visits

School Governor and LA approval for residential visits needs to be gained at least 8 weeks before the proposed activity. Details for planning such visits are contained in the LEA guidelines and must be followed.

Form HP2 is available from the school offices.

Hazardous Pursuits

Any teacher considering taking a group off-site to undertake a hazardous pursuit must consult the Headteacher before commencing the planning stage.

Teachers who are unsure which activities are deemed hazardous should consult the LEA Guidance.

LA Regulations and Guidelines must be followed.

Emergency Contact

In an emergency, group leaders must contact the Headteacher or other designated staff immediately and follow emergency procedure.

Emergency Procedures

In the event of an emergency, the leader must inform the Headteacher as soon as possible. If this is not possible then the Chair of Governors should be informed. It is the responsibility of the leader to ensure that they have the relevant contact telephone numbers prior to the trip.

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to inform the parents of any emergency.

Other members of the party should not make individual contact with home until the Headteacher has informed parents.

If the incident involves the emergency services, it is likely that the media will become involved. In such circumstances the LA Officer should be informed.

The Headteacher will co-ordinate the provision of appropriate support which will include:-

- notification of local Police
- notification of Social Services
- notification of Governors
- arranging to transport parents and/or replacement party leaders to the incident

APPENDIX 1 Weston Park Primary School Off-Site Activities Form

Two copies should stay in school. One to the office and one to the Headteacher. A copy should also be taken by each teacher.

Name of party leader: Tel:

Senior staff contact:

Preliminary trip completed? Y / N Date Any specific dangers observed? Y / N

Risk Assessment completed? Y/N Is it a hazardous pursuit? Y / N

Purpose of visit

Contact point for children and adults on the trip

Visit to

Address

Telephone number Day and date of visit

Class involved Number of children Number of adults

(For names and addresses, see attached list)

Transport details (including no. of vehicles)

Coach company and phone number

Other transport

Time of departure from school Estimated time of arrival at location

Time of departure from location Estimated time of arrival at school

EMERGENCY CITY NUMBER 01962 846547
Out of office hours 02392 265113 (Southern Monitoring)

HAVE YOU CHECKED/GOT?

- | | | | |
|-----|--|-------|-----------------------------|
| 1. | Medical records/forms | Y / N | |
| 2. | First aid kit | Y / N | |
| 3. | Sterile water | Y / N | |
| 4. | Asthma inhalers/medicines | Y / N | Who is carrying them? |
| 5. | Mobile phone and phone number | Y / N | |
| 6. | Change for public phone | Y / N | |
| 7. | Emergency procedures | Y / N | |
| 8. | Who is looking after those that are left behind? | | |
| 9. | Given adequate briefing and notice of contact points to all adults | Y / N | |
| 10. | Written parental consent for all pupils? | Y / N | |
| 11. | Police check form for parent volunteers | Y / N | |
| 12. | Full written details if parents/adults driving cars | Y / N | |

I have read the LA Regulations and Guidelines for Off-Site Activities.

Signed by the group leader _____ Date _____

Signed by the Headteacher _____

Append

- Names of all pupils
- Names of all adults & their groups (+ vehicular distribution)
- Full itinerary/programme details
- Names of any pupils left in school

APPENDIX 2

Risk Assessment Form

Risk assessment and risk management record		Off-site activities and educational visits	Outdoor Education Unit
Establishment		Location/Purpose	
Leader	Other staff	Group size	Ratio
<i>Identifying the hazards - assessing the risk</i>		<i>Control measures - reducing the risk</i>	
Site and its environment	risk rating		outcome
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • 	
Group		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • • 	
Leader and activity arrangements		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • • 	
Transport		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	
Variations: Record any additional assessments and control measures here if this sheet is used as a generic risk assessment			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 			

Generic/mandatory risk assessment, used and acknowledged

1. Council - risk assessment, guidance used
 -
 -
2. Establishment - risk assessments/guidance used
 -
 -
 -

Alternative plans (Plan 'B'/Plan 'C')

-
-

Emergency contacts - take the emergency action cards with you! Group details - ensure you have full details close to hand.

<p>On-going risk assessment</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Apply the control measures 2. Monitor how effective they are 3. Change, adapt, revise as required 	<p>Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor the weather • Monitor water/river levels • Monitor traffic on road • Monitor conditions underfoot 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor group and leaders response and motivation • Monitor behaviour • Assess group risk awareness in different environments • Monitor the response of your supporting adults
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Completed:	Date
Signed:	Head of establishment or EVC

APPENDIX 3 Checklist for leaders planning an off-site activity

NB. This checklist is not to be used instead of the LA Guidelines and School Policy, but just as an aide memoire.

July

- Phase Leaders to plan overview of all activities for the forthcoming year alongside the



Senior Leadership Team and d
the activity

etermine the objectives of

12/16 weeks before the activity

- Discuss the trip with the EVC (Headteacher)
- For a hazardous pursuit, fill in form HP2, show to Headteacher and send to Outdoor Education at HCC

8 weeks before the activity (longer if a residential activity or abroad, shorter if a football match)

- Read the LA Guidelines and the School Policy
- Pre-visit the site
- Determine adult/pupil ratios
- Cost the activity (ask the administrative officer for assistance)
- Read previous risk assessments of activity if a repeat trip
- Ask designated administrative staff to order the transport

4/6 weeks before the activity

- Complete a new Risk Assessment and discuss with Headteacher
- Consult the Headteacher on details and letter to parents, costs, adult help, etc.
- Send letter to parents giving full details of the activity (minimum 3 weeks before the activity - 2 months if residential). Show letter to Headteacher before it is sent. Never tell parents that the activity is risk free
- Secure adult help (ensure police checks in place)
- Involve pupils in the planning, including discussion of hazards, expected behaviour etc.

1 week before the activity

- Give Weston Park Primary school Off-Site Activities form to Headteacher to sign

48 hours before the activity

- Ensure that you know the emergency procedures
- Check medical forms with the administrative staff and ensure that necessary medication is available. Determine who is to carry it

APPENDIX 3 Checklist for leaders planning an off-site activity

- Check First Aid provision
- Ensure mobile telephone will be charged

On the day

- (Earlier if appropriate) Fully brief all adults taking part, e.g. on their responsibilities, on how we cross roads, on particular hazards, etc. Give them written guidance, pupil lists, etc.
- Check that the information given to the Headteacher is correct and amend if necessary
- Check you have all necessary equipment for the day e.g. throw bags, first aid boxes, inhalers etc