



Barcombe Hamsey Plumpton Iford & Kingston

Skylark Federation

OFF-SITE ACTIVITIES and EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY

**Reviewed and approved by Finance Committee:
19.10.23**

Next review: Autumn 2025

Introduction

This policy should be read alongside the East Sussex County Council Offsite Activities & Educational Visits Policy which can be located on the 'Exeant' website and the National Guidance.

Trips, visits and learning off-site comprise an essential part of the federation curriculum. Successful trips provide memorable learning experiences and enhance the children's education in ways that are not possible in the classroom. The federation is committed to providing school visits as a positive tool to develop pupils' independent, investigative learning, and to build their experience of the local and wider world.

Within the federation, responsibility for educational visits rests with the Governing Body, Executive Headteacher, Head of School and the Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC), however all school employees have a responsibility to:

- take reasonable care of their own and others' health and safety
- co-operate with their employer
- carry out activities in accordance with training and instruction
- inform the employer of any serious risk

This policy has been produced to offer federation staff advice and support in the planning and organising of all off-site activities in order to ensure the health and safety of pupils.

Definition

For the purposes of this policy, an 'educational visit' means any educational, cultural or sporting activity that requires the pupils to leave the school premises having been authorised to do so by the Head of School. This includes the following:

- Visits to places of interest in the local area
- Day visits to museums, galleries and places of educational interest
- Forest School
- Sporting activities including swimming sessions
- Outward bound and adventurous activities
- Visits abroad

Aims and expectations

Most classes in the federation will have one educational visit each long term. These trips are planned to support and broaden the children's understanding of the current topic. Class teachers may arrange additional visits throughout the year following authorisation from senior leaders, providing the costs for the school year are not excessive. In addition to this, there will be additional trips arranged throughout the year, such as sports. All activities are available to all children irrespective of needs, ethnicity, gender or religion.

Planning and Preparation for a trip

The Educational Visits Coordinator

The federation has appointed Educational Visit Co-ordinators (EVC) whose role is to coordinate the planning and management of these activities. All off-site activities must be approved by the EVC at least two weeks prior to the proposed date of the trip or four weeks if residential or adventure activities, unless the trip has been planned in response to an educational opportunity that has arisen, for example a last minute invitation to a significant event or rearranged sporting fixture. Where possible, dates for educational visits will be set at the beginning of the calendar year to enable office staff to book tickets and transport as applicable.

Procedure

The best practice to be adhered to in the arranging of school trips is as follows:

- The school trip form to be completed and followed.
- Calculate a cost per pupil, inclusive of transport and Parent Pay charge of 1.25%. This must be sufficient to cover the entire cost of the trip, including any charges for additional helpers.
- Once confirmed with the venue and transport providers, the dates for the trip must be entered onto the electronic diary
- In cases where school lunches are affected, kitchen staff must be informed.
- The EVC must be informed and Exeant completed.
- Class teachers will inform parents in advance of dates for school trips giving at least two weeks' notice (unless there are exceptional circumstances)
- Where applicable, parental volunteers will be asked for. Where there are more volunteers than spaces, parent helpers will be selected using a fair and transparent process.
- If appropriate, payments will be made on Parent Pay.

Risk assessments

A pre-visit is highly recommended to support the risk assessment process and should be carried out whenever possible. A full risk assessment must be completed two weeks prior to a trip, which must be approved by the school's EVC, using Exeant. To support the process, existing risk assessments can be used, evaluated and updated, including generic risk assessments provided by the centre to be visited, risk assessments completed by colleagues who carried out the same trip and/or the generic risk assessments available on the school server.

The risk assessment must include details of any specific medical issues, additional support for individual children and details of adult helpers. A copy should be taken on the trip, and another copy left with the EVC.

Parental consent

Most parents give blanket permission for their child to attend local school trips. As a result, permission is no longer requested from parents for some school trips or sporting activities. However, parents will always be informed about the trip or activity by email or letter. All the necessary details will be included in the letter, as well as any payments required.

Permission will be specifically requested from parents for:

- Residential trips
- Adventure trips (e.g. outward bound) or a long journey
- Trips that take place outside of school hours

Ratios

All trips are individually risk assessed to ascertain the safe level of adult supervision required. Below are the recommended minimum adult to pupil ratios that our federation is committed to implement. These are adhered to unless there are exceptional circumstances and/or permission has been given by the Head of School following an assessment of risk taking into consideration the nature of the trip.

- Reception classes - 1:4
- Years 1 – 3 - 1:6
- Years 4 – 6 - 1:15
- Adventurous activities -1:10

- Residential visits – 1:10
- Visits abroad 1:10

If a child with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or an Education Health Care Plan is participating in the trip, this pupil must have the same support that is ordinarily available to them during the school day.

Residential trips

In the case of residential trips, a parents' meeting will be held well in advance of the trip. This will provide all the relevant information, including the details of payment plans, which are always available on request. Special equipment/clothing will be listed as required; for example, for adventurous visits, additional or waterproof clothing may be necessary. Emergency telephone contacts must be obtained for all pupils participating in residential activities, along with relevant medical information, on the parental consent form. The federation will ensure that adults of each gender accompany the children on residential visits.

Payments for trips

When planning educational visits, class teachers will always consider the cost implications for parents. Excessively expensive trips will be avoided wherever possible. All payment by parents for school trips is made in the form of a voluntary contribution unless it is a residential trip. However, in the event that the school is unable to cover the costs of a planned visit, the trip might have to be cancelled. All payments are made online via Parent Pay.

For residential off-site visits where the costs are likely to be higher, payment plans are available, to spread the cost.

In certain cases, the federation may be able to subsidise the cost of school trips. In these cases, parents need to complete a request form which is kept in the school office.

Behaviour on school trips

The school's Behaviour Policy applies equally to children when they are being educated off-site. Indeed, being outside of the school, expectations are even higher as children are acting as ambassadors for our school/federation. We expect our pupils to behave courteously to all members of the public that they meet. It is essential for their own safety that they listen carefully to their accompanying adults and act on any instructions given to them. It is also essential that all children actively participate in all aspects of the trip as trips are an integral part of the child's education. Children will always be reminded of the behaviour expectations before going off-site on their visit.

Trip Safety

The school takes the safety of its pupils on off-site visits extremely seriously. All supervising adults must be made aware of the duty of care which is placed upon them. The federation's Safeguarding Policy will be implemented during all off-site activities. The federation will adhere to the following to ensure the safety of children on educational visits:

- An adult of each gender to accompany mixed groups of pupils if possible

- Newly Qualified Teachers to be accompanied by an experienced member of the teaching staff on their first visit
- A first aider to be available for all trips
- For EYFS trips, at least one first aider must accompany children
- Supervising adults must know of any special medical details relevant to any pupil
- First aid kits and any individual medicines, e.g., asthma pumps, must be taken on the trip
- Children to be briefed about the importance of staying with their partner/group/adult helper
- Any adult who has not been DBS checked should not be left alone with children during any activity
- Adults must never travel alone with a child in their own vehicle
- Any adult helpers must be fully briefed prior to leaving, in writing, with names of children in their group, expectations and responsibilities, and mobile numbers of members of staff
- When walking along a pavement, children must be in a line in pairs (or single file if necessary) with teaching staff at the front and rear, and other adults alongside
- Regular headcounts to be taken

Emergency procedures

In cases where a child or children need urgent medical attention, one staff member will accompany that child (or children) for treatment, while other staff members and adults remain with the rest of the group. School will be notified at all times, and they in turn will notify parents.

In the unlikely event that a child becomes separated from their group, they must follow the steps below, about which they will have been briefed prior to departure:

- Wait so that the trip leader can re-trace their steps to locate the child
- If a child has been left on the tube/train, they are to get off at the next station and wait
- Speak only to adults in uniform, e.g., police etc. but under no circumstances go with them.

The trip leader and one other member of staff will search the immediate vicinity. Another member of staff will assume overall responsibility for the group during the absence of the trip leader to maintain the safety and well-being of the other children.

If the child is not found after approximately 20 minutes, the trip leader will phone the school office to notify them and ascertain whether they have any information. The school will notify the parents.

The trip leader will contact the police no more than 30 minutes after the child has gone missing. Once the police arrive, all relevant information about the child will be given, so that the police can take over the search. The trip leader will remain with the police to comfort the child when found and maintain regular contact with the school. The remaining staff and adult helpers will return to the school with the rest of the children.

When the situation has been resolved, the executive headteacher and SLT will conduct a full investigation to ascertain how the incident occurred and revise the risk assessment procedures where appropriate.

Other Relevant Policies and Documents

This policy complements and supports a range of other policies:

- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy

Policy Monitoring and Review

A copy of this policy is available to all staff and parents and is published on each school website. This policy is reviewed every two years by the Governors' Finance Committee