

# St John's C of E First School



**Learning together, aiming high**

## OFF-SITE VISITS POLICY

**This policy should be taken as part of St. John's C. of E. First School's overall strategy and is implemented within the context of our vision of Government aims and our values as a Church of England School.**

### Introduction

Off-site visits/activities are arranged by or on behalf of the school, and would normally 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 that 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 in order to manage and minimise risk, ensuring 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.

### Aims and Objectives

- 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.

### Curriculum Links

For each subject in the curriculum, there is a corresponding programme of activities that may include visits to specialist venues. All activities should be in line with guidance published by the Local Authority.

### External Visit Coordinator (EVC)

The Head Teacher will ensure that the school has a trained External Visit Coordinator. The EVC will assist in the planning and management of off-site visits, if needed but the majority of the planning will be carried out by the adults organising the visit.

The EVC will:

- Ensure that risk assessments are completed by staff who are leading the off site visit and, when appropriate, support staff to complete safety plans and safe working practices. The EVC will not complete Risk Assessment for the planned trip.
- Support the governing body in any decision on approval.
- Keep records of visits and provide after-visit evaluation to aid future visits.

## **How visits are authorised,**

Staff proposing to arrange an off-site activity must seek and obtain the approval of the Head Teacher or EVC at least 2 weeks prior to going. Failing to do this could result in the request being denied. In some instances the Governing Body may need to be informed (as necessary), in advance, before any commitment is made on behalf of the school.

### **Category A Visits / Activities**

Approval for Category A visits and activities, has been delegated by the Governing Body to the **Head Teacher and / or EVC. Governors review delegation arrangements annually as part of Health and Safety Policy for school.** For these visits, a paper version of the online system is adequate, providing it is completed correctly in a timely manner AND the necessary risk assessments are attached.

### **Category B Visits / Activities**

Approval for Category B visits or activities must be obtained from the Governing Body and the Head Teacher before they take place. Endorsement is also required from the Outdoor Education Adviser for the Local Authority through an online application.

### **Planning a Visit or Activity**

The Visit Leader must ensure that the visit or activity is planned in advance and within submission time to ensure approval is granted. An application must be given to the EVC at least 2 weeks prior to the visit happening otherwise it may be refused.

The planning of a visit and should be carried out using the European Education Consultants (EEC) Health and Safety Management system for Risk and Educational Visit management as the system provides on-line approval for the school's EVC and, for Category B, Local Authority endorsement only.

Category A visits can also be requested using the Request form on the P:Drive in the folders, Staff, EVC. This must be completed and handed with any relevant risk assessment forms. Risk Assessments should be carried out the EEC live website ([www.eeclive.co.uk](http://www.eeclive.co.uk)) before printing off.

## **Visit Plan**

The visit plan for intended visits must include the following:

- Risk assessments for transport, site of visit and activities;
- Curriculum objectives
- Supervision / pupil ratios
- Itinerary
- Supervisory details
- Emergency contact details.

## **Risk Assessment**

All, relevant, risk assessments must be carried out by the Visit Leader before any proposed visit or activity takes place. Existing risk assessments must be checked to ensure that they are still suitable and sufficient.

As before, EEC provides comprehensive frameworks for venues and activities and should be used for assessing any risk of the place or activity that is being visited.

A copy of the risk assessment or safe working procedures is to be given to all adults supervising the visit/activity.

## **Transport**

Risk assessments must be carried out for the mode of transport. When hiring a coach or minibus, only use companies that have been endorsed by Transporting Somerset.

Using vehicles belonging to parents is to be discouraged. If, however, the decision is made to use a parent's vehicle the driver risk assessment (F14a) **must** be completed and a CRB check performed before the visit/activity takes place.

## **Communication with Parents**

The parents of pupils taking part in an off-site activity must be provided with all appropriate information about the intended visit. Parents must give their permission in writing before a child can be involved in any off-site activities. Every September generic consent forms are signed by parents for local walks, which give consent throughout the year for walks and of-site visits within Frome.

## **Further Health and Safety Considerations**

Adults accompanying the group(s) on the visit/activity must be informed of the emergency procedures by the Visit Leader and provided with an emergency telephone number. This will normally be the school number, but where an activity extends beyond the normal school day, the telephone number of a designated emergency contact should be provided.

The School Office is to be provided with a list of everyone, pupils and adults, travelling with the group, together with a copy of the itinerary for the activity.

The safety of the group(s), especially the pupils, is of paramount importance. During the activity, the Visit Leader must take whatever steps are necessary to ensure that safety. This involves taking note of any information provided by medical questionnaire returns, and ensuring that pupils are both safe, well and looked after at all times.

Prior to an activity, if it is felt that the behaviour of an individual pupil is likely to compromise the safety of others, the Visit Leader should discuss with the Head Teacher measures to put in place to enable the pupil to take part, especially if part of the curriculum. An example of these measures could be an Individual Safety Plan supporting extra supervision.

## **MONITORING AND REVIEW**

This policy is monitored by the Children and Learning Committee of the Governing Body and will be reviewed every two years, or before if necessary.

**Signed:** C C Marsland & M Gatcliffe      **Date:** 21/02/17