

Offsite Visits Policy

Furneux Pelham C of E Primary School



Roots to grow,
Wings to soar

Approved by: Curriculum and Pupil Welfare
Committee

Date: June 2024

Next review due by: June 2026

Introduction

Off-site visits are activities which take place outside school grounds. All off-site activities must serve an educational purpose, enhancing and enriching our pupil's learning experiences.

At Furneux Pelham School we believe that offsite visits are an essential and enriching part of a child's education, adding to the learning that takes place within the classroom environment. We believe that every child should experience at least one residential trip during their primary school years.

In this policy we seek to establish a clear and coherent structure for the planning of our off-site visits, and to ensure that any risks are managed and kept to acceptable levels, for the health and safety of pupils, staff and volunteers 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 protective characteristics.

Compliance with Guidance

All visits will comply with the requirements outlined in the DfE's [Health and Safety Guidance on Educational Visits for Schools](#). Further advice will be sought from local authority advisors where necessary. All staff leading or participating in a visit are required to have read this Policy and to have signed it to say this is the case.

Purposes of Day and Residential Trips

- To ensure that children have increased opportunities to learn in a visual and practical manner and to apply their learning in different contexts.
- To provide opportunities for children to become more fully engaged in their learning through immersing them in a new experience or context and to provide an exciting enhancement of topic work.
- To provide experience of environments that are not necessarily familiar.
- To provide opportunities for children and staff to interact socially in an environment other than school.
- To provide a social experience outside of their home environment.
- To provide the opportunity for self challenge in a controlled and safe situation.
- To help the children develop their independence and self-reliance.
- To increase personal confidence and motivation for learning throughout the curriculum.
- To provide opportunities for team building and co-operation.

Roles and Responsibilities

The school has a named **Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC)**, who is involved in the planning and management of off-site visits.

The EVC will:

- assign competent staff to lead and help with trips (being competent means that the Leader has demonstrated the ability to operate to recognised standards of good practice, and has sufficient relevant experience and knowledge of the group, the activity and the venue);
- Check that Visit Leaders are competent and record details of necessary training and qualifications and/or reviewing verified evidence of relevant experience;
- ensure that risk assessments are completed by competent staff, who have an understanding of the risk assessment process;
- check visit plans and sign off risk assessments;
- organise related staff training;
- verify that all private car drivers, have had satisfactory DBS checks, and that the letter from the coach company assures us their drivers too have had satisfactory DBS checks;
- ensure that regular volunteers and those assisting with overnight/residential stays have had satisfactory DBS checks carried out. Volunteers used for one off activities, who are not left alone at any time (out of sight/ear shot of a member of staff) to supervise pupils, do not necessarily need DBS checks completing. The headteacher's discretion under these circumstances is used;
- make sure that all necessary consent and medical forms are obtained;

- approve visits through the education visits advisor electronic share point system - Evolve;
- ensure that all residential visits are recorded on Evolve;
- ensure that risk assessments for frequent/regular visits are routinely reviewed (for example a swimming facility) and update where necessary.

The **Headteacher** will approve a competent Visit Leader to be responsible for running the visit. This will normally be a class teacher, with an appropriate level of experience, training and qualifications.

Visit Leaders and staff arranging, or otherwise involved in, off-site activities must read thoroughly the guidelines published within this policy.

Visit Leaders will:

- ensure all off-site activities take place in accordance with school procedures;
- check to ensure sufficient staff and helpers of the right experience are DBS checked (as detailed above) and briefed throughout the visit;
- conduct/review risk assessments and ensure management to reduce risks including site specific, general and dynamic risk assessments are undertaken and recorded;
- ensure a named person, emergency procedures and systems for recording and sharing information on accidents and near misses are in place before briefing pupils and parents;
- Where appropriate and when considered necessary undertake exploratory visits or seek references from other schools if using new venues; and reassess from time to time;
- ensure that the details of the visit and risk assessments are entered into Evolve and passed on to the EVC with standard forms attached where appropriate to show the arrangements that have been made;
- ensure any accidents / incidents are reported;
- Feedback any learning points from visits to the EVC.

The **School Business Manager** will:

- ensure that Best Value principles are used when selecting providers, appropriate checks are made, insurance and financial support procedures are followed;
- ensure appropriate transport arrangements are in place i.e. reputable coach company, driver insurance, following specific legal requirements;
- Make available to staff, details of DBS checked parents and facilitate DBS checks if required.
- In line with the Charging and Remissions Policy, cost trips based on information provided by visit leaders.
- Manage communications with parents and financial details.

Where staff are proposing to arrange an off-site activity, they must first seek and obtain the initial approval of the headteacher before any commitment is made.

Governors will be informed of all visits through the termly Headteacher Report but delegate formal approval of visits to the headteacher.

Equal Opportunities

It is our policy that all pupils including those with medical conditions should be able to participate in educational visits. Where a child with a protected characteristic is eligible for a trip, we will make every effort to ensure that s/he is included. We may seek guidance from parents to help us adapt our programme, and we will make any reasonable adjustments to our itinerary to include a child with protective characteristics. Any such adjustments will be included in the risk assessment.

Risk Assessments

The Visit Leader must carry out a comprehensive risk assessment, before the proposed visit. It will assess the risks that might be encountered on the visit, and will indicate measures to prevent or reduce them. All identified hazards must be reduced to an acceptable level (Medium or Low rating) before the headteacher will approve the visit. Advice may be sought from the EVC or the local authority outdoor education advisor where required.

The risk assessment should be based on the following considerations:

- Look for the hazards;
- Decide who might be harmed and how;

- Evaluate the risks and decide whether the existing precautions are adequate or whether more should be done;
- Implement safety measures needed to reduce risks to an acceptable level;
- Include the SEN/medical needs of the specific pupils participating;
- Plan for emergencies;
- Identify alternative arrangements or “Plan B” if the risks change and activities cannot be completed;
- Review assessment and revise it if necessary.

A risk assessment must also cover transport to and from the venue and must include provision for:

- appropriate level of supervision;
- the required use of child restraints;
- vetting of the driver by the police;
- insurance for the driver;
- details of first aid and emergency procedures;
- breakdown procedures.

Incident Management

Any accidents that occur to employees, volunteers or pupils during the visit must be investigated and recorded following normal accident reporting procedures. RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations) reportable accidents will require the Health and Safety Advisor to be notified as soon as reasonably practicable.

Planning for emergencies

Teachers in charge of pupils during a visit have a duty of care to make sure that pupils are safe and healthy. They also have common law duty to act as a reasonably prudent parent would. Teachers will not hesitate to act in an emergency and to take lifesaving action in an extreme situation.

As part of our planning for emergencies, the EVC will:

- Ensure all staff are made aware of and understand the guidance on emergency planning and procedures. Training and briefing sessions must be provided for staff as necessary;
- Ensure trip leaders are aware of local emergency services before activities take place.
- Ensure an emergency procedure is in place so that parents are informed quickly about any major incident on a trip through school contact, rather than through the media or anyone else;
- Ensure Visit Leaders take a copy of the Emergency Action Card on the trip and that this is easily accessible during the trip, should an emergency arise;
- The ‘home based contact’ (usually the headteacher) will make significant decisions. S/he should be contactable and available for the full duration of the visit 24 hours a day. S/he should be able to respond immediately at the establishment base to the demands of an emergency and should have a back-up person or number;
- Support should be provided by the local authority advisor when dealing with media enquiries.

Procedural Requirements

- If a Visit Leader is organising a trip to a new venue then, whenever possible, an exploratory visit should be made to inform their risk assessment.
- A risk assessment is carried out by the Visit Leader for every trip or journey. This is clearly dated and stored centrally so a record can be kept.
- A record of every trip or journey is kept on the school calendar.
- For repeated activities, such as church visits or walks around the village, the standard risk assessment should be amended for that particular visit or cohort of pupils.
- Once the trip has been booked the Visit Leader should aim to notify parents at least two weeks before the date.

Residential trips – As above **but**

- A residential trip should have four or more months' notice.
- Hertfordshire's internet-based system, EVOLVE, is used to facilitate the planning, management and approval of residential or overseas trips.

Parental Consent

- Children will not be allowed to participate in the trip if a parental consent form is not returned. Local trips (within walking distance) are covered by a consent slip signed by parents when a child starts school. At the head teacher's discretion the school may accept verbal permission on the morning of the outing.

Residential trips – As above **but**

- For residential trips a full medical form will be sent out to parents.
- At the planning meeting for the School Residential trip it will be agreed with the parents that if behaviour is unacceptable then the child will be sent home early and that costs will not be refunded. This statement will also be part of the consent form completed by parents.

Supervision

- Foundation Stage (reception) ratio 1:5
- Key Stage1 ratio 1:6
- Key Stage 2 ratio 1:10
- Where possible it is suggested that the Visit Leader should not have a group but floats between the groups. This is dependent on the behaviour and maturity of the group and staff numbers.
- Where the Visit Leader does have a group, they should take the children who may require more support during the visit.
- A risk assessment will be carried out for all trips.
- A code of conduct will be given to all volunteer helpers. (Appendix C)
- The group leader (usually the class teacher) will hold a short meeting with volunteer helpers to ensure that they are aware of their responsibilities and key aspects of the risk assessment.
- On all school trips each child is assessed individually and if further supervision is needed then this will be arranged (eg to meet any special needs).

Residential trips – As above **but**

- For residential trips there will be a named teacher in charge.
- Parents will be informed about the number of adults at the residential centre and those who will be accompanying the children from the school, at a meeting held for parents and carers

Step by Step Guide for Arranging an Offsite Visit - Appendix A

When organising a trip the group leader follows the step by step guide which ensures that they follow the school's procedure for planning, managing and getting approval for all offsite visits.

Offsite Visits Checklist –see Appendix B

All group leaders use the offsite visits checklist to ensure they adhere to the school's procedure for conducting offsite visits, including processes to be followed upon their return to school.

During the Visit

- The children are expected to behave as they would in school and listen to and follow through adult instructions.
- The Visit Leader is responsible for the safety of the children on the journey and should ensure that all seat belts are fastened for the duration of the journey (if applicable).
- The Visit Leader should complete a head count when the group is getting on or off the transport and when the groups come back together for lunch etc.
- A first aid box must be taken on each journey and where possible a trained first aider should accompany the group.
- The Visit Leader will ensure that they carry a fully charged mobile at all times during the visit. They will contact the School Office if an issue arises or to give updates on delayed times of arrival back at school.
- If a child has specific medical requirements medicines must be taken on day trips e.g. asthma pumps, epi-pens. Children requiring an epi-pen will be placed in a group with a leader who has been trained in administering their medication. The adult working in closest proximity to the child should carry their epi-pen – this would usually be the school journey leader.
- It is the responsibility of the school journey leader to ensure that staffing ratios are maintained at all times.

Residential trips – As above **but**

- The Visit Leader will have each child's medical form on a residential trip and all medicine will be collected in on the departure morning (at the latest) and should be clearly labelled with the child's name. Parents will complete the school's medicine administration form and hand this to the leader with the medicine. There will be a named person responsible for storing and administering medication.

Contact

- The Visit Leader should notify the office if there are any delays or problems.
- If there is an emergency at home then parents should phone the school office who will pass the message on to the School Journey Leader.
- On all trips the adult role should be clearly defined and written notes given to adult helpers.
- All adult helpers should have a mobile phone and should exchange numbers with the group leader in case of emergency.

Residential trips – As above **but**

- On residential trips the Visit Leader will phone the school office to confirm safe arrival and to warn (in good time) of a delayed arrival back at school.
- During a residential trip we do not allow children to phone home or parents to phone the centre, except in exceptional circumstances, such as a birthday. Each child will send a postcard/letter and we encourage parents to write to their child at some point during the stay. Children are not allowed to take mobile phones

- Before the trip parents are given the number of the centre to call in the event of an emergency out of hours. [For emergencies in school hours the school office should be informed].+

Present Journey Structure

- Day trips for each year group are connected with the topics they are studying that year.
- In Year 5 and 6 there is a joint residential trip which will cover aspects of the National Curriculum such as Outdoor and Adventurous Activities one year followed by a city based visit covering different aspects of the curriculum.

Finance

Parents are asked for a contribution towards the cost of all trips. Whilst this is voluntary, without it the trip would not take place. For residential trips, Pupil Premium supports half of the cost, and where possible grants are obtained to reduce costs for those families who are eligible for financial support. Decisions and procedures regarding finance are made in line with the *Charging and Remissions Policy*.

Appendix A: Step by Step Guide for Arranging an Off-Site Visit

1.	Organiser to obtain permission from the Headteacher for the proposed visit. If granted, fix date. Liaise with school office to put date into office diary.	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.	Organiser to start 'Trip Planning Form' and email to office / SBM for completion. This should include the coach quote form, if a coach is to be booked.	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	Organiser to meet with SBM to discuss initial costings resulting in the issue of a costings sheet. (Any correspondence to be passed to SBM as soon as it is received).	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.	If volunteer drivers are to be used, organiser to check the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Driver is DBS/disqualification disclosure checked • Form OV 7D completed by driver • Whether booster seats are required 	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.	Organiser to complete a risk assessment and ask Headteacher to sign off visit (OV1 or OV 3 form).	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.	Organiser to add the trip to Evolve.	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.	Organiser to arrange helpers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are they DBS/disqualification disclosure checked? • Reception – Y3 1:6 • Y4 – Y6 1:10 <p>Minimum of 2 adults for all visits unless previously agreed with the Headteacher.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8.	Organiser to write letter to parents with full information and payment request. All correspondence to be copied to the office.	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.	Organiser to make arrangements for any child not going on the trip with the Headteacher.	<input type="checkbox"/>
10.	Organiser to brief any additional helpers and give them a copy of the risk assessment and to ensure that they are aware of first aid/emergency procedures and give all members of the party an emergency contact list for the children.	<input type="checkbox"/>
11.	All members of the party must fill out a Self-Consent Form for Adults (OV 7B) which should be taken on the visit whilst a copy is passed to the school office beforehand.	<input type="checkbox"/>
12.	Organiser to complete and pass to the school office a copy of the OV 9 form (Emergency Contact information for the trip)	<input type="checkbox"/>
13.	Organiser to ensure that a fully charged mobile phone is carried at all times.	<input type="checkbox"/>
14.	Organiser to ensure that a first aid kit, wellness bucket and any emergency medication is taken on the trip.	<input type="checkbox"/>

Appendix B

Checklist for School Journey Leaders On the trip

- check seat belts on the coach/transport
- do a head count after getting on transport and other relevant times during the trip
- ensure considerate behaviour at all times, and that which is conducive with learning.
- include in Risk Assessment how large groups of children will cross roads, walk along them etc
- notify school via your mobile phone if there any delays or problems
- for residential trips phone school on arrival at the centre and to warn of delays on return to school

On your return

- return the first aid kit and any other medical supplies to the medical cupboard in the staffroom
- ensure return of asthma pumps/epipens to their usual place for the next school day
- return all equipment used to the correct place

Appendix C

Information for Volunteers Accompanying Children on Offsite Visits

It is important that volunteers who go on school journeys understand the following:

1. The class teacher is the group leader and will ensure all volunteers know their responsibilities.
2. Adult supervisors are there for all the children and should care for and encourage all the children equally.
3. Supervisors need to have all their attention focused on the children and their welfare.
4. Photographs should only be taken by members of school staff using school cameras, unless specifically asked by the School Journey Leader.
5. If the children are being spoken to as a group then all volunteers should be listening and modelling good listening behaviour.
6. Volunteers are allocated a group of children by the class teacher. The safety of the group is their responsibility. They should ensure that all children walk in a sensible manner with due regard for others. Adults should always walk on the road side.
7. When crossing major road junctions class teachers will need to place volunteers appropriately so that children can cross the road safely. Volunteers should listen carefully and do as directed by the class teacher.
8. No child should be forced to undertake an activity they find frightening or intimidating.
9. Food should only be eaten at times designated by the class teacher.
10. All volunteers should ensure children behave appropriately.
11. Any concerns about the above especially point 9 should be referred to the group leader who is always the class teacher (unless stated).
12. All medical and personal information that adult volunteers receive as part of the school journey is confidential and should not be discussed with anyone before or after the trip.
13. If a child talks about something which concerns an adult volunteer, or they witness things regarding a child which concerns them, this should be reported to the class teacher immediately. Adult volunteers must not promise to keep secrets if a child discloses information to them.
14. Adult supervisors should, wherever possible, avoid being alone with a child on the journey, and should always try to ensure that someone else is always present with them too.

Thank You for all your help and support enabling us to take this trip today.