

# Tenbury C E Primary Academy



'Therefore encourage one another and build each other up.

Thessalonians 5:11

## *Off-Site Visits Procedures*

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## **1. Introduction**

At Tenbury Primary Academy we believe that every young person should experience the world beyond the classroom as an essential part of learning and personal development, whatever their age, ability or circumstances. Learning outside the classroom is defined as: **"the use of places other than the classroom for teaching and learning."** The rationale is that such learning often makes **"the most memorable learning experiences"** and **"help us to make sense of the world around us by making links between feelings and learning. They stay with us into adulthood and affect our behaviour, lifestyle and work. They influence our values and the decisions we make. They allow us to transfer learning experienced outside to the classroom and vice versa."** **Manifesto for Learning Outside the Classroom.**

It is academy policy to follow the guidance set out in the National guidance for the management of outdoor learning, off-site visits and learning outside the classroom, which can be seen at [www.oeapng.info](http://www.oeapng.info).

## **2. Aims and objectives**

All academy visits and off-site activities are planned in the broad educational context of supporting the following educational aims and objectives:

- To provide children with first-hand experiences.
- To enhance curriculum learning opportunities.
- To strengthen personal development and the process of self-discovery.
- To develop a growing sense of community values and to develop the ability to live with and cooperate with others in a group or team context.
- To nurture a tolerant understanding of the locality and wider world in which we live, including respect for the environment and sustainable means of utilising it for educational and recreational purposes.
- To encourage and develop self-reliance, self-discipline and self-esteem.
- To enhance a sense of responsibility towards self, others and the wider environment.
- To improve understanding and appreciation of the value of sustained endeavour, taking due account of religious, cultural, ethnic and gender-based diversity.

## **3. What is an off-site visit?**

An off-site visit includes a range of activities that occur off the academy site. The nature of risk involved increases with the distance from the academy site.

These include:

- Walks in the local area
- Swimming
- Local visits (including church, the high academy and the library) that involve walking to the venue.
- Half-day or full-day trips including transport
- Residential visits
- Extra-curricular sporting or choir events

Educational visits should be available to all the pupils concerned and should be organised accordingly. Particular consideration should be given when selecting venues and organising transport, to any pupils who have sensory impairment or physical disabilities.

## **4. Roles and Responsibilities**

Under the statutory guidance which came into effect on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2004, all educational establishments are required to have a named Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC), who will ensure that the planning and supervision of all visits and adventurous activities meet the national guidance. This academy's EVC is Jason Griffiths.

The DHMAT requires the establishment's EVC to have undergone specific training, which is updated every three years:

**Rachel Gittens: November 2022 (EVC)**

The role of the EVC is included in the Off-Site Visits folder in the staff room.

Specific responsibilities include:

- Governing body - to approve overseas, residential and adventurous activities
- Head teacher - to approve visits and assesses competence of visit leaders
- EVC - to approve visits, maintain records, provide advice and documentation, assess competence, produce and monitor academy policy.
- Visit leader - to plan visits in line with procedures in this policy, including liaising with the office and EVC, completing risk assessments and relevant forms and continually assess risks
- Supervising teachers and other adults - to supervise children, continually assess risks, manage risks in line with risk assessment
- Pupils - to follow instructions and procedures in line with the risk assessment

For further guidance into specific roles see appendices

Each staff member should have read and understood their role before permission for a trip can be given.

## **5. Planning a trip**

The visit leader must obtain permission for the trip from the head teacher. Though must be given to the educational benefits, cost to the parent/carers and staffing needs.

The visit leader should complete the visit leader checklist (SAGED planning document) and discuss the visit with the EVC at the early stages of planning.

Information about the planning of a trip can be found on the following website. [www.oeapng.info](http://www.oeapng.info).

### **5.1 Permission for trips**

All matters regarding each visit outside academy - feasibility, planning, safety, organisation etc - will require the prior approval of the head teacher and EVC. The Governing Body is also informed of all residential visits or visits which the EVC deems to have a higher risk than normal whereby the EVC will seek advice and guidance if required.

## **5.2 Parental consent**

Parent/carer consent is required for trips or visits that:

- a) Take place out of normal academy hours
- b) Involve a cost to the parent/carer
- c) Involve transport

Therefore signed consent is not required for local visits (e.g. to the park, the library or the swimming pool), where the activity is part of the normal curriculum. However parent/carers should be informed of the nature, purpose and time of these visits. Blanket consent is given for all these local activities when a child begins academy and is valid until they leave the academy. A list of who has completed these forms is kept in the academy office.

Parent/carers should be made fully aware of any likely risks of the visit and their management, so they may consent or refuse on a fully informed basis (known as 'Acknowledgment of Risk').

The letter to parent/carers should therefore give full details of the visit, the reason for the visit (educational aims), supervision arrangements and the transport arrangements, and ensure that the detail of other incidental activities is included, together with Plan B if appropriate. The letter should also state the cost of the visit per child.

Whilst most visits will only be able to go ahead if sufficient funds are available, no child may be excluded from an activity because of the unwillingness or inability of the parent/carer to make a contribution. Parent/carers will be informed of this principle through the academy prospectus and letters sent home about intended visits. The timetable for the payment of contributions should allow for the headteacher to make a decision about the financial viability of the activity in reasonable time.

Prior to a residential trip, parent/carers are given comprehensive information, including emergency contact details.

The party leader always has a mobile phone on their person and will phone the academy in the event of an emergency, and the administrator will contact parent/carers. Alternatively, they will take an emergency contact list and will phone the parent/carer directly. In the event of a late return to academy a text message will be sent to parent/carers.

Where written consent has not been received, verbal consent may be accepted for day visits only. This will be recorded by the member of academy staff making the phone call.

## **5.3 Staffing of trips**

The leader of the visit **MUST** be a member of the teaching staff of Tenbury Primary Academy and have experience of the group they are responsible for. In addition to this, no teacher should lead a trip without being assessed as competent by the head teacher/EVC.

They also **MUST** have completed Visit Leader Training.

There should be a minimum of 2 adults with any off-site visit. (Exceptions to this are: small groups of less than 6 and sporting fixtures where other adults will be available at the venue eg THOA)

All staffing of a visit must be discussed with the EVC and the head teacher before the trip can go ahead.

When deciding on staffing levels the 'worst case scenario' should be considered. If a child needs to go to hospital would there be sufficient adults to safely supervise the remaining group?

#### **5.4 Use of parent/carers**

Where ever possible parent/carers on a visit should not be allocated to the group containing their child. This removes any possible conflict of interest. In addition to this the parent/carer should ideally hold a valid DBS check.

#### **5.5 Supervision of children**

Pupils must be supervised throughout all visits. This includes where an activity is led by a competent adult from the provider. At no point can the visit leader/ group leader defer responsibility for the safety of the group to another person. However, there are circumstances when they might be unaccompanied by an adult (remote supervision). The decision to allow remote supervision should be based on risk assessment and must take into account factors such as:

- Prior experience of pupils
- Age of pupils
- Responsibility of pupils
- Competence/ experience of staff
- Environment/ venue

Some examples of acceptable remote supervision include:

- Children playing on a park in full view of the staff.
- Children playing a game on a field in view of the staff,
- Children exploring a wood or other outdoor space where clear boundaries have been set and the staff are within earshot, in a given area, at all times.
- An evening activity at a residential centre where the children are occupied in a different area but at least one member of academy staff is close by and easily contacted in an emergency.

## **6. Risk Assessment**

In line with B&S guidance, risk assessment and management processes should be simple, proportional, suitable, sufficient and manageable.

At Tenbury we use the Worcestershire County Council **generic risk assessments** as found in the Off-site visit guidance. These are statements of current good practice which apply to the activity wherever and whenever it takes place. These are checked and updated yearly, or after an evaluation of a visit if necessary.

These are used for:

- Visit to Tenbury High
- Visit to the library
- Town walk around Tenbury
- Sporting fixture
- Swimming

These are supplemented with **Event specific risk assessments** which will be undertaken by the group leader and will be unique to each occasion. They will take into account the site, individuals within the group and activity specific needs including the environment, accommodation, the leaders and factors

such as transport. In addition, **ongoing risk assessment** involves professional judgements in response to changing circumstances. It is critical that control measures are monitored and confirmed or adapted as required. The lessons learnt from Ongoing Risk Assessments will inform future Event and Generic Risk Assessments. All staff should be involved in this process and have confidence in the management procedures.

Risk assessments are a vital integral part of the overall planning process for the visit, ensuring leaders have the experience and competence to manage the process positively and successfully and providing confidence in the process for those involved.

It will assess the risks which might be encountered on the visit, and will indicate measures to prevent or reduce them. The risk assessment should be based on the following considerations:

- What are the hazards?
- Who might be affected by them?
- What safety measures are needed to reduce risks to an acceptable level?
- Can the group leader put the safety measures in place?
- What steps will be taken in an emergency?

Risk assessments are shared with all adults involved in the visit. Control measures need to be suitable and sufficient for the leader and the individuals within the group, and responsibilities have been defined.

The process will be realistic and effective when it is flexible, recognises the experience and professionalism of leaders, provides sufficient detail for staff confidence and allows leaders, children and young people with varied experience, motivation and training to be treated according to their needs.

Where possible, staff planning an off-site activity should make a preliminary visit to the venue, in order to carry out an on-site risk assessment.

It is important to take into account the probable weather conditions at the time of year proposed for the trip, and the party leader should take careful account of the facilities available, with due regard to the proposed size of the group. S/he should also assess the site's suitability with regard to the age and any particular needs of the children. S/he will also consider the venue's own approach to security and to health and safety.

Venues providing instructor-led activities will have their own risk assessments for particular sessions, and these assessments may be adopted if it is impractical for the group leader to experience the activity beforehand, or if s/he lacks the skills required to make informed judgements about the risks it may involve.

***While a Visit Leader should seek written assurances that a Provider has appropriate risk management systems in place, the leader should not ask for copies of risk assessment documentation.***

Staff must be aware of the needs and risks associated with individual pupils and not adopt a complacent attitude as a result of previous risk free visits. They should also carry out ongoing risk assessment throughout the visit.

Pupils should be involved in risk assessment and management. This may include identifying potential risks and discussing their role in reducing risks. Through this they will develop risk awareness - an educational issue as well as a safety issue. It is an essential life skill.

Once completed the risk assessment should be checked by the EVC and then signed by the head teacher before the trip can go ahead. These are then saved in the Risk Assessments folder on the Staff Shared area.

Master copies of the risk assessments are also to be found in the Off-site Visits folder.

### **6.1 Transport**

Travel arrangements should be included in the risk assessment. If public transport is to be used, all pupils and supervisors must be fully briefed as to procedures on platforms, at bus stops, on busy streets etc.

If travel is by coach or minibus, all pupils must wear a seat belt. Staff must ensure that pupils comply with this rule.

Only members of staff who have received training in accordance with the academy policy may drive the minibus. There are additional requirements where the minibus is borrowed / hired. Before using the vehicle, the driver must complete a checklist and report any defects to the head teacher.

Where possible staff should avoid taking children in their own cars. If this is necessary the staff member must hold business insurance and the head teacher must check and hold copies of relevant paperwork (insurance documents, MOT certificate and driving license).

Staff must not take responsibility for arranging transport with parent/carer's cars.

### **6.2 Water margin activities**

Where pupils might participate in learning activities near or in water, such as a walk along a riverbank or seashore, collecting samples in ponds or streams, or paddling or walking in gentle, shallow water, then the guidance contained in DfES 'Group Safety at Water Margins' is relevant. All staff, including parent/carers, should be provided with a copy of this guidance prior to the visit. This is available in the Off -Site Visits folder of the Staff Shared area of the computer system.

At no point should children be allowed to swim in the sea, a river or stream without a qualified beach lifeguard present.

## **7. Residential Visits**

Tenbury Primary Academy believe that residential visits are a key part of children's school life and their personal development. All children have the opportunity to undertake residential visits in year 4, 5 and 6.

Visits are planned in order to maximize the interests of the children.

Prior to a residential visit, parent/carers are given comprehensive information, including emergency contact details. They are also required to complete a detailed medical form including details of pre-existing medical details; doctors contact information and 24hr emergency contacts.

The visit leader must carry these forms at all times and leave a copy with the academy emergency contact.

The governors will be informed of the details of any residential trips.

## **8. Emergency procedures**

Before leaving the academy on a visit the visit leader must make the office aware that they are leaving and ensure the office has a copy of the exact names of children on the trip. Be aware of children that are absent on the day of the trip, but were on the original list of children. Additionally, the office must also have a list of the staff and volunteers accompanying the trip.

Visit leaders must take a mobile phone with them, but be aware of incidents occurring out of range of a mobile signal. Where this is a possibility, other arrangements should be included in the risk assessment.

The first point of contact for a member of staff in an emergency should be the nominated emergency contacts found on the school crib cards that all adults on the trip should be carrying on their persons. These emergency contacts will then contact the nominated advisor from Worcestershire County Council if required. In academy hours this will be via the academy office. The academy emergency contact will then talk the visit leader through the emergency procedures. The headteacher and EVC should also be aware of the children on the visit and the nature/location of the visit.

Visit leaders must take with them a copy of **the Emergency card**, which sets out the academy procedures to be followed in the case of an emergency. A copy of the **Emergency Card** is also found in each First Aid kit used for visits.

Academy emergency contacts must hold a copy of **the Emergency Card** at all times, which details procedures for supporting visit leaders. The Emergency card is available in credit card size. Further contact details are also displayed in the school office.

For visits that take place in school time, the office and EVC hold visit information including itinerary, venue details, names and emergency contact details for all participants including staff. For visits outside academy hours, the academy emergency contacts must also hold this information or be able to access it quickly.

The emergency contact should be an experienced member of staff who has undergone Emergency Contact training and who is available for the duration of the visit. They should carry with them the list of children who are off site and have quick access to the emergency contact list. They should also be able to gain quick access to the academy in an emergency and authorize the transfer of academy funds if necessary.

### **8.1 Out-of-academy-hours visits**

Where the visit will take place out of normal school hours the adult in charge of the group must have contact details of the children on the visit, so that parent/carers can be contacted in an emergency.

There must be a nominated emergency contact at school who knows where the group are, the names of the children and staff and the estimated return time. Any change in return time the emergency contact should be informed.

### **8.2 First Aid**

It is the responsibility of the visit leader to ensure they take any medicines (including inhalers, epipens or insulin pens) with them on the trip. If a child requires medication and this is not provided by the parent/carer to take with them then the child will not be able to go on the trip. It is important that the adult responsible for the child's group carries their medication rather than the visit leader.

The level of first aid provision should be based on risk assessment. On all visits there should be a responsible adult who has a good working knowledge of first aid. A first aid kit should be taken on all off-site visits.

On a residential visit parent/carer's consent is sought for the administration of Calpol and/or junior paracetamol. If these medicines are administered a school medicines form must be completed and the time and dose of medication recorded. This also applies to other medications given on a residential visit (e.g. inhalers, hayfever medication etc.)

The parent/carer of any child who has required first aid should be informed in person on return to academy. If the child is not collected by their parent/carer then a phone call must be made informing them of the first aid given.

Any medication remaining at the end of the residential will be given to the parent/carer, not to the pupil.

## **9. Inclusion**

It is our policy that all children should be able to participate in educational visits. Where a child with a disability is eligible for a trip, we will make every effort to ensure that s/he is included. We may seek guidance from parent/carers to help us to adapt our programme, and we will make any reasonable adjustments to our itinerary to include a child with disabilities. However, the stated aims and objectives of the trip should still be achievable for all pupils. Any such adjustments will be included in the risk assessment.

## **10. Safeguarding**

All normal school safeguarding procedures apply when children are on an off-site visit. (See Child Protection Policy). Any concerns must be reported to Mrs Phelps (DSL) or Mrs Baker (Deputy DSL) as soon as possible. All school staff must be DBS checked before participating in an off-site visit. Where possible, a male member of staff will also attend in order that both male and female toilets can be checked for members of the public before the children enter.

## 11. Evaluation

A rigorous process of evaluation is vital for the success of an off-site visit. On return the visit leader should evaluate the trip in light of:

- Value for money
- How well the trip met the stated educational objectives
- How well the staffing met the requirements
- Any incidents/accidents that occurred - could they have been avoided?
- Any near-misses - these could lead to incidents in the future.
- Would you do the trip again?

There are different evaluation proformas for day visits and residential visits found in the school's EVC staff share folder. All adults who attended the visit should have input into the completion of these forms. This evaluation will be discussed at a staff meeting as soon as possible after the visit. In the meeting staff on the visit will make other people aware of any issues that arose. The EVC and headteacher will then determine whether they think the trip was worthwhile and if it would be viable for a repeat visit in the future.

An Evaluation form will be completed and stored in the Off-Site Visits folder held by the EVC.

This policy will be reviewed as part on an ongoing system every two years.

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