

Priestley Primary School
OFF SITE VISITS POLICY
Reviewed Autumn 2019



Philosophy

This is our chance to make a strong case that, in developing a progressive curriculum that ensures young people are well prepared for life beyond and after school, they must have opportunities to experience the world beyond the classroom.

Council for Learning Outside the Classroom Chief Executive Officer Kim Somerville : April 2019

Principles

Off-site visits are activities arranged by or on behalf of the school, and which 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 which 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, and to ensure that any risks are managed and kept to a minimum, for 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.

These visits aim to:

- 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.

These visits begin with short excursions into the local area in the Early Years, and progress to a range of residential experiences throughout Key Stage 2.

Procedures

The school will appoint Educational Visits Coordinators (EVCs). The EVCs will be involved in the planning and management of educational visits. The nominated EVCs are Mrs K Staniforth & Miss E Morgan.

The EVC will:

- ensure that risk assessments are completed by the trip leader
- scrutinise **Category A** visits and forward to head for authorisation, refer **Category B** visits to the County Outdoor Visits Adviser. (See Appendix One)
- organise related staff training
- maintain the online records of visits and ensure there are regular generic assessments of the risks, for example road-crossing where there are frequent visits to local venues, for example a swimming facility
- ensure staff arranging or otherwise involved in off-site activities familiarise themselves with the regulations, advice and procedures
- ensure all off-site activities take place in accordance with the LA's instructions
- ensure all unsupervised volunteers are DBS cleared
- KS1 trips to be scrutinised by Mrs K Staniforth
- KS2 trips to be scrutinised by Miss E Morgan

Where staff are proposing to arrange an off-site activity, they must seek and obtain the approval of the headteacher before any commitment is made on behalf of the school. A comprehensive visit plan should be provided by the member of staff to allow for an informed decision to be made.

The Office staff and trip leader will make sure that all necessary permissions and medical forms are obtained.

Where the activity involves a period of more than 24 hours, an overnight stay, or a journey by sea or air, the headteacher will seek the approval of the Local Authority before permitting the activity to take place.

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 parents to

help us adapt our programme, and we will make any reasonable adjustments to our itinerary to include a child with disabilities. Any such adjustments will be included in the risk assessment.

Risk Assessment

Staff planning an off-site activity should make a preliminary visit to the venue, where possible, 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. They should also assess the site's suitability with regard to the age and any particular needs of the children. They 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 activities. These will be included to the trip Risk Assessment file.

Costings

The total cost of each cohort year groups trips planned for the academic year will be divided into equal termly payments. Parents will be able to pay in instalments for trips throughout the year via Parent Pay. The costing of off-site activities should include any of the following that apply:

- transport
- entrance fees
- insurance
- provision of any special resources or equipment
- costs related to adult helpers
- any refreshments the school has opted to pay for

Transport arrangements

These will allow a seat for each member of the party. It is our policy only to use coaches fitted with seat or lap belts, and to insist that they be worn by all those participating in the visit.

Staff using cars to transport children

Members of staff occasionally transport children in their own cars. In order to do this, they must satisfy the following requirements:

- Fully comprehensive insurance including business use identified on the policy
- Car seats must be used for all children below 1.35m which must be provided by parents

Communication with parents

The parents of children taking part in an off-site activity should 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. Parents give permission for local walks when signing the Home School Agreement annually.

Funding for off-site activities is provided mainly by parental contributions, voluntary except in the case of residential visits, with a limited subsidy from school funds. This must be made clear to parents in all correspondence about an educational visit at the planning stage.

No child may be excluded from an activity because of the unwillingness or inability of the parent to make a contribution. Parents will be informed of this principle through the school 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

Further health and safety considerations

All adults accompanying a party must be made aware, by the party leader, of the emergency procedures which will apply. Each adult should be provided with an emergency telephone number. This will normally be the school number, but where an activity extends beyond the normal school day the home telephone number of a designated emergency contact should be provided.

Before a party leaves school the school office should be provided with a list of everyone, children and adults, travelling with the party, together with a programme and timetable for the activity.

The safety of the party, and especially the children, is of paramount importance. During the activity the party 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 children are both safe and well looked after at all times.

Prior to an activity, if it is felt that the behaviour of an individual child is likely to compromise the safety of others or the good name of the school, the party leader should discuss with the headteacher the possibility of excluding that child from the activity.

More detailed guidance on procedures and requirements can be obtained from the Local Education Authority's Off-Site & Hazardous Activities File held by the EVC.

Group leaders' planning

Group leaders must read thoroughly the appropriate guidance for off-site activities: updated versions on Evolve Website

- Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits: A Good Practice Guide (updated versions held on Evolve) – and its supplements:
- A Handbook for Group Leaders (updated versions held on Evolve)
- Group Safety at Water Margins (updated versions held on Evolve)

They must consult LA documentation detailing procedures and requirements, including guidance on Emergency Planning and Crisis Line organisation, and must draw up a Visit Plan which records in writing (including standard forms where appropriate) the arrangements that have been made.

Visit plan

The visit plan for intended educational visits must include the following:

- names, ages, contact details, permission forms, medical records and other relevant details of all those going on the visit for that day;
- travel schedule;
- accommodation plan (if applicable);
- full plan of activities;
- intended arrangements for supervision;
- emergency contacts and procedures;
- general communications information;
- guidance for party leaders;
- guidance for the emergency contact and headteacher;
- medical questionnaire returns (if applicable);
- first-aid boxes and travel sickness equipment

Equal Opportunities

Adult to pupil ratios are a minimum guide only. If a child has significant additional needs then appropriate 1:1 support will be provided, even if 1:1 support is not received in school. The teacher leading the class should ensure that children with additional needs are in close proximity to her/him throughout the visit. The school aims to include all pupils on school trips and will provide additional support for children with physical, learning or behavioural needs. However, if a child's behaviour in school indicates a significant risk to the safety of themselves or the people (adults and children) with them, or the reputation of the school, they may not be allowed to participate and will remain in school. We do not discriminate against families due to inability to pay voluntary contributions for trips. We speak privately with parents who we know are in receipt of income support and other benefits and also ask on letters that parents experiencing difficulty paying should contact the Headteacher for a confidential chat. Children's ethnicity and religion may need to be taken into account on rare occasions. While this may not mean a trip does not go ahead, it will be considered when planning events.

Following a Visit

- The Headteacher or EVC should be informed of any issues that caused concern on the trip (pupil behaviour, poor quality of trip etc.) These may need to be followed up with the establishment.
- The Headteacher or EVC should be informed of the success of the trip. A particularly good visit can be followed up with the establishment and a note can be made to use that venue again.
- Poor behaviour outside of school is taken very seriously and will not be tolerated. Poor behaviour on a school trip affects the reputation of all the children attending Priestley Primary School. The school reserves the right to refuse to take children on a trip if their behaviour has been poor during previous visits, or if their behaviour is likely to bring the reputation of the school not disrepute.

Additional References

Policies for: Health and Safety Safeguarding, Media Policy, Critical Incident Policy