



Offsite Visits

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Verified by	
Approved by	Governing Body



Introduction

Educational visits / off-site visits are activities arranged by or on behalf of Ashchurch Primary School and which take place outside the school grounds. We believe that offsite activities can supplement and enrich the curriculum of the school by providing experiences which would otherwise be impossible. All offsite activities must serve an educational purpose, enhancing and enriching our children's learning experiences. They are planned in discussion with the Senior Leadership Team so that relevance and appropriateness are assured. In this policy, we seek to establish a clear and coherent structure for the planning and evaluation of our educational 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. We have formally adopted, through our Governing Body, the Gloucestershire 'Guidance for Offsite Visit'. Further procedures have been agreed with the Governing Body to ensure that this policy is adhered to.

Aims

Ashchurch Primary School has a strong commitment to the added value of learning beyond the statutory school day and beyond the school premises. The aims of our offsite visits are 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.

Curriculum links

Each year the school will arrange a number of activities that take place off the school site and/or out of school hours, which support the above aims of this school. These activities will be linked to the themes and topics that are being developed within each year group and cover all areas of the curriculum. Parents will be informed any asked for their consent by letter, information meetings and electronic communication. The Governing Body has given its approval to the following types of activities being arranged in support of the educational aims of Ashchurch Primary School:

- Out of hours Clubs (music, drama, art, science, sport, homework etc)
 - School teams
 - Regular nearby visits (village walks, libraries, shops, woodlands, place of worship)
 - Day visits for particular year groups
 - Residential visits
 - Adventure Activities, which might be classed as higher risk.
 - Residential Activities: Children in Years 4/5/6 have the opportunity to take part in a residential visit every 2 years. This activity is in school time. The residential visit enables children to take part in outdoor and adventure activities as part of their PE work. We undertake this visit only with the agreement of the LA. We provide qualified instructors for specialist activities that we undertake.
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Approval Procedure and Consent

The Head teacher is the nominated off-site co coordinator. The Governing Body has approved this appointment. The Governing Body has delegated the consideration and approval of Offsite visits and other offsite activities to a specific committee (the safe guarding committee) and has nominated a governor from the relevant committee as signatories, (Mrs Angela Godwin) as necessary, on behalf of the governing body. Before a visit is advertised to parents/carers the Head teacher, the OVC and (on rare occasions such as residential trips) governors must approve the initial plan. They will also approve the completed plan and risk assessments for the visit at a later date. Where external contractors are involved in organising all or part of the visit, the contract will be made with the school on behalf of the pupils. All payments for the visit will be made through the school's accounts. For out of hour's clubs, school teams and nearby visits parents/carers will be asked to sign a general letter of consent for participation in these activities when the child enters the school. Parents/carers will be given the timetable (or just information) for the activities that pupils are involved in and will be informed, by letter (if the time allows) or phone call if an activity has to be cancelled. For any visit lasting a day or more, parents/carers will be asked to sign a letter, which consents to the child taking part. As part of the parent/carers' consent, they will be fully informed of the activities and arrangements for the visit. For all residential visits, parents/carers will be invited to a briefing meeting where they can ask for clarification of any aspect of the itinerary and organisation of the visit. The school has separate policies for 'Charging' and 'Equal opportunities', which applies to all Offsite visits.

Staffing

Ashchurch Primary School recognises the key role of accompanying staff in ensuring the highest standards of learning, challenge and safety on a school visit. Teachers and other staff are encouraged and supported to develop their abilities in organising and managing learning in a variety of environments through induction, and training. The selection of staff for Offsite visits will be a key priority in the initial approval of any proposed visit. Where it is appropriate the school will ensure that DBS checks have been completed and that these adults are asked to accompany the trips first; if not then these adults should not be left unsupervised in the company of children. The school does not support additional people accompanying offsite visits who are not at the school or part of the agreed staff complement. This may include family members accompanying visits if the governing body is not satisfied that there is an educational benefit for the pupils. The appointed Group Leader will be fully supported in the tasks required to arrange the visit. This will include, as necessary:

- making time or finances available to conduct an exploratory visit
 - briefing teachers and/or other staff
 - accessing training courses
 - reviewing and evaluating the visit
 - identifying time when the leader and OVC might work in partnership to undertake planning and risk assessments.
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Risk Assessment

A comprehensive risk assessment is carried out by the group leader before the proposed visit. 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?
- Gloucestershire County Council Risk Assessment pro formas should be used for all visits.

Staff planning an offsite activity should make a preliminary visit to the venue, in order to carry out an onsite 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. It is important to assess and record any health, safety or security issues that are identified during the preliminary visit. Any such issues will be taken into account when the final decision is taken on whether the visit should proceed, and the Visit Plan must state both the extent of any risks involved, and the measures that will be taken to reduce or eliminate them. The cost of these preliminary visits will be borne by the school, and should be built into the overall financial arrangements for the visit itself. (see separate Health & Safety Policy).

An activity should have sufficient adults taking part to provide the following minimum ratios:

- 1 adult to between 10 and 15 pupils in Years 4 to 6;
- 1 adult to 6 pupils in Years 1-3;
- 1 adult to 4 pupils in YR
- Any trip will require a minimum of two adults.

However, these are minimum requirements, and may not provide adequate supervision in all cases. A risk assessment must also cover transport to and from the venue:

- the provision and required use of seat belts;
- proper insurance for the driver;
- details of first aid and emergency equipment;
- breakdown / any contact pyramid procedures.

The group leader will check that all adults helping to supervise the trip have been subject to police checks; or are not left unsupervised in the company of children. A copy of the



completed risk assessment will be given to the Head teacher and disseminated to all adults supervising the trip.

Remissions Policy

Where charges are made by the governing body for optional extras, parents/carers may apply for a remission for the whole or part of the charges set out in the school's remissions policy.

The Expectations of Pupils and Parents/Carers

Ashchurch Primary School has a clear code of conduct for school visits based on the school's 'Behaviour Policy'. This code of conduct will be part of the condition of booking by the parents/carers, and include the potential of withdrawal of a child, prior to and during the visit, if such conduct would have led to a fixed term exclusion from school. In letters detailing the visit, parents/carers will be informed of implication for themselves: associated costs and collection of children.

Emergency Procedures

Ashchurch Primary School will appoint a member of the Senior Management Team as the emergency school contact for each visit. All major incidents should immediately be related to this person, especially those involving injury or that might attract media attention. The Group Leader will leave full details of all pupils and accompanying adults on the visit with the emergency school contact, including the home contact details of parents/carers and next-of-kin, as appropriate. The Group Leader will take with them a copy of the Gloucestershire Emergency Procedure as outlined in the online Offsite Visits Manual. All incidents and accidents occurring on a visit will be reported back through the school systems. The school will have emergency funding available to support the Group Leader in an emergency.

Evaluation

All visits will be evaluated by the Group Leader. The OVC will ensure that any risk assessments on the trip are dated as having been evaluated and/or modified as a result. The Group Leader is responsible for presenting a financial account for the visit, which will be audited as part of the school procedures.

Gloucestershire eGO is the GCC website used by all staff to log and plan a visit. The site is linked to the LA so that they are able to monitor visits and ensure that they are safe. Longer visits and those with adventurous activities are monitored to a greater degree and permission for the trip to go ahead needed. All staff have access to eGO through the website: <https://www.qes24.com/gloucestershire/ego/live/> the site is secure and can only be accessed through a username and password. Staff have received training in order to use the site and receive regular updates via the OVC.

Equal Opportunities

We value everyone at Ashchurch Primary School. We seek to promote understanding and mutual respect of all members of society regardless of differences. We believe that



everyone in our school is entitled to work in a non-threatening and supportive environment. We consider our school to be a learning community where everyone is encouraged to develop to their full potential. Children should have equal opportunity to participate in offsite 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/carers to help us to 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. The school seeks to break down prejudice and build positive attitudes, which help to reduce discrimination and develop equality of opportunity. Everyone working in our school, whether on site or offsite, should identify and counter discriminatory attitudes in particular sexual and racial discrimination. All staff take an active role in ensuring attitudes of tolerance, care, respect and fairness.

Further Information

For further information go to the Gloucestershire County Council Offsite Visit Manual www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/offsitevisits Or contact the SHE Unit, Business Management, Shire Hall GL1 2TG Tel : 01452 42 5350/5349 Fax : 01452 42 5755 <mailto:sheunit@gloucestershire.gov.uk> Review This policy is reviewed annually by the OVC in conjunction with the staff and the Governors. .
