



Offsite Activities Policy

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1. Philosophy

At Furze Platt Senior School we are strongly committed to the value of offsite activities and the contribution they make, not only to students' knowledge and understanding of curriculum subjects, but also their personal development.

A vibrant programme of offsite activities also enables us to meet the aspirations in our school vision statement. It supports our commitment to help students to 'enjoy and value their learning' and to 'have broad horizons'. The school takes the health and wellbeing of our staff and students very seriously. This policy has been designed in line with DfE and HSE guidance and details our responsibilities for students and staff members while out on educational visits and school trips.

Finally, providing a wider range of offsite activities makes an important contribution to students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

2. Guiding principles

- All curriculum areas will be encouraged and supported to provide extended curriculum activities, including off site activities, to enhance and enrich students' experience of their subject
- There will be planned opportunities in our curriculum which ensure entire cohorts/year groups have equal access to offsite activities (e.g. through Flexible Learning Days)
- When planning the residential trip programme, the school will ensure a balance between modestly priced opportunities and those which inevitably cost more.
- The school is committed to supporting access to those students who suffer economic disadvantage and will provide financial support to students in receipt of Pupil Premium.
- All teachers leading or participating in trips will receive appropriate training.

3. Processes

- All of our processes and procedures conform to OEAP National Guidance
- We have a designated Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) who advises staff, ensures appropriate training and monitors that processes are followed
- All requests to lead offsite activities are submitted to the senior leadership team for prior approval
- The Headteacher is responsible for granting permission for both day and residential trips as well as approving leadership and staffing of these trips. This responsibility may be delegated to other senior staff, particularly the Assistant Headteacher responsible for Educational Visits and Trips, for day trips.
- All paperwork for residential trips is reviewed and approved by the EVC and the consultant trips adviser Suzanne Holroyd (suzanne@edvisits.com)
- All forms and documents are now located in Evolve.

4. Legal Framework

- 4.1. This policy has been created with regard to relevant legislation including, but not limited to:
The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- 4.2. This policy has also been created with due regard to OEAP National Guidance
- 4.3. This policy should be used in conjunction with the following school policies:
 - Complaints Policy
 - Behavioural for Learning Policy
 - Health and Safety Policy
 - Charging and Remissions Policy
 - Equalities Policy
 - Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

5. Definitions

- 5.1. '**In loco parentis**' means that the group leader of any school trip or educational visit has a duty of care over the students in place of a parent.
- 5.2. '**School trip**' means any educational visit, foreign exchange trip, away-day or residential holiday organised by the school which takes students and staff members off-site.
- 5.3. '**Residential**' means any school trip which includes an overnight stay.
- 5.4. '**Adventurous activities**' include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - Trekking

- Caving
- Skiing
- Water sports
- Climbing
- Duke of Edinburgh

6. Key Roles and Responsibilities

6.1. The governing body is responsible for:

- The strategic review of this policy.
- Ensuring that this policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds including, but not limited to: ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- Handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's Complaints Policy.
- Ensuring educational trips and visits positively impact on students' lives, teaching them new life skills and providing new experiences.
- Promoting good safeguarding practices to ensure the safety of students when partaking in extra-curricular trips and activities.

6.2. The Assistant Headteacher in charge of Educational Visits and Trips is responsible for:

- The day-to-day implementation and management of this policy.
- Line managing the Educational Visits Coordinator and Outdoor Education and Enrichment Leader
- Liaising with the consultant trips adviser, the Educational Visits Coordinator, trip leaders and communicating information regarding any planned trips to parents where necessary.
- Liaising with the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher regarding the organisation of extra-curricular trips and activities, including settling any disputes.
- Being part of the approval process for extra-curricular trips and activities.
- Ensuring the Educational Visits Coordinator is competent to oversee the coordination of off-site education and arranging for training to be undertaken as necessary.
- Ensuring the Educational Visits Coordinator is checking that all trip leaders complete all relevant paperwork, including risk management plans, for extra-curricular trips and activities in a timely fashion.
- Ensuring trip leaders have put suitable safety measures in place prior to each trip or activity.
- Overseeing the work of the Educational Visits Coordinator, ensuring a whole-school approach is adopted when planning and coordinating extra-curricular trips and activities.
- Ensuring there are contingency plans in place in the event of a member of staff being absent on the day of the trip or activity.
- Appointing an appropriate member of staff to be the designated leader of the trip where necessary.

6.3. The Educational Visits Coordinator has overall responsibility for:

- Overseeing all issues and controls regarding extra-curricular activities and trips.
- Liaising between all appropriate parties, including the school's Outdoor Education and Enrichment Leader, and the Trips Adviser, during the planning and organising of extra-curricular and off-site activities.
- Ensuring the systems and procedures for dealing with educational visits adhere to the requirements of this policy.
- Notifying the Outdoor Education and Enrichment Leader, and the Trips Adviser, when the necessary paperwork has not been submitted within the expected time frames.
- Ensuring that trip leaders have conducted all necessary risk management plans prior to school trips and educational visits to ensure pupil and staff safety.
- Liaising with the trip leader to ensure an itinerary is created prior to an educational visit or school trip and distributing it to parents and staff to ensure the day is well organised and safe.
- Ensuring that any problems are raised in a meeting with the Assistant Headteacher in charge of educational visits and school trips.

The designated trip leader has a duty of care for all students on the trip. They are also responsible for:

- Checking the schedule is free on the school calendar prior to planning an educational visit.
- Identifying the educational purpose of the extra-curricular trip or activity and presenting its benefits to the Headteacher.
- Completing all essential documentation on Evolve for the trip, including risk management plans.
- Informing parents of the proposed extra-curricular trip or activity in advance of the trip.
- Distributing permission slips to parents through Parent Mail.
- Understanding and operating safeguarding measures throughout the planning, organisation and delivery of the extra-curricular trip or activity.

- Delegating responsibilities to other staff members on the school trip.
 - Ensuring all adults on the trip are aware of their responsibilities and that the necessary checks have been carried out on volunteers in line with the Child Protections and Safeguarding Policy.
- 6.4. Staff are responsible for:
- Adhering to this policy and applying its principles when participating in extra-curricular trips and activities.
 - Ensuring the safety of the students is paramount throughout any educational visit or activity.
 - Liaising with the designated leader to understand personal responsibilities and ensuring the smooth running of the school trip or activity.
 - Ensuring that any outdoor space visited, e.g. a park and playing field, is respected.
- 6.5. Students are responsible for:
- Following instructions from staff while on school trips.
 - Complying with all expectations around the use of mobile phones if the trip leader and senior leadership decides that they will be allowed on the trip.
 - Keeping pride in their presentation, understanding that they are representing the school whilst on an education trip.
 - Ensuring that, during visits to outdoor spaces, they keep the area tidy and free from litter.
 - Behaving in a manner which matches the ethos of the school, and for following the behaviour rules set out in the school's Behaviour for Learning Policy with regards to this policy.

7. Training of staff

- 7.1. Staff will receive training on this policy as part of their induction.
- 7.2. Staff will receive regular and ongoing training as part of their CPD.

8. Planning School Trips

- 8.1. Prior to planning a school trip, the OEAP National Guidance will be read by the organisers. A thorough risk management plan will be conducted by the trip leader during the planning of the trip, to ensure pupil and staff safety.
- 8.2. Adventure activities will always be identified at the planning stage and never added during the trip.
- 8.3. When planning water sport activities, the need for instructors and lifeguards will be taken into account, particularly when using facilities which may not have a trained lifeguard present.
- 8.4. The school will do everything in its power to ensure that all students are given an opportunity to participate in school trips, for example, organising two trips with a smaller group size or finding a venue which can cater for all students.

Where there is a maximum capacity of students for a trip, the allocation of places will be clearly communicated to parents in a letter home.

9. Risk Management Process

Our risk management process is designed to manage risks when planning trips, while ensuring that learning opportunities are fully experienced.

- 9.1. The risk management plan should be created by all adults attending the trip. Adults should talk through the trip and identify possible hazards and risks and agree how they will minimise those risks. This should include specific information about the venue, travel, accommodation, activities, and individuals with specific medical, emotional or behavioural needs. Once all the hazards have been identified, it is the responsibility of the trip leader to complete the RMP and upload to EVOLVE.

A variety of generalised and amendable risk management plans are available in the Resources section of Evolve. It may be appropriate to use a trip specific RMP depending on the potential risks of the trip. Providers and venues may have their own RMP's. All RMP's will be tailored to the trip and the students attending the trip.

10. Vetting Providers

- 10.1. External providers should hold the LOTC (Learning Outside the Classroom) and in the case of Adventurous activities the AALA (Adventure Activities Licensing Authority) accreditations, The information will be checked through Evolve. If the provider does not hold the appropriate accreditations the trip leader must ask them to complete a "Provider Statement" (found in the resources section of Evolve) which must then be uploaded to Evolve. The school's consultant adviser will then verify their suitability.

10.2. If an organisation does not meet the school's standards, they will not be considered.

11. Equal Opportunities

11.1. The school promotes values of equality and does not discriminate against any individual or group of students when organising a trip.

11.2. The extra-curricular trips and activities offered to students will provide new experiences and develop life skills.

11.3. Extra-curricular trips and activities are organised, managed and conducted in accordance with the school's Equalities Policy.

Due to the popularity of some extra-curricular trips and activities, the school may use a ballot system or other systems to fairly allocate places.

Where appropriate, students will be given the opportunity to contribute to the planning and organisation of extra-curricular trips and activities.

11.4. For school trips that require additional payment, the fee will be reasonable, and help will be provided where possible for students who cannot afford the initial fee.

12. Safe Use of Minibuses and Seatbelts

12.1. The Facilities Manager is responsible for arranging the annual maintenance of the minibuses, including MOTs and road tax.

The driver will have passed any relevant minibus driving assessment, have a current driving licence, be aged 21 years or over and have held a full driving licence for at least 2 years to drive on a domestic school trip.

Before driving abroad, the Educational Visits Coordinator will contact the Trips Adviser for guidance on which licence is required.

12.2. Internal damage to the minibus is the responsibility of the individual or organisation using the minibus. The school will decide who is responsible for covering the cost of any repairs.

The minibus will carry strictly one person per seat, and seatbelts must be worn at all times.

Fines incurred will be paid by whoever was driving the minibus at the time the offence was committed. Each fine will be reviewed by the Headteacher.

13. Parental Consent

13.1. Parental consent is not generally required for off-site activities that take place during school hours.

13.2. Written consent is required for:

- Activities of an adventurous nature.
- Residential trips.
- Foreign trips.
- Trips outside of school hours.

Separate consent will be sought for trips which require payment. Payment for a trip can be taken as consent.

Parents will be informed of activities by school communication systems and will have the opportunity to withdraw their child from taking part.

14. Staffing Ratios

There will be sufficient staff to cope in an emergency and generally. Staffing ratios are very dependent upon a variety of factors: age/maturity of students, nature of the trip and activities involved, level of training and experience of staff, the students on the trip, whether the school group are staying at a centre with external staffing etc. Therefore, the staff to pupil ratios below should only be used as a guide:

- Minimum of two staff for any residential
- Trip Abroad: 1/10
- Other residential: 1/15
- High risk: 1/8
- Day trip visits: 1/20

15. Insurance and Licensing

15.1. When planning activities of an adventurous nature in the UK, the Educational Visits Coordinator will check that the provider of the activity holds a current licence.

- 15.2. Insurance will be organised for every trip, no matter how short, to ensure adequate protection and medical cover is in place.
- 15.3. Parents will be informed of the limits of any insurance cover.
- 15.4. Where a crime is committed against a member of the party, it will be reported to local police as soon as possible.
- 15.5. Medical expenses will be recorded and stored in the school office.

16. Accidents and Incidents

- 16.1. In the case of accidents and injuries while on a school trip in the UK, the school's accident reporting process will begin, as detailed in the Health and Safety Policy.
- 16.2. In the case of accidents and injuries while on a school trip abroad:
 - Organisers will cooperate fully with local emergency services and understand that any injury or death of a member of staff or pupil outside of Great Britain may be subject to the law of the land where the accident occurred.
 - The first point of contact within the UK will be the designated emergency contact SLT member who will contact the family of the injured person.
 - Students will be asked not to contact friends or parents in the UK until the family of the injured person can be contacted.
 - The British Embassy/Consulate will be informed.
 - The insurer will be notified.
- 16.3. The Facilities Manager will keep written records of any incidents, accidents and near misses.
- 16.4. Media enquiries will be referred to the Headteacher or, if they are not available, the Deputy Headteacher. Staff will be briefed on how to react and respond should an emergency occur, e.g. a terrorist attack.
- 16.5. Relevant risk assessments will be undertaken before the trip, including for points of interests such as museums and hotels.
- 16.6. Students and staff are informed of an evacuation plan before entering trip venues; this should include an agreed rendezvous point, to ensure everyone knows what to do in an emergency.

17. Missing Person Procedure

- 17.1. The school places pupil and staff safety as its top priority when participating in school trips, either domestically or abroad.
- 17.2. Before embarking on the trip, extensive risk assessments are undertaken in accordance with section six of this policy.

The trip leader will communicate with the venues of the school trips to ensure the correct group sizes are planned for each setting.

When travelling with a pupil with SEND or medical needs, the trip leader will ensure that appropriate supervision is in place and that the visit is adequately modified to suit the pupil's needs in accordance with section 18 of this policy.
- 17.3. Everyone on the trip will be provided with an emergency contact sheet for all members of trip staff who possess a school trip phone, in the event they are unable to locate their group.

All group leaders on a trip will be required to always carry a mobile phone with them.
- 17.4. Upon arriving at every venue, the trip leader will identify a rendezvous point where students and adults should go if they become separated from the rest of the group.

Where possible students and staff will wear school branded clothing, to make them easily identifiable.

Regular head counts of all students and staff will take place throughout the day to ensure all persons are always present.
- 17.5. In the event someone goes missing whilst on a school trip domestically or abroad:
 - The trip leader will ensure the safety of the remaining students and staff by taking a register to identify who is missing.
 - The trip leader will immediately identify at least one adult to start looking for the person, this member/s of staff will look for the person until, where necessary, the police arrive.
 - Where possible, the venue will be notified of the missing person to help ensure the person is found quickly.
 - If the person cannot be contacted or located within 10 minutes, the local police or relevant authorities, e.g. the British Embassy, will be contacted.
 - If the police are called, the trip leader will contact the designated emergency contact SLT member, or other available member of SLT, back at the school and inform them of what has happened.
- 17.6. If the police, or another authority, is called to an incident where someone is missing, they will oversee locating the person and will advise on factors including, but not limited to, when to contact next of kin.

If the missing person cannot be found, the group will return to school. If this is not possible, e.g. when a trip is taking place abroad, the Educational Visits Coordinator will plan to ensure the group's safety, e.g. by changing venues or cancelling visits.

If a member of the party has gone missing and is subsequently found, the trip leader will:

- Review the group sizes and staffing ratios to ensure no one becomes separated from their group.
- Review whether more registers should be conducted throughout the day.
- Assess which venues they attend to ensure they are suitable for the group.
- Make recommendations to the Educational Visits Coordinator to ensure similar incidents can be avoided in the future.

18. Students with SEND

18.1. Where possible, activities and visits will be adapted to enable students with SEND to take part.

18.2. Where this is not possible, an alternative activity of equal educational value will be arranged for all students.

Students with SEND will be appropriately supervised by a responsible adult during the extra-curricular trip or visit.

19. Finance

19.1. The financial procedures outlined in the school's Charging and Remissions Policy will always be followed when arranging trips.

19.2. The school will act in accordance with OEAP National Guidance.

19.3. Money for school trips will always be paid directly to the school. Under no circumstances should school trip money be processed through personal accounts.

All letters to parents regarding school trips will include a clause explaining what will happen if the trip is cancelled, or a pupil cancels their place on the trip.

If the trip is cancelled due to unforeseeable circumstances, it is at the trip leader's discretion (in consultation with the Headteacher) as to whether a refund is given to parents, considering the cost to the school, including alternative provision costs.

In the event that a pupil cancels their place on a trip, it is at the trip leader's discretion (in consultation with the Headteacher) as to whether a refund is given to parents, taking into account the pupil's reasons for cancelling their place, whether the school will be reimbursed for the pupil's place on the trip, and whether the space on the trip can be offered to someone else. Please note that if a refund is offered, a nominal administration fee will be due to cover additional fees.

19.4. The school will take a common-sense approach to refunds and cancellations, ensuring that all students are treated equally.

19.5. Once trip arrangements are booked and confirmed, if contributions to a trip exceed the total cost of the trip, a refund will be offered where the excess is greater than £30 per pupil.

19.6. Any excess of expenditure will be subsidised by the school overall budget.

20. Foreign Trips

20.1. When planning school trips abroad, the school will consider the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's guidance and all OEAP National Guidance.

20.2. Validity of passports and visa requirements will be dealt with within three months of the initial notification of the trip, to avoid problems when the trip is due to take place.

20.3. Staff and students will be taught about the culture and values of the country they are visiting, to ensure they understand and respect the values of the citizens.

20.4. Before the trip, staff are trained in spotting suspicious behaviour and remaining vigilant whilst abroad.

20.5. Before the trip, students will be taught how to remain vigilant in the country they are visiting, particularly about advances from strangers.

Registers will be taken at the start and end of each day, as well as before, during, and after events, and at regular intervals whilst on days out to ensure the whereabouts of students are always known.

20.6. Staff will check the town/city's local news at the start of each day of the trip, to ensure their planned activities are safe to go ahead.

Where there is no agent, representative, or guide, at least one member of staff attending the trip will have at least an intermediate understanding of the destination country's language.

At the start of the trip, all students and staff are provided with an emergency contact sheet, this includes the trip leader's mobile phone number, as well as emergency numbers for the country they are visiting.

20.7. When using external providers abroad, the school will check whether the provider holds an equivalent of the 'Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge'. If no such equivalent can be ascertained, the school will make checks in the same manner as Section 10.2 prior to agreeing to use the provider.

21. Evaluating Trips and Visits

Trip leaders are required to complete a brief evaluation of the trip on Evolve.

22. Monitoring and review

22.1. The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored by the Assistant Headteacher in charge of Educational Visits and School Trips.

22.2. Any changes needed to the policy, including changes to the programmes, will be implemented by the Senior Leadership Team.

The next scheduled review date for this policy is November 2028.