

Off-site Activities and Educational Visits

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1. Introduction

1.1 Peacehaven Community School provides many opportunities to enrich the curriculum for its students through off-site activities and educational visits. These include regular off-site PE fixtures, day visits to theatres, museums and galleries and annual residentials.

1.2 The value of off-site activities and educational visits is well recognised by the Governing body and fully supported throughout the school. Practice is constantly reviewed and amended accordingly. For example concern was expressed that some students were missing too much curriculum time, so in Summer 08 we agreed a 6 day allocation for all students, agreed that Y11 would not participate in off site education after Christmas and that we would

not approve a term time family holiday and residential in the same academic year (appendix J). Safety is recognised as important and careful planning and adherence to statutory procedures is required. Off-site activities and educational visits must be well managed and responsibilities recognised.

1.3 This document outlines the specific policies and procedures for PCS. It supplements and follows the guidance, regulations and advice contained within the following significant publications, all of which can be found @ <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/visits>

- East Sussex County Council Local Authority's Off-site Activities and Educational Visits: [Regulations and Guidance](#) *
- The Health and Safety Executive, in conjunction with the DfES, producing their *Health and Safety : Responsibilities and Powers* statutory document (2001)
- The DfES reviewed their 1998 document *Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits* and produced their supplementary guidance in August 2002:
 - *Part 1 – Standards for LEAs in Overseeing Educational Visits*
 - *Part 2 – Standards for Adventure*
 - *Part 3 – A Handbook for Group Leaders.*

* copy on W share + updated version on available on czone

2. Roles and Responsibilities

2.1 The Governing Body should:

- ensure that arrangements are in place and the County Council regulations and guidance are being translated into working systems
- ensure that the Governing Body has its own systems in place to support this process: a named governor* rather than a group; a signatory for the approval system; dedicated discussion and review time at meetings
- have the ability to act on behalf of the parents to ascertain if the specific event arrangements and risk assessments are in place and appropriate.

All off-site activities and educational visits that are residential, hazardous or overseas will need the approval of the Governing Body and a signature on the Application For The Approval Of Residential, Hazardous And Overseas Educational Visits By Head Teacher, Governing Body And East Sussex County Council form, see Appendix B.

*The named governor responsible for educational visits is Roger Creasey.

2.2 The Head Teacher should:

- ensure that the management of visits and ventures meets the regulations and guidance offered by the County Council, DfES and others, as well as conforming to the school's own health and safety policy
- ensure the Governing Body are kept appropriately informed and accreditation or verification of providers has been checked
- ensure arrangements are in place for the educational objectives of a visit to be inclusive and that issues identified in exploratory visits have been satisfactorily resolved within the risk assessment.

All off-site activities and educational visits that are residential, hazardous or overseas will need the approval of the Head Teacher and a signature on the Application For The Approval Of Residential, Hazardous And Overseas Educational Visits By Head Teacher, Governing Body And East Sussex County Council form using Appendix B. All other visits and events must be approved through completion of Appendix A at least 4 weeks prior to the visit or event

2.3 The Educational Visits Coordinator should:

- liaise with the Outdoor Education Adviser where appropriate
- be involved in educational visit management in order to ensure that the County Council's guidance and regulations are followed and to confirm that adequate risk assessments have been carried out
- to be able to confirm that the leadership of the visit is appropriate and to check staff qualifications, this to include accompanying staff and volunteers
- to organise the training of leaders and volunteers, and organise thorough induction of staff and volunteers new to the visit
- ensure that procedures for Criminal Records Bureau disclosures are in place as necessary
- to ensure that liaison with parents and obtaining consent are effective
- ensure that the establishment has robust emergency procedures in place and knows how to liaise with the County Council team should an emergency occur
- ensure that the establishment complies with County Council requirements for reporting incidents and accidents (including 'near misses')
- support the head of establishment in the management of and evaluation of educational visits:
 - use and apply suitable record keeping practices for both children and young people and leaders off-site
 - learn from previous experience, recording successful practice and contacts, and be able to use them and move on, in particular where staff personnel change
 - monitor and review what is going on, establishing a clear picture of current practice. Be able to both report on successes and set targets for improvement. Be ready to intervene where practice is incorrect or unsatisfactory.

2.4 The Group Leader should:

- Be approved to carry out the visit, suitably competent and knowledgeable about the school and LEA's policies and procedures See Appendix I
- Plan and prepare for the visit and assess the risks with the EVC
- Define the roles and responsibilities of other staff and pupils and ensure effective supervision of what they do
- Obtain the Head Teacher's approval for the visit
- Have enough information on the pupils taking part in order to risk assess their suitability for the visit or specific activity
- Consider stopping the visit if the risk to the health and safety of the pupils is unacceptable and have in place procedures for such an eventuality
- Ensure the leaders have details of the school contact
- Ensure the leaders and others have details of the pupil's special educational or medical needs which will be necessary for them to carry out their tasks effectively

2.5 Parents should:

- provide the EVC with emergency contact number(s)
- sign the consent form and for residentials, a safety contract
- give the EVC information about their child's emotional, physiological and physical health which might be relevant to the visit
- agree the arrangements for sending a pupil home early and who will meet the cost – consent form to include this

2.6 The students should:

- not take any unnecessary risks
- follow the instructions of the leader and other supervisors including those at the venue of the visit
- dress and behave appropriately and responsibly
- if abroad, be sensitive to local codes and customs
- look out for anything that might hurt or threaten himself or herself or anyone in the group and inform the group leader or supervisor
- for residentials sign a safety contract (see appendix K)
- behave in accordance with PCS R4L agreement

3. Guidance Notes for Off-site Activities and Educational Visits

To ensure good practice and to comply with the necessary regulations it is expected that:

- 3.1 All group leaders will familiarise themselves with the published guidance and attend training when appropriate which is available through the Outdoor Education Adviser.
- 3.2 The EVC should be involved in discussing plans for any off-site activity at an early stage. All off-site visits need to be planned including local and routine visits e.g. to the local library, feeder primary schools or for games matches. No financial commitment and / or provisional bookings should be agreed until all relevance approvals have been gained. The approved centre list should be consulted and if the provider for a hazardous activity is not listed, the Outdoor Education Adviser should be contacted.
- 3.3 Parental consent needs to be obtained and copies of the medical/dietary requirements and emergency contacts details should be taken on the visit by the group leader. A copy will need to be held by the emergency contact person for residential visits. See Appendices C and D.
- 3.4 An internal approval form will need to be completed at least 4 weeks in advance when the visit is non-residential, non-hazardous and in the UK. See Appendix A.
- 3.5 An Application for the Approval of Residential, Hazardous and Overseas Educational Visits by Head Teacher, Governing Body And East Sussex County Council form will need to be completed when the visit is residential, and/or hazardous and/or overseas. It will need to be signed by the Head Teacher and a representative of the Governing Body and then sent in to the Outdoor Education Adviser at least six weeks before the visit. See Appendix B.
- 3.6 Off-site Visit Risk Assessment forms should be completed for all aspects of the visit e.g. the journey, activities and down time if a residential. See Appendix E. Several example risk assessments are available for all types of transport and several frequently needed risk assessments; these are kept in a folder called 'Risk Assessments' within the 'Educational Visits' folder on the W share. External providers may have their own risk assessments that will need to be seen by the group leader. Some East Sussex external providers will have example risk assessments; these are kept within the educational visits folder on the W share and / or with Catherine Verrall.
- 3.7 A pre-visit is highly recommended to support the risk assessment process and should be carried out whenever possible.
- 3.8 If volunteers are being used for the visit, they will need to be fully briefed and a CRB check should be carried out if they are used regularly and if the visit is residential.
- 3.9 The parents will be informed of the type of transport used. When [private cars](#) are used various checks will need to be carried out (insurance, licence) and guidance (appropriate contact with children) provided to volunteer drivers. When coaches and minibuses are used the leaders should ensure the pupils are wearing seat belts. Staff must be distributed evenly throughout the minibus/coach. A current East Sussex Minibus permit is required to drive a minibus.

3.10 If the visit is mainly within school hours or for the curriculum, a voluntary contribution may be requested. Other visits may be charged for.

3.11 School Journey Insurance may need to be arranged depending on the nature of the visit e.g. if deposits are paid, the pupils are taking belongings and the visit is abroad. Parents should be informed of the insurance arrangements. NB PCS has a block booking with Zurich Insurance, which should be used unless agreed otherwise with Catherine Verrall.

3.12 The supervision ratios need to meet the requirements summarised in the table below though these are minimum ratios and the group leader must consider the pupils involved, the type of activities, the site and the experience and competency of the supervising adults.

Supervision ratios and qualifications guidance for non-hazardous ventures

Activity	Qualifications/staffing	Ratios	Notes
Local visits – in the local area, close to support at the base	an experienced group leader other qualified leader(s) (numbers as required) other responsible adult(s) in support a minimum of two leaders required, unless in exceptional circumstances	1 adult for every 6 pupils in school year 1 to 3 (under 5's Reception classes should have a higher ratio) 1 adult for every 10-15 pupils in school year 4-6 1 adult for every 15-20 pupils in school year 7 onwards	A minimum of one qualified leader is needed for every group or class. They can then be supported by other qualified leaders or responsible adults. It is recommended that the gender of the leaders reflects the gender of the group.
Day visits – more than 60 miles or one hour from base	an experienced group leader other qualified leader(s) (numbers as required) other responsible adult(s) in support a minimum of two leaders required	1 adult for every 6 pupils in school year 1 to 3 (under 5's Reception classes should have a higher ratio) 1 adult for every 10-15 pupils in school year 4-6 1 adult for every 15-20 pupils in school year 7 onwards	
Residential visit, UK or abroad, and visits abroad	an experienced group leader other qualified leader(s) (numbers as required) other responsible adult(s) in support a minimum of two leaders required	1 adult for every 6 pupils in school year 1 to 3 (under 5's Reception classes should have a higher ratio) 1 adult for every 10 pupils in school year 4 upwards These ratios do not include the centre/ residential base staff	As above, however it is recommended that the ratio of qualified leader to responsible adult support is low, at 1:1 or 1:2. The gender of the leaders must reflect the gender of the group.

Group leader

- the person who has overall charge of the venture

Qualified leader

- a teacher, nationally qualified youth worker or lecturer (also some NVQ Level 3 qualified personnel)

- 3.13 The leaders need to know that in an emergency they should:
- Ensure the pupils are safe
 - Contact their emergency contact person (Catherine Verrall or Helen Cryer) and give them the details
 - Follow the procedures to be followed in the event of a serious accident/incident or fatality. See Appendix F.
- 3.14 On return from the visit, the group leader should report to the EVC and complete an evaluation report where necessary, e.g. when the visit involved an external organisation/was notable in terms of positive outcomes/gave rise to significant concerns, a copy of which should be sent to the Outdoor Education Adviser. See Appendix G.
- 3.15 The planning of the visit should be supported by the use of the PCS checklist, which should be passed to EVC on completion. See Appendix H.
- 3.16 PCS has an inclusive approach to off site activities / educational visits. Advanced warning should be given of when deposits will be requested. In the event that the number of deposits exceeds the number of places available places will be allocated on a first come first served basis.
- 3.17 There are occasions when it is necessary to remove a student from a visit in the interests of health and safety. Information letters and /or consent forms should make it clear to parents that in such circumstances monies paid can not be refunded.
- 3.18 All places on visits are subject to good behaviour and attendance. This must be checked in advance and where necessary conveyed in writing to parents / carers of students at risk (see appendix N)

Appendix H

Off-site Activities and Educational Visits Checklist

Prior to visit

- ☺ Prior to bookings being confirmed approval sought in writing from Headteacher (appendix a) or if activity hazardous or residential or abroad from HT, Gov Body and LEA (appendix b)
- ☺ HT / EVC to check clearly identified and specific objectives for visit; staff/pupil ratio acceptable and gender of group reflected in this (essential for residential); group leader meets definition of a leader (appendix I); accompanying staff suitably qualified and competent and CRB checks carried out for volunteers if necessary (essential for residential)
- ☺ Date of activity/visit to be circulated to all staff to ensure no clash of interest
- ☺ Activity appropriately costed – seek advice from CVE if necessary (Sandra Wiles collects payments from students)
- ☺ Information letter and consent form (appendix c/d) issued to parents – to be drafted by Sharon Wood, Lynn Hill or Catherine Verrall
- ☺ Appropriate legal transport arranged (Sharon Wood)
- ☺ Insurance cover arranged (Sandra Wiles)
- ☺ Risk assessments have been written for all activities; journey and down time (advice from CVE / Sharon Wood can check SEN; Claire Murphy can check medical; Ann Ford can check attendance)
- ☺ Parental consent obtained
- ☺ 1st aider and 1st aid kit (Clare Murphy will prepare)
- ☺ If visit abroad, EHIC cards and passports checked for validity and copied
- ☺ Accompanying staff fully briefed and clear about their role and responsibilities and issued with RA and aware of medical /dietary needs of the group
- ☺ Students briefed and clear about expectations of behaviour, emergency procedures
- ☺ Parent briefing meeting for all residential or trips abroad (hall booked with CVE) – full details given re visit; 'to be safe' contract signed by parents and students
- ☺ Money / currency collected from Sandra Wiles – allow sufficient time for the banking to be done
- ☺ Full set of paperwork (approval form; parent information letter; risk assessments; consent forms; checklist etc) issued to Sharon Wood for office and cc to Helen Cryer and Catherine Verrall

- ☺ Staff usually working with students informed e.g. teachers, foodhall
- ☺ Matt Daniels informed of cover requirements; appropriate cover work set; to include class lists and seating plans – all accompanying staff to consult with HOF

During the visit

- ☺ Ongoing risk assessment
- ☺ Group leader to ensure 1st aider keeps written record of any medication administered and any accidents on the incident log
- ☺ CVE kept informed of any issues
- ☺ In event of serious incident contact CVE, who will kick in the County emergency procedures. Under no circumstances make any press statements

After the visit

- ☺ Paper work returned to Sharon Wood, to include completed registers with dates and times
- ☺ 1st aid kit to be returned to Clare Murphy and incident log and check list to Catherine Verrall
- ☺ HT/EVC informed of any issues and if necessary evaluation report written and sent to County
- ☺ Feedback to staff and community via compass/YTM – if displaying photos on the website, cds, ask Sharon Wood to cross reference with consent forms

Group Leader Signature: _____ Date:

NB: This check list should be returned to Catherine Verrall after the visit.