FPPF

Policy for Off-Site and Hazardous Activities

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Policy for Off-Site and Hazardous Activities

The Governing Body recognises that off-site activities are those activities arranged by, or under, the auspices of the school, which take place outside the boundaries of the school.

This policy has been drawn up in line with the DCFS publication ‘Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits’, and using the ‘Policies and Procedures for Off-Site and Hazardous Activities’ published by the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead. Under the ‘Health and Safety at Work Act’ of 1974 all activities on and off the premises must be made as safe as is reasonably practicable. Under the ‘Common Law Duty, Duty of Care, those responsible for others must take the same reasonable care that a reasonable, prudent and careful parent would take in the same circumstances.

Rationale - The Governing Body of the school recognises the valuable contribution that the wide range of additional activities, including trips, clubs and residential experiences can make towards pupils' education.

The Governing Body aims to promote and provide such activities both as part of a broad balanced curriculum for the pupils of the school and as additional optional activities.

The Governing Body believes that off-site activities can complement and enhance the curriculum of the school by providing experiences that would be impossible within the school boundaries. It is understood that the paramount consideration in all planning and preparation for such activities will be the safety of the individual pupils and the party leaders. During the activity, the party leader must take whatever steps are necessary to ensure that safety of all participants.

The Governing Body expects that all off-site activities will serve an educational purpose.

Statements of policy

1. The Executive Head Teacher and Heads of School are responsible for the implementation of this policy.

2. It is strongly recommended that the advice of The Off-site and Hazardous Advisory Service will be sought at all stages of planning.

3. Staff arranging, or otherwise involved in, off-site activities must be trained in the leading of a trip and make themselves familiar with the Policies and Procedures published by RBWM. All off-site activities must take place under the terms of these policies and procedures.

4. Where staff are proposing to arrange an off-site activity, the approval of the EVC (Executive Head teacher) must be obtained before any commitment is made on behalf of the school, and the authority must agree with the basic policies of activities lasting less than 24 hours; no separate authorisation is needed from the Off Site advisor (RBWM).

5. Where the activity involves a period of more than 24 hours, an overnight stay, or a journey by sea or air, the Executive Head Teacher will require the approval of the Governing Body and the Local Authority before the activity may take place.

6. The Executive Head Teacher will appoint a party leader to be responsible for running the activity. This will normally be a teacher employed at the school, but may be another competent and trained person.

7. Wherever possible the staff planning an off-site activity should make a preliminary visit to the venue, in order to familiarise themselves and make a proper assessment of its suitability - bearing in mind the age of the children, the size of the group, the time of year and the
suitability of facilities. The costs of such a visit may be reclaimed and should be included in the overall cost of the activity. The costing of off-site activities should include any costs associated with this visit.

8. Organisers of appropriate activities should be aware of the Health & Safety regulations concerning hazardous activities including water-based activities, land-based activities, air-based activities, physical education and all other sports activities as listed in the Policies and Procedures. Staff should refer to the Policies and Procedures for specific staffing ratios for each hazardous activity; these are available from the EVC or direct form the RBWM Off-site advisory team.

9. The parents of children taking part in an off-site activity should be provided with appropriately detailed information about the activity, in good time, so that they can make informed decisions.

10. The party leader is responsible for ensuring all appropriate forms are completed by parents/guardians before the visit commences - e.g. medical consent.

11. Funding for off-site activities is provided mainly by parental contributions (voluntary - except in the case of residential visits). No child may be excluded from an activity because of the unwillingness or inability of the parent to make a contribution. A limited subsidy may be available for children with special circumstances. If it is an evening activity, weekends or in holidays then the cost will be charged and any extra costs in taking those with disability cannot be met by other parents. (See also school policy for Charging and Remissions.)

12. The timetable for payment of contributions should allow for the Executive Head Teacher to make a decision about the financial viability of the activity in reasonable time. This must be clearly stated to the families at the onset of the publicity.

13. Transport arrangements must provide a seat with a seat belt for each member of the party.

14. Where private cars are used for transport, the party leader is responsible for ensuring that all volunteers have completed form OA6 and had it counter-signed. The Criminal Records Bureau must also have checked them as they have unsupervised access to the young people.

15. All adults accompanying a party must be trained and made aware by the party leader of the emergency procedures that 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 or mobile telephone number of a designated emergency contact should be provided. In normal circumstances this will be either the executive Head or Head of School.

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

17. 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 Executive Head Teacher the possibility of excluding the child from the activity.

18. The pupils and their families will be informed that all valuables are taken at the owners own risk, and that mobile phones are banned, just as they are in school.

Off-Site Activities which are Non Residential

1. An activity should normally have sufficient adults taking part to provide a minimum ratio of one adult for every 15-20 children.
2. Where the activity is taking place entirely within a normal school day, it is sufficient to obtain an acknowledgement that the parents are aware of the arrangements in advance. Where the activity extends beyond the school day, written permission from the parents must be obtained. A regular visit off-site over several weeks may be covered by a letter at the beginning of term when the yearly medical/consent form is sent to parents, e.g. sports matches, visits to library etc.

Off-Site Activities which are Residential

1. An activity should normally have sufficient adults taking part to provide a minimum ratio of one adult for every 15-20 children and one adult for every 10 children for residential visits abroad - with a minimum of two adults for 10 or less children. This is a minimum requirement and should not automatically be taken as providing appropriate supervision.

2. If during an activity, it is felt that the behaviour of an individual child is likely to, or has, compromised the safety of others or the good name of the school, the party leader should discuss with the Executive Head Teacher the possibility of excluding the child from the remainder of the activity.

3. All residential trips will follow the FPPF flow chart for organisation; this includes dates documents and decisions must be made by.