

# OFF-SITE ACTIVITIES POLICY



At Colston Bassett School we wish all of our pupils to take part in off-site activities believing that they will be of great educational benefit. Colston Bassett School will ensure that a named teacher known as the 'group leader' will have responsibility for overall organisation and control and no off-site activity will take place without the consent of the Head Teacher. The Office Manager and/or the group leader in charge must have researched the background for each activity thoroughly and for residential trips/field studies or trips abroad the venue must be visited in advance of the trip. Safety must be the prime consideration at all times.

The Head Teacher will ensure that:

- Adequate child protection procedures are in place;
- All necessary actions have been completed before the visit begins;
- Complete a comprehensive risk assessment and ensure that appropriate safety measures are in place;
- Training needs have been assessed by a competent person and the needs of the staff and pupils have been considered;
- The group leader has experience in supervising the age groups going on the visit and will organise the group effectively;
- The group leader or another teacher is suitably competent to instruct the activity and is familiar with the location/centre where the activity will take place;
- The Office Manager is allowed sufficient time to organise visits properly;
- Non-teacher supervisors on the visit are appropriate people to supervise children;
- Ratios of supervisors to pupils is appropriate;
- The School Directors have approved the visit if appropriate;
- Parents have all signed the annual consent form for any off-site visits;
- Arrangements have been made for the medical needs of all pupils;
- Adequate first aid provision will be available;
- The mode of transport will be appropriate and travel times out and back are known including pick-up and drop-off points;
- There is adequate and relevant insurance cover;
- They have the address and telephone number of the visit's venue and have a contact name;
- A school contact has been nominated and the group leader has full details of this;
- The group leader and supervisors on the visit and the nominated school contact all have copies of the agreed emergency procedures;

- The group leader and supervisors and the school contact have the names of all adults and pupils travelling in the group, and contact details of parents and the teachers' and other supervisors' next of kin;
- There is a contingency plan for any delays including a late return home.

The following factors will all form part of the planning stage of each off-site visit:

- The facilities/equipment the group will need to take on the visit and to be provided at the venue;
- Staff training needs;
- The designation of someone to record the details of the visit and to carry accident forms etc;
- Transport, insurance and communication arrangements;
- Supervision ratios;
- Contingency measures for enforced change of plan or late return;
- Information to parents;
- Preparing pupils;
- Emergency arrangements;
- Arrangements for sending pupils home early.

## Supervision

The number of supervisory adults will depend on the number of children taking part. The group leader must ensure that all adults have access to sufficient information to enable them to act effectively in cases of emergency. The following ratios (as detailed in the DfE good practice guide for the Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits) will be applied as a general guide to every off-site visit:

- 1 adult for every 5 pupils in Reception (under 5's).
- 1 adult for every 6 pupils in school Years 1 – 3.
- 1 adult for every 10 – 15 pupils in school Years 4 – 6.

The above are examples only. Group leaders should assess the risks and consider an appropriate safe supervision level for their particular group. There should be a minimum of one teacher in charge. Each adult will have a list of children for whom they are responsible and frequent head count checks of the children will be made. The children will be made aware of the adult they have been allocated to.

When on school trips, staff are entitled to carry their mobile phones for use in cases of safety or emergency. However, these phones must remain on silent until needed for such causes. Staff have access to a school mobile phone where contact with parents is required off-site.

## Parents

Other than a walk in the local vicinity of the school, parents will be provided with a letter or email relating to any off-site activity. Parent volunteers will be welcome to accompany off site trips subject to thorough vetting suitability.

# Transport

## A) COACHES

Careful thought will always be given to transport planning:

- The Head Teacher will ensure that all travel arrangements, including the hire of private coaches or buses are suitable for the nature. The Office Manager will be responsible for carrying out these checks and ensuring that coaches and buses are only hired from a reputable company. The school has opted to use Sharpe & Sons (Nottingham) Ltd based in Cropwell Bishop, Nottinghamshire for all coaches used for offsite visits. Documentation relating to the coach company is always retained at school.
- The driver is responsible for the vehicle during the visit.
- Legislation requirements concerning seat belts will be adhered to at all times.

The group leader will consider:

- Passenger safety;
- The type of journey – will the visit take place locally or will it include long distance driving;
- Traffic conditions;
- Contingency funds and arrangements in case of breakdown/emergency;
- Appropriate insurance cover;
- Weather;
- Journey time and distance;
- Stopping points on long journeys for toilet and refreshments;
- Supervision.

## B) PRIVATE CARS/TAXIS

Teachers and others who drive pupils in their own car must ensure their passengers' safety, that the vehicle is roadworthy. The school has a fully comprehensive occasional business use motor insurance policy for schools and colleges. Additionally:

- The driver will be responsible for making sure that pupils have a seat belt and use it at all times. Parental agreement will be sought for pupils of Colston Bassett School to be transported in other parents' or volunteers' cars.
- Children in Key Stage 2 may travel in the front if parental permission has been sought.

# Insurance

The Directors of Colston Bassett School will ensure that all necessary insurances are in place for employers' liability, public liability and personal accident cover for teachers and other adults.

A wide range of different off-site visits may be considered and all will be assessed individually should they occur and guidelines followed as detailed in the DofE publication 'Health and Safety of pupils on educational visits':

- Coastal visits;
- Swimming in the sea or other natural waters;
- Swimming pools;
- Farm visits;
- Field studies;
- Residential visits.

## Emergency Procedures

*(As required by the DofE publication 'Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits')*

The teachers in charge of pupils during an off-site visit have a duty of care to make sure that the pupils are safe and healthy. They also have a common law duty to act as a reasonably prudent parent would. Teachers should not hesitate to act in an emergency situation and to take life-saving action in an extreme situation. Colston Bassett School considers the health and safety of all our pupils of paramount importance, and solid emergency procedures are an essential part of planning any school visits. The detailed guidelines for an emergency procedures framework in the DofE publication 'Health and Safety of pupils on educational visits' will be adhered to in all situations. Teaching staff, parent helpers and volunteers will not speak to the media in any circumstances and a designated media contact will be established should any situation arise ensuring the privacy and best interests of all of our pupils.

A full set of forms are in place for the purpose of off-site visits and all will be completed and used as appropriate at all stages of any visit.

The cost of all off-site activities will be met by the parents of each pupil as detailed in our parent information pack.