

# RIVERSDALE PRIMARY SCHOOL

## Off Site Activities Policy



## **INTRODUCTION**

An off-site activity is any activity that takes place outside the school site, including use of the park next to the school.

At Riversdale Primary School we believe that:

- Visits and journeys off-site are a valuable and integral part of a child's education. They can add greatly to children's understanding of a wide variety of concepts and skills. They can enhance personal and social skills;
- Costs to parents/Carers need to be carefully considered when planning off-site activities and we should always strive to give reasonable notice and achieve maximum value for money.
- Preparation is imperative to the success of off-site activities and planning must be in accordance with LEA Guidance kept in the head teacher's office
- The safety of the pupils is the most important consideration. It is vital to maintain safety consciousness and safe working practices.

All off- site activities should be appropriate and efficiently organised and supervised.

## **PLANNING AND PREPARATION**

Every teacher planning an off-site activity must read the relevant sections of the LEA Guidance which is kept in the head teacher's office.

It is imperative that the group leader visits the locality beforehand. This is particularly important where safety factors are involved or where residential accommodation is needed. The leader must find out about any hazards as well as facilities for refreshment, rest, toilets, etc. before booking.

Pupils should be involved in the planning at some stage. They should know the aims and purpose of the visit, what activities are planned and how they are to be carried out. They should also know what is required of them at every stage. They should be aware of any hazards and be fully briefed in all relevant procedures. See page 37-38 of LEA Guidance [HT Office]

## **INFORMATION TO PARENTS/CARERS**

Teachers should ensure that parents are kept fully informed regarding any off- site activity. This information should always be given in writing and the mode of transport made clear. Parents should have full particulars of a visit before they are asked to give their consent. See page 76 of LEA Guidance for a useful checklist. If parents refuse their consent for any off-site activity, then the child must not be taken off site. For local trips in the immediate environment parents sign a consent form when their child starts at Riversdale.

## **PAYMENT FOR OFF- SITE ACTIVITIES**

Parents are asked to make voluntary contributions. Some parents find this difficult or impossible due to their financial situations. As a school we should therefore:

- Limit the number of paid off-site activities during the course of a year
- Let parents/Carers know the cost at least 3 weeks in advance and 2 months for residential trips
- Encourage all parents to pay all or part of the charge
- Keep accurate lists of parents who have paid.

An educational visit may have to be cancelled if more than 10% of the class do not contribute financially.

## **RISK ASSESSMENTS**

A Risk Assessment must be made for each trip, detailing actions to be taken to reduce any significant or medium risk using the risk assessments forms and guidelines found in the staffroom. Exceptions may be those trips that are taken frequently, for example to Southfields Community College. See page 50 of LEA Guidance

## **SUPERVISION**

Group leaders should ensure that there is adequate supervision taking into account the LEA Guidance, the programme of activities and the environment visited. A minimum of 3 adults should accompany any group going off-site. See page 57 -59 of LEA Guidance

- For pupils under 5 there will be no more than 6 minors to 1 adult
- For pupils under 8 there will be no more than 8 minors to 1 adult
- For pupils between 8 and 18 there will be no more than 20 minors to 2 adults
- For some activities the head teacher may allow a lower ratio than those specified above e.g. walking to Southfields Academy.

## **CROSSING THE ROAD**

Only the police, Traffic Wardens and School Crossing patrols have the right to control traffic. If a member of staff assumes responsibility for seeing children across the road they must discharge this activity to the best of their ability. The LEA recommended way to cross is for the group to cross in waves, but teachers should use their own discretion and cross in crocodile if they consider it safer. See Page 65 of the LEA Guidance.

## **TRAVEL BY COACH**

The school should always book coaches fitted with seatbelts. It is the responsibility of teachers to ensure that all fitted seatbelts are in use at the start of each journey and after stops.

To ensure adequate supervision, adults must be spread throughout the coach and not seated together. Some EEC legislation now makes this a legal requirement.

Pupils must remain seated and the driver must not be distracted from driving.

## **VOLUNTEER ADULTS**

Where an off-site activity involves the use of parents, or other assisting adults, it is imperative that their role is explained to them and that appropriate guidance is given during a full briefing session. Untrained adults should never be solely responsible for groups

It is desirable that volunteer adults be police-checked, unless the head teacher has agreed otherwise.

Parents/Carers supervising an off-site activity must not bring other children with them.

Briefings to adult helpers should include, for example:

- Procedures at all road crossings
- Behaviour management
- What to do if a pupil becomes separated from the group.
- Whether the pupils are to walk in pairs, single file, as a group, etc.
- The necessity for regular head counts throughout the day. When counting pupils onto transport the numbers should always be double-checked.
- Procedures for the safe collection of children by parents at the end of the trip.
- Emergency procedures

## **RECORD OF GROUPS OFF-SITE**

When any group goes off-site the party leader must ensure that: All accompanying adults have lists showing:

- All adults and pupils on the trip
- The distribution [if in separate groups or vehicles]
- The planned itinerary
- Their own group responsibility
- The location contact point
- The name and telephone number of the school office[ base contact person]  
The base contact person [school office] and the group leader should have:
- The information held by all adults on the trip [as above]
- Access to next of kin emergency telephone numbers
- The name and address of any travel company
- Details for contacting the LEA representatives in the event of an emergency

During a residential visit the head teacher must keep a record of each participant's relevant details [as above] at home as well as in school.

## **MOBILE TELEPHONE**

When organising an off-site activity the group leader must arrange to carry a full charged mobile telephone. In an emergency, group leaders must contact the head teacher or deputy head teacher immediately and follow emergency procedure.

## **FIRST AID, HEALTH AND MEDICINE**

First Aid bags must be taken on each trip; these are kept in the office. The group leader is responsible for ensuring that all medicines, inhalers and Epi pens are taken with them on the visit. All medicines must be carried by the teacher and not by parent helpers. Therefore, pupils requiring medicines should be in the teacher's own group as child and medicines should not be parted.

## Checklist for leaders planning an off-site activity

NB. This checklist is not to be used instead of the LEA Guidelines and School Policy, but just as an aide memoir.

- Three weeks beforehand write date and time of trip in diary in school office
- Read the LEA Guidelines and the school policy
- Pre-visit the site
- Determine adult/pupil ratios
- Cost activity
- Order transport or free travel tickets
- Send letter to parents giving full details of the activity
- Order packed lunches in the office two weeks before trip
- Secure adult help [ ensure police checks in place if necessary]
- Involve pupils in planning, including discussion of hazards, expected behaviour etc.
- Complete Risk Assessment and have it signed by head or deputy head teacher
- Check medical forms and ensure that necessary medication is available. Determine who is going to carry it.
- Check first aid provision
- Ensure mobile is charged and know the school telephone number.
- Collect school packed lunches.
- Fully brief adults taking part on their responsibilities. Give them written guidance, pupil lists etc.
- Give each child a sticker with name of school and telephone number on it.
- Check you have all necessary equipment for the day, first aid bag, inhalers etc.