Learning Outside the classroom/ Off-Site Educational Visits Policy

Approval Date: October 2019

Review Date: September 2027

Headteacher: .....

1. Introduction

1.1 This policy covers all off-site visits and activities organised through the school and for which the Governing Board and Headteacher are responsible.

The Governing Board endorses the West Sussex County Council model policy document 'OUTDOOR EDUCATION AND OFF-SITE EDUCATIONAL VISITS' as the basis for the school's management of outdoor education, visits and off-site activities.

Three Bridges Primary School provides many opportunities for its pupils to enrich and enhance their experience through Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC). This encompasses both on-site and off-site learning, residential activities, environmental studies, sports, physical and cultural activities, business visits, conference and adventurous activities.

The Governing Board seeks to ensure that every pupil has access to a wide range of educational experiences as an entitlement. As part of this entitlement the Governing Board recognises the significant educational value of visits and activities which take place away from the immediate school environment.

The Governing Board aims to enable this school to become an educational environment in which all members of the school community can thrive, regardless of race, religion, culture, gender or individual need. We intend to apply this aim to the planning and management of all visits and off-site activities.

Visits and off-site activities support, enrich and extend the curriculum in many subject areas, encourage co-operation, team work and the application of problem-solving skills and develop independence and self-confidence.

Physical challenge and adventure can have a particular part to play in the development of personal and social qualities for all children. Outdoor education helps children to be physically active and to understand how to assess and manage risk.

The management of visits and off-site activities places particular responsibilities for the health, safety and welfare of all participants on the Governing Board, Headteacher, the party leader, members of staff and volunteers, pupils and parents. The school also has responsibilities to other members of the public and to third parties. This policy on outdoor education, visits and off-site activities therefore complements the wider school health and safety policy.
It is a priority of this school that all outdoor education, visits and off-site activities are safe, well-managed and educationally beneficial.

1.2 The value of LOtC is well recognised by the Governing Board and fully supported throughout the school. It is emphasised that a culture of safety must prevail and there is a need for careful planning and adherence to statutory procedures. Learning Outside the Classroom must be well managed with information communicated and

responsibilities recognised as with any other learning that takes place within the school.

1.3 This document outlines the specific policies and procedures for Three Bridges Primary School. It supplements and follows the advice and guidance contained within the following significant publications:

- WSCC's Learning Outside the Classroom and Off-Site Educational Visits Regulations and Notes for Guidance 2018;
- OEAP National Guidance.
- Departmental advice on health & safety for schools, regularly updated. See: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-and-safety-advice-for-schools
- The Health and Safety Executive statement: "School Trips and Outdoor Learning Activities – Tackling the Health & Safety myths. available at: http://www.hse.gov.uk/services/education/school-trips.pdf

2. Roles and Responsibilities

2.1 The Governing Board satisfies itself that the appropriate procedures, risk management processes and control measures are in place and that the documented guidance notes are being followed. All LOtC and off-site visits that are residential, abroad, or hazardous need to be approved by the Governing Board. Such approval must be recorded in the minutes of the Governing Board.

2.2 The Headteacher is delegated by the Governing Board to approve all LOtC and off-site educational visits of a perceived low risk, local, daily or regular nature. This is recorded through use of **EVOLVE.**

2.3 The Learning Outside the Classroom Co-ordinator (LOtC CO-ORDINATOR) ensures that all LOtC activities follow the correct procedures. The person with these responsibilities will approve the Visit Leader for every visit and monitor the risk management processes to ensure good practice. In addition, the following responsibilities and duties are undertaken:

- Support the Visit Leader in identifying the purpose and outcomes for the visit and the selection, training and briefing of appropriate supervising adults and volunteer helpers. It is important to consider the continuing professional development needs of staff engaged in these activities;
- Ensure that Disclosure and Barring Scheme disclosures are in place, where necessary;

- Arrange Emergency Contact Duty Officer and draw up proper procedures to be followed in such an event. (See appendix 'Emergency Action Card).
- Keep records and make reports of incidents, accidents and 'near hits';
- Review and regularly monitor policies and procedures;
- Liaise with the Outdoor Education Adviser where necessary to ensure the proposed visit complies with the WSCC policies for Learning Outside the Classroom.

2.4 The Visits Leader is responsible for identifying the purpose and outcomes for the visit. They have responsibility for:

- Have overall responsibility for the planning, risk assessment, supervision and conduct of the visit or activity;
- Consider the timing of the visit in conjunction with other classes and year groups to ensure a spread across the year;
- Complete an off-site visit proposal from at least **half a term** prior to the visit;
- Obtain the Headteacher's and LOtC CO-ORDINATOR's approval before letters are sent to parents;
- Inform parents fully about the visit and gain their consent, where appropriate by producing letters asking parents to return their permission slips allowing consent, giving medical conditions, emergency contact information, etc. and ensuring any payment required (see charging policy) is made via Parent Pay (staff should ask the finance team to set the trip up on Parent Pay);
- Follow policy and procedures of the County Council and the school;
- Assess the risks involved, write or amend as appropriate any previously recorded risk; assessment three weeks prior to the visit;
- Request additional school-based adults from SLT as necessary;
- Re-assess risks while the visit or activity takes place;
- Ensure there is a contingency plan should a significant change to the programme be necessary due to weather etc.;
- Deliver a safety briefing to all adults attending the visit.

A robust risk management process is necessary for all LOtC activities and visits. Significant hazards and their control measures will need to be recorded and attached to the EVOLVE visit form (available on http://www.westsussexvisits.org).

This will take account of:

- Generic hazards;
- Event specific hazards as identified from a pre-visit or through knowledge or experience of the environment, accommodation, the competence of the staff team, the group and other factors such as transport;
- On-going hazards identified by the professional staff responding to changing circumstances and the success of planned activity and procedures. The participants and staff will be fully briefed on the purpose, outcomes and the risk management processes.

2.5 Participants are encouraged to consider hazards involved in LOtC activities and off-site educational visits and to assist in the design of appropriate risk management strategies that support their learning. They will be fully aware of the purpose and outcomes of the visit and understand expectations of behaviour.
Members of staff will:

- Prepare the children taking part by discussing the risks involved in the visit and appropriate ways to manage this risk.

Members of staff, volunteers and parent helpers should:

- Assist the party leader to ensure the health, safety and welfare of young people on the visit;
- Be clear about their roles and responsibilities whilst taking part in a visit or activity.

3. Guidance Notes for LOtC Activities and Off-Site Educational Visits

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

3.1 All Visit Leaders will familiarise themselves with the published advice and guidance.

Further information is available from the EVOLVE website (www.westsussexvisits.org).

Training for staff and Visit Leaders will be arranged by the school to include all aspects of supervision, on-going risk management (including being prepared to stop an activity that has become too hazardous) and how to deal with an emergency. Access to such training is also available through the Outdoor Education Adviser.

3.2 In order to plan LOtC activities and visits the Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher should be involved in discussing plans at an early stage. **See 3.4 below.** Routine or local visits such as sports fixtures also need to be planned ahead. It may be possible to approve a series of events on a termly basis. No financial commitment should be agreed until all relevant approvals have been achieved.

3.3 Parental Consent and contact details must be available for the Emergency Contact and the Visit Leader to take on the visit. **(This is obtained in initial letter to parents asking for consent for child to take part in visit/trip).**

3.4 Internal Approval Form. **Initially the 'Off-Site Visit Proposal Form' should be completed and submitted to the HT/DHT. This should be completed at least half a term prior to the visit.** (See appendix I). This local form is used to achieve any necessary cover arrangements.
Once approved the **'Emergency Information Form for Off-Site Visits'** should be completed and sent to The LOtC Co-Ordinator as soon as the visit has been approved. On return of this the evaluation section on the risk assessment should be completed in addition to the trip evaluation form (this should be sent to the LOTC CO-ORDINATOR no later than one week after the trip/visit).

3.5 An EVOLVE Visit form must be completed for all residential visits, visits abroad, visits out of county and or for all adventurous activities whether on-site of off-site. The form will need to be submitted to the LA, four weeks in advance of the activity or visit date and before becoming financially committed. These types of off-site visits also need the Governing Board's approval. School Journey Insurance should be purchased for educational visits and evidence should be attached to the EVOLVE form. Visit Leaders should check to see if such cover is already being provided by a tour operator, or external provider.

3.6 The OE2 form provides information on what WSCC expects an external provider to provide and deliver. It should be sent to any provider being considered for the first time and attached to the EVOLVE form as evidence of the planning process. Please note WSCC 'check' a number of providers who are regularly used by WSCC establishments, these providers are listed on EVOLVE as 'checked' in addition providers who hold the LOtC Quality Badge are considered as suitable to offer activities and have achieved a nationally recognised accreditation.

3.7 On return the Visit Leader must report to the LOtC CO-ORDINATOR and, where necessary, an evaluation report should be completed in order to achieve any learning about a 'near hit' or where an incident took place. If such a form was completed at the venue, there is a need to place such an occurrence on the record at the 'home' establishment.

Additionally, it is highly recommended that an evaluation of the visit's purpose and outcomes is carried out to review the learning achieved and educational value. It is possible, within 28 days, to record this through the EVOVE visit form.

3.8 Risk management forms should be completed and attached to the EVOLVE form when risks are perceived as significant. (See Appendix II). External providers will have their own risk management documents that can be used to help in this process. For certain activities an Adventurous Activity Licence is legally required (see www.hse.gov.uk/aala). If this is the case, the provider's licence number should be quoted instead of copies of their risk assessment documentation.

3.9 Providers that hold a LOtC (Learning Outside the Classroom) Quality Badge have been externally assessed and are acceptable as a 'checked' provider on the EVOLVE site.

Action in the case of emergency

The Headteacher will ensure that emergency arrangements are in place, known to staff and in line with the off-site emergency planning policy, to cover the range of activities undertaken from the school and the times at which they take place. This will include emergency contact numbers for designated senior members of staff or the Governing Board out-of-hours.

The information overleaf has been taken from the TBPS On/Off Site Emergency Planning Policy and gives information for off-site leaders when dealing with an off-site emergency.

OFF SITE EMERGENCIES

Information for Leaders of Off-Site Groups

- Group leaders, or Educational Visits Co-ordinators ***must*** ensure that a written risk assessment highlighting generic and specific significant risks involved has been carried out;
- The Headteacher, or in her absence one of the Deputy Headteacher must sign the risk assessment prior to a trip taking place;
- All helpers attending an off-site activity should be briefed on the emergency arrangements prior to the visit;
- All staff supporting on a trip MUST carry the **school's emergency red card ALONG WITH A COPY OF THIS POLICY TO BE HELD BY THEIR GROUP LEADER**.

Managing an Off-Site Emergency

Should an incident occur during an off-site activity the Leader of the group must take ***immediate*** emergency action required to deal with any injuries and summon assistance, after which the school must be informed.

It should be noted that the venue of the off-site activity may well have its own emergency procedures, and the Group Leader or LOtC Co-ordinator, should ensure that the actions taken complement those in this plan, and do not cause additional problems.

To assist in dealing with the media, ***a draft interim press statement is provided.***

Three Bridges Primary School - EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN

Off-Site Group 'Leaders Pack'

It is recommended that Off-Site Leaders carry an information pack containing the following items:

- Mobile phone(s) (Fully Charged)
- First Aid kit (ensure First Aider present)
- Emergency Response Team contact details (the **RED CARD**)
- Interim press statement pro-forma
- A completed consent form for each child/young person attending the offsite activity
- If attending an organised centre the team leader should discuss the centre's emergency procedures and risk assessments prior to a visit to enable them to be integrated with the Establishments Emergency Response Plan
- Risk assessment of the site to be visited, including any actions necessary to minimise risks, of all the activities to be undertaken. These should be discussed with all members of staff and parent helpers prior to departure
- Off-site visit proposal form
- Emergency information form
- Risk assessment for off-site activity form

THREE BRIDGES PRIMARY SCHOOL
EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN

Interim Press Statement - Offsite Activity

While on a visit to…….a pupil/pupils [and……staff/helpers] of Three Bridges Primary School, Crawley, West Sussex, was/were involved in an incident at……which resulted in him/her/them being taken to Hospital.

The Police/Health and Safety Executive are/will be investigating the incident. The school's Emergency Response Plan has been activated and all further press statements will be made through the Emergency Response Team at the school.

Note to Group Leader

This interim press statement has been agreed with the school and with WSCC and should not be changed in any way. It should be shown to the Police/HSE before being issued.

Monitoring and review policy and practice

The Governors will review this policy:
Every two years, or at such time as there are significant changes to guidance from West Sussex County Council on the management of Outdoor Education, Visits and Off-Site Activities, or should significant issues be brought to the attention of the Governors through the report of the Headteacher.

Appendices

Off-Site Visit Proposal Form (Appendix I)
Risk Assessment for Off-Site Activity (Appendix II)
Emergency Information Form (Appendix III)
Trip Evaluation Form Appendix IV
Emergency Action Card (for Visit Team Leaders) Appendix V

- West Sussex County Council Regulations & Notes of Guidance for Learning Outside the Classroom and Visits (in office Policy File)
- **School Trips and Outdoor Learning Activities – Tackling the Health & Safety myths** (in office Policy File)

To read in conjunction with:

Driving Policy
Health & Safety Policy

Previous Policy Approved October 2019