



# OFF-SITE VISITS

Residential trips and activities organised away from the school site can provide some of the most enriching experiences of a child's school life. If carefully planned and clearly focused, they can be a very effective way of delivering many areas of the curriculum. Frank Wise School has always been committed to providing stimulating, challenging and ambitious residential and day-visit experiences. However, there is nothing which we plan for the pupils in school which is more fraught with potential difficulties and hazards than activities taking place away from the school site. Consequently, clearly defined lines of responsibility and planning guidelines are essential if such activities are going to be as safe as they can possibly be. No policy or guidelines can account for each unexpected occurrence in every situation, but following this policy should ensure that foreseeable hazards are taken into consideration.

## **RESPONSIBILITY**

The LA delegates managerial control for supervision and welfare of pupils taking part in off-site education to the Headteacher. The Headteacher then delegates this responsibility to the Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC). The EVC oversees the planning off-site activities and will only give permission for them to proceed if he/she is fully satisfied that the required planning is thorough, staff are competent, have the required support during the activity and can exercise a high degree of supervision at all times and in all circumstances.

## **STUDENT/STAFF RATIOS**

For any off-site activity organised by Frank Wise School, we try wherever possible to provide staffing ratios over and above the usual classroom ratio. This is particularly important on residential trips where the fatigue engendered by 24 hour care in an unfamiliar environment can be debilitating if the workload is not well-spread and there is no opportunity for breaks. No statutory ratio can be given, as the ideal will vary according to the activity, size of the party and location, but in staffing residential trips the visit leader and EVC will consider:

- the experience and qualifications of the party leader.
- the gender mix of the group - mixed parties will require both male and female support in appropriate proportions.
- the needs of the pupils as individuals and as a group.
- the length of the trip
- the curriculum focus of the trip.

## **VOLUNTEER STAFF**

Volunteer staff who do not usually work in the school may occasionally accompany school parties. The EVC will need to be satisfied of their capability and they will be expected to undergo the usual police checks carried out on any volunteer working in the school.

## **PLANNING**

When planning any off-site activity, staff must work from a combination of the Oxfordshire guidance folder *Out and About with Oxfordshire 3* along with Frank Wise School's *Planning Pack for Residential Trips and Educational Visits*. Contained within the pack are the following pro-formas to be used for planning.

### **Guidance Documents for each visit (attached as appendices to this policy):**

- Appendix 1 Off-site activities
- Appendix 2 Simple day visit
- Appendix 3 Complex day visit (e.g. water based activity)
- Appendix 4 Simple UK residential
- Appendix 5 Complex UK residential (e.g. visiting the Lake District)
- Appendix 6 Foreign residential
- 

Each sheet lists the Frank Wise and Oxfordshire forms which will need to be completed and it is essential that all forms are dealt with in good time for the EVC and in some cases the LA to make their decisions.

### **Frank Wise School forms to be used alongside key LA forms:**

- FWS1 Initial EVC clearance
- FWS2 Costings calculator
- FWS3 1st letter to parents, day trip
- FWS4 1st letter to parents, residential trip
- FWS5 Reply slip (for further day trips within the year)
- FWS6a Emergency plan
- FWS6b Emergency Procedures
- FWS7a Passport Information
- FWS7b Passport Application Letter
- FWS8 Confirmation letter to parents, residential trips, including packing list
- FWS9 School supplies list, residential trip
- FWS10 a Pre-visit Checklist for Day Visit
- FWS10b Pre-visit Checklist for Residential Visits
- FWS11 Final Internal Approval
- FWS12 Volunteer Driver Declaration
- FWS13 Leader Checklist
- FWS14 Trip Report
- FWS15 Expenditure on Trip

### **Copies of Frank Wise and Oxfordshire forms:**

All of the forms and guidance can be found on the school server, within the 'Master Templates' folder, inside a folder called 'EVC Off-site visits'. Hard copies are located in the EVC folder in the study. Further Guidance can be found on the Oxfordshire Outdoor Learning Website and includes the Notification Form.

<http://www.oxfordshireoutdoorlearningservice.co.uk/cms> The TVP E147 for foreign trips can be found on the server.

## **INSURANCES**

Oxfordshire County Council's insurance requirements will be adhered to at all times and no educational visit will be undertaken without adequate insurance. Medical insurance is required for all foreign travel.

## **CRITICAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT**

Before authorising any out of school activities, the EVC will satisfy him/herself that all staff involved are familiar with emergency procedures. Oxfordshire County Council's emergency procedures for residential trips will be followed wherever possible, as detailed in the Oxfordshire Outdoor Learning Website.

An Emergency Plan will be written and adhered to for all trips and visit. This will include reference to Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Critical Incident telephone number. (See the school's *Critical Incident Management Policy* appendix to the *Health and Safety Policy*).

**Reviewed by:** Lara Hughes

**Date:** September 2014

**Approved by Governors:**

**Date:** 7th October 2014