

The Bliss Charity School

School Visits Policy

Mission Statement

The Bliss Charity School aims to provide a caring, secure and enriching experience; each child is encouraged to develop strong personal, academic, physical and creative skills for lifelong learning.

1. Responsibility for off-site visits

- 1.1 The activity leader has full responsibility for the safe running of the activity including prior agreement for the activity to take place, following guidance laid down and ensuring that all participants are aware of their roles.
- 1.2 Teachers, volunteers, students and parents all have responsibilities during the course of any off-site activity in which they are participating.
- 1.3 Teachers have a common law duty to act 'in loco parentis' (as a reasonable parent), as indeed would any other employee involved in an off-site activity.

2. Risk Assessment

- 2.1 The underlying basis of health and safety care is to control risks. This is effectively achieved through risk assessment. When planning an off site visit all the potential risks to the students and adults undertaking that visit should be assessed and, where it is 'reasonably practicable', elimination or alleviation of those risks achieved. This should be undertaken before the visit is started. A record must be kept of the risks identified.

- 2.1.1 In order to undertake a full and comprehensive assessment of risks, it will be essential in some cases to undertake a pre-visit. Even where the visit is made regularly, risks should be reassessed from time to time. When undertaking risk assessment, a number of variables need to be taken into account:

- the number of students involved;
- the age of the students, their sex, ability and general behaviour;
- the previous experience of the group in undertaking off-site visits;
- the time of the day and the time of year;
- the travel arrangements;
- the hazards of the environment being visited;
- the numbers, experience and quality of accompanying staff and volunteers;
- the nature of the activity.

3. Communications

- 3.1 Parents should always be made aware when their children are leaving the school premises. In certain circumstances, parents may wish to exercise their right to refuse to allow their child to take part in a visit. Under such circumstances, the school must make alternative arrangements to ensure that the National Curriculum work that was being developed during the visit is made available in another form to the student in school. The refusal of the parent to allow the child to take part does not offer the opportunity for a day off!
- 3.2 On the trip pupils should not be given the teacher's personal mobile phone numbers. There is a school mobile phone available for trips.

4. First-aid

- 4.1 In all cases it would be appropriate to ensure a first-aid box is readily available during the course of an off site activity. The contents of this first aid kit should be subject to a

regular documented check to ensure kit is replenished after use and the contents are in date. The provision of a formally qualified person to administer first-aid may be more problematic, the legal requirement is for a person with first aid knowledge commensurate with the risks associated with the visit. It is sensible to have at least one trained first-aider on every occasion; however this may not always be possible..

5. Supervision

- 5.1 There are no legally enforceable ratios of students to adults accompanying a visit. The level of supervision will always depend upon the type of visit being made and the numbers and abilities of the students.
- 5.2 The ratio of participants to staff should be such as to ensure adequate control and safe conduct during all phases of the activity or event. The risk assessment may indicate that a short journey to a nearby venue can be adequately covered by 1 adult when appropriate emergency procedures have been previously arranged.
- 5.3 A minimum of two adults, one of whom should be a member of staff should accompany each event unless a formal risk assessment is carried out and indicates that 1 adult is adequate to provide the appropriate level of supervision and safety cover. The activity leader should always ensure that a group is adequately supervised. It is recognised that the staff/participant ratio will need to be varied according to the age and temperament of participants and the type of visit undertaken.
- 5.4 At the planning stage of an event and after consideration of all relevant factors, the EVC (Educational Visits Co-ordinator) in charge of trips must ensure that an appropriate staff/participant ratio is defined and recorded.
- 5.5 For residential visits it is essential that all accompanying adults have been checked by the Police under the procedures for disclosure of criminal backgrounds of those with access to children. There is no doubt that most educational visits or journeys provide the opportunity for 'substantial unsupervised access' to children.

6. Insurance

- 6.1 When a trip is undertaken as a part of the normal school curriculum, even though it is conducted off the school premises, the insurance arrangements for the school will prevail. All 'day –trips' are covered by the school's insurance.
- 6.2 Where a tour operator is used the type and extent of the insurance provided must be ascertained.

7. Discipline

- 7.1 Out of school activities undertaken during school time, or largely during school time, will always be conducted according to the school's disciplinary policy.

8. Students with Special Medical Needs

- 8.1 If a student requiring specific medical needs is to take part in an off site activity, the school should ensure that any protocol established between the school, the parents and the student's GP extends to the differing circumstances of that activity. The School have a duty under the Equalities act to ensure that students can access medication and that reasonable adjustments are made to enable this to happen.
- 8.2 When the school is undertaking a residential visit, parents should be asked to give their authorisation to the leader of the party to act for their child should the need arise for

emergency medical treatment during the course of the visit. If parents are unable to give this authorisation, head teachers may decide that the resultant risk to that child precludes them from taking part. If a student is included in the party where parents have not given authorisation, a clear unequivocal protocol should be supplied by the parent including appropriate enforceable notification to any medical practitioner that may find themselves looking after the student's medical or surgical needs.

9. Finances

- 9.1 In circumstances where insufficient money has been contributed collectively to cover the cost of the visit, the school may cancel the visit and return all the contributions made.
- 9.2 Where contributions are made in excess of the required sums for a particular visit: If the surplus is over £10.00 per student, refunds will be given,
- 9.3 Generally schools would indicate that such money will be put into a school visits' fund to support other off-site opportunities at a future date. When the activity is more than 50% outside school time and a charge is being made, that charge cannot exceed the actual costs to be incurred.
- 9.4 Contingency money should be included for emergency situations which is reflected on a Costings Sheet, a school credit/debit card should be available to support visits abroad.
- 9.5 All accounts will be kept accurately by the Finance Officer.
- 9.6 Non-Curriculum trips need to be paid in full by all pupils. There is a hardship fund available for pupils on Curriculum trips. They need to apply, in writing, to the Deputy Headteacher, with evidence supporting their claim.

10. Transport

- 10.1 Hired Transport - Only reputable companies should be used. Seat belts should be provided on all seats. The driver of the coach has no responsibility for the conduct and behaviour of the students on the transport. The school must provide sufficient supervisory staff to ensure the health and safety of the students.
- 10.2 Public transport - When public transport is to be used, close supervision of the students must be ensured. Students should be prepared in advance concerning expectations of their behaviour. Where it is considered inappropriate to include a particular student because there is serious doubt about their ability to behave, it is appropriate to find a suitable alternative occupation for that student on the occasion of the visit. (If behavior issues manifest themselves because of an underlying SEN then appropriate adjustments should be made to accommodate that student, eg. hiring a private coach as an alternative to public transport even if greater expense is involved).
- 10.3 Private use of cars - Extreme caution should be exercised over the use of private cars, both of parents and staff. Where such transport is to be used Activity Leaders should be confident that vehicles and drivers are legal.