

ST BARTHOLOMEW'S SCHOOL
OFF-SITE ACTIVITIES POLICY

Reviewed by the Governors' Education Committee Summer 2023

Approved by the Full Governing Body Summer 2023

To be reviewed Spring 2025

1. Purpose

This policy describes how educational visits and off site activities are managed and organised. This includes day trips and residential trips, both abroad and within the UK but excludes PE fixtures. It ensures that all employees are aware of their responsibilities and the arrangements in place to meet the requirements of the School's Health and Safety and Safeguarding policies.

2. Statement of Intent

The School places a high value on fieldwork, excursions, and educational visits. Such trips are of enormous benefit. It is a central part of the ethos of the school to provide the opportunity for educational visits and school excursions.

Students' safety is of paramount importance. The School accepts that trips, visits and outdoor activities cannot be completely without risk but it requires that staff involved take all reasonable precautions to protect the health, safety and welfare of students and staff, and minimise the risk of untoward or dangerous situations (in accordance with Health and Safety at Work Act 1974). This policy is supported by and works in conjunction with the School's Positive Behaviour Policy, Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy and Safer Recruitment guidelines. The Headteacher and Governors must be satisfied of the competence (training, assessment and experience) of staff to undertake and supervise the various activities. The lead member of staff will brief all accompanying staff about all aspects relating to the health and safety of students accompanying the educational visit or outing. This may include designating staff with specific tasks e.g. care of medication. All staff supervising a trip will have undergone a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, and be as well informed about the proposed visit as the trip leader.

3. Equal Opportunities

Every effort will be made to ensure that School visits and activities are fully inclusive and accessible to all who wish to participate.

3.1 Funding and allocation of places

For further detail on funding for trips, please see **Section 7**

Where appropriate to do so, Pupil Premium funding and Bursary funding will be accessed for students who qualify for this support.

If 50% or more of the trip falls within school time, then the trip is funded through voluntary contributions, and all students within the targeted cohort will be given the opportunity to take part in the trip. Payment is requested but not required. In the case of the MFL Exchange trips, the number of places can be determined by the number of foreign exchange partners available. If necessary, the letter to parents/carers will make it clear what the approach for allocating places will be.

If more than 50% of the trip falls outside of school time, then it is no longer required to be funded through voluntary contributions and parents / carers are required to be willing to meet the cost of the trip. If a trip of this nature is oversubscribed then students will be randomly selected by a fair and equal method. It may be the case that gender balance and age informs the selection. The school does not adopt a 'first come, first served' approach. If necessary, the letter to parents/carers will make it clear what the approach for allocating places will be.

3.2 Students with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities, Special Educational and Medical Needs

Wherever it is feasible, students with learning difficulties and disabilities should be included, whilst maintaining the safety of everyone in the group. Any problems/limitations should be considered at the planning stage and when carrying out the risk assessment. Special attention is made to supervision ratios. Each trip leader, for information, should hold summary sheets containing details of the student/students' special needs. The trip leader should discuss the visit with parents of those children with special needs or complex medical needs to ensure sufficient support is in place for each child and the teacher.

School Procedure

The Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) at St Bartholomew's School is the Assistant Headteacher. In order to assess whether a trip should be allowed, there must be a genuine educational value and/or academic relevance and benefit.

4. Planning and Approval of Trips

- All staff must follow the school's 'Visits Checklist' and adhere to the procedures outlined in this document.
- With the exception of PE fixtures, all visits and offsite activities must be logged on the School's visits system – Evolve.
- All necessary forms and documents for the organisation of a trip can be found on the Visits page of the School's Intranet
- Whilst the Evolve system is used to support the planning of trips and input is sought from West Berkshire Council when appropriate, overall responsibility for trip approval remains with the school. The EVC and the Headteacher authorise all visits and offsite activities through Evolve.
- The Safeguarding Governor will have overall governor responsibility for all School's trips; The Safeguarding Governor will liaise with other Governors as necessary, in particular with Governors responsible for Health and Safety, for Risk, and for SEND and Disadvantaged Students.
- The EVC, DSL and Safeguarding Governor will meet at least once a term to review trips that have taken place and upcoming trips. Special attention will be given to new residential trips and trips with any new or different types of activities.
- The Safeguarding Governor has oversight of the School's visits and offsite activities by having access to Evolve. The Safeguarding Governor, H&S Governor, EVC and Headteacher can communicate via Evolve and a record of this communication is automatically saved on Evolve.
- Medical information about each student will be supplied to the trip leader by extracting this information from SIMS. In all cases, parents will be invited to supply additional or updated information when giving their permission for their child to go on the activity/trip. In the case of some residential trips a separate Medical Form may be required for each student
- The list of students participating in the trip will be reviewed by pastoral staff to ensure that all students' welfare needs have been taken account of. Where necessary, additional appropriate support will be provided for individual students.

- The trip leader must ensure that adequate insurance is in place. In most cases this will be covered by the School's insurance policy. This should be discussed with the Accounts Manager at the same time as formulation of the trip costing
- For all trips information will be communicated with parents and guardians in case of delay, accident or change of plans. This is the responsibility of the trip leader potentially in liaison with the Leadership Team base contact
- For every trip, a member of Leadership Team will hold the school's 'Emergency Contact LT Base Phone'. This will be the main point of contact for the trip leader in case of an emergency
- Reception hold three mobile phones that are specifically for use by staff on trips. These phones contain the number of the 'Emergency Contact LT Base Phone' as well the phone numbers of 3 members of LT and 3 school offices.
- Staff will take the 'Serious Incident on an Offsite Activity' procedures with them.

5. Communication with Parents

It is imperative that parents are given full and complete written details regarding the organisation of all visits off the School site. For all visits, including residential, a letter specific to that visit will be sent to parents and their consent obtained. Copies of all such letters should be given to the EVC, and to the Accounts Manager where payment is being requested from parents. Residential visits will involve a parents' meeting, where all pertinent information to that visit is outlined and emergency procedures explained.

6. The Number of Subsidised Staff on Trips

There needs to be some standard arrangements for this so that the school is confident that:

- Legal requirements regarding supervision and safety are fully met
- Students are well cared for
- Staff are confident that supervision levels are adequate
- Parents are not unduly subsidising unnecessary staff

In cases of trips booked through a travel company, the travel company will give a standard number of free or subsidised places. Staffing ratios are outlined in the 'Visits Checklist' If the member of staff organising the trip believes that there is a particular reason for having additional staff this must be cleared with the EVC during the planning stage of the trip.

7. Financing of Trips

The Department for Education policy on 'Charging for School Activities' can be found on gov.uk.

If 50% or more of the trip falls within school time, then trip is funded through voluntary contributions and all students within the targeted cohort will be given the opportunity to take part in the trip. A financial contribution from parents/carers will be requested but it is not required. If there are insufficient funds raised for this type of trip, the trip will be cancelled. If more than 50% of the trip falls outside of school time, then it is no longer funded through voluntary contributions, and parents / carers are required to be willing to meet the cost of the trip.

A trip costing must be formulated with the trip organiser and the Accounts Manager at the outset. Trips are not costed to make any profit for the school. All trips are costed to cover the costs of running the trip.

Once a trip costing has been completed and agreed by the Finance Department, letters can go out to the parents regarding the cost and payment schedule for the trip.

Parents are encouraged to pay by ParentPay albeit cash and cheques are accepted.

Parents will not be charged any additional fees if the trip subsequently makes a loss. Any surplus from trips will be transferred to the student hardship fund, rather than parents being given a refund.

Pupil Premium funding for students in Years 7-11 and 16-19 bursary funds will be considered for all trips. Additional funding may be available for families in receipt of certain benefits.

8. Safety and Welfare

It is essential that the trip leader should make a careful and written risk assessment of all aspects of the trip. This **MUST** be handed into the EVC at least 7 days prior to departure.

Good practice would include:

- Making a preliminary visit to the site of the trip (If this is not feasible you must discuss with the EVC).
- Looking into the qualifications of any outside instructors or guides to ensure they meet nationally required standards.
- Ensuring that there will be acceptable provision of sufficient and appropriate food and drink.
- Adequate emergency care should be available and arrangements made for caring for any student who is ill.

9. Medical Issues

- First Aid kits must be carried. These are kept in the House offices.
- In the case of students who are taking prescribed medication, the trip leader must check with the parents whether they wish the trip leader to keep and administer it (staff must always get this permission in writing) or whether the students are competent to administer it themselves. In either case staff must note down details of the drug and dosage.
- Staff are not allowed to administer any non-prescribed medication to students. Where parents request that staff look after such medication the decision for a student to take this must either be devolved to the student themselves by agreement with the parent or parental permission must be sought by phone prior to staff administering the medication to the student.
- In hot weather care should be taken to ensure that students are protected from the harmful rays of the sun and from the effects of dehydration.
- The exact circumstances of any accidents, injuries or illnesses must be carefully recorded.
- Those students that carry epi-pens for anaphylaxis should have one epi-pen on their person and one extra epi-pen, with usage instructions, entrusted to a member of staff. Students who normally carry inhalers should have a spare with them on all residential trips.
- Only staff who have the appropriate epi-pen training are permitted to administer these. It is essential therefore that member of staff carrying the student's spare epi-pen has had this training prior to the trip departing.

10. Risk Assessments

Risk Assessments should be completed in conjunction with the EVC and where appropriate the DSL. The risk assessments forms can be found on the Intranet.

They must clearly include a number of considerations:

- a. Hazardous materials
- b. Fire precautions and fire procedures
- c. Students supervision including remote supervision

- d. Transport
- e. First aid and the administration of medicine
- f. Safeguarding
- g. Security
- h. Welfare of students
- i. 'Plan B' procedures
- j. Emergency procedures
- k. Insurance
- l. Clothing and equipment
- m. Inclement weather

All risk assessments are approved by the EVC and/or the DSL.

The Combined Cadet Corp have their own risk assessments which are completed and collated by The Combined Cadet Corp Leader.

11. Accommodation

For residential trips always check all allocated rooms on arrival at your accommodation and make sure that there is nothing unsafe and that you have noted anything that is broken, missing or in any way inadequate, and inform the accommodation management at once.

- Students MUST be shown fire escape routes in the accommodation on arrival and a fire evacuation procedures must be explained clearly to all students and staff.
- Make sure that the students know where to find a member of staff in the night in the case of any emergency.
- Members of staff must check that all students are in their rooms at the appropriate bedtime. The security of their rooms should also be checked and appropriate precautions taken where necessary. If students are sleeping in downstairs rooms windows should be shut.
- Rooms are allocated appropriately to students, taking account of proximity to staff, gender, behaviour, wellbeing and special needs of individual students. All trip participants will have their own bed.

12. Supervision Levels

- Mixed parties must, wherever possible, contain at least one male and one female member of staff.
- Volunteers accompanying any trip must be DBS checked.
- Staff/student ratios will vary depending upon the nature of the trip. This is likely to be in the range from 1:8 for trips involving hazardous activities to 1:16 for more straight forward visits.

12.1 Students Left Unsupervised

- If it is intended that students are to be left unsupervised by a member of staff at any stage (e.g. allowed to go shopping) parents must be informed in writing and in detail prior to the trip that this will be occurring.
- Students should never be allowed to go off in groups of less than three and should always have a time to report back.
- Students should always know where and how staff can be contacted.

12.2 Behaviour on the Trip

All students should observe the highest standards of politeness, courtesy and conduct at all times in line with all School policies. Particular care needs to be taken when on public transport or in residential accommodation. Even out of school time students are representing the School and should do everything in a way that reflects positively on them as well as on their School. The expectations of good behaviour must be explained to students before any trip and reiterated as appropriate. The Trip Leader will be responsible

for student discipline in accordance with School policy. A member of the Leadership Team will be available to give advice and to contact parents as necessary. Poor behaviour on school trips must be reported to the LT on or before return to School. Students must be made aware that there may be further repercussions on their return to School and that they may lose the right to participate in future trips.

12.3 Drinking Alcohol

Students are not allowed to drink alcohol when on School trips even when they are over 18 years of age.

12.4 Smoking

Smoking is not permitted on School trips.

12.5 Students Sent Home

It should be made clear to parents in advance that if a student is sent home for misbehaviour then parents will be expected to pay for all costs incurred.

13. Minibus Trips

Minibuses are booked via the Facilities Administrator. Wherever possible the minibus should be driven by the school minibus drivers. All drivers must have completed MIDAS training and hold a D1 licence.

13.1 Pre-departure checks

Although the School's driver is not responsible for the maintenance of minibuses, the law directs that the driver is responsible for ensuring that the vehicle is fit for use. Therefore before departure basic checks on the vehicle ought to be carried out:

- Lights (including hazard warning lights)
- Tyre pressures and wear
- Fluid levels: oil, brakes, radiator, windscreen washer
- Wipers and horn

Under normal circumstances there must be an additional member of staff other than the driver to supervise students.

13.2 Seatbelts

The driver should check that all passengers have correctly adjusted and fastened their seatbelts.

13.3 Doors

The driver should check that all doors are properly closed before departure.

13.4 Luggage

Ensure that any loose items (bags etc.) are safely stowed at floor level and are not blocking the way out of the minibus.

13.5 Length of Driving

For all but short journeys, it is strongly recommended that there should be two drivers. After three hours of driving, drivers MUST take a break of at least 20 minutes, except where a relief driver is available.

13.6 Speed Limits

Speed limits must be adhered to at all times.

13.7 Accidents / Incidents / Vehicle Faults

Any of the above must be reported to the Facilities Team on returning to school.

After the journey:

- (a) The driver should complete an appropriate entry in the minibus logbook for every trip.
- (b) The driver is responsible for ensuring that the bus is left in a **clean and tidy state**.

14. Trip Recording and Reviewing

It is the responsibility of the trip leader to report accidents and 'near accidents'. Reviews of each trip and monitoring of good practice should always be reported to the EVC.

15. Health and Safety

It is essential that the health and safety of all students and staff be of paramount importance during all trips and visits which is encompassed within St Bartholomew's School's overall Health and Safety Policy documentation. When in *loco parentis* all teachers must take the same care that a reasonably prudent and careful parent would take in the same circumstances.

16. Transport

When the minibus is not appropriate, the Facilities Office will arrange for an appropriate coach company for day visits and/ or residential visits if these are not provided by the tour operator. All students will wear seatbelts and staff must ensure these are secure at the start of each journey and during the journey at reasonable intervals. Students should be made aware of basic safety rules for travel. Wherever possible, students should not sit in the two front rows of the coach, or in the back row seating. Adults should be seated throughout the coach.

17. Booster Seats

Operators are not required to provide child seats because it is not practical for them to carry a range of different child seats on their vehicles. However, they may allow parents or others to supply their own child car seat for a use on a minibus journey. In light of this, parents may provide booster seats for use on minibuses and coaches if they wish.

In the very exceptional circumstance when private cars are used, booster seats must be used if a student is under 12 years old and less than 135 cms tall.

18. Monitoring & Evaluation

All reports on residential trips are submitted to EVC and any issues will be notified to the Governors' Education Committee, with recommended changes to the Policy and Procedures, if appropriate.

19. Data Protection

The School and staff will adhere to all data protection procedures to ensure that any personal or sensitive information is kept safe and secure and returned to School. Once no longer needed, it must be disposed of via confidential waste means.

***This policy was agreed by Governors at a meeting of the Full Governing Body on
10th July, 2023.***