

Offsite Visits Policy

Stroud High School

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PURPOSE

Aim and Purpose of Offsite Visits

Stroud High School (the 'School') has a strong commitment to the added value of learning beyond the statutory school day and beyond the School/centre premises. Each year the School will arrange a number of activities that take place off the School site and/or out of School hours, that support the aims of the School. The range of activities is designed to enable students to further access the School curriculum and to give each individual the opportunity to develop within their local and wider communities.

The Trust Board has given its approval to the following types of activities being arranged and carefully managed in support of the educational aims of the School:

- Out of hours Clubs (music, drama, art, science, sport, homework, etc)
- School sport teams
- Day visits for particular year groups
- Residential visits
- Overseas visits
- Adventure Activities, which might be classed as higher risk.

GUIDELINES

1. Approval Procedure and Consent

The Headteacher has nominated a teacher/staff member as the Offsite Visits Co-ordinator ('OVC') and the Trust Board has approved this appointment.

All trips and visits whether during or outside of School time must comply with the Offsite Visits Policy, be organised using the School's trips and visits procedures/protocols and follow the guidelines as laid out in the Gloucestershire County Council ('GCC') guidance, including staffing arrangements, itineraries and risk assessments for the visit, including completion of the online GCC system for approval.

Procedures include making appropriate checks before committing the School to the contract, assurances about health and safety, any accreditation and licensing and special consideration regarding the insurance requirements for the trip for cancellation purposes and any adventurous activities. The School may need to consider taking the companies' insurance and adding that into the costing of the trip, e.g. PGL for Ski trip.

All visits that involve an overnight stay, going abroad and any that involve adventurous activities will be submitted to the Local Authorities Safety, Health & Environment ('SHE') on eVisit prior to departure. SHE will provide an independent reassurance check of the plan and the precautions and safety measures that will be taken. Any advice provided will be fully considered prior to the trip taking place.

Residential trips during School time usually have a clear link to the curriculum, e.g. Geography field trip, and be approved by the OVC/OVC Line Manager. Trips and visits may only be advertised as having a link to the curriculum with approval from the Headteacher, OVC Line Manager and OVC.

For any visit parents/carers will be asked to give consent to the student taking part. The School has a standard model letter, which should be used for this purpose. As part of the parents/carers' consent, they will be fully informed of the activities and arrangements for the visit. For all residential visits, parents/carers will be invited to a briefing meeting where they can ask for clarification of any aspect of the itinerary and organisation of the visit.

For out of hours clubs, School teams and nearby visits, parents/carers will be asked to sign a general letter of consent for participation in these activities when the student enters the School. Parents/carers will be given the information for the activities that students are involved in and will be informed if an activity has to be cancelled.

2. Staffing

The School recognises the key role of accompanying staff in ensuring the highest standards of learning, challenge and safety on a School visit. The School will ensure that Enhanced DBS screening is undertaken for volunteer adults assisting with offsite activities and visits, with the exception of School sporting fixtures.

Adults from outside of the School may only be included in the staffing complement for a trip/visit when all possibilities from School staff have been exhausted.

Visit staff will not be under the influence of alcohol or other drugs such that their ability to recognise hazards or respond to emergencies is in any way restricted.

3. Risk Assessment

The Visit Leader will identify the risks from any activity that is under their control and take appropriate steps to ensure all participants are safe. Good practice precautions and safety measures will be taken and this will be recorded in a risk assessment.

4. External Activity Providers

Where external contractors are involved in organising all or part of the visit, the contract will be made with the School on behalf of the students. All payments for the visit will be made through the School accounts.

The Visit Leader will make appropriate checks before committing the School to the contract. This will include seeking assurances about health and safety, appropriate and relevant safeguarding assurances and any other accreditation and licensing.

5. Information about Special, Medical and/or Dietary Needs

The School maintains information about special educational, medical and dietary needs of all students, which will be referred to by the Visit Leader during the planning of all educational visits and offsite activities. Parents/carers will be reminded to provide up to date information. Parental authority for students to receive emergency treatment when appropriate, including administration of an anaesthetic or blood transfusion is part of the School's medical form. If parents/carers do not agree to this, the School may decide to withdraw the child from the visit.

Where necessary special arrangements will be made and information will be shared with relevant staff and any external activity provider to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all individual participants.

6. Finance

In order to provide equality of opportunity and to maximise the number of students who can participate in School trips (both curriculum and holiday trips), the School will, as far as possible, endeavour to maximise the notice that parents/carers are given that a trip is to take place to enable them to budget for their child's participation. The final cost for all trips and visits will be determined in line with the Charging policy.

7. Staff Costs

Any costs that are incurred where it is necessary for members of staff to go on residential trips in order to meet the supervision and safety guidelines set must be taken into consideration. Group Leaders must factor in basic meal and transport costs for the staff for the area they are going to and **clearly highlight these costs in the budget sheet**. These costs are then to be incorporated into the final cost for students.

8. Staff Cover Costs

Costs for cover teachers must be taken into account for all trips and visits depending on cover requirements and with advice from the Finance Office. This will be incorporated into the final budget and the final cost for students.

9. The Expectations of Students/Young People and Parents/Carers

The School has a clear code of conduct for School visits based on the School's 'Behaviour Policy'. This code of conduct will be part of the condition of booking by the parents/carers, and include the potential of withdrawal of a student, prior to and during the visit, if such conduct would have led to a fixed term exclusion from school.

If a student is required to be withdrawn from the visit for breaching agreed standards of behaviour, all costs for this withdrawal will be met by the parents/carers as part of the signed agreements from parents/carers.

10. Emergency Procedures

The School will appoint a senior member of School staff as the emergency School contact for each visit along with one other member of School staff. All major incidents should immediately be related to this person.

The Group Leader will leave full details of all participating students, staff and accompanying adults with the emergency school contact in an emergency pack which must include:

- home/emergency contact details of parents/guardians/designated adults
- medical information as appropriate
- photocopies of passports if travelling abroad
- a copy of the School Trips and Visits Crisis Plan

The Group Leader will take with them a similar emergency pack.

For exchange visits, all SHS parents/carers hosting exchange students, all SHS students and all exchange students must have full contact details for all supervising adults involved in the exchange, including SHS and visiting staff. They must also be encouraged to carry these at all times. In addition,

hosting parents/carers should have full details of any declared medical conditions or need which their exchange student may have.

All incidents and accidents occurring on a visit will be reported back through the school systems.

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