



Our Beach School Vision

We are incredibly lucky as a school to have the beach, 'on our front door step'. At Chapel St Leonards, we believe that the beach provides an excellent learning and discovery space for our learners; allowing them to develop their communication and teamwork skills, build their vocabulary and life experiences. Our Beach School is a way of giving children the opportunity to learn and develop in a natural environment, sparking their intrinsic motivations to explore, create and be curious about the world around them. Our Beach School provides an opportunity for holistic development for children, giving them good foundations for the rest of their life. T

his handbook outlines the key rationale and ideas for supporting beach schoolwork at Chapel St Leonards Primary School. It will also outline the safety requirements for all staff when engaging in beach activities.



As a learning resource, the rationale of going to the beach links coherently to our curriculum vision ensuring our use of the beach is focused, inspiring, responsive and engaging. We are committed to ensuring safe and high-quality experiences when using the beach in relation to learning outside the classroom and the beach. We will visit the beach in any weather: rain or shine. The only instances where weather will stop a beach trip is during storms or particularly heavy rain or strong winds.

Organisation of our Beach School Sessions

Permission for children to use the beach will be gained from parents using our school's 'on entry' consent for school trips and visits form. In addition, prior to a beach school session, a letter will be sent home to all parents to ensure that children are equipped with the appropriate clothing.

We use the beach in line with the seaside code. This includes: leaving things where you find them, including plants, animals and stones, making sure you know the tide times and discarding rubbish that could kill the local wildlife. As part of our beach schools' provision, we will encourage children to take some risks as part of their overall development that will support them to become well-rounded human beings.

Before going on the beach, children need to be reminded that everything we find on the beach belongs there, so we must not take anything back with us. No trace of the activities taken place on the beach should be left, for example, if building a fire, it should be put out correctly and then covered. The children, particularly younger children, may become over excited when looking at live creatures, so how to handle them should be demonstrated beforehand.

Safety and Assessing Risk

- All beach activities must be risk assessed (see Appendix 1 and 2 for examples).
- Whilst visiting the beach, there will always be at least one member of staff who is confident with the Normal Operating Procedures and the Emergency Action Plan. These are detailed below.
- Individual class and activity risk assessments will be carried by the session leader.

Normal Operating Procedures

- The session leader will ensure that risk assessments are presented to the Education Visits Coordinator (EVC) at least two weeks before the visit to the beach, via Exeant.
- The EVC will advise visit leader on the type of activity that could take place depending on the season, weather and tide.
- Session leader to organise visit, including risk assessment, ensuring they have the correct number of adults and a letter home to parents asking for the child to be sent with appropriate clothing.
- Session leader to ensure all teachers have appropriate medications for children who require them.
- Session leader to ensure all equipment for the session is ready.
- Session leader will walk children down onto the beach and be in charge of any groups completing water exploration activities.
- Children will be placed into small groups and each group will have a supporting adult who will support their group, carrying out headcounts throughout.
- The session leader must take the school mobile phone. At least one other adult should also have a mobile phone.

- Staff radios will be taken to the beach in order to maintain contact between staff members.
- The session leader and adult support will walk the children down Sea Road, up the Pullover and onto the beach, where activities will take place.
- What Three Words app will be used to pinpoint the group's location.

Emergency Action Plan

Session leader to report any concerns regarding the trip to the EVC. First aid bag and burns kit located in leader's bag for use if required. A mobile phone, with service, will be available to session leader. In the event of a problem on the visit, respond using the risk assessment.

First Aid required, but well enough to remain on the trip/trip to continue:

- If appropriate, apply first aid, and continue with the activities. Apply first aid using first aid kits.
- If needed, use a mobile phone to contact the school, depending on the incident a member of staff drives to the beach and takes injured child, or whole class return to school.

Emergency services needed:

- Contact emergency services immediately and then notify school of the incident.
- Ensure the injured person is comfortable and warm whilst waiting for emergency services.
- School will notify parents/ carers.
- Depending on the incident, two adults remain with the injured person whilst waiting for the emergency services. Other adults will leave school, walk to the beach and then accompany the rest of the class to school.

Equality and Inclusion

Beach School sessions are inclusive and all needs and abilities are catered for. We aim to provide a safe and secure environment in which children can flourish and in which children feel able to share their ideas. Additional risk assessments are carried out for children with Special Educational Needs.

Cancellation

There may be times when Beach School sessions have to be cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances. These may include:

- Staff illness
- Adverse weather conditions
- Any situation that poses a health and safety risk

In the event of this situation arising, cancellation decisions are made as soon as possible.

Risks

Due to the environment of the beach, it obviously poses a number of risks. However, these can be prevented by identifying the risks beforehand and implementing suitable preventative measures. Often the benefit and positive contribution of the different activities on the beach outweigh the possible risks. Children also enjoy a degree of risk taking.

An obvious risk on the beach is the tide. It is important to check the tide table before heading out onto the beach, this ensures knowledge of where the tide is when on the beach, and which way it is going, in or out. If caught by the tide, then stay calm, wave arms in the air and shout and wave anything brightly coloured. The tide can come in strongly: do not swim against it.

Instead, swim across the shoreline until free of the current and then head to shore. A member of staff will be supervising the water at all times.

Another risk that could affect visits to the beach is the weather. When visiting the beach with young children in particular it is important to be aware of the sun. Being on the beach when it is hot can be misleading due to the wind. Children and adults should ensure that they are dressed appropriately for warm weather including sun hats and sun cream.

When warm, people can quickly become dehydrated so water should be taken to on visit and opportunities to drink regularly. Groups should aim to stay out of the sun at midday when the sun is at its highest point as this is when it is the hottest and the risks increased.

Bad weather can also be dangerous on a beach. If very windy, or heavy rain, then visibility or hearing can be reduced. This may mean that you miss other risks, for example the incoming tide. If dark clouds become visible and thunder is heard or lightening is seen it is important to head for shelter immediately as being on an open beach increases the likelihood of being struck by lightning. Being indoors is the best protection against lightening.

Session leader's bag

The beach school session leader will always have the following items within their bag for each beach school session. The contents will be checked before and after a visit to ensure that they are in good condition.

The bag should include :

- A whistle
- A mobile phone (the service should be checked to ensure its coverage whilst on the beach)]
- Bin and nappy bags
- Plastic gloves
- First aid kit

If lighting fires, using a Kelly Kettle, during the session, the leader will also have a burns kit in their bag.

Procedures for Lighting Fires at Beach School

Before lighting a fire at Beach School, the following should be in place:

- The agreement of the Head Teacher
- Children have a secure knowledge of the fire safety circle (not crossing the circle and not walking in the vicinity)
- Children will have had the chance to practise lighting a fire using a flint and steel before going to the beach and be aware of procedures such as the 'kneel of respect'

When lighting a fire:

- A trained person will take responsibility for the fire. Kelly Kettles will be used to light fires, with permission from the Parish Council, enabling an enclosed fire to be lit.
- A trained person will be in charge of extinguishing the fire appropriately when activities are completed.
- The fire shall be contained within the area agreed with the Local Authority or Land Owner and in the centre marked-out circle. The ground shall be cleared of flammable material and the following adhered to:
 - We will have a container of water beside the fire to put it out.
 - Children will be clearly briefed and supervised when lighting Kelly Kettles.

Procedures for Water Exploration at Beach School

- Set out the paddling area by placing 2 coloured poles on the edge of the water, the area between the cones will be the paddling area.
- Only small groups of children will be allowed into the water at a time.
- An adult will walk out into the water, in line with cones and stop. Bear in mind how deep you want the children to go, the tide and weather.
- One adult will stay on the shore, watching the children with a whistle in case the children get into difficulty.
- Children will be instructed to leave the water and the adult in the water will follow after them.

