

Educational Visits Policy

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Scope of this Policy

This policy is applicable to the whole school including EYFS pupils.

Objectives:

- To ensure that visits are well planned and significant risks are identified and managed.
- That there are contingency plans in place for changes in circumstances during a visit that are reasonably foreseeable.
- That there are those in charge of visits who have the necessary competence to manage situations appropriately.

All Staff will be responsible for the implementation of this policy.

Learning outside the classroom environment is an essential part of our curriculum. Trips and visits include the following:

- day trips to historic sites, museums, galleries, natural features, farms, drama productions
- language trips abroad
- field trips, e.g., geography, history,
- adventure activities, e.g., canoeing, climbing, trekking, sailing
- choir concert tours
- sports team events

The school calendar will list the trips and visits that are due to take place each term, together with planned home and away sports fixtures. An off-site activity consent form is signed by parents when their child joins the school. This gives permission for local trips for example the library, local wood or other place that can be reached on foot and is during the school day. Parents will still be informed of these events but signed consent will not be needed.

Notifying Parents

Parents will be notified in advance of:

- Selection of a child for a sports team (at least 2 weeks in advance),
- A child attending a day out on a trip / visit, including details of any extra charge if over £30 and details of visit duration,
- Planned trips and visits for year groups such as residential trips. Parents of pupils opting for trips will attend the school for a full briefing.

Individual written consent will always be obtained where pupils are taken on a trip or visit that:

- extends beyond the normal school day
- involves an overnight stay
- collection from a different venue
- overseas visit
- extra cost to a parent

For these trips listed above, the completed and signed consent form will include details of how to contact a parent in the event of an emergency. For any other visits the standard communication channel with parents will be used in the event of an emergency. The form must be returned to the school at least three days before the start of the trip. Parents are expected to support the school in ensuring that pupils follow instructions given by those in charge of the trip. Those in charge of the trip may send home early any pupil who declines to follow reasonable instructions.

Staff responsibility

Staff responsible for their own trip will:

- support the Head teacher in the process of approving visits
- ensure, as far as possible, they are spread through different age groups and the school year
- help other staff involved with organising tours
- check parental consent forms
- keep records of previous visits, including details of accidents and incidents

Staff Induction

All new staff will receive training on planning school visits as part of their induction.

Every planned trip or visit will have a nominated Group Leader ("GL") who is responsible for organising and running. A deputy GL will also be nominated.

Training for staff regarding educational visits will cover:

- (a) conducting risk assessments
- (b) emergency procedures
- (c) school insurance cover

- (d) budgeting for visits
- (e) circumstances when a trip may be terminated

The Group Leader

The Group Leader (GL) will hold a valid first aid certificate or ensure that one of the accompanying teachers does.

Personal Liability: The GL acts "in loco parentis". This means that they "have a duty under common law to take care of pupils in the same way that a prudent parent would do".

The school as employer of the GL will support them in the unlikely event of an accident occurring provided, they have exercised reasonable care and followed school guidelines

Insurance

The school has Employers Liability Insurance of £10m and Public Liability Insurance of £10m. It also has a group travel policy that covers most visits in the UK and overseas but does not cover adventurous/hazardous activities such as climbing. The EVC and/GL should check with the Bursar when planning trips relating to hazardous / adventurous activities for the applicability of insurance and arrange for an extension where required. The GL should ensure that they have a copy of the school travel insurance with them on the trip. At no time should staff transport pupils in their own vehicles.

Trips and visits planning

The amount of advance preparatory work needed will vary considerably with the type of activity. There are a number of stages involved in the planning of any trip outside school involving pupils. The following is a set of guidelines which must be followed it is designed to be as comprehensive as possible.

The following list relates to planning for longer trips (e.g., a week's residential) but should be adapted as necessary for shorter trips:

At least six months in advance it is recommended that:

- assurance should be sought that suitability checks have been carried out for any staff or another organisation taking responsibility for the school's pupils on a site other than the school.
- The GL has obtained suitable advice from the EVC on suitable dates, previous experience and requirements etc

- There is a discussion regarding key elements of the visit, including purpose, location, transport, accommodation, activities, itinerary, number and age of participants.
- There is a calculation of the staff to pupil ratio
- There is preparation of a draft itinerary
- A decision is made over the mode of transport for the whole journey
- There is a preparation of costing for the visit, remembering to allow a contingency for delays and emergencies
- If an adventurous activity is involved, the provider is licensed and individual instructors possess a recognised qualification (such as the Adventure Activities Licensing Authority)
- Relevant details from the intended Centre regarding acceptance of responsibility and copies of risk assessments have been obtained before committing to the visit.
- There is preparation of a school risk assessment.
- There is a confirmation from other members of staff who are willing to participate, remembering:
 - (1) adult: child ratios
 - (2) language skills
 - (3) medical assistance
 - (4) nature of activities
- There is a reconnaissance visit to the location if the school has not visited it before.
- There is an established minimum and maximum number for the visit to be viable.
- Any medical requirements are established.
- The cost of any deposits required both for travel and the activity provider are established and the deposit required from participants is calculated.
- Travel advice has been sought from the unit of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office depending on the location.
- A written case is prepared for counter signing by the EVC/Head teacher.

Our staff pupil ratios for offsite activities are:

- (a) 1:4 for EYFS children
- (b) 1:6 for Years 1-3 inclusive (higher ratio for under 5's)
- (c) 1:10 for years 4-6
- (d) 1:10 for all visits abroad

Risk Assessment:

GL's are trained in undertaking risk assessment and how this relates to the visit trip or activity they are planning. Our risk assessments include:

- (i) identifying potential hazards of the location being visited
- (ii) listing the groups of people that are at risk from significant hazards
- (iii) listing control measures that are in place
- (iv) allowance for hazards which may not yet be fully understood due to lack of information
- (v) monitoring hazards during the visit

The GL should ask for copies of risk assessments at the planning stage from professionally operated licensed activity centres and tour operators. These will form part of the overall school risk assessment.

Risk assessments from previous visits can be used as a starting point for a revised assessment, but they must never be adopted without checking for changes which may have occurred.

The EVC maintains a dossier of generic risk assessments relating to sports activities, regular school visits and theatre/museum visits.

After permission for the trip has been granted, a preliminary letter should be written and sent to parents and guardians of the target age group (which should be reviewed by the EVC), outlining:

- (i) purpose of the trip
- (ii) programme

- (iii) expected maximum cost
- (iv) process for expressions of interest and date by when deposit must be paid
- (v) parents briefing six weeks before departure
- (vi) restrictions on numbers

Once permission is given by parents and the register of pupils taking part is compiled, the GL should:

- (a) Brief pupils about the visit, its dates and purpose
- (b) Discuss any requirements with the EVC (including those for special educational needs)
- (c) Collect the payment for the trip and arrange for accounting procedures with the Bursar
- (d) Arrange with the Bursar to pay any deposits on accommodation, travel, activity centre etc

At least three months in advance:

- (a) Finalise costs with the travel company
- (b) Where possible check that all coaches are fitted with seat belts
- (c) Confirm the cost for parents (including contingency provision)
- (d) Inform parents of medical and visa requirements. Any non-British passport holder's parents should be advised that it is their responsibility for ascertaining any visa requirements for their child
- (e) Arrange with the Bursar for the parents to be billed for the balance of the cost of the trip / collect the balance of the money for the trip from pupils and pass to the Bursar for crediting to the trip account
- (f) Arrange for the Bursar to pay the travel company/hotel etc with the balance required
- (g) Arrange via the Bursar for the loan of a school mobile phone, with pre-paid SIM for the country to be visited from an agreed date

- (h) Brief pupils and ensure any specific advance requirements have been communicated

Six weeks in advance:

- (a) Give the Bursar details of any foreign currency and agree collection requirements.
- (b) Arrange trip briefing with parents, which will cover:
 - (i) Itinerary, including meeting and collection points
 - (ii) contact details for hotels / hostels
 - (iii) the number of the school mobile phone issued to the GL
 - (iv) kit, equipment, dress code of country and money requirements for pupils
 - (v) expected rules of behaviour for the trip and the arrangements where such rules are not followed by pupils (including possibility of sending pupils home at parent's expense).
 - (vi) arrangements for dealing with emergencies and informing parents of them
 - (vii) arrangements for communicating with parents in the event of return from the trip being delayed
 - (viii) the need to notify the school of contact with an infectious disease 4 weeks before travelling
 - (ix) the reasons for why a consent form is essential
 - (x) the need for a copy of each pupil's passport
- (c) Send all parents a copy of the consent form (travel company/kitchen of hostel)
- (d) Brief pupils on expected standards of behaviour and cultural differences

Two weeks in advance:

- (a) Chase parents who have not returned their consent forms, pointing out that their child will not be able to participate unless the form is received 3 working days before departure
- (b) Obtain copies of each pupil's passport

- (c) Check all travel tickets and store in the school safe
- (d) If collecting currency arrange for storage with the Bursar in the school safe
- (e) Meet with accompanying staff members to discuss all practical arrangements for the trip and roles and responsibilities
- (f) Prepare packs for the School Office and each member of staff containing:
 - the itinerary, with all addresses of locations during the trip etc
 - the GL mobile number
 - mobile numbers of participating staff
 - a list of pupils with parental contact details and medical conditions
 - copies of all passports and travel documents
 - emergency contact numbers for the Head teacher/ EVC, designated member of staff on-call
 - out of hours contact numbers
 - address and contact details of nearest British Consul
 - copy of travel tickets and insurance documents
 - copy of the trip risk assessment
 - location of nearest hospital

Day prior to departure / day of departure:

- (a) Collect tickets, foreign currency etc from the safe
- (b) Give trip information packs to nominated persons
- (c) Give each pupil the names, addresses and phone numbers of their accommodation
- (d) Remind pupils about expected standards of behaviour and sanctions if not followed
- (e) Collect travelling first aid kit (check contents)
- (f) Collect school mobile phone and charger
- (g) Collect any catering provisions

During the visit or activity

Primary responsibility for the safe conduct of the visit rests with the GL. They have sole responsibility for amending the itinerary in the event of unforeseen delay or sudden deterioration in weather conditions. They may delegate part or all of the responsibility for the following to one or more of the accompanying staff:

- 1 Carrying out a head count on getting on and off each form of transport, entering or leaving a museum, restaurant, activity centre, hotel etc
- 2 Checking that all pupils wear their seat belts
- 3 Checking the fire exits and escape routes at each hotel or hostel. Ensuring that every pupil walks through the emergency escape route at each hotel.
- 4 Ensuring that sleeping accommodation is suitable and located together.
- 5 Setting times for pupils to be in their rooms at night. Conducting checks (using the other staff).
- 6 Enforcing expected standards of behaviour
- 7 Looking after pocket money.
- 8 Storing cash and tickets in the hotel safe
- 9 Keeping an account of all expenditure
- 10 Recording all accidents and near misses

Illness or minor accidents

If a pupil has a minor accident or becomes ill, the GL and another member of staff, will take him/her to the local hospital or clinic. If the trip is outside the UK, they will notify the insurers on their helpline to arrange (where possible) for the medical bill to be sent directly to the insurance company for settlement. If the accident is more serious, the school's medical insurers may arrange for the pupil, accompanied by a member of staff to be repatriated to the UK. The GL will phone the pupil's parents if their child has suffered an accident or injury that is serious enough to require medical treatment - as opposed to minor cuts and bruises.

Emergency procedures

In the event of a serious accident resulting in the death or injury of one or more of the pupils and staff, the GL first priority is to summon the emergency services and to arrange for medical attention for the injured party. One of the accompanying members of staff should accompany the injured pupil(s) to hospital.

After ensuring that the rest of the group are safe and looked after, the GL will:

- (i) inform the Head teacher or on-call member of the SLT, who will make contact with the parents – please also reference crisis management policy.
- (ii) where the full facts have not yet emerged, they should say so and ensure that follow-up communications with the Head teacher are maintained.
- (iii) a full record should be kept of the incident, the injuries and of the actions taken.

All communication with the media must be left to the Head teacher. The GL will refer the media to the school. Pupils should be discouraged from talking to the media and kept away from the media focus.

Delayed return

If the return from a visit is delayed, the GL will phone the school office, or the Member of staff on call (out of school hours), who will in turn contact all the parents to alert them to the delay and the revised time of arrival.

On Return:

- (a) The GL will provide the EVC with a report on the visit.
- (b) The GL will return all school property (together with a report of any lost or damaged property).
- (c) The GL will return any unused cash to the Bursar, with all related transaction vouchers.
- (d) The GL will produce a schedule of all expenditure on the trip.

Following return

After the trip the GL will complete the post trip evaluation sheet, this gives valuable insight for future trips but also flags up any changes and adaptations for the trip/risk assessment.

Report for the Management Board

The Head teacher's termly report to the Board will contain a synopsis of all the school trips and visits that have taken place since the last visit. The EVC, who prepares this report, will invite the GL to draft a short report.

Legal Requirements & Education Standards, References

A: Handbook for the Inspection of Schools - The Regulatory Requirements, Part 3
(www.isi.net)

B: Health and Safety at Work" Section H of the ISBA Model Staff Handbook,

C: "Good Practice in Adventure Activities within the Education Sector" Adventure Activities
Licensing Authority (AALA) (www.aals.org.uk)

D: Health & Safety Executive, School trips and outdoor learning activities home page
(www.hse.gov.uk)

E: "Taking Students Offsite" ATL (www.atl.org.uk)

F: Institute for Outdoor Learning guidance (www.outdoor-learning.org)

G: Health and safety: advice on legal duties and powers, DfE Feb 2014