



## **EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

**Committee Responsible: School Life Committee (AM)**

**Reviewed by: Deputy Head**

**Date of Last Review: May 2024**

**Date of next review: May 2027**

## EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY

Sibford School believes that Educational Visits add immense value to the educational experience of our pupils.

We also recognise that there are additional risks involved in running activities beyond the school gate. The purpose of this policy is to establish a framework in which visits and trips can be organised so as to minimise risk, to ensure that national standards are met and best practice is followed.

This policy has evolved from the DfE guidelines, OEAP National Guidance and Oxfordshire County Council guidance notes.

Students can derive great educational benefit by taking part in off site visits. Taking part in problem solving, decision making, and residential experiences both at home and abroad can enhance the development of personal and social skills. The knowledge and experience gained beyond the classroom can consolidate and extend the curriculum taught within it.

This policy seeks to establish a framework from which students and staff can benefit in a safe, healthy and secure environment.

An off site visit is defined as pupils going ‘beyond the school gates’ to pursue an activity. Activities may take place during or after the school day, at weekends or in school holidays and will be educational; curricular or recreational based. All off site visits have a clear purpose and **predetermined** objectives.

This policy includes guidance for Party Leaders taken from *Part 3 of Health & Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits: A good Practice Guide (HASPEV)*.

This document includes advice on supervision, risk assessment, emergency procedures, and some specific types of visit. (All relevant paperwork is kept on the staff shared area on the school’s intranet).

## CLARIFICATION OF ROLES

This document outlines the normal responsibilities of various roles including:  
School Committee (As Governing Body)  
Head/manager  
Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC)  
Visit Leader

This includes any establishment-specific requirements of the above roles. Any delegation of key areas of responsibility, such as assessment of competence or approval, must be made clear.

### **School Committee**

As a member of the School Committee we seek to enable and ensure high quality visits and outdoor learning through support and challenge as a 'critical friend'.

In doing so, School Committee ensure that:

School Committee are aware of the employer's responsibilities, including under health and safety law – see below;

- There is a policy for off-site visits and outdoor learning
- The policy covers charging for visits and activities
- There is a plan for emergencies
- The Committee has access to advice to inform its policy, practices and procedures relating to the health and safety of participants in outdoor learning and off-site visits, such as from an Outdoor Education Adviser appointed by the employer.
- The roles and responsibilities of the EVC, Committee members, the Head/Deputy Head and other staff are clear
- The head/Deputy Head and the EVC take all reasonable and practicable measures to include in visits those with disabilities, special educational or medical needs, and those from all ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds.
- There are formal notification and approval procedures for visits, and the School Committee agrees on the types of visit it should be informed about.
- Committee challenge the nature of an activity or visit when the educational objectives are not clear or where the means to meet them do not appear to be realistic.
- There are procedures in place to monitor the safety, quality and effectiveness of off-site visits and outdoor learning

It is not expected that Committee should become directly involved in trip planning, risk assessment and related matters unless they have an appropriate competence.

Committee should be aware that, if they offer professional advice, schools professional indemnity insurance may not cover for unpaid advice.

### **Head/Deputy Head**

- The Head/Deputy Head is familiar with school policies for outdoor learning and off-site visits;
- School has a policy for outdoor learning and off-site visits

- All activities and visits comply with School policies and OEAP National Guidance, and are notified or submitted for formal approval as Required.
- The Head/Deputy Head approve visits as required, or delegate this to an appropriate experienced senior colleague.
- Arrangements are in place for School Committee to be informed of visits as required by school policy.
- The Head/Deputy Head have designated a suitable member of staff as the Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC), and the designated person meets the Committees requirements, including undertaking training as required.
- The roles and responsibilities of those involved with visits are clear.
- The Head/Deputy Head and EVC have access to expert advice, such as from a competent outdoor education adviser
- The Head/Deputy Head has ascertained that all leaders are appropriately competent, confident and accountable to carry out the responsibilities they are allocated
- The Head/Deputy Head support the EVC in ensuring that all activities and visits are effectively supervised with an appropriate level of leadership
- The Head/Deputy Head support the EVC in ensuring that information has been shared with parents, and consent has been given if required.
- When the Head/Deputy Head take part in a visit or activity, they and other members of the Visit Leadership Team are clear about the Head/Deputy's Heads role (if they are not leading the visit, they should follow the instructions of the designated Visit Leader, who should have sole charge of the visit);
- Suitable safeguarding procedures are in place, including appropriate vetting of all adults including volunteers, helpers and visitors
- Sufficient time for leaders has been allocated to organise activities and visits properly
- The Head/Deputy Head support an apprenticeship/succession-planning culture to ensure sustainable activities and visits and the development of competent leaders and EVCs
- Arrangements have been made for the medical and special educational needs of all participants and staff
- Inclusion issues are addressed
- Suitable transport arrangements are in place
- Systems are in place to ensure that equipment used during activities is suitable and safe – e.g., systems for recording inspections, recording use, and reporting defects.
- Appropriate insurance arrangements are in place
- Visits have contingency plans (a Plan B) to deal with changing circumstances
- The Head/Deputy Head obtain best value – consideration must be given to financial management, choice of external providers and facilities, and contractual relationships
- Where charges are made to parents, these are within legal and Committee requirements
- Appropriate procedures are in place to account for the visit finances
- Risk management is proportionate, suitable and sufficient.

**Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC)**

- Be a champion for all aspects of visits and outdoor learning.
- Challenge colleagues across all curriculum areas to use visits and outdoor learning effectively in order to provide a wide range of outcomes for children and young people and contribute towards establishment effectiveness.
- Support/oversee planning so that well considered and prepared arrangements can lead to well-managed, engaging, relevant, enjoyable and memorable visits and outdoor learning.
- Support the Head/Deputy Head in ensuring that committee fulfils its duty of care and complies with legal requirements regarding outdoor learning and off-site visits
- Ensure good practice in the provision of visits and outdoor learning
- Mentor leaders and aspirant leaders, supporting their ongoing development and training.
- Ensure that leaders are competent to lead the activities and visits to which they are assigned.
- Ensure that Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) disclosures are in place as necessary
- Support leaders to ensure that parents are fully informed about visits, and to obtain parental consent as necessary
- Ensure that emergency arrangements are sufficient, and that there is an emergency contact for each visit
- Monitor provision in school to ensure good practice and compliance with school requirements, and to identify any training needs
- Ensure that planning complies with the values endorsed by Committee and that, where required, the arrangements are submitted for approval within agreed timescales.
- Support the Head/Deputy Head and Committee in approval decisions so that all those with responsibility have the competence to fulfil their roles.
- Ensure that all activity is reviewed and evaluated, that good practice is shared, and that any issues are followed up
- Keep records of individual visits including reports of accidents and near-misses
- Keep the Head/Deputy Head and Committee informed about the visits and outdoor learning taking place and their contribution to establishment effectiveness

**Visit Leaders**

Visit Leaders must not lead an activity or visit unless they have been approved to do so by the Head/Deputy Head. They must be specifically competent for the type of visit, and for any activities they plan to lead.

Depending upon the nature of the visit, Visit Leaders should:

- Ensure that the visit has clear aims;
- Be able to use the chosen environment or venue(s) to facilitate the intended learning or development outcomes;
- Assess the risks involved in the visit, and ensure that the visit is planned to appropriately balance benefits and risks
- Follow the advice about specific types of visit, activity and hazard that are relevant to the visit
- Ensure that any transport arrangements are suitable
- Liaise with the school EVC to ensure that all leaders and helpers accompanying the visit are competent for those roles and meet school requirements – Activity Leaders must be competent and confident to lead their planned activities, and be approved the Head/Deputy Head to do so if this is required
- Define the roles and responsibilities of other leaders and helpers
- Ensure that, if the visit leadership team includes someone with a close relationship to a member of the group, this is managed to avoid any possible compromise of effective supervision;
- Take a lead on risk management, involving all the visit leadership team to ensure they understand what they need to do, and involving participants wherever appropriate
- Have alternative plans (a 'Plan B') in case the itinerary needs to be changed.
- Have an effective emergency plan
- Provide information to other leaders and any external provider, as relevant, such as:
  - the visit's aims, and how they can contribute to achieving these;
  - their roles;
  - travel and accommodation arrangements;
  - the location and any specific hazards at it;
  - the participants (names, ages, health information, capabilities, special needs, safeguarding and behavioural issues);
  - expected standards of behaviour;
  - emergency procedures (including how to access participants' emergency contact details and medical consent etc.);
- Ensure that participants are effectively supervised
- Have a list/register of all group members, and conduct regular headcounts;
- Ensure that students know what to do if they get lost or separated from the group;
- Ensure that child protection issues are addressed, that good safeguarding practice is followed and that adults are appropriately vetted and checked
- Ensure that parents have been fully informed, and that parental consent has been obtained as necessary
- Ensure that students and parents are aware of expected standards of behaviour, and any consequences if these are not met
- Ensure that students bring suitable clothing and footwear

- Ensure there is access to first aid at an appropriate level
- Ensure that any medication needs of students are addressed
- Encourage students to maintain good hygiene during a visit, such as washing hands after visiting the toilet and before eating;
- When necessary, advise students about the dangers of over-exertion and dehydration in hot weather, and ensure they use appropriate sun protection
- Check with the EVC whether the visit is covered by adequate insurance
- Review all aspects of the visit, both during and after the event
- Liaise with the EVC about evaluation of the visit
- Report any accidents, incidents or near misses

### **Teachers & Classroom Assistants**

Teachers on school visits act as employees of School Committee by agreement with the Head Teacher. Accompanying teachers must:

- Do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group
- Act as any responsible parent would in the circumstances
- Take reasonable steps to avoid exposing pupils to dangers that are foreseeable and beyond those that the pupils can reasonably be expected to cope with.
- Consider stopping the visit or activity and notify the party leader if s/he thinks there is an unacceptable risk to the health and safety of the pupils in their charge.

### **Volunteers**

Non-teaching adults must be clear about their roles and responsibilities.

Volunteers must not be left in sole charge of pupils except where they are DBS cleared and it has been previously agreed as part of the risk assessment. They must follow the instructions of the party leader and teachers, and assist with control and discipline.

### **Pupils**

Older pupils in particular have a part to play in avoiding risk to health and safety. They must;

- Not take unnecessary risks
- Follow instructions of the party leader, teachers, instructors, and people within the venues
- Follow the school dress code unless otherwise advised by the party leader
- When abroad be sensitive to local customs.
- Be aware of anything that may cause harm to themselves or to others; speak to their party leader or another teacher if they are concerned

- Understand that poor behaviour may result in their being sent home at their parents' expense.

**Parents**

Parents have the responsibility to ensure that their child follows the Code of Conduct, including school rules on uniform (where required) and behaviour. Parents should prepare their child for the visit and understand and accept that a child who is a risk to others in the group is jeopardising the safety of himself and others and may be sent home early at their own cost. Parents must complete and sign medical forms for residential trips, and supply an emergency contact name and telephone number who must be available for the duration of the visit.

The party leader must inform the parents about all aspects of the visit to enable them to make an informed choice as to whether or not they want their child to participate. Parents cannot be considered as supervisory adults if they bring other members of their family with them and should be treated as volunteers. It is advised that when using parents to help on day visits, a pool of parents is put together and they are DBS checked.



## PROCEDURAL REQUIREMENTS

### Day & Residential Visit Approval

Trips must have the approval of the Head teacher/EVC, who should be satisfied with the purpose, planning, and staffing for the proposed off site activity. The **Educational Visits Booking Enquiry form** must be used for this purpose.

Once the visit has been approved in principle, the leader should complete the appropriate form and have this signed by all staff involved in the trip, this form plus risk assessments and an itinerary must be submitted before final approval is granted.

A letter to parents/guardians should be sent with plenty of notice informing them of the date, destination, purpose, cost and times of the visit. The consent form must be signed and returned to the party leader indicating if the pupil is attending. It will be up to the parent to let the school know if they do not want their child to go along, rather than waiting for permission slips to be returned.

Residential visits need to be approved by the Head Teacher Or Deputy Head. School Committee are informed of all residential visits.

Once a trip has been approved the Party Leader can go ahead and book places.

### Planning Considerations

Whatever the type or length of a visit thorough planning is essential prior to departure. Implicit to any planning is risk assessment; consideration must be given to the dangers and difficulties that may arise, and control measures must be put into place. Please see separate section on Risk Assessment.

Other planning considerations are;

- The facilities at the venue
- Equipment the group will need to take with them
- Staff training needs
- Transport arrangements
- Insurance arrangements
- Food arrangements (including boarders)
- Supervisory ratios (see next section).
- Emergency procedures
- Arrangements for sending pupils home early (Code of Conduct)
- Informing parents of arrangements
- Preparing pupils

### Accommodation

Check that the sleeping areas are adequate for the needs of the group. This will obviously vary depending on the accommodation chosen but it should offer;

- Adequate ventilation
- Suitable separation of boys and girls.
- Rooms for staff appropriately sited for supervision
- Reasonable washing and toilet facilities
- Heating and lighting
- Enough storage space for personal belongings
- Sufficient room between bunks or beds to allow easy access and movement (particularly in an emergency)
- Bedrooms located away from the ground floor where possible. In some countries, this may not always be possible, in which case it is important to make party members aware of the added risks

Permanent centres should ideally provide a separate area for sick/unwell visitors and sleeping areas should be clean and tidy. Ask about meeting rooms, work bases and evening recreational/relaxation areas. Ensure that kitchen and dining areas are sufficient for the number in the party, particularly if your group is self catering.

### **Staff/Instructors for activities**

Ensure that there are written operating procedures for each activity; ask for written evidence of qualifications and experience of the staff leading activities. Obtain a written statement from the centre that they have completed all the vetting and barring checks that are necessary on their staff.

### **Transport or Equipment**

The Trip leader will use the **Transport booking form** which should be passed to the person responsible for booking transport.

Transport needs to be included in the overall cost of the trip and be part of the risk assessment process. Minibus drivers should be employed to drive the bus if the party leader is not able to organise a qualified minibus driver from within the party.

If centre transport is being used it must be in a road worthy condition. If in doubt ask the centre manager for details on maintenance. If using school vehicles ensure that each driver does a pre check of the bus.

All equipment used should be adequate for the purpose. Most outdoor equipment such as helmets, buoyancy aids, etc have recognised standards such as BSI, BMIF, CEN or UIAA. If the equipment, even to the untrained eye, appears neglected or broken, ask the centre manager.

### **General Considerations**

If using a centre you may wish to ask for written references from previous groups where possible.

Remember that whilst safety is obviously paramount, it is also necessary to consider the quality of the programme offered in terms of educational content and participant involvement. This also means being able to justify the cost.

For further guidelines on transport, and particularly minibuses, please refer to section TRANSPORT

### **After the visit**

An **evaluation form** should be completed and a copy given to the EVC. Any appropriate letters of thanks should be sent and all accounts checked, finalised and closed.

Alterations/ amendments to the risk assessments can be made if this trip is to be repeated at a later date.

## **SUPERVISION & RATIOS**

Supervision needs to be considered during the planning stage.

Adult:pupil ratios may vary according to the type of visit or the planned activity. The factors that must be taken into consideration are:

- Sex, age and competence of the group
- Pupils with medical needs or SEN
- The type of activity and the hazards associated with it
- The length and type of journey
- Type of accommodation to be used
- The competence of the staff both generally and in specific activities
- The requirements of the venue to be visited
- The competence of the pupils and their standards of behaviour
- Provision for first aid

### **Suggested Ratio**

The DfE guidance suggests that for visits to local historical sites, museums and local walks, the ratio in normal circumstances would be:

- 1 adult for every 3 children - Reception.
- 1 adult for every 6 pupils -Years 1 -5.
- 1 adult for every 10 – 15 pupils -Years 4 -6.
- 1 adult for every 15 + pupils -Year 7 and above.

Where possible there should always be a minimum of two **adults**

Ensure that staff responsible for supervising children have not had alcoholic drinks before or during the time they are responsible. A minimum of two staff must always be allocated to be responsible for the students.

These ratios are only for guidance, a higher ratio may be appropriate for high risk activities.

Ratios need to be discussed with the EVC as factors differ for every trip. Residential visits with mixed groups will need a teacher of each sex. Non teaching staff or volunteer parents may be used where a higher ratio is required and these people should be carefully selected and known to the school and pupils.

**Never allow unsupervised access to children to anyone that has not been DBS checked.**

### **Exchange visits**

These are not really practicable now as the guidance from (KCSIE) 2021 states that parents of the host families need enhanced DBS checks, the decision as to whether checks are required on children of the host family who are over 16 is at the discretion of the school.

### **Head Counts**

Whatever the nature of the visit there should always be regular head counts, particularly before leaving school and venues.

- A party leader must always carry a list of pupils and adults on the visit.
- The DfE suggests that particularly with pupils in years 1 -3, pupils should be easily identifiable, especially in densely populated areas i.e. uniform, bright t-shirts, etc.
- Pupils should not wear name badges as this makes them vulnerable to strangers pretending to know them.
- Badges displaying the school name and emergency contact number can however be useful. This information can also be translated for visits abroad.
- Ensure all pupils are aware of rendezvous points and the school mobile numbers.
- Ensure all pupils know what to do if they become separated from the group.

### **Remote supervision**

Supervision can be close or remote:

- Close supervision occurs when the group remain within sight and contact of the supervisor
- Remote supervision occurs when, as part of planned activities, a group works away from the supervisor but is subject to stated controls (e.g. during certain Duke of Edinburgh (Dof E) expeditions). The supervisor is present though not necessarily near or in sight, but location is known

- Down time or recreational time (for example during evenings) where supervision may be remote, supervisors are still in charge and aware where the pupils are
- It is essential that everyone involved in the visit understands the supervision arrangements and expectations

### **Rearranging Groups**

Potential danger points can occur when rearranging groups. In particular:

- When a large group is split into smaller groups for specific activities
- When groups transfer from one activity to another and change supervisor
- During periods between activities
- When small groups re-form into a large group

It is therefore the responsibility of the party leader:

- Make certain that all group members are aware of the changeover
- Clearly passes on responsibility for the group when their part of the programme is concluded, together with any relevant information ensuring that the group members know who is in charge

### **First Aid**

The party leader must ensure that adequate first aid arrangements are made; bearing in mind the location and nature of the activity. The party leader must know the medical details of the pupils they are taking out of school, these can be obtained from the school nurse and for residential trips there must be copies of medical forms.

Staff must also consider hygiene and where relevant may need to carry hand sanitisers depending on the nature of the visit.

First Aid boxes should be carried on all visits and contain a sufficient quantity of suitable first aid materials. The contents should be checked regularly by the school nurse (who will provide appropriate first aid kits) and replenished when necessary. The school minibuses are equipped with First Aid kits and will need to be checked regularly.

On residential visits where the supervising staff are in loco parentis an additional first aid kit can be provided by the Health Centre containing items such as sore throat sweets, antiseptic wipes, liquid antihistamine and linctus. First Aid may be administered just as a parent would give to their own child, as long as a school medical form has been completed.

Where mains tap water is not readily available for eye irritation sterile water or sterile normal saline (0.9%) in sealed disposable containers should be provided. Eye lotions and eye baths should not be used for eye irrigation.

Any medication that is distributed, no matter how small, must be recorded by the party leader along with the amount given, the name of the student and the date.

### **Recording Accidents**

Accidents are “unplanned events” and, therefore, not every eventuality can be accounted for in a risk assessment.

Should an accident occur it must be, if applicable, recorded in the accident book at the venue. Upon return to school the accident should also be recorded at school. Should a serious accident happen, parents of the child should be notified and consulted with; this would be done by the duty member of staff.

### **Medicines & Medication and Medical conditions**

Prior to an educational visit the party leader should check with the school nurse for any known medical conditions of participating pupils. On residential visits a medical form must also be completed and signed by the parent/ guardian consenting to permission for emergency medical treatment to be given if needed.

In general, medicines should be clearly labelled with the name and dosage, and handed to the party leader as it is not desirable for children to be responsible for them. For certain conditions however, this procedure may be wholly inappropriate and potentially harmful i.e. asthma (where it would be wrong to separate an asthma sufferer from a prescribed inhaler). Similar conditions and care might be advisable for the sufferers of diabetes and those needing epi pens.

### **Mobile Phones**

It is the responsibility of the party leader to ensure that they have taken a school mobile phone with them. This number can be given out to pupils and it is up to the discretion of the party leader if pupils take their own phones with them.

Do not rely on a mobile phone for emergency situations as signal may not be available. Party leaders should ensure that all supervising staff have the other phone numbers for the group, as well as the number of the duty member of staff.

### **Notification of Emergency Contact Information**

The party leader of any visit that is to take place out of school hours must ensure that emergency contact details for the staff on the trip, the name and address of the accommodation (if appropriate) and the emergency contact details for the pupils should be available to those staff members on call. It is also advised that all supervising staff can access a copy.

## RISK ASSESSMENTS

Risk assessments must be approved by the EVC/Deputy Head. Generic risk assessments are available on the Staff Intranet. These need to be tailored to fit the exact requirements of the trip in question and to be signed and dated by all staff members on the trip. Electronic typed signatures are acceptable.

A full written Risk Assessment is required for all visits (use the forms provided on the Staff Intranet). The Risk Assessment must:

- a) Identify specific hazards/risks
- b) State who is at risk
- c) Set out measures to control / minimize the risk
- d) Calculate the estimated Risk Rating
- e) Set out the emergency procedure to be followed

All risk assessments must be visit specific and must cover the full itinerary. Risk assessments should be reviewed and, if necessary, updated, even for visits/expeditions that occur regularly.

If a licensed provider is responsible for a visit/activity, you are advised to ask for a copy of their own Risk Assessment and to refer to and include it as part of your own.

Risk assessments will be prepared for all aspects of a school trip that the school is actually organising (i.e transport to and from a venue, leisure activities at a centre, etc). Activities undertaken under the supervision of instructors when visiting organised centres will be the responsibility of the centre.

Risk assessments should be completed **at least two weeks prior** to the visit leaving school and a copy given to the EVC, where possible. Any shorter duration is at the discretion of the EVC only.

### Ongoing Risk Assessment

*HASPEV* chapter 2 paragraphs 37-46, and *Standards for LEA's in Overseeing Educational Visits* deals with risk assessment. "Risk assessment does not end when the visit begins. Changes to the itinerary, changes to the weather, incidents (whether minor or major), staff illness – all or any of these may bring pupils face to face with unexpected hazards or difficulties and give rise to the need to re-assess risk."

It is expected that all adults on the trip update on-going risk assessments while the visit takes place. These normally consist of judgements and decisions made as the need arises. They are not usually recorded until after the visit.

It is good practice to have briefings each night to take stock and assess the circumstances for the next day, and to spend time early the next morning explaining arrangements to the pupils.

Check the local weather forecast

- To inform pupils on appropriate clothing
- To be aware of whether activities might be in areas prone to flash floods, high winds, etc.
- To be aware of whether trekking or climbing at altitude might be subject to dramatic changes of weather; potential for fallen trees, avalanches, etc.

Seek local knowledge of potential hazards e.g. tides, rivers/streams prone to sudden increases in flow, difficult terrain, crossing points for road, rail or water, unstable cliffs, etc.

### **Plan B**

- Good forward planning will always include alternative plans in case the itinerary needs to be changed.
- A flexible itinerary can allow activities from later in the visit to be substituted for earlier activities if those are prevented by unexpected circumstances.
- Regardless of whether alternatives have been pre-assessed, always take time to re-assess risks if the itinerary changes.
- On arrival at an alternative site or activity that has not previously been risk assessed, it is recommended that the party leader should risk assess the situation before allowing the pupils to disembark from transport.
- An unknown location might involve hazards not covered in the original risk assessment; for example if the original intention to visit a land only site has changed at short notice to a lake or seaside location.

### **Behaviour problems, illness or injury**

- Poor behaviour can increase the risk to others on the trip. This can be reduced by ensuring that all parents/pupils have agreed to the code of conduct before departure.
- The party leader should not accept lower standards of behaviour than what is normally accepted at school.
- If one adult has to give prolonged attention to one group member, the party leader should re-assess the supervisory roles of the other adults to ensure that all members of the group know who is responsible for them. This may mean that



activities need to be changed until the other adult returns their full attention to the group.

- Party leaders should trust their own knowledge of the pupils and use their own professional judgement; this may include challenging an activity leader where the knowledge of the group supervisor is superior to that of the activity instructor.

## **FIRE PRECAUTIONS & EVACUATION PROCEDURES**

### **Precautions**

All premises with fire certificates must have fire routines. Ensure that all members of the group understand them – do not take it for granted that they will read them without prompting. If necessary, read the instructions to them. In accommodation, fire notices should be stuck to the back of the door.

Obtain advice from the management on the means of escape available, and investigate ALL means of escape to ensure that they are adequate and unobstructed. Emergency exit doors should be checked, where possible and not prohibited by alarms, to ensure that they can be readily opened from the inside. Check on fire alarm assembly points.

### **In the event of a fire**

- Give priority to the evacuation of members of your group
- If it is safe to do so, check that those in your party have heard the alarm and are evacuating the premises
- Do not use lifts
- Do not collect any personal belongings
- Check that all members of the party are accounted for by carrying out a roll call
- If any members of the group are missing, report them immediately and without fail to the Fire Officer in charge at the scene
- **Under no circumstances** should you or any member of your group re-enter the premises to locate or attempt to rescue missing persons after carrying out the procedure above

**Extra precautions must be put into place where SEN pupils/adults are in attendance in order to ensure their safety, especially those with hearing or visual impairments and those with walking aids or wheelchairs.**

## RESIDENTIAL VISITS

### Prior to the visit

All of the considerations for a day visit will apply, as well as the specific points that follow:

The roles, duties and expectations of accompanying staff and helpers should be clearly defined and understood; so that everyone involved is clear about what is expected of them. This should be done through a meeting prior to the visit departing and supported by an information pack. This is particularly true for inexperienced staff and volunteers who may not appreciate that residential visits require a great deal of commitment and goodwill.

Parents need to be fully informed of the type of visit proposed. This is best done through an initial letter outlining the trip, the dates and the cost involved. A parents' evening should take place for all residential visits at least two weeks prior to departure providing parents with the following information:

- Reason and purpose of the visit/trip
- Nature of the programme (this must include details of all activities)
- Supervision arrangement.
- Expectations of behaviour (Code of Conduct)
- Method of travel, including the name of the coach companies, airlines, etc.
- Insurance arrangements
- Pocket money and arrangements for distribution.
- Address and telephone number of venue and emergency contact numbers
- Type of accommodation and facilities available
- Clothing requirements via a kit list (stress that clothing and other possessions should be clearly labelled and are the pupils' responsibility)
- Procedures for storage and administration of medication
- Banned items
- Sun protection requirement (if appropriate)
- Route (if known)
- Expected arrival /departure times for outward and return journey

In addition to a meeting for parents, pupils should also be briefed before departure about codes of conduct, behaviour, outline of the visit, what will happen on journeys, evening entertainment, etc.

### Accommodation for non-exchange trips

Students should know where the staff rooms are located and these should be in the vicinity of student accommodation. Group accommodation should be located in one area rather than scattered in different parts of a residential complex. There should be a clear divide (a staff room/accommodation is acceptable) between female and male accommodation. Staff may not use the same shared bathrooms and toilets as students. If staff are on the same corridor as students, there must be clear practices that avoid students and staff meeting in a state of undress, including not leaving rooms when in a state of undress and knocking and waiting for an 'ok' before entering rooms. It is important to have proper details of the accommodation that is being provided before the visit, even if a pre-visit is not possible. The group leaders should have a room list.

When booking residential accommodation, rooms containing only single beds must be requested for students. It is not acceptable for students to be asked to share a double bed. Rooms must be checked on arrival to ensure that only single beds have been allocated.

In order to ensure appropriate rooming, the Head of key Stage should sign off on the dorm list prior to the trip departure.

### **On arrival at a residential centre**

When arriving at a staffed residential centre, the party leader should meet the centre manager, or someone of similar status, and agree on routines and regulations that have not been previously agreed. The party leader should ensure that any requests or stipulations agreed in writing prior to the journey (ie leaders' qualifications, fire regulations, first aid arrangements, etc) still apply.

Define limits early – remember the group is new to the site – explain boundaries/limitations – say what you want, but do so only after consultation with the centre manager, and leaders of other parties, if appropriate.

### **Supervisory Ratios**

Careful consideration should be given to this point and the activities to be carried out should be properly evaluated, to ensure that sufficient staff are available for supervision at all times. To implement this, a ratio of staff to young people of at least 1:10 will be needed for visits abroad. The majority of commercial school tour operators now offer an automatic supervisory place of one adult to either eight or ten paying young people.

At least two members of staff must accompany any group abroad, one of them clearly designated as party leader. The party leader should be an experienced teacher and should be satisfied that there is sufficient experience and expertise in the staff accompanying him/her.

Adults other than members of staff (ie husband/wife/parent/student) may accompany the group, but ultimate responsibility for the safety of the pupils' welfare lies with the teachers and in particular the party leader. Where appropriate a deputy leader may be

appointed and thoroughly briefed with regard to planning and organisation, and be prepared to take responsibility for the group in case of emergency.

All adults should have been clearly briefed by the party leader so that roles, duties, responsibilities are understood and accepted. All adults should be aware of their own roles and duties, both to ensure that they feel involved and to provide adequate supervision.

### **Down Time**

Party leaders should ensure that pupils continue to be properly supervised during down time, including evenings on residential visits.

It is good practice to;

- Ensure that all staff and pupils understand the standards of behaviour that apply at all times, not just during activities
- Ensure that handover between activities is properly supervised
- Ensure that all supervisors understand that their role continues in the evening – there should be at least two supervisors on duty at all times
- Down time in the evening or morning should be used to brief the group on the planned activities for the session to come and an opportunity to reinforce standards of behaviour
- Use down time to reflect on the day's activities and discuss any positives and negatives
- This is a time when 'remote supervision' can be adapted as necessary
- Evenings can be filled with non academic entertainment such as quizzes, craft sessions, team challenges, etc.

### **Night Time**

Party leaders should ensure that:

- The group's immediate accommodation is exclusively for the group's use (If possible).
- Teachers have sleeping accommodation on the same floor immediately adjacent to the pupils' accommodation
- Child protection arrangements are in place to protect both pupils and staff.
- Party leaders should be aware of security arrangements in the hotel or accommodation and brief pupils on arrival
- Where possible internal doors are locked, but staff must have reasonable access to the pupil accommodation at all times
- All staff and pupils must know the emergency procedures/escape routes in the event of a fire. Where windows and doors are locked against intrusion, ensure that alternative routes are known and upon arrival make sure that all fire doors work properly.

Do not be lulled into a false sense of security through local assurances such as “no need to lock doors in this part of the country”. The presence of the group may attract unwelcomed attention.

### **Financial Arrangements**

Steps should be taken early on to arrange for an extras account to be set up by the accounts department. It is usually more helpful for parents if they can be billed in instalments. If this is not possible, then billing must be done the term prior to departure, so that money is received before the visit leaves.

When taking deposits it must be clearly stated on the initial correspondence to parents that the deposit is non-refundable.

### **Passports & Visas**

Passport should be valid for the duration of your trip. After the transition period, British passports will need six months' validity from the date of the outward journey for any trip taken within the EU. They must also be fewer than 10 years old - this is important since you are able to renew a passport before it expires and have the remaining months added to your new passport; these additional months will not be valid under the new rules. There is one exception, which is the Common Travel Area (Ireland, Jersey, Guernsey and the Isle of Man), for which passports need only be valid for the dates of travel, even after the transition period.

The European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) continues to be valid in any EEA member state as well as Norway, Iceland, Lichtenstein and Switzerland, covering reciprocal healthcare in these countries until the card expiry date. The EHIC has now been replaced by the Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC). While not a substitute for travel insurance, it will cover state-provided healthcare that is deemed “medically necessary until the card holder returns home”, which also includes treatments for pre-existing medical conditions and routine maternity care.

Pupils should travel on their own passports and are responsible for organising their own visas. In some cases pupils are covered by the “List of Travellers” issued by the British Council. If this method is to be used then the British Council must be contacted three months prior to departure, but no earlier. You will need to register the pupils with the British Council and they will provide you with the appropriate paperwork.

As party leader it is your responsibility to check that the names in pupils' passports match those on the travel documents, that the passports are valid, and contain appropriate visas. In some cases visas may be in an old passport in which case both passports must be taken.

Passports must be looked after by staff on the trip. Prior to departure, all passports and EHICs/GHICs should be photocopied twice with one copy left with the duty member of staff and the other copy going with the party leader, but being stored separately.

### **Supervision on the journey in foreign countries**

Accompanying staff must accept responsibility for good behaviour of their groups both on the journey and while abroad. It will greatly ease supervision if each accompanying adult takes responsibility for a sub-group, with the trip leader being responsible for any pupils who may create difficulties. Each sub-group leader must have a list of the pupils under their responsibility with details of any medical issues.

### **On the continent it is a legal responsibility for an adult to sit next to the emergency exit in the middle of the coach.**

Pupils will need continuous reminders about sitting down in seats and wearing seatbelts. It is also a legal requirement that pupils know where the emergency exits, fire extinguishers and the onboard first aid kit are located.

All group members need to be aware of unfamiliar right hand traffic. Extra care must be taken parking UK coaches and minibuses to avoid left side passenger doors opening directly on to passing traffic. Where possible middle doors on coaches should be used.

### **Pocket Money**

Parents are to be notified prior to the trip as to how much pocket money their child will need. If going overseas it is advisable to ask parents to submit money in small denominations in an envelope with their child's name and the amount on it. Money should then be issued on a daily basis.

If pupils choose to bring more than the suggested amount then they are responsible for that money.

### **Repatriation**

For foreign visits parents should be told that in the unlikely event of a gross breach of the code of conduct, a student might be repatriated. This would be the decision of the group leaders and in consultation with the Senior Staff On Call. It would be at parents' expense.

## **TRANSPORT**

**Minibus**

If you are using the School Minibus you must be on the list of approved drivers held by Reception. Please also adhere to the School's Minibus Policy. For visits involving travel over some distance, the driving should be shared, or 'adequate breaks planned', and therefore the party should, in most circumstances, include at least two approved drivers per vehicle. Clarification should be sought from either the EVC, or the Deputy Head. If you are hiring a self-drive minibus the cost should be included in the trip cost and you must inform the Bursar's Assistant of the registration number a minimum of one day in advance of the trip, to arrange insurance cover.

A driver cannot drive safely and supervise children at the same time. Party leaders should ensure that:

- Pupils wear seatbelts at all times
- There is adequate supervision when travelling
- Minibus drivers cannot be responsible for pupils travelling on board. Therefore there must be a second adult in a supervisory role on journeys over 30 miles
- Pupils are supervised when leaving and boarding transport
- Extra care is taken when leaving a vehicle in a country that drives on the right hand side of the road
- Standards of behaviour meet codes of conduct and supervisors must ensure that drivers are not distracted
- Pupils are occupied on long journeys to prevent boredom – this will help journeys pass more quickly
- Evacuation procedures are clearly understood by everyone; luggage should be securely stored and emergency exits must not be blocked
- There are adequate rest stops for drivers
- Head counts are carried out regularly when the group is getting on and off transport
- Speed limits are observed at all times
- When driving in convoy the lead vehicle is within sight of each vehicle
- Routes and stops are planned in advance and discussed with all drivers
- Minibus drivers have passed the school minibus test

For more information on minibus tests please see the Business Manager.

**Driving a School vehicle to Europe (avoided if possible)**

Check the School's insurance cover with the Business Manager once the details of the itinerary have been finalised. The School has overseas travel insurance in place and so it is not necessary to take out insurance cover from other providers.

Check whether an International Driving Licence is required if staff are driving abroad. In exceptional circumstances where a School vehicle may be used for a trip in Europe, check with the Business Manager whether a Green card needs to be provided by the School's insurers.

**Using personal vehicles**

If you are using your own private vehicle on necessary School business to transport students you must have a valid driving license and have informed the EVC who can carry out the necessary checks. including suitable insurance

Students must be required to wear safety belts in all vehicles. It is the group leaders and staff who are responsible for ensuring that this requirement is enforced on all journeys. If driving abroad, it is likely that you will need to obtain an international driving licence. Only relatively short trips to the local area may be driven by teachers. Otherwise transport should be booked and driven by an external provider. This can be sourced by contacting Reception.

Staff should not drive with a student alone. If a situation arises where parties deem this necessary, the Senior Staff On Call needs to be called in advance of any journey taking place.

**Trains and Underground**

For train travel and underground, particular care needs to be given to the risk of some students being separated from the rest of the group and this must be set out in the risk assessment.

When travelling abroad, students need to be briefed on matters such as securing passports and visas and baggage security and airport security checks. It is good practice that once you are at your destination (or all passport check have been completed) that the group leader collects all passports and stores them in a safe place (taking advantage of lockable facilities where possible).

**Ferries**

When travelling on ferries it is good practice to have a known rendezvous point for the duration of the trip, where students know that they can always find a member of staff if needed. Advice on staying in small groups (age dependant) should be given and clear instructions on meeting times should always be given.

**Other travel arrangements**

It is good practice to keep in touch with details of your expected arrival back at School. During term-time/Reception opening hours – please keep in touch with Reception. They will filter information to enquiring parents.

Outside Reception hours – (term and holiday time) please keep in touch via the duty phone.

**PARTY LEADER INFORMATION FOLLOWING  
A SERIOUS ACCIDENT OR INCIDENT**



A serious accident or incident can be defined as;

- An accident leading to a fatality, serious or multiple fractures, amputation or other serious injury
- Circumstances in which a party member might be at serious risk/serious illness; or any situation in which the press or media might be involved.

*Remember that serious accidents and incidents are extremely rare, but if one occurs it certainly makes great physical and emotional demands on staff. These guidance notes are designed to help you deal with an emergency.*

- 1) Be prepared
  - a. Carry the 24 hour emergency numbers on you at all times
  - b. Ensure that you are familiar with all the school's guidelines for off site visits
  - c. Brief your group on emergency procedures before they set off, including communication details, so that they know how to deal with situations should the party get split up.
  
- 2) Care of the group
  - a. Ensure safety from further danger
  - b. Contact local emergency services immediately and follow their advice
  - c. Deploy other staff/adults as effectively as possible in continuing to ensure the welfare of your group.
  
- 3) Communication
  - a. Contact the school's 24 hour standby emergency contact giving them the following information;
    - i. Your name
    - ii. Name of group
    - iii. Telephone number you are calling from
    - iv. What happened
    - v. To whom
    - vi. When
    - vii. Where
    - viii. What has happened since
    - ix. If a fatality is involved, has this been confirmed?
    - x. If so by whom
    - xi. What local emergency services have been involved
  
- 4) Next steps and general advice

- a. Parents and relatives will naturally be anxious to establish what is happening but do NOT let party members (staff or pupils) telephone home, until after you have made contact with School
  - b. Do NOT speak to the the media or press. Refer enquiries to local emergency services and School Committee or the Head
  - c. Do NOT admit liability of any sort to anybody
  - d. Do NOT allow anyone other than medical practitioners see a member of the group without an independent witness being present
  - e. Retain any equipment involved in an unaltered condition
  - f. Keep a written record of all that happens
  - g. If you change your location, remember to let the head teacher and or other contact person have the new telephone number at which you can be contacted
- 5) Use contact cards so that everyone who is likely to be contacted acts consistently . This can be held by the designated on –call emergency contact.

Example below;

<p><b>Contact Person</b>  <b>Initial action upon receiving a call</b>                  When first contacted make note of:</p> <p>Who called                  Where from                  What number are they on                  What happened, when, where and to whom                  What has happened since the incident                  Are any emergency services involved - if so who?</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>SCHOOL CONTACT PERSON</b></p> <p><b>Upon receiving call ask these questions and make note of;</b></p> <p><b>Who rang</b></p> <p><b>Where from</b></p> <p><b>What number are they on</b></p> <p><b>What happened, when, where and to whom</b></p> <p><b>What has happened since</b></p> <p><b>What emergency services are involved.</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>HEAD OR MEMBER OF SCHOOL LEADERSHIP TEAM (SLT)</b></p> <p><b>Follow procedure for contact person if you are first point of contact.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>NEXT</b></p> <p><b>Inform SLT or incident management team and discuss procedures for support and notification of parents.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>REFER TO MAJOR INCIDENT PLAN</b></p> <p><b>Note: In the case of serious incidents, initial contacts with parents should be made by the police.</b></p>

<p><b>WARNINGS AND ADVICE</b></p> <p><b>Keep a written/ taped record of all the facts, calls and times</b></p> <p><b>Preserve the evidence, photos may help</b></p> <p><b>Help with any official enquiries</b></p> <p><b>DO NOT admit liability or comment to the media</b></p>
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## LONG TERM CRISIS MANAGEMENT PLAN

Task	Timescale
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obtain factual information at start of crisis/ incident</li> </ul>	Within hours
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Senior Management Team meet with support personnel</li> </ul>	Within hours
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish an intervention team</li> </ul>	Within hours
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contact families until all are informed</li> </ul>	Within hours
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Call a full staff meeting to give information</li> </ul>	Same day
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inform students/ pupils in small groups</li> </ul>	Same day
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Debriefing for staff involved in incident</li> </ul>	Same day
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Debriefing for pupils involved in incident</li> </ul>	ASAP
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify high risk staff &amp; students</li> </ul>	Next few days
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote discussions in classes and meetings</li> </ul>	Next few days
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify needs for group and individual treatment</li> </ul>	Days or weeks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organise treatment</li> </ul>	Days or weeks

**All the forms required are in staff files**