



LEIGHTON PARK
FOUNDED 1890

Educational Visits Policy

Introduction

We aim to enhance the education of each student through organising and encouraging their participation in trips and visits. All students should have the opportunity to take part in all relevant and appropriate trips and visits. We realise the importance of visits in building team spirit and camaraderie between staff and students, amongst peer groups and also between girls and boys of different ages.

School policy encourages visits to as wide a variety as possible of destinations ranging from subject specific fieldwork through cross-curricular work, theatre and concert visits, games and outdoor pursuits to ten-pin bowling and cinema trips at weekends.

The Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) is responsible for overseeing the educational visits that take place throughout the school. Part of this role is to ensure that the visits are value for money, that they represent significant academic or cultural interest and that they are compliant with relevant regulations and codes of practice. The EVC also maintains the Trip Packs which provides the guidance and the relevant paperwork for all staff to plan and lead visits of all types, so they are always current and compliant. The EVC will also liaise with senior colleagues over all matters relating to visits.

Leighton Park follows closely the guidance as provided by the Royal Society for the Protection of Accidents (RoSPA) and a copy of their help and guidance can be found here:

<http://www.rospa.com/schoolandcollegesafety/teachingsafely/info/school-visits-guide.pdf>

[The School also takes guidance from the Health and safety executive \(HSE\):](#)

www.hse.gov.uk/services/education/school-trips.pdf.

The school has a number of relevant policies, which must be carefully followed in conjunction with this policy; Supervision Policy, Safeguarding Policy, Behaviour and Discipline Policy, Smoking, Alcohol and Misuse of Drugs and Substances Policy and First Aid.

Care of Students and Parents' Authority

Parents authorise the Head and staff to whom the supervision of students has been delegated while in loco parentis to take and/or authorise in good faith all decisions that safeguard and promote the proper welfare and education of the student. Parents' consent to such physical contact as may be lawful, appropriate and proper for teaching or to provide comfort to a student in distress or to maintain safety and good order. Parents also consent to emergency medical treatment where certified by a doctor or the School's trained medical staff to be necessary for the safety of the student and if a parent cannot be contacted in time.

Leighton Park staff are required to be careful and vigilant in their supervision of students, as far as is practicable, at all times during the visit as legally bound.

These guidelines have been created with regard to the DfE: Health and Safety: Advice on legal duties and powers February 2014 a copy of which can be found at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/279429/DfE_Health_and_Safety_Advice_06_02_14.pdf

All staff organising the visit, in conjunction with the school Bursar will ensure that their visits are adequately insured according to the levels of activity.

A systematic risk assessment will be undertaken and recorded before the trip proceeds and should be discussed with the EVC at the earliest opportunity.

We will outline our expectations of behaviour to students and their parents well in advance of the educational visit, and we will discuss with students that they will be expected to take full responsibility for their conduct while away from the school.

Financial and Insurance Details

We cost all visits carefully to try and ensure the best value for money and the best educational experience. The EVC and the school accountant will advise colleagues about how best to manage the financing of any visit. All costs are clearly communicated to parents including clear guidelines for when payments need to be made. Students should not be permitted to participate in the visit unless they have paid the necessary money, or another alternative has been explicitly agreed with the Bursar.

The school has a 'hardship' fund which may be used at the Head's or Deputy Head's discretion to help a particular student attend a trip who otherwise would not be able to participate. Enquiries should be addressed to the Head prior to any discussion with the student or their family.

If a trip results in a small surplus of £10 or less per student the total amount will be transferred to the Educational Visits Control Account and therefore used in future to help students participate in trips when family finances would have prevented it. If a trip results in a surplus of more than £10 per student, the amount should be refunded to the student by way of a credit on the next billing run. This should be notified to the Bursary as soon as possible.

No school trip can go ahead unless there is adequate insurance. All school trips, with the exception of those incorporating hazardous activities, will be covered by the school's general insurance policy (copy available from the Bursary). If hazardous activities are going to be undertaken then separate insurance cover may be necessary – please ask the Bursary to investigate – and if applicable the cost will have to be recharged to those students participating.

Insurance should cover:

- **Personal injury** - covers death, major injury, loss of limbs or eyes, permanent or partial disability. Check that insurance covers students as well as staff.
- **Public liability** - covers against the risk of an award of compensation where a legal claim is made against the organisers/supervisors of the school trip for the death, injury or illness of a person.
- **Medical and related expenses** - covers expenses following an injury or illness.
- **Extra expenses** - covers expenses reasonably incurred because of enforced extension or abbreviation of the trip - e.g. strike, civil commotion.
- **Personal effects** - covers loss or damage to luggage, clothing, personal effects and loss of money.
- **Hired equipment** - if you have hired any equipment for the trip, check under the terms of hire agreement whether you are required to arrange insurance cover for the equipment for the period of hire.

- **Special activities** - separate insurance will be necessary when the trip includes high risk activities. Please consult the Bursar for advice.
- **Cancellations** - covers loss caused by the cancellation of the trip.

As a guide here is a list of ten activities (not exhaustive) which would be considered high risk and therefore would require extra special attention to insurance and risk.

1. Camping: Fire is always a potential hazard - mainly as a result of cooking activities. The Party Leader must be an experienced camper. Careful, precise planning plus good order and discipline are essential.

2. Mountain Walking: Many accidents occur in mountainous country as conditions can and do change rapidly - even in the summer. Quality of leadership is vital. Anyone taking part should be physically fit and mentally prepared. Know standard procedures for becoming lost.

3. Rock Climbing: Quality of leadership is vital. There should be a leader: student ratio of at least 1:4 on single pitch climbs (one pitch point usually at the top of the rock controlled by party leader) and 1:3 on multi-pitch climbs (more than one pitch point).

4. Swimming Outdoors: The cold water temperature is always a potential hazard. Statistically, this is the most dangerous outdoor activity for children. An accident in any depth of water can be fatal unless prompt action is taken. Being able to swim well in an outdoor pool does not guarantee safety in outdoor water.

5. Caving: The party leader must be an experienced caver holding a Cave Leader's Certificate. The assistant leader must be able to bring the party back to the surface safely in an emergency. The maximum recommended party is 2:10. Every party must consist of at least four people and any school party must contain at least two adults.

6. Potholing: See caving above. This type of adventure can never be completely safe, but leaders have a clear responsibility to make sure that the hazards the students encounter are kept within "acceptable limits".

7. Skiing: The party leader must be competent and qualified skier with a recognised certificate or award. Any student taking part must be physically fit and mentally prepared.

8. Riding: There are strict safety procedures which must be followed - these include standards of equipment, qualifications for group leaders and codes of behaviour. The British Horse Society provides extremely useful guidance.

9. Cycling: Bicycles should always be checked for safety and any faults corrected. Party leaders must ensure that all the children are proficient cyclists with a thorough and working knowledge of the Highway Code. Cycle helmets and high visibility clothing should be worn.

10. Water-based activity: Effective water safety training should be incorporated wherever possible into all water activity programmes. Sailing, rowing, kayaking, surfing, coasteering and water skiing are common examples.

Leaders of any water-based activities must consider all of the following before proceeding:

- the water temperature, weather forecast and tidal conditions
- the swimming competency in "real conditions" of all members of the party
- the "kitting out" of the group with proper clothing and equipment and the checking of life saving equipment
- the group's mastery of the capsize drill and other emergency procedures
- the ability of at least one member of the group to carry out expired air resuscitation
- the ability of the group to recognise the symptoms of hypothermia and the ability to deal with it

For high risk activities it is often the case that an external provider be used the following guidelines will be helpful, but if there is any doubt the EVC Coordinator should be consulted:

- Does the centre operate a policy for staff recruitment, training and assessment which ensures that all staff with any responsibility for the safety and welfare of participants are competent and where appropriate suitably qualified?
- Does the centre carry out criminal record checks as part of its recruitment procedures?
- Does the centre have a clear chain of responsibility set out in writing?
- Does the centre have written local operating procedures for each programme or activity offered?
- Does the centre guarantee that there is at least one responsible person with First Aid qualifications on site?
- Is the equipment used at the centre safe, appropriate, correctly sized and correct for the intended purpose?
- Is the equipment frequently checked and the results recorded (internal audit)?
- Has the centre produced a written document on accident and emergency procedures, including fire safety, and is this available?
- Does the centre provide insurance cover?
- Does the centre provide a risk assessment that can be supplied to the school detailing risks and control measures?

All details should be confirmed in writing as far as possible. An established written system will help to ensure that all procedures and precautions are taken. No contract should be entered into until you are satisfied about the safety provision.

Where appropriate, the party leader must obtain a written statement from the centre management clearly indicating in what circumstances the centre staff will expect to be responsible for the safety of the students.

The responsibility for the safety of each student must be clearly defined at all times. This is particularly important when the responsibility is divided between school and centre during a residential course. Never assume that "someone else" is doing it. Under common law, it is the teacher who has the ultimate responsibility for acting 'in loco parentis'. A teacher may discharge this responsibility to a competent and highly qualified member of centre staff for say a high risk activity (caving, climbing, sailing, etc.) which requires special skills. But for the rest of the visit, the responsibility remains with the teacher - even at night.

It is essential that at all times, each member of a school or centre staff on a trip knows exactly for which students they are responsible and the extent of that responsibility. Each student should know which member of staff is responsible for them or their group.

When a teacher takes part in an activity alongside the children under the guidance of centre staff, the teacher must not overrule the instructor unless they consider that the children's safety is threatened in any way. The teacher may then take action on behalf of the students and withdraw them from the activity. This decision must then be recorded and reported to the party leader, head teacher and centre manager.

Procedure for all Off-Site Activities other than Sporting Fixtures

The following apply to all activities off the park, other than sporting fixtures, not for the sake of bureaucracy but for staff and student protection. Sporting fixtures are covered by a generic risk assessment that is revised in accordance with extreme weather conditions as and when appropriate.

For all school journeys, whether residential or not, in the UK or abroad, we ensure that all reasonable steps have been taken to establish safe conditions for the students and adults concerned and that levels of risk are both manageable and acceptable.

The EVC does not approve any visit without having established that risks have been fully assessed, bearing in mind the age, gender and experience of the students. The EVC will also ensure that

transparent costing, an itinerary and details of the staffing are provided at the earliest opportunity. The School's medical team and pastoral leaders are consulted during the planning process to ensure that special medical or welfare needs of participants are considered.

The full educational visits procedure is available in Teachers Work, School Trips and Visits, EVC Trip Packs. This pack contains everything needed to run a successful visit and each section should be read carefully before embarking upon the process. The Staff Aide Memoir is particularly useful for colleagues as it shows the whole process stage by stage.

Planning

All staff who plan visits receive help and guidance at each stage of the process. The lead member of staff will ensure there are no clashes with other events in the school and will seek to resolve clashes, including with individual teachers, where they occur. Sometimes it is necessary for lessons to be missed by students if they are to take advantage of a particularly attractive visit, but where it can be avoided, trips should not take students out of lessons unnecessarily. Planning should be done in plenty of time for any objections to be registered, and resolved. However, LP is ideally located for many places of academic and cultural interest, and there may be occasions when last minute opportunities present themselves. This should not preclude the visit taking place – working together with the EVC and other colleagues we should be open to making things happen when it is in the best interest of the students.

Staff will also ensure that safety standards at the venue and on transport to and from the visit are compliant. For visits in the UK this includes obtaining confirmation that third party staff have a CRB/DBS check. For overseas visits the EVC will assess the need for a reconnaissance trip. Leighton Park will carry out all necessary checks to ensure the safety of its students from the outset.

The timings for trip planning are as follows:

| Type of Trip | Proposal Submitted | Risk Assessment and Completion of Planning |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|--|
| Educational day Trip | Minimum 1 month prior to trip | Minimum 1 week prior to trip |
| Recreational Day trip | Minimum 1 month prior to trip | Minimum 1 week prior to trip |
| Residential trips/ domestic | Minimum 2 months prior to trip | Minimum 2 weeks prior to trip |
| Residential trips/ abroad | Minimum 2 terms prior to trip | Minimum 2 weeks prior to trip |

Where there is an opportunity to take students away from school that represents a 'chance not to be missed', which does not fit the timescales above, please seek advice from the Deputy Head.

Risk Assessment

A full Risk Assessment is required for all visits. All Risk Assessments must be visit-specific and must cover the full itinerary. They should also be reviewed and, if necessary, updated, even for visits / expeditions that occur regularly.

There must be on-going risk assessment by group leaders and staff as the visit progresses and as circumstances require. On expeditions and visits involving any hazardous activity, Group Leaders and staff should always be prepared to make a dynamic risk assessment on site. Pupils must not be made to undertake or to continue with an activity if they are expressing serious concerns about their health, well-being and overall safety.

Any pupil who is deemed to be a risk to the safety of other pupils should not be allowed on a visit. Generic risk assessments are available from the EVC and on the School intranet and may be helpful (though they must be adapted to the specific visit).

It is important that pupils going on a visit are properly briefed before departure and given clear instructions as the visit progresses.

Inclusion

Leighton Park trips and visits are made available to all students where appropriate. Some trips and visits may be appropriate for older students, and/ or require particular skill and aptitude in which case the trip would not be available for some members of the community and this would be openly declared in the information provided to parents and students.

No student will be prevented from participating on a trip on the grounds of disability and everything will be done to include students with specific medical conditions and dietary requirements where the safety of the student is not compromised.

In some cases it may be necessary to exclude a student from participating in a trip or visit where the behaviour of that student cannot be guaranteed and which may therefore hinder the visit for other participants. Only the Head may prevent a student from participating in a school trip/ visit.

In some cases, school attendance may also prove a factor in whether a student will be allowed to attend a school trip. Students with poor attendance records may not be allowed to take part in some visits.

Health and safety

Colleagues leading visits ensure that all accompanying staff know the itinerary and understand their responsibilities. They complete specific and detailed risk assessments whether the visit is residential or day. Where appropriate, risk assessments from third party providers will be obtained to see if further measures are needed. For hazardous outdoor activities the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 2004 apply (for England, Scotland and Wales) and therefore the School will check that the provider holds a license. The licensing requirement applies to caving, climbing, trekking, skiing, coasteering and water sports. Also, see above for other high risk activities.

All accompanying members of staff should be confident in managing the needs of those students on the visit with special medical requirements e.g. those at risk of anaphylactic shock, epileptics, diabetics and so forth. They are briefed and where necessary trained, by the school nurse. Sometimes we hold a supplementary meeting with parents of a specific student in order to make the most appropriate arrangements to meet the medical or pastoral needs of the student. The party leader also ensures that host families, centres, hotels etc are aware of any special dietary or medical requirements. The school nurse manages the issuing and maintenance of first-aid kits which are taken on all visits and parents are reminded that students need to have with them any special medical requirements (eg inhalers, EpiPens).

For all visits, staff will ask for medical information to be updated so that the School has the very latest information with which to act.

In order to ensure the safety of students, it may be appropriate to take a school mobile phone. For residential trips this is always the case. Students should be given the school mobile number and informed of the number to use should they need to contact a member of staff. Mobile phones are available from the Bursars Office and should be booked out in plenty of time to be able to publish the correct number to the necessary staff, students and parents.

Transport

Quotations should be sought from at least three coach companies (where practical), to ensure that best values are always obtained wherever possible, but this may not necessarily be the lowest quotation. These should be sought from our preferred coach companies held in the school office. If the schools' minibuses are used, a mileage cost of 60p per mile should be calculated in the costings which should be charged to parents as a contribution to the lease and running costs of the vehicles.

Safeguarding

Any person on a residential visit designated to act in a supervisory role must have an enhanced CRB or DBS check. This includes any person who is not a member of staff such as a volunteer. Volunteers or others not employed by the school (such as parents) are not required to have a CRB check for non-residential visits as they would never be left in sole charge of students. All such volunteers will be made aware of the school's safeguarding policy.

The School cannot always guarantee to provide individual arrangements for students to join or leave visits. Where it is possible to do so without compromising the safety of the other students the School will do its very best to accommodate individual arrangements.

Safeguarding arrangements remain in place whether in or out of school. Staff on school trips must remain vigilant to the fact they are responsible for all the children in their care and this includes the protocols for safeguarding every child.

Supervision

The level of supervision must realistically reflect the purpose, location and nature of the visit, the age and maturity of the students and any special needs. Visits are therefore planned in accordance with the principles of effective supervision. When deciding staff to student supervision ratios, the EVC will also take into account factors such as staff experience, the potential risks and making adequate provision to allow for emergencies. Some activities may be unaccompanied or involve a sole teacher in charge, for example a visit to Reading University, which are low risk and involve students over 16. In all cases, we make staffing details clear to parents when they are notified of the visit.

It is acknowledged that there are occasions when it is appropriate for students to work in situations where they are not directly supervised. Examples might be Duke of Edinburgh's Award expeditions, some field work exercises and in order to explore, however briefly, a carefully and clearly defined area. This would include shopping excursions. Where students on visits are not directly supervised, they are told where staff may be found and how to contact them by mobile phone should they be given free time, for example for shopping. The itinerary is approved by the EVC in advance of the visit. Staff accompanying visits are responsible for students in the group according to a supervision ratio and risk assessment approved by the EVC. Therefore a supervising member of staff will only separate from the main party in extreme circumstances such as injury or illness.

We remind students and parents that normal school rules apply on visits and that any student grossly disobeying these rules may be sent back at the parents' expense. This will also be the case for overseas trips and visits where the expense incurred would be significant.

It is essential to ensure that during any off-site activity students must be properly supervised during their free time as well as at all other times. This means that the students should be briefed as to where they may or may not go and be given specific rendezvous times to 'check in' or meet with staff. Students should be aware of where staff will be and/ or how to contact them **at any time**, including the use of mobile phones – students should contact the staff mobile, and all teachers are advised to not give out their personal mobile numbers. Staff should be visibly undertaking supervision in hotels/ hostels etc by regularly visiting rooms and being a presence. Exceptions to this may be made in certain circumstances with 6th formers but parents should be told in advance and their permission sought. At no time should students be allowed to play near water unless the supervision is very tight and one of the staff is a trained lifesaver.

Where students have free time they should NOT under any circumstances visit pubs or bars to drink alcohol and they should NOT purchase alcohol in any other outlet. Students, even if they are 18 or over, are not allowed to consume any alcohol on a school trip. On school trips and visits the School's Alcohol Policy applies.

Staff consumption of alcohol must be moderate, with two colleagues at any one time not drinking so as to provide the right level of care. Staff must think about the example they are setting when consuming alcohol and think carefully before doing so.

In such cases, no matter how short the time scale may be, particular care must be taken to ensure that the following are observed:

- students must have the aptitude and maturity for, and be appropriately trained, briefed and experienced for whatever is involved;
- parents must be given clear and detailed information in writing about what is proposed, before being asked to give their consent and must agree in writing;
- There must be appropriate emergency back-up available and students must have the means, knowledge and ability to use it. The extent of back up depends on the circumstances e.g. trip mobile phone number issued to all students

Taking groups of students out of school is one of the most potentially hazardous things that any teacher may be called upon to do and therefore the planning, preparation and acknowledgement of risk and safeguarding the welfare of students at all times is paramount.

As a general guide the following minimum ratios should apply as set out below:

| Year Groups | Type of Visit | Staff Gender | Staff Ratios |
|-------------|--|--|--------------|
| 7 - 9 | Day - minibus | Either | 1:16 |
| | Day - coach | Either | 1:16 |
| | UK - residential - coach - activity | Mixed | 1:12 |
| | Overseas - residential - coach / plane / train / ferry - activity | Mixed plus if possible a qualified first aider | 1:10 |
| 10 - 11 | Day - minibus | Either | 1:16 |
| | Day - coach | Either | 1:16 |
| | UK -residential - coach - activity | Mixed | 1:12 |
| | Overseas - residential - coach / plane / train / ferry - activity | Mixed plus if possible a qualified first aider | 1:10 |
| Sixth Form | Day - minibus | Either | 1:16 |
| | Day - coach | Either | 1:16 |
| | UK - residential - coach - activity | Mixed | 1:15 |
| | Overseas - residential - coach / plane / train / ferry - activity | Mixed plus if possible qualified first aider | 1:10 |

NB: Travelling to and from any location as part of any trip, all staff should be aware of supervising student behavior. For large groups travelling on a coach, teachers should split themselves at the front and back of the coach and not all sit at the front to ensure safety and wellbeing. Consideration

to supervision should also be assessed when travelling by other modes of transport, especially those which involve members of the public, where seating may split up the school group.

In situations where it is proposed that the children, close relatives or friends of staff accompany a school group on an off-site activity then there is a risk that roles will conflict. Therefore the participation of any adults who are close relatives or friends of staff should be considered as supervisors and in the same light as a member of staff at Leighton Park only if they are made aware and accept this responsibility and it is reasonably judged by a member of staff that they are competent to take on this responsibility. Only in these circumstances should any adults with the group be there in a supervisory capacity sharing supervisory responsibilities. It is proposed that if other adults who do not work at Leighton Park are included as a member of staff, please consult Educational Visits Coordinator.

If any children of staff who are either at the school, or attends another, accompany the visit, they should be of a compatible age to the students in the group and should be treated as any other student in the party. Where a child accompanying a member of staff is not a registered student at Leighton Park, the party leader should check if the Leighton Park school insurance would apply in the event of a claim being made in respect of an accident to that child. It is unlikely that a non-registered student will be covered and therefore it is recommended that this situation be avoided.

Any exceptions to this must be approved by the Educational Visits Co-ordinator.

Missing Children

When taking children away from school, extra care is taken to ensure they are safe and supervised appropriately, in line with the Educational Visits Policy. In the unlikely event that it is suspected that a student has gone missing, the following procedure will be followed:

- Staff will ensure the rest of the group are safe and well cared for
- A roll call will be taken
- A member of staff will conduct a search of the immediate vicinity
- Depending on the nature of the trip, a member of staff will attempt to call the child
- If there is no response via mobile phone with the child, the trip organiser will endeavour to contact the child's parents by telephone and/ or email and the police will also be called
- Once the police arrive, all details about the child will be given. The police will take over the search and the child's parents will be informed once contact has been made with them
- A senior member of staff/ emergency contact should also be alerted to what has happened using the emergency contact numbers
- A member of staff will remain with the police to comfort the child when found and maintain regular contact with the parents and the school

When the situation has been resolved the organiser and the EVC will review the reasons why it happened with a view to putting preventative measures in place for the future.

PLEASE NOTE: ALL ADULTS / VOLUNTEERS ACCOMPANYING GROUPS ON RESIDENTIAL VISITS WHO ARE NOT A MEMBER OF STAFF AT LEIGHTON PARK MUST BE CRB/ DBS CHECKED.

Legal Responsibilities

Before undertaking any school trip, the school is legally required to carry out a written risk assessment. Schools have a duty of care towards students and in an activity where there is an element of risk, we will need to show that you have considered, and as a result taken "all reasonably practicable precautions".

There is no question of automatic liability on the teacher. A teacher who is able to show that all reasonably practicable preparations have been made, including where necessary the instruction and training of the children, and that the activities themselves have been carried out carefully and in accordance with approved practices, would be secure against any claim arising from an accident.

The *Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations* 1992 require that schools make suitable and sufficient assessment of the risk to health and safety of staff, students and others who might be involved in an activity. Where there is an element of risk you will need to show that you have taken "all reasonably practicable precautions".

Teachers are obliged to take all reasonably practicable measures to ensure that every child under their control and supervision is safe and protected from any unacceptable risks. The teacher must be CAREFUL not CARELESS. Be proactive on planning and anticipating potential risks and be alert to changing plans and circumstances that introduce fresh risks that need to be assessed.

A teacher's duty of care on a school trip is not confined to normal school hours. It lasts throughout the time away and can only be put aside at times when responsibility for the care of the children can be reasonably delegated to some other person or persons. For example: A teacher could reasonably allow children to be supervised by the staff from an Activity Centre provided that those staff are competent, qualified and that the teacher is satisfied that the other person/s can do so safely.

Responsibilities

Educational Visits Co-ordinator

- has a responsibility to ensure that all school trips comply with school regulations in every respect; and if this responsibility is delegated, it must be to a "competent" person;
- must ensure that activities are properly planned and supervised, and that the students' safety is paramount.

Teachers

- have a common law duty to act as a "reasonable parent";
- must ensure the meticulous planning and preparation of the school trip including a risk assessment of all activities;
- are responsible for all students in their care throughout the entire trip;
- must safeguard the health and safety of students both on the school premises and in authorised activities elsewhere;
- must maintain good order and discipline at all times.

Non-teachers

- must accept the normal common law duty of care to act as a "responsible parent" towards the children;
- are not held as accountable as teachers but may be acting in a supervisory capacity as described above

Briefings and correspondence concerning educational visits

Parents are informed about educational visits in writing by e-mail or letter and the following details are specified, some of which may be provided in follow up documentation:

- Names of staff accompanying visit
- Year group or forms
- Date(s)
- Time(s)
- Itinerary
- Venue(s) with address and contact details
- Aims and objectives of the visit
- Detail of any unsupervised time
- Mode(s) of transport with departure and return times

- Whether meals are provided
- Passport and visa requirements
- Insurance arrangements
- Health formalities (inoculations etc)
- Clothing, food, equipment required
- Total cost
- Meeting and dismissing arrangements

Through the School's standard terms and conditions, parents' consent to their child/ children attending a non-residential visit and potentially the cost being added to the termly bill. For some visits we hold an information evening for parents before any commitment is made, especially if the visit is to somewhere distant, if the cost is considerable or the activities to be undertaken involve heightened risk. The EVC advises whether this is necessary.

Before the visit, the lead member of staff fully briefs supervising staff and students about the nature of the visit, all practical requirements and expectations of behaviour. For residential visits we hold an evening briefing with parents to explain the arrangements in detail.

Contact for residential visits

The trip leader assigns a member of staff as the emergency School contact for all visits which take place during school holidays. This emergency contact person is given all details of the visit including contact telephone numbers for parents, appropriate medical details for students, host family addresses in the case of exchanges, the risk assessment for the visits and next of kin details of accompanying staff. Where the emergency contact is not a member of the ELT, the emergency contact must have the means to contact a senior member of staff. As a minimum, the visit organiser must text the staff contact on arrival and return.

Emergency on an educational visit

In the event of an accident or emergency, the priority of the lead member of staff and accompanying staff is to ensure the safety of students. The lead will liaise with local emergency services and staff will accompany any injured students to hospital and ensure that any other students are supervised. The lead is also responsible for arranging that the Head, or the staff contact if in school holidays, is notified as soon as possible. The Head or the staff contact will arrange for the parents of students to be notified. Staff accompanying visits are advised not to speak to the media and any press enquiries are referred to the Head's PA.

Going Abroad

Trips abroad call for even greater care, organisation and planning than trips and adventures at home. The following advice should be followed when planning an overseas visit, and alongside these the EVC can also provide help and guidance where necessary.

There are four options open to schools planning a trip abroad.

1. Using a commercial travel agent specialising in school journeys, which will organise travel, hotels, visits and all necessary details. Travel Agents who are members of ABTA (Association of British Travel Agents) are governed by ABTA's code of conduct.
2. Using the services of one of the voluntary bodies established to promote school journeys, such as The School Journey Association of London (SJA) or the British Council. Wherever possible, schools should use companies which are members of the School Travel Forum. Member companies must abide by the Forum's code of conduct.
3. Do-it-Yourself. A school may decide to make all, or most, of its own arrangements.
4. Using reputable and experienced tour operators can be an advantage but school trip organisers should not see this as a substitute for the careful investigation and planning that school trips require.

The Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours Regulations 1992 implement the EC Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours Directive, requiring organisations to provide fair and guaranteed conditions and operate a bonding scheme to protect any pre-payments made. One of the fundamental reasons for the introduction of these regulations is to prevent

financial loss in the event of the solvency of a tour operator. In 1993, a number of school travel companies did collapse. None of them were members of the School Travel Forum.

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/1992/3288/contents/made>

A package is defined as the pre-arranged combination of at least two of the following: transport, accommodation and other tourist services. Whether a school chooses to use a tour company or to organise its own trip abroad, it must take account of the provisions of the 1992 Regulations.

The Regulations offer three choices for protection of pre-payments, one of which must be used by the organiser:

1. Bonding
2. Insurance against insolvency
3. Trust accounts

For schools making their own arrangements, trust accounts are the only real option. The fund should be separate from the general school fund, the moneys being placed in a separate account under the control of a trustee. This will also be under the scrutiny of the school's auditors. Consider taking legal advice.

Ten Key Points for trips abroad

1. **Travel documentation:** Allow plenty of time to organise travel documentation. Take advice from the Home Office Immigration and the Home Office UK Border Agency if you are unsure about any aspect of obtaining correct documentation.
2. **Foreign Language:** At least one adult member of the party should be able to speak the language of the country fluently. It is desirable if everyone knows the basics of the language. Where this is not possible, then an alternative plan should be in place to deal with any eventuality.
3. **Foreign Culture:** Encourage the children to sample the country's cuisine BEFORE the visit and teach them something about the country's culture, especially laws and customs. Warn of the dangers of drinking tap water abroad.
4. **Health, fitness and general safety:** Be familiar with potential health and safety risks. Party members must have recommended vaccinations. Take insect repellent and water sterilising tablets together with a basic first aid kit. Know how to avoid sunburn and de-hydration. Inform the children about rabies and warn them on no account must a child be allowed out alone while abroad. Everyone in the group should know what to do in the event of an emergency - accident or illness.
5. **Residential centres and hotel:** As many checks as necessary should be made to ensure that the centre is suitable. It is recommended that team leaders make enquiries about fire safety checks on the hotels to be used and all students are made aware of the fire evacuation procedure on arrival.
6. **Identification of group member:** It is recommended that each student is easily recognisable as being a student from Leighton Park, to help with keeping a group together, for example in a busy city. This could be done with a distinctive badge or hat. Each student should carry a card giving the address of the group's accommodation written in the language of the country being visited.
7. **Luggage:** As little and as light as possible with shoulder straps or secure handles. Essentials only.
8. **British Embassy and British Customs:** Know where the nearest British Embassy is situated in relation to where you will be staying. Know how to get through British Customs with groups of young people.

9. Leader's Information: The party leader will need to carry all necessary information. This will include:

- the Head Teacher's home address and telephone number;
- the names of parents and addresses and telephone numbers at which they can be contacted;
- copies of a list of group members;

10. Insurance: Double check that your insurance cover is appropriate to the visit.

During the Trip:

- Regularly do a headcount of students, particularly when getting on and off transport.
- Always get another member of staff to double check.
- Ensure reasonable supervision at all times. Allocate groups of students to individual staff members; this helps rapid communication of information.
- Ensure students understand and apply travel safety requirements, e.g. using seat belts on coaches and minibuses.
- Create positive relationships with coach drivers, hotel managers, tour reps and, above all, teachers from other schools! You need them on your side.
- Always keep students informed of reasons for delays or sudden changes of plan. This will keep most students quiet for a period of time!
- On arrival at the accommodation update your risk assessment. Ensure all students are made aware of the fire evacuation procedure on arrival. Check exits and entries to rooms.
- Take care when allocating students to rooms. There needs to be a balance between students' preferences and the need to ensure good order and safety.
- Take similar care in allocating staff members.
- Advise students to take care of their belongings and offer to lock valuables in staff rooms or in the hotel safe.
- Make sure rooms are checked for pre-existing damage and report it to the accommodation manager.
- Arrange a meeting with students to reinforce the code of conduct, identify out of bounds areas, map out the programme for the week and agree on bedtimes.
- This type of meeting should be a daily event.
- Let the tour reps or hotel managers know of any concerns you may have, particularly if you think they compromise student safety.
- Do not change the planned programme, or accept enforced changes, without good reason.
- Consider the insurance implications of any change and your liability as Party Leader.
- Before setting off for home from abroad ensure students are aware of Customs and Excise regulations and the penalties that underpin them.
- On the way home ensure that, in the last stages of the journey, students can contact home to give the expected time of arrival.
- On arrival, staff must stay with students until they are collected.
- Contact the parents if they are late.
- If you are unsure how to deal with a problem on the trip, consult your team and don't be too proud to contact school for advice. The school provides a mobile phone so you can make contact in the event of an emergency.

Emergency Procedures

If the visit is in school hours the School Office should be contacted.

If the visit takes place outside normal school hours, an emergency contact from the Extended Leadership Team is required. All major incidents should be reported to this person, especially incidents involving injury or ones that may attract media attention.

The Group Leader will leave full details of all pupils and accompanying adults on the visit with the emergency contacts, including the home contact details of parents/guardians and next of kin, as appropriate.

Despite good planning and leadership, unforeseen accidents, emergencies or injuries may arise. Staff have a duty of care to ensure the students are safe and healthy on the trip. They also have a common law duty to act as a reasonably prudent parent would. Teachers should not hesitate to act in an emergency and to take life-saving action in an extreme situation.

The following guidelines are designed to ensure rapid transfer of accurate information whilst dealing with the situation sensitively and effectively.

As early as possible on the trip the Trip Leader must ensure that all members of the group know what action to take if there is a problem. They must also know the Trip Leader's mobile telephone number and the rendezvous point in case of a problem. If a student is missing a member of staff should be left with the group and the other staff should carry out a search with the security personnel, if in staffed premises.

If an emergency occurs the following factors need to be considered:

- Establish the nature and extent of the emergency as quickly as possible
- Ensure all the group are safe and looked after
- Ascertain the names of any casualties, the nature and extent of the injuries and ensure immediate medical help for them
- Ensure a member of staff accompanies casualties to hospital and that the rest of the group are adequately supervised and kept together
- Inform the group what has happened and explain the course of action to be followed
- Notify the police if necessary
- Inform the school and the Contact Person - details should include: nature, location, date and time of incident, names of casualties and details of injuries, action taken so far and action yet to be taken and by whom. Access to telephones should be restricted until this has been completed.
- Keep accurate, written records of the incident including, as soon as possible, all relevant facts, witness details, contact details after the incident and preserve any vital evidence
- Do not speak to the media until authorised to do so by the Head. Do not allow students to speak to the media.
- Do not release the names of anyone involved in the incident until their families have been informed. The family of those involved must be informed as soon as possible. The contact would normally be made by the Head depending upon the nature of the emergency.
- Inform insurers
- An Accident Form or Health and Safety Incident Form needs to be completed as soon as possible.

In the event of death or serious injury overseas the nearest British Consulate or Embassy should also be contacted as soon as possible.

End Note

Where there is any doubt, the lead member of staff should consult with the EVC. Remember:

Taking groups of students out of school is one of the most potentially hazardous things that any teacher may be called upon to do and therefore the planning, preparation and acknowledgement of risk and safeguarding the welfare of students at all times is paramount.

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