



St HELEN'S COLLEGE

Educational Visits Policy

This is a whole-school policy which includes the Early Years Foundation Stage

Introduction

We have a large number of trips, out of school activities and visits at St. Helen's, which are an important part of our educational ethos. We expect that every member of our staff endorses the educational value of activities outside the classroom. We encourage everyone possible to participate in them, and to help with the arrangements. We always welcome suggestions from staff for new trips.

This policy provides Group Leaders and other staff with the requirements to be followed when planning and running educational visits. Annex A provides useful references for further guidance.

Educational Visits and Routine Off-site Activities

An educational visit is defined as a school excursion beyond the immediate locale of the school. Examples include trips to theatres, museums, castles, farms or adventure centres, or any residential trip. The following are not classed as educational visits, but as 'routine off-site activities': away matches, local walks to the park, library or post box, PE activities at Court Park, Brunel University or All Saints Hall, rehearsals at the Compass Theatre or Winston Churchill Hall. These lists are for example only, and are not exhaustive.

All parents are asked, on their child joining the school, to sign a form giving consent for the school to take children, without separate permission, on routine off-site activities. This policy applies to Educational Visits as defined above, although some of the good practice described (especially staff ratios and risk assessments) will be applicable to routine off-site activities also.

Role of the Educational Visits Coordinator

The Headmaster is our Education Visits Coordinator (EVC). He is responsible for approving visits, and (in liaison with the Director of the Co-curriculum), ensuring that they are spread through the different age groups, and the school year. He helps staff involved with organising tours, with checking parental consent forms and keeps records of all previous visits. He also keeps reports of any accidents or near misses.

Role of the Group Leader

Every trip or visit, no matter how short, must be planned in advance by the member of staff who is in charge of organising and running it. He or she will always have had experience of accompanying school visits before taking on the role of Group Leader. We arrange for the EVC to hold a training session with all potential Group Leaders, which covers practical guidance on conducting risk assessments, emergency procedures, the school's insurance cover, budgeting for visits and the circumstances under which a visit might be terminated or curtailed, for instance if weather or sea conditions suddenly deteriorated. With the exception of the very shortest visits, such as to our local library or church, we expect all Group Leaders either to hold a valid First Aid certificate themselves, or ensure that one of the other teachers accompanying the visit holds one. In the Foundation Stage there is a member of staff with a

Paediatric First Aid Qualification in each year group so that there is always one on an outing. A Deputy Leader is nominated for all trips. S/He may not hold the qualifications of the Group Leader but is nevertheless capable of taking over that role, if necessary.

No one should drive the school minibus unless s/he has qualified as a minibus driver. For any minibus journey outside of the local area, there should be a second member of staff. The school will arrange and fund First Aid courses, as well as courses in driving minibuses for all staff who are involved in visits.

Personal Liability and Insurance

The law places the Group Leader "in loco parentis". The DCSF Guidance "The Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits: A Good Practice Guide," (www.teachernet.gov.uk), should be read by all Group Leaders. It explains that their responsibility is to "act as any reasonable parent would do in the same circumstances." Staff who take part in visits and activities outside school may feel concerned about the possibility of being held personally liable if an accident should occur. However, they can be assured that St. Helen's, as their employer, will always stand behind them in the unlikely event of an accident occurring, provided they have exercised reasonable care and followed the school's guidelines.

The school holds employers' liability Insurance and public liability insurance, as well as a group travel policy that covers visits inside the UK and overseas. Cover includes cancellation or delay, medical expenses, replacement of passports, personal possessions and money. The policy covers all school visits but does not cover all adventurous activities. Any member of staff organising an adventurous or hazardous activity should therefore check, via the EVC, whether or not the activity is covered by the school's policy. An extension usually can be arranged. The Group Leader should ensure that s/he takes a copy of the school's travel insurance with him/her on all but the shortest of visits.

The school's policy is to discourage staff from transporting pupils in their private cars, only to do so with written parental permission, and never to allow them to be transported in cars belonging to parent helpers (unless the parents make a private arrangement that does not involve the school).

Special Needs and Disabilities

At the early planning stages, Group Leaders must plan to fully involve pupils with special needs or disabilities, or to make reasonable adjustments to ensure the fullest possible participation.

Preparatory Arrangements for a Residential Trip

The amount of advance preparatory work needed will vary considerably with the type of activity. Very little preparation may be needed for walking with a group of pupils to a local church, spending an hour there and walking back in time for school lunch. By contrast, a residential visit requires considerable research and preparation. Repeat visits and shorter visits will need less planning, and can be arranged at shorter notice. Group Leaders may draw upon the EVC's stock of existing background material when planning regular repeat visits to familiar destinations.

The notes that follows are designed to cover all the planning that a Group Leader needs to undertake for a residential visit. It is designed to be as comprehensive as possible. For day trips, the requirements and timescales may be telescoped down as necessary.

At Least 6 Months in Advance

- Obtain advice from the EVC on suitable dates, precedents etc.

- Discuss preliminary plan, including purpose, location, transport, hotels, activities, itinerary, number & age of participants with EVC.
- Calculate the staff to pupil ratio, (see below).
- Prepare a draft itinerary.
- Decide mode of transport for all legs of the journey.
- Prepare fully inclusive costs for the visit, including an appropriate contingency for delays and emergencies. (The costs of the accompanying staff must be included).
- Check that the provider of adventurous activities is licensed and the individual instructors possess recognised qualifications from a national body, such as the Adventure Activities Licensing Authority.
- Obtain written confirmation that staff at the centre to be visited have had the appropriate identity and CRB checks completed.
- Obtain clear statement from the Centre about their responsibilities for the safety of the pupils before making any commitment. Ask for copies of their risk assessments.
- Prepare the risk assessment(s), (see below).
- Check the school's insurance cover, (see above) if the visit involves hazardous activities.
- Find other members of staff who are willing to participate in the trip, bearing in mind the need to have both male and female teaching staff when both sexes participate in a visit. It is desirable to have at least one member of staff who speaks the language of the country to be visited. We hope that Sports Coaches and Visiting Music Staff will participate in sports and music tours. They are also welcome to help with other visits. Office staff may assist with day trips and theatre visits. We encourage parents to accompany some school day visits and we welcome them at all sports fixtures, but parents or volunteers do not attend residential trips.
- Check that the tour company/airline is ATOL/ABTA bonded to provide cover in the event of the bankruptcy of the provider.
- Carry out a reconnaissance visit if the location is not one that the school has visited before. (If a reconnaissance visit is impossible, a reference from another school that has visited the site may suffice).
- Establish the minimum and maximum numbers for the visit to be viable (bearing in mind that the costs of the accompanying staff will be divided amongst the participants).
- Ascertain the medical and visa requirements.
- Establish when the deposits are required by tour operators/airlines/activity centre etc, and ensure that the size of the deposit requested from parents is sufficient to cover these costs (including the costs of deposits for accompanying staff).
- Seek the Head's approval.
- [If necessary] Attend a First Aid and/or minibus driving course beforehand.

Staff/Pupil Ratios

The DCSF recommended staff to pupil ratios for visits and off-site activities is:

Ratio	Pupils' Year Group
1:5	Foundation Stage
1:6	1- 3 inclusive (with a higher ration for the under 5s)
1:10	Years 4 – 6

The Risk Assessment

The step that Group Leaders should follow are set out in the model risk assessment form that is part of DCSF Guidance "The Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits: A Good Practice Guide," (www.teachernet.gov.uk). This form can be downloaded and guides the user in:

- Identifying the potential hazards of the place being visited.

- Listing the groups of people that are especially at risk from the significant hazards.
- Listing existing controls or notifying where the information may be found.
- Considering how he/she would cope with the hazards which are not currently identified or fully controlled.
- Carrying out continual monitoring of hazards throughout the visit.

Sample and blank risk assessment forms are provided at Annex B.

Professionally operated licensed activity centres and tour operators specialising in school visits will conduct their own risk assessments. The Group Leader should ask for copies at the planning stage. Provided that he/she is satisfied, it will meet the requirements of the school for the activity part of the visit. Additional risk assessments will probably be needed to ensure complete coverage of all aspects of the visit. Risk assessments carried out by the school for previous visits can generally be updated and re-used, unless there has been a change of circumstances. The EVC maintains a dossier of generic risk assessments that cover sports fixtures, theatre and museum visits and most of our regular visits.

After Permission is Granted (At Least 3 Months in Advance)

- Write a preliminary letter (Annex C) to send to parents and guardians of the target age group, outlining the purpose of the trip, the programme and the cost. Include a consent form (Annex D), and ask for acceptance, together with a deposit by a specific date. Mention that parents will be invited to a briefing meeting within six weeks of departure. These letters should always be cleared in advance with the EVC.
- Brief the pupils about the visit, its dates and purpose.
- Check names of all pupils participating with the Welfare Officer. Discuss with the EVC concerns about special arrangements that may be required for handling any specific medical or LLD issues.
- Collect payment/deposits and arrange with the Finance Secretary (BD) to set up a unique cost centre in the school accounts for the trip.
- Arrange for BD to pay deposits on hotels, flights, activity centre etc.

At least 6 Weeks in Advance

- Finalise the costs with travel company etc.
- Insist that all coaches are fitted with seat belts. (This may not be possible in every country).
- Inform parents of the medical and visa requirements. Advise parents of non-British passport holders that they are responsible for ascertaining the visa requirements of the country to be visited.
- Arrange for BD to bill parents for the balance of the cost of the trip.
- Arrange for BD to pay the balance to the airline, hotel, travel company etc.
- Arrange for a cash float to be issued for the duration of the visit.
- Brief and prepare the pupils in advance.
- Ensure that they are given plenty of advance notice if they need special equipment.

Six Weeks in Advance

- Give BD details of requirements for foreign currency/travellers' cheques/pre-paid foreign currency card. Agree collection arrangements.
- Chase parents who have not returned their consent forms. Remind them that their child cannot participate unless the form is received within 3 working days of departure.
- Arrange meeting with parents and pupils to brief them on all aspects of the trip, including:
 - The itinerary, including the meeting and collection points.
 - Contact details for the hotels/hostels.
 - The number of the school mobile phone used by the Group Leader.

- The money, kit and equipment that the pupils need.
- The medical and visa requirements.
- The expected standards of behaviour, and the potential risks of irresponsible behaviour.
- The ground rules on consumption of junk food.
- Remind parents those pupils who ignore or flout the behaviour code risk being sent home at their parents' expense. Pupils remain subject to school rules throughout the visit.
- Arrangements for handling illness and accidents, and arrangements for informing parents in such circumstances.
- Arrangements for communicating with parents in the event that the return is delayed.
- The need to notify the school in the event of contact with an infectious disease within four weeks of traveling.
- The reasons why a completed consent form is essential.
- The need for a copy of each pupil's passport.
- Arrangements for medicines including written administration instructions.
- If appropriate, tell parents to provide a picnic lunch for the day of departure.
- Brief pupils on expectations of standards of behaviour and cultural differences.
- Book traveling first aid kit from the Welfare Officer.

Two Weeks in Advance

- Obtain photocopies of each pupil's passport.
- Check all tickets for accuracy. Store them in the school safe until collection.
- Collect travellers' cheques from bank. Note their serial numbers before storing in safe until collection, with the foreign currency ordered by BA. Give copy to Bursary.
- Meet with the other members of staff to discuss the itinerary, the risk assessment, the respective roles of the Group Leader and other accompanying staff, and emergency procedures. Remind staff that pupils must be supervised at all times.
- Prepare packs for the School Office, the Head and for each member of staff, that contain the following information:
 - The itinerary (including address, phone numbers etc of all locations where the party is staying).
 - The Group Leader's mobile number.
 - Mobile numbers of all participating staff.
 - A list of pupils, together with copies of their parental contact forms (which includes details of each pupils' medical conditions).
 - Copies of all passports and travel documents.
 - Emergency contact numbers for the Head, member of the SMT designated to be on-call, the EVC.
 - The address and contact details of the nearest British Consul.
 - A copy of the tickets, travel insurance document (including emergency contact details).
 - A copy of the risk assessment.
 - Location of local hospital.
 - Copies of the serial numbers of travellers' cheques.

Attach the above to cover sheet (Annex E).

The Day Prior to Departure/The Day of Departure

- Collect tickets, travellers' cheques and foreign currency from the safe.
- Give trip information packs to designated school recipients and to other staff participants.
- Remind pupils about the rendez-vous, dress code, standards of behaviour etc.
- Remind pupils of the potential risks of irresponsible behaviour.
- Remind pupils to bring passports. Ask to see each passport.
- Collect traveling first aid kit(s). Check contents.

Preparation Arrangements for a Day Visit

- Book visit and put event in school diary at least 3 months in advance
- Book coaches or method of transport
- Tell any teachers likely to be affected by absence of class, such as peripatetic music teachers
- Teacher does a preliminary visit, noticing possible risks
- Fill out Risk Assessment
- Organise a suitable staff:pupil ratio
- Give details of trip to parents in letter and ask for permission slip to be completed and returned
- Inform office of trip costs to be added to termly bill
- Obtain mobile phone numbers of each accompanying adult
- Arrange to take appropriate medical bags to cater for all children with allergies etc
- Remind children of good behaviour and staying with group and responsible adult
- Ensure that only St. Helen's staff take children to the toilet (if accompanied by parents unless CRB checked)
- Stay together as a group, even though subdivided into smaller groups
- Inform children of a safe place to return to, in unusual event of becoming detached from rest of party
- Leader continually head-count

During the Visit or Activity

Primary responsibility for the safe conduct of the visit rests with Group Leader. He or she has sole responsibility for amending the itinerary in the event of unforeseen delay or sudden deterioration in weather conditions. S/He may delegate part or all of the responsibility for the following to one or more of the accompanying staff:

- Carrying out a head count on getting on and off each form of transport, entering or leaving a museum, restaurant, activity centre, hotel etc.
- Checking that all pupils wear their seat belts.
- Checking the fire exits and escape routes at each hotel or hostel. Ensuring that every pupil walks through the emergency escape route at each hotel.
- Ensuring that sleeping accommodation is suitable and located together (preferably not on the ground floor).
- Setting times for pupils to be in their rooms at night. Conducting checks (using the other staff).
- Enforcing expected standards of behaviour.
- Looking after – or reminding pupils to look after – passports and valuables.
- Storing cash, travellers' cheques and tickets in the hotel safe.
- Keeping an account of all expenditure.
- Recording all accidents and near misses.
- Administering and recording medicines.

Illness or Minor Accidents

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

Emergency Procedures (see Annex F)

In the event of a serious accident resulting in the death or injury of one or more of the pupils and staff, the Group Leader's first priority would be to summon the emergency services, and to arrange for medical attention for the injured. One of the accompanying members of staff should accompany the injured pupil(s) to hospital. The child's parents must be contacted immediately. NB When pupils first join the school, parents sign to provide permission for emergency medical treatment to be given if they cannot be contacted.

Ensuring that the rest of the group were safe and looked after, and informing the Head or on-call member of the SMT of what had happened would be the next tasks for the Group Leader, who would need to give as full, calm and factual account as the circumstances permitted. Where the full facts had not yet emerged, he or she should say so, and ensure that follow-up communications with the Head are maintained. He/she would also need to arrange (perhaps using the Deputy Leader or another member of staff) for the school's insurers to be contacted as quickly as possible, together with the British Consul, if the accident happened overseas. A full record should be kept of the incident, the injuries and of the actions taken.

At school, depending on the nature of the incident, we may implement our own communications plan for informing as swiftly as possible both the families of the injured, and the families of those who are unhurt. We recognise that in an era of instant communications, it may not be possible for us to be the first to break the news. Nevertheless, we firmly believe that we have an important duty to speak personally to the parents of any pupil who has suffered some injury or mishap. We will use mass communication methods (SMS, email, messages on our web, local radio) for communicating with those whose children are not affected.

Where possible, communication with the media should be left to the Head. The Group Leader should refer the media to the school. If comment is unavoidable, it should be factual, calm and no attempt made to cover gaps in knowledge. Pupils should be discouraged from talking to the media.

Delayed Return

If a visit is delayed, the Group Leader should phone the school office, or the Head (out of school hours), who will in turn phone all the parents on their contact numbers to alert them to the delay and the revised time of arrival.

On Return

Each Group Leader is asked to provide the EVC with a report of any accidents or near misses on his/her return. Personal observations and lessons learned are always valuable. The Group leader should return all school property.

Expenditure

The Group Leader is responsible for returning any unused cash or travellers' cheques to BA. The Group Leader is also responsible for producing a schedule of all expenditure on the trip. Unused balances will be returned to the parents by way of credits shown on the next school bill.

Report for School Magazine

The Group Leader should draft, or arrange for a pupil to draft, a short report of the trip with photographs for inclusion in the school magazine.

St. Helen's College
Educational Visits Policy

Author(s)	DAC
Date	December 2009
Review Frequency	2 years
Next review	December 2011

Annex A:

Useful References

A: The Revised Handbook for the Inspection of Independent Schools: Part 3: The Regulatory Requirements of Independent Schools, March 2009 version. (www.isi.net).

B. "The Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits: A Good Practice Guide," DCSF guidance, 2004 (www.teachernet.gov.uk)

C. "Good Practice in Adventure Activities within the Education Sector," An Adventure Licensing Authority guidance document (www.aals.org.uk)

D. "School Trips" and "Minibus Safety", ROSPA guidance documents (www.rospa.com)

E. "Health & Safety on Educational Excursions" Scottish Government guidance document (www.scotland.gov.uk)

F. "School Trips: Glenridding Beck," and "Five Steps to Risk Assessment," Health & Safety Executive guidance documents (www.hse.gov.uk)

G. Child Safety Education Coalition (www.csec.org.uk)

H. "Taking Students Offsite" ATL guidance document (www.atl.org.uk)

I. "What is Outdoor Learning?" and "Why does Outdoor Learning Matter?" Institute for Outdoor Learning guidance documents, (www.outdoor-learning.org)

J. "The Drivers' Declaration Form," an ISBA model document by D E Ford Insurance Brokers, 2009 (www.deford.co.uk)

Annex E: Planning Checklist for Educational Visit

Please complete this form and give it to the Head at least three days before the visit.

Member of staff responsible	
Day & date of visit	
Purpose of visit/nature of activity	
Venue(s) to be visited	
Type of transport to be used	
Time & place of departure from school	
Time & place of return to school	
Please confirm the following:	
	Yes/No
Visit is in school diary	
Authorisation has been received from Head	
Parental consent/emergency contact numbers have been received for all participants	
Risk assessment has been completed and a copy is attached (include assessment of required adult:child ratios)	
Medical information has been obtained for all party members	
Relevant emergency & reporting procedures are known to all staff/adults accompanying the party	
List of staff/adults with contact numbers is attached	
List of pupil participants is attached	
Non-participating staff affected by the visit have been informed (incl. peripatetics)	
Cascade communication details attached (residential visits only)	

Signed/dated Group Leader

Signed/dated Head teacher

Annex B:

Sample Risk Assessment

Risk area:	VISITS TO PLACES WITHIN WALKING DISTANCE (SAMPLE RISK ASSESSMENT)
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Assessment Performed by:	
Date & Location of visit:	
Class(es):	

Potential Hazards in this Risk Area	Risk Level			Controls in this Risk Area	Action Dated
	High	Med.	Low		
Too low a ratio of teachers and parent helpers to pupils			X	Health & Safety Policy	
Pupils unaware of the rules for the visit, especially road safety			X	Security Policy	
Inadequate security measures for pupils			X	Policy on Off-Site School Visits	
Lack of first aid-kit			X	Named group leader and named first-aider	
Lack of medications, inhalers for asthma sufferers, etc.			X	Pupils and parent helpers aware of the rules for the visit	
No mobile phone for emergencies			X	Equipment checklist relating to educational visits	
Minor accidents			X	Local police notified of planned visit	
Uneven surfaces, such as pavements			X		
Inadequate insurance			X	Insurance cover checked	

People at risk:	Pupils	x	Staff		Parents		Parent helpers				
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Staff/helpers informed of risk assessment via the following means:	Copy of this RA to all staff for insertion in their visits file.		
Staff/helpers/pupils to report newly-identified hazards via:	informing the visit organiser		
Date:		Signed:	

Risk Assessment Form

Risk area:	VISIT TO
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Assessment Performed by:	
Date & Location of visit:	
Class(es):	

Potential Hazards in this Risk Area	Risk Level			Controls in this Risk Area	Action Dated
	High	Med.	Low		

People at risk:	Pupils	Staff	Parents	Parent helpers				
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Staff/helpers informed of risk assessment via the following means:	Copy of this RA to all staff for insertion in their visits file.
Staff/helpers/pupils to report newly-identified hazards via:	informing the visit organiser
Date:	Signed:

Annex C: Sample Letter to Parents/Consent Form

Date

Dear Parents,

Year 1 Outing to Leeds Castle

We have arranged an exciting trip for 1M and 1B to Leeds Castle as part of our history study. The outing will take place on Tuesday, 13th March, leaving school at 9:00 a.m. and returning at approximately 3:45 p.m. The children will be accompanied by four members of staff and four parent helpers.

Children should wear school uniform as usual, and should bring a packed lunch and break in a disposable bag. The children will not need school bags or hats. As it is a long journey, they may each bring a pocket toy for the coach. The cost of the outing includes an amount to cover the purchase of a small souvenir - no pocket money should be carried by the children.

The outing cost, to cover entry, transport and a souvenir, is £12 per child. This amount will be added to your invoice for next term, so you do not need to pay anything now. However, please complete the enclosed parental consent letter and return it to the school office by 1st March.

Many thanks,

Mrs. A. Motte

Mrs. N. Bailey

Enc: Parental Consent Form

Annex D:

SCHOOL VISIT CONSENT FORM

Visit to			
Departure date	time
Return date	time

Child's name	Class
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Emergency Contact Details
The party leader will be provided with the contact details which you have already provided. Please provide, here, any additional contact number which would be relevant for the time of the visit.

Medical Information
The party leader will be provided with a print out of the medical information which we already have for your child. If your child's medical needs have changed and you have not yet informed the school office, please do so as soon as possible.
Does he/she suffer from travel sickness? If so, may we have your permission to give him/her a travel sickness tablet?
To the best of your knowledge, has he/she been in contact with any infectious disease over the past four weeks? If so, please give brief details.
Does he/she suffer from any phobia which might make it unsafe for him/her to participate in any of the planned activities?

Please turn over

Permission

- I hereby consent to my child taking part in this school visit.
- I note that the charge for the visit (as detailed in the party leader's accompanying letter) will be added to next term's fee invoice
- I understand that my child will be subject to the normal school rules of behaviour throughout the visit.
- I agree to him/her following the guidance on health and safety given either by a member of staff or by an instructor at venue at all times.
- I accept that where his or her behaviour causes danger to him/herself and to others, or is a serious breach of school discipline, that he/she may be excluded from activities or (in the case of residential visits) sent home early at our expense.

Signed (parent)

Name (please print)

Date

Please return this form to the school office as soon as possible. Thank you.

Annex F: School Emergency Procedure

In the event of an emergency involving serious injury or death, the loss of a member of the party, or any other grave event, the following actions must be taken:

1. Establish the nature and extent of the emergency;
2. Ensure that other party members are accounted for and safe;
3. Establish the extent of any injuries and administer first aid;
4. Establish the name(s) of the injured and call the appropriate emergency service;
5. Advise other staff of the accident and the procedures in operation;
6. Inform the head teacher by telephone;
7. Ensure that an adult from the party accompanies casualties to hospital;
8. Ensure the adequate supervision of the rest of the party and arrange for their return to base;
9. Arrange for one adult to remain at the incident to liaise with emergency services and others;
10. Control access to telephones until contact is made with the head teacher and the emergency contact point, and all relevant information has been given; identify alternative telephone numbers for 'home' and 'off-site' communication in case other lines become jammed;
11. The head teacher: (i) contact parents and (ii) act as liaison between all parties;
12. Party members: do not discuss the incident with the media; (if necessary, the head teacher should do this initially, and then appoint a designated representative);
13. Party leader (and other staff if appropriate); record all relevant details as soon as possible – including names/addresses of witnesses; keep associated equipment in its original condition.
14. It is important that (i) legal liability is not discussed or admitted and (ii) all accident forms are completed and contact made with (e.g.) insurers, or the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

Notes for Volunteer Helpers

The health, safety and well-being of all our pupils are of paramount importance. All staff are trained in child protection, and are clear about their responsibilities with regard to the promotion of pupils' welfare and the actions necessary should they have a concern about a possible child protection issue. All staff are subject to safe recruiting procedures and are 'police-checked', that is, they are subject to a Criminal Records Bureau check at Enhanced level. Volunteers who help in school on a regular basis are also checked in the same way.

For practical reasons, it is not possible to police-check parents who help out on a casual basis, for example with day trips. For this reason, such volunteers are not allowed to have unsupervised access to children at any time, and must follow the following guidelines. Please read the guidelines, ask the teacher in charge for clarification if necessary, then sign/date this form and return it to the teacher in charge before the activity commences.

Parent volunteers who have not been police-checked must adhere to the following guidelines.

1. You must not have any criminal convictions against children.
2. Make sure that you are aware of what is expected of you, which member of staff is 'in charge', and to whom you should refer injuries or general concerns.
3. Do not leave the party at any time. Your assistance is necessary for the safety and smooth running of the activity and the teacher in charge is depending on you.
4. You must not supervise children on your own. There must be a member of staff with you and the children at all times.
5. You must not take a child into a toilet, unless it is your own child.
6. Do not do anything of a personal nature for a child that s/he can do for him/herself. This includes toileting and dressing.
7. Avoid inappropriate physical contact with children. Never pat a child on the bottom or kiss them. Be careful about extended hugs. This may be particularly relevant if children have special needs.
8. For your own protection, if a child touches you inappropriately or says something inappropriate to you, report it straight away to the teacher in charge.

I understand and will abide by the above guidelines.

Volunteer's signature Name (capitals)

Date

