St. Helen's College

Educational Visits Policy

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

1 Introduction

We have a large number of trips, out of school activities and visits at St. Helen's College, which are an important part of our educational ethos and provide valuable enrichment opportunities for pupils. We expect that every member of our staff endorses the educational value of activities outside the classroom and as a guide we have an expectation of at least one internal or external visit per term per class. We encourage all staff to participate in them and to help with the arrangements. We always welcome suggestions from staff for new visits.

The amended Independent School Standards Regulations 2019 does not require proprietors of Independent schools to have regard to specific guidance. However, our school finds it useful to refer to DfE guidance and OEAP advice to establish good practice.

This policy focuses on four main areas which ensure high quality visits: competence, approval, consent and risk management. It provides all staff with the procedures to be followed when planning and running educational visits at St. Helen's College. Annex A provides useful references for further guidance.

2 Internal Educational Visits

An internal educational visit is defined as any visit to the school by an individual, group or company that provides children and young people with opportunities to develop and enhance their learning. Examples include visiting theatre groups, educational workshops, musicians, scientists, artists and charity representatives. When arranging a visitor who will be presenting or speaking to the pupils, staff should:

- Give preference to speakers who have been recommended or who have visited the school before or who are representatives of reputable organisations (e.g. the London Fire Brigade).
- Ensure that you know the correct and full name(s) of the person(s) visiting ahead of the visit.
- Run a Google search of the visitor's name and, if there is one, the organisation which they represent. If you discover any information which gives rise to concern, particularly with regard to radicalisation or safeguarding more widely, refer to the DSLs.

- If the search is clear, and there is no reason to doubt the suitability of the visitor, proceed with the booking.
- Email the School Business Manager to confirm that you have made the booking and attach the completed visiting speaker checklist. The School Business Manager will record these details in accordance with DfE advice.
- During the visit, the visitor must not have unsupervised access to pupils. If he/she says anything which you interpret as an attempt to radicalise the pupils, curtail the session and report the situation to the DSLs.

3 External Educational Visits

An external educational visit is defined as any school excursion that takes children and young people away from their normal place of learning to another location in order to develop or enhance learning. Examples include visits to theatres, museums, castles, farms or adventure centres, local places of worship, libraries or any residential trip. At St. Helen's College we operate three types of external visit:

- Residential Visits which include an overnight stay away from home e.g. PACCAR Scout Camp, Spain, Isle of Wight, Flatford Mill.

- Visits within curriculum time e.g. one day, half day trips, routine local off-site activities including away sports fixtures, local walks to the park, library or post box, PE activities at Court Park, Brunel University or Methodist Church Hall, rehearsals at the Compass Theatre or Winston Churchill Hall. These lists are for example only and are not exhaustive.

- Visits beyond normal curriculum hours in term time or weekends e.g. sports fixtures, clubs which take place off site, sports events, theatre and concerts visits. These lists are for example only and are not exhaustive.

This policy applies to external educational visits as defined above.

4 Parental Consent

Written parental consent is not required for all visits for children in Nursery to Y6 as the majority of organised offsite activities take place during school hours and are a normal part of a child's education at school. Therefore, a one-off parental consent form may be used for local routine off-site activities and visits within normal curriculum hours. At St. Helen's College all parents are asked, on their child joining the school, to sign a form (adapted from DfE Guidance 2019) giving consent for the school to take children off-site without separate permission. However, parents are always informed in writing about additional off-site visits which are not weekly activities.

For visits involving the EYFS, children's parents are informed in writing about the visit.

For residential visits, specific parental consent is required and parents are invited to complete the residential parental consent form (see Annex B).

All parents will have the option to opt out of any visit, in writing, when the Group Leader sends home a letter with the details of the visit.

5 Role of the Educational Visits Coordinator

DfE guidance (2018) makes it clear schools are required to have an Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) in place and outlines their role in schools. The Deputy Head is our Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC). They are responsible for approving visits and ensuring all visits meet the school's requirements. The EVC is responsible for:

- ensuring all staff are competent to accompany children on trips and in particular act as Group Leaders;
- ensuring all visits have been approved and have been planned in accordance with the school procedures;
- ensuring parental consent has been received for visits;
- ensuring risk management for visits is documented and actively implemented by all staff;
- reviewing visits to monitor practice and systems and make improvements as necessary and
- maintaining records of all previous visits.

The EVC also ensures a variety of curriculum areas are covered and that pupils from Ducklings to Year 6 experience visits throughout the school year. They provide staff training and ongoing guidance and support for all staff involved in visits. The EVC will review the Educational Visits Policy as set out in the policies review schedule and keep up to date with current guidance and advice by attending regular EVC training.

6 Role of the Group Leader

Every trip or visit, no matter how short, must be planned in advance by the member of staff designated as the Group Leader, who is in charge of organising and running it. Before taking on the role of Group Leader, he or she will have had experience of accompanying school visits with other experienced staff members and this will be one way they will be assessed as competent to be a Group Leader.

The Group Leader has overall responsibility for the supervision and conduct of pupils and staff on visits, including direct responsibility for the pupils' health, safety and welfare.

The Group Leader must:

- Be an employee, approved to carry out the visit, suitably competent and knowledgeable about the school's policies and procedures and uphold the school's ethos and professional standards.
- Book the visit details in advance for approval following the school procedures.
- Check that the provider of activities or venue has public liability insurance.
- Plan and prepare for the visit, assessing the risks and completing all planning documents.
- Request approval for use of staff for visits from the Deputy Head or Head of Lower School.
- Arrange a pre-visit meeting with support staff to define the roles and responsibilities of other staff and to ensure effective supervision on the visit.
- Prepare and share a visit information pack with support staff.
- Organise for a pupil iSAMS report to include medical and parental contact information to be created. The iSAMS reports can be downloaded to the personal password protected devices of staff on the visit. The Group leader must have a paper copy too in their folder. This paper copy must be kept securely and shredded securely at school when the trip is complete.

- Nominate a Deputy Leader for all visits. S/he may not hold the qualifications of the Group Leader but is nevertheless capable of taking over that role if necessary.
- Ensure all parent helpers are aware of the purpose of the visit, their role whilst on the visit and have understood and signed the Guidance for Volunteer Helpers form.
- Communicate to parents information regarding the visit.
- Complete an evaluation form after the visit.

Group leaders are encouraged to make pre-trip visits to venues to assist them to make adequate assessments and management of the risks and to plan the visit effectively.

During the visit, primary responsibility for the safe conduct of the visit rests with the Group Leader. He or she has sole responsibility for amending the itinerary in the event of unforeseen delay or sudden deterioration in weather conditions. Group Leaders should have a mobile phone with them and it is advisable to have access to a credit card they can use in the event of an emergency. S/he may delegate part or all of the responsibility for the following to one or more of the accompanying staff:

- Carrying out regular head counts (for example, on getting on and off each form of transport, entering or leaving a museum, restaurant, activity centre or accommodation).
- Staying together as a group, even though subdivided into smaller groups. If groups are out of sight of each other, staff should be able to keep in contact with mobile phones.
- Informing children of a safe place to return to in the unusual event of becoming detached from the rest of the party.
- Minimising the amount of down time and ensuring that pupils are still supervised in down time periods.
- Checking that all pupils wear their seat belts on coaches and minibuses.
- Ensuring fire exits and escape routes are known by all staff and pupils at venues.
- Checking the fire exits and escape routes at residential accommodation.
- Ensuring that every pupil takes part in a fire drill upon arrival and knows the emergency escape route and assembly point at each residential venue.
- Ensuring that sleeping accommodation is suitable and located together (preferably not on the ground floor) and that two staff members are located in each accommodation. Failing this, there should be clear and reliable procedures in place for emergency communication (for example, phones or walkie-talkies).
- Setting times for pupils to be in their rooms at night and conducting room checks.
- Enforcing expected standards of behaviour.
- Ensuring professional standards are maintained by staff.
- Looking after – or reminding pupils to look after – passports and valuables.
- Storing cash and tickets in a safe.
- Keeping an account of all expenditure.
- Recording all accidents and near misses.
- Administering and recording medicines.

The Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel suite of guidance for visit leaders is a useful reference and should be read by all Group Leaders.

7 Role of Other Staff Members

Other staff members participating in visits are required to support the Group Leader and ensure they are aware of their role for the visit and the activities in which they will be participating. All

supporting staff should attend a pre-visit planning meeting with the Group Leader. They should also be aware of the school's policies and procedures, particularly in the event of an emergency when the Group Leader is incapacitated. TALAs, welfare and office staff may assist with visits. We welcome and encourage sports coaches and visiting music staff to participate in sports and music visits. Non-participating staff support colleagues in the preparation of visits by undertaking cover duties for the period of the visit.

8 Staff Dress on Visits

All staff should be appropriately dressed for each visit, maintaining professional standards at all times. Where visits require the pupils to dress formally (in smart school uniform), staff dress should be professional, smart and formal. Where visits require pupils to dress informally, for example in PE kits for more physical tasks or outside terrain, staff should also be appropriately dressed for this type of visit environment. Branded school staff kits should be worn where possible to help with staff identification in public areas. Spare branded kit is available for staff for educational visits. If pupils have been instructed not to wear jeans then staff should also not wear jeans on the visit. On all visits footwear should be appropriate, comfortable for walking and allow for rapid movement if required in the event of an emergency.

9 Parent Helpers

We encourage parents to accompany some school day visits. It is the school's policy where possible only to use parent helpers who are DBS checked on visits. If parents are not DBS checked, the Group Leader must ensure that they do not have any unsupervised contact with the pupils. Parents do not accompany residential visits unless deemed necessary to support their own child with a specific medical condition. The Group Leader should ensure that all parent helpers are aware of the purpose of the visit and their role whilst on the visit. They should also be made aware of the school's emergency procedures and sign the Guidance for Volunteer Helpers form (see Annex C). We welcome all parents at sports fixtures as spectators but they should demonstrate sportsmanship and support, in adherence to the Home/School Agreement.

10 Personal Liability and Insurance

The law places the Group Leader "in loco parentis". It explains that their responsibility is to "act as any reasonable parent would do in the same circumstances." The HSE guidance "School Trips and Outdoor learning activities: tackling the health and safety myths"(2024) is a useful reference and should be read by all Group Leaders. 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 College, 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 policy and procedures.

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 with the school's Business Manager whether or not the activity is covered by the school's policy. An extension can usually be arranged.

The school's Business Manager must check that venues and the providers of all activities have public liability insurance and can provide evidence of this e.g. a copy of their insurance certificate or details of their insurer and policy number.

All staff on residential visits will be required to disclose any medical conditions to the school insurers or to provide evidence to the School Business Manager of their own travel insurance which covers them for business travel.

11 Training

We arrange for the EVC to hold a biennial training session with all teachers, TALAs, office and welfare staff which covers:

- the professional standards expected by all staff and pupils on visits;
- guidance on completing pre-visit planning documentation including submitting proposals for visits, budgeting for visits and using the pre-visit checklist;
- completing risk assessments and active risk management;
- the school's emergency procedures and critical incident management including in the event of terrorist attacks;
- the management of pupil and staff personal data to meet GDPR and
- visit and group leader evaluations.

The school will also arrange first aid training for all staff who are involved in visits as necessary.

12 First Aid Provision

We expect all Group Leaders either to hold a valid First Aid certificate themselves or to ensure that one of the other teachers accompanying the visit from Years 1 – 6 holds one. In the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) we expect Group leaders to either hold a valid Paediatric First Aid Qualification themselves or to ensure that one of the other teachers accompanying the visit does. It is the responsibility of all staff on a visit to provide adequate and reasonable first aid care for pupils and colleagues.

It is a requirement for Group Leaders to check the names of all pupils participating with the Welfare Officer and discuss any medical needs there might be. Where a pupil has specific medical needs it may be deemed necessary for a member of the welfare team trained to support the pupil or their parent to accompany the visit. Group leaders must have a first aid kit with them and all medication required for pupils with written instructions for it whilst on the visit.

13 Illness or Minor Accidents

If a pupil has a minor accident or becomes ill, the Group Leader or another member of staff may need to take him/her to the local hospital or clinic. 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. If the visit is outside the UK, s/he may need to notify the insurers on their helpline to arrange (where possible) for the medical bill to be sent directly to the insurance company for settlement. This may not be necessary in countries covered by the EHIC / GHIC agreement if the pupil holds a valid EHIC / GHIC card. 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.

14 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. It is a requirement for Group Leaders to discuss with the SENCo concerns about the trip for pupils with additional needs.

14 Transportation on visits

Walking

Some routine local off-site visits will involve pupils walking from school to the venue and crossing a main road; this includes visits between the school sites and to the Methodist Church Hall and All Saints Church. For most routine local off-site visits involving pupils in Foundation stage, a staff:pupil ratio of 1:6 or better must be employed. At least 4 adults including 3 staff members should accompany each class. For Years 1 – 3 a ratio of 1:8 or better must be employed and for Years 4, 5, and 6 a ratio of 1:12 or better must be deployed with at least 2 members of staff accompanying each class. Staff should position themselves at the front and back of groups and hi-visibility jackets should be worn by staff in these positions and some pupils should also have hi-visibility jackets on too.

Where the routine local off-site visit is a regular walk to sporting facilities in nearby Court Park and does not include crossing a main road, staff will be able to take Y3 – 6 classes on their own, however support from other staff will be provided at times when the car park and road outside the school can be busy. One staff member should position themselves in the road to stop traffic and see children across the road whilst other members of staff should be either at the front or back of the group. All pupils should be made aware of road safety and expected standards of behaviour when walking.

Further information about school procedures for walking groups of children off-site and crossing roads can be found in the staff handbook.

Coaches

Only reputable coach companies are used and companies should be able to provide the school with evidence of appropriate insurance. Seat belts should be provided for all passengers on coaches in the UK and where possible abroad. For journeys of longer than one hour, coaches should have toilet facilities on board. Staff should be seated throughout the coach, including at emergency exits, to maintain control of all areas during the journey and in the event of an emergency.

Minibus

No one should drive the school minibus with passengers unless s/he has qualified as a minibus driver. Arrangements for travel on the minibus will be as follows:

- For all minibus journeys involving pupils from Nursery to Year 2, the driver and an additional member of staff must accompany the group. The driver will be responsible for driving and the second staff member will be responsible for supervision.
- For any minibus journey involving pupils in Years 3 – 6 beyond the local area, defined as a journey of longer than 10 minutes, a driver and an additional member of staff must accompany the group. The driver will be responsible for the driving and the second

staff member will be responsible for supervision. See Annex K for a list of regularly visited venues beyond the local area.

- For any minibus journey within the local area, defined as a journey of no longer than 10 minutes, a driver may accompany pupils from Years 3 – 6 by themselves. However arrangements must be made for a designated person to be available at school to attend by car if a problem arises. See Annex L for a list of regularly visited venues within the local area.

The minibus driver must observe the school guidance and understand that they are legally responsible for the condition of the vehicle, not drive whilst taking medication which could affect their ability or judgement, know what to do in an emergency, know how to use firefighting and first aid equipment, avoid driving for long periods, take into consideration the effects of teaching and the working day and have regular medical checks. The Business Manager is responsible for ensuring regular checks are made on the minibus in accordance with DVLA regulations and guidelines.

Trains

The school policy is to use greener methods of transportation whenever practicable and this includes using local train services. This will normally only apply to visits involving older pupils. The Group Leader will ensure appropriate supervision and discipline is maintained at all times, pupil/staff ratios are maintained in carriages, pupils are instructed to stand back from the platform edge when waiting on the platform, pupils remain seated whilst on the train and pupils are aware of the expected standards of behaviour of the school. The Group Leader will also make staff and pupils aware of what to do if a pupil or staff member becomes detached from the group either on a train or on the platform.

Ferries

The Group Leader will ensure appropriate supervision and discipline is maintained at all times. Pupils will be made aware of the expected standards of behaviour and areas where they can go and not go. Pupils should not go on outside decks unaccompanied and without adequate supervision. The Group Leader will also make staff and pupils aware of what to do in an emergency and where emergency procedures are displayed.

Cars

The school's policy is to discourage staff from transporting pupils in their private cars, and only to do so in the event of an emergency. If it is necessary for a staff member to transport pupils in their private cars for a planned visit, the staff member must provide the school with documentary evidence of a valid MOT, Road Tax and insurance cover for transporting children. Written parental permission must be received in advance for planned use of a staff car. Pupils should always be seated in the rear of the vehicle and wear a seat belt. Lone children should never be transported in a member of staff's car except in an emergency. It is the school policy never to allow pupils to be transported in cars belonging to parent helpers (unless the parents make a private arrangement that does not involve the school).

14 Staffing for Visits

All staff should be suitably trained to undertake school visits and ensure they uphold professional standards at all times to minimise reputational risk to the school.

There is no absolute requirement for children to be accompanied by staff of the same gender, even on residential trips. However, to manage potential issues including the needs for privacy, safeguarding and pastoral support, we endeavour to have at least one male member of staff and one female member of staff on residential visits.

It is useful to refer to the current advice regarding supervision from the Outdoor Education Advisors' Panel (2018).

Arrangements for supervision, including staff/student ratios, must take into account the nature of a group and the individuals in it. It is therefore important that, when planning a repeat visit or a series of activities, the previous plan (no matter how well it worked in the past) is reviewed to ensure it meets current group needs.

Ratios are a risk management issue, and should be determined through the process of risk assessment. It is not possible to set down definitive staff/student ratios for a particular age group or activity,

Some guidance documents do set out ratios, but these should be regarded as starting points for consideration rather than being definitive, as they may only be appropriate where the activity is relatively straightforward and the group has no special requirements.

For example, the following "starting point" ratios are suggested:
School years 1 - 3, 1:6/8
School years 4 - 6, 1:10/15

These ratio "starting points" will be applied to most off-site visits with the exception of some routine local off-site activities. Without special safeguards or control measures, these ratios may not be adequate to meet the needs of most residential or more complex visits.

Residential visits require 24 hour supervision by staff therefore we ensure we have spare staffing capacity on all residential visits. Rest breaks and non-contact time for all staff are planned as part of the trip programme and group leaders should be free to liaise with centre staff, deal with any emergencies that arise and release staff for breaks.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework (2024) no longer sets out different requirements for minimum ratios during outings from those required on site. The appropriate ratio on an outing is always likely to be better than the legal minimum that applies otherwise.

The following "starting point" ratios are suggested:
Foundation years 1:5

All staff: pupil ratios must be included on the written risk assessment for all visits.

15 Residential Visits Accommodation

The Group Leader should ensure in the planning stages that sleeping accommodation is suitable and located together (preferably not on the ground floor). If sleeping accommodation is split in different buildings then there must be a minimum of two staff members in each accommodation block unless they are in close proximity and have a reliable communication method in place for emergencies. Staff should not be isolated and on their own with children overnight on residential visits. Boys and girls should be accommodated in

separate areas with their own bathroom facilities where possible. Staff will be provided with private accommodation and, where possible, their own private bathroom facilities. The Group Leader, with colleagues, will plan in advance the rooming of pupils taking into account pupil requests and group dynamics.

Pupil Code of Conduct

All pupils, in conjunction with their parents, will be required to read and sign the pupil code of conduct for residential trips prior to going on the visit. The code of conduct clearly sets out rules and expectations for pupil behaviour and the possible sanctions for any infringement of the code of conduct. See Annex K.

Safeguarding

The school's Business Manager will get written confirmation from residential centres regarding their employment and safeguarding checks. In particular centres must confirm the following:

1. Safeguarding pre-employment checks have been carried out, listing the checks required.
2. Centre staff have had Safeguarding training.

A template letter for residential centres is provided, see Annex J.

Any safeguarding concerns should be reported directly to the DSLs as soon as possible. Do not wait until you return from the visit to contact the DSLs.

Consumption of Alcohol

In accordance with the staff handbook the consumption of alcohol or illegal drugs is not permitted, save where otherwise agreed when modest amounts of alcohol may be consumed, for example with a meal. Staff conduct and performance must not be adversely impacted by alcohol or drugs when undertaking duties especially on residential visits when staff are effectively on duty through the night and may have to support pupils or deal with emergencies.

16 Delayed Return

If a visit is delayed, the Group Leader should phone the school office or Head (out of school hours), who will in turn inform all the parents to alert them to the delay and the revised time of arrival. Group leaders should keep the school informed and updated of the estimated time of arrival regularly. The school will contact parents to advise of any delays.

When return journeys are delayed and it becomes clear that the party will be 15 minutes (or more) late returning to school, the following actions should be followed.

1. Group leader phones the school as early as possible to alert the office staff. If the office is closed then the Head should be telephoned.

2. Office staff or Head:

a) sends a message to all parents affected, alerting them to the delay and providing an estimated time of arrival (ETA), and

b) puts a notice board out at the point of collection to alert parents whose phones are off.

3. If the ETA changes by more than 15 minutes due to further traffic or other problems, the group leader phones again with an update.

4. Office staff or Head updates parents with the new ETA and updates the notice board.

5. If the party is likely to return after the office closes (4:30 p.m.) a member of the SLT must remain at school to coordinate communications and greet the party on arrival.

17 On Return

Upon return to school the Group Leader should return all school property including returning all medication and records of the administration of medications to the Welfare Officer for checking and shred any hard copies of documents containing personal data. Any iSAMS reports downloaded on personal password protected devices must be deleted.

Group Leaders and support staff are encouraged to report feedback on the trip to the EVC upon return. This feedback should evaluate the quality of the venue, the educational experience and impact on pupil learning, the effectiveness of group leadership and report any Health & Safety or behavioural concerns.

18 Charges for Visits

Some visits will incur a charge to parents. Where additional parental consent is not required for visits e.g. within curriculum time and visits beyond curriculum time, parents will be informed of the charge in the letter with the visit details on from the Group Leader and directed to the SchoolsBuddy system to make payment prior to the visit. For residential visits, the charge for the visit will be made in instalments over a period of two terms. Parents will be advised of the payment schedule in the initial visit letter. They will be directed to the SchoolsBuddy system to make payment by the instalment dates set. The Group Leader and Head must agree in advance of any letter to parents, the rate of charge for the visit with the EVC and the Finance Officer to ensure that costs have been calculated correctly and all the school's costs are met.

19 Expenditure

The Group Leader is responsible for returning any unused cash to the Finance Officer. The Group Leader is also responsible for producing a schedule of expenditure on the visit.

20 Report for School News

The Form Teachers should draft, or arrange for a pupil to draft, a short report of the visit with photographs for inclusion in the school news. On residential visits, the Group Leader will arrange for a short message and some photos to be published whilst the group is away.

21 Emergency and Critical Incident Procedures (see Annex D)

All staff should be familiar with the school's Critical Incident Policy. 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 or staff member on call should accompany the injured pupil(s) to hospital. The child's parents must be contacted immediately. 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, informing the Head or on-call member of the SLT of what had happened would be the next task for the Group Leader, who would need to give as full, calm and factual an 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. On overseas visits, Group Leaders will also have the contact details for the British Consul. 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 website) 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.

All staff on school visits are issued with a copy of the school's pocket Emergency and Critical Incident Card which summarises the actions needed in the event of an emergency or critical incident. All SLT and office staff are issued with a copy of the school's Emergency and Critical Incident procedures which should be displayed or easily accessible upon first contact with the Group Leader.

22 Actions to be followed by staff if a child goes missing on an outing

1. An immediate head count would be carried out in order to ensure that all the other children were present.
2. Supervising staff would search the immediate vicinity.
3. Inform the management of the venue, request their assistance and arrange a search.
4. Extend the search to surrounding areas within the venue.
5. Inform the Head/DSL's by mobile phone.
6. Ask the Head to ring the child's parents and explain what has happened and what steps have been set in motion. Ask them to come to the venue or the school at once.
7. Contact the Police.
8. The remaining children would be taken back to school. At least one member of staff would remain at the venue.
9. The DSL would inform the Local Children Safeguarding Partnership.

10. The school would cooperate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by Social Care.
11. ISI/Ofsted would be informed.
12. The insurers would be informed.
13. If the child is injured, a report would be made under RIDDOR to the HSE.

23 Educational Visits Procedures

Staff are initially invited to submit their requests for curriculum hours educational visits at least a half term in advance to the EVC by entering information on to the shared trip planner. Requests are then reviewed and discussed with the SLT before approval is given by the EVC and visits are added to the following term's programme and calendar.

Once a visit has been approved, the amount of advance preparatory work needed will vary considerably with the type of visit. 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 generic risk management forms and background material when planning regular repeat visits to familiar destinations.

The Group Leader is required to:

1) In the case of residential visits, book the visit with the EVC at least **two terms** in advance and provide all pre-planning documentation to the EVC at least **two weeks** in advance of the visit for checking.

2) In the case of visits within normal curriculum time, book the visit with the EVC at least **one term** in advance, normally by the preceding term's half term and provide all pre-planning documentation to the EVC at least **one week** in advance of the visit for checking. The exception to this being regular, weekly, routine off-site visits where pre-planning will be conducted at the beginning of each term.

3) In the case of visits beyond normal curriculum time, book the visit with the EVC at least **two weeks** in advance and provide all pre-planning documentation to the EVC at least **two days** in advance of the visit for checking.

4) If an opportunity arises for a visit to occur at short notice, the EVC should be informed immediately so that approval can be sorted and pre-planning organised.

24 Pre-Planning Documentation

The Group Leader is required to produce pre-planning documentation and share this with the EVC to get approval that the visit can go ahead. The exception to this will be routine local off-site activities where annual risk assessments and planning will be held and should just be referred to. The pre-planning documentation will include:

a) General visit information – see Annex E.

b) Completed appropriate pre-planning checklists – see Annex F and Annex G

c) Risk assessments – see Annex H.

d) Letter to parents informing them of the visit in curriculum time – see Annex I.

e) Letter to parents informing them of a residential visit – see Annex J.

f) Residential Centre Letter Employment Checks and Safeguarding – see Annex K.

g) Data Collection sheet for each pupil (created through iSAMS) which can be downloaded to password protected mobile devices.

h) A written itinerary of the day/days.

i) Evidence the provider of activities or venue has public liability insurance.

The EVC will provide all Group Leaders with an electronic pack of all pro forma documents to be completed in Google docs.

The Group Leader is also responsible in the pre-planning stage for informing the Deputy Head of any cover needed for the visit and informing specialist teachers including visiting music teachers when pupils will be away from school.

24 The Risk Assessment and Management

As part of the visit pre-planning, the Group Leader can use existing generic risk management templates for visits or create a specialised risk assessment if necessary. The EVC has a number of generic risk management templates that cover sports fixtures, theatre and museum visits and most of our regular visits. These can be used as a starting point for Group Leaders and can be adapted for their specific visit. See Annex G.

The Outdoor Educators Advisors' Panel guidance Risk Management: an overview (2016) is a useful reference.

Group Leaders should also obtain risk assessments from trip venues as necessary. 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 management assessments will probably be needed to ensure complete coverage of all aspects of the visit.

In line with new government guidance regarding school visits, schools should: "always take a common sense and proportionate approach, remembering that in schools the purpose of risk assessment and management is to help children to undertake activities safely, not to prevent activities from taking place. They cannot remove risk altogether and they should not require needless or unhelpful paperwork." (DfE Nov 2018).

Author(s)	MG
Date	September 2025
Review Frequency	2 years
Next review	September 2027

Annex A: Useful References

A. The Outdoor Educators Advisors' Panel "Group Management and Supervision Good Practice" 2016

B. Royal Geographical Society School Trips Guidance

C. The Outdoor Educators Advisors' Panel "Risk Management Good Practice" 2016

D. "School Trips: Glenridding Beck," Health & Safety Executive guidance documents

E. Council for Learning Outside the Classroom

F. "What is Outdoor Learning?" and "Why does Outdoor Learning Matter?" Institute for Outdoor Learning guidance documents,

G. Health and Safety Executive "School Trips and Outdoor Learning Activities Tackling the Myths"

H. DoE Health and Safety Advice for Schools 2018

Annex B:

SCHOOL VISIT CONSENT FORM

RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL VISIT CONSENT FORM

Annex C
Guidance for Volunteer Helpers

Annex D:
School Emergency and Critical Incident Information for Visit Staff

Annex E:
General Information on the Educational Visit

Annex F
Checklists for Preparatory Arrangements for Visits

Annex G
Examples of Generic Risk Assessments

Annex H
Sample Letter to Parents for a 1 day visit:

Sample Letter to Parents for a residential visit

Annex J
Residential Centre Letter Employment Checks and Safeguarding

Annex K
Residential Visits Pupil Code of Conduct

Annex L

Minibus list of regularly visited venues beyond the local area requiring a driver and an additional member of staff

Name of venue
Buckingham College
Northwood College
Reddiford School
Orley Farm School
John Lyon School
Northwood Prep
St Mary's School
Langley Manor School
Cowley St Laurence Primary School
Harmondsworth Primary School
Heathrow Primary School
Rabbsfarm Primary School
St Catherine's Primary School
Laurel Lane Primary School
Eurotalk Regional Centre
Hillingdon Leisure Centre
Compass Theatre, Ickenham

This list is not exhaustive and will be revised and added to as new venues are visited.

Annex M

Minibus list of regularly visited venues within the local area requiring only a driver.

Name of venue
Hermitage Primary School
Highfield Primary School
Oak Farm Junior School
Ryefield Primary School
St Andrew's Primary School
St Bernadette's Primary School
St Mary's Primary School
Whitehall Junior School
Swakeleys/Abbotsfield Secondary Schools
Bishopshalt Secondary School
Rosedale College
Hillingdon Fire Station
Hillingdon Leisure Complex
Denham Country Park
Brunel University

This list is not exhaustive and will be revised and added to as new venues are visited.