



POLICY STATEMENT

Policy	Educational trip policy
Department	Admin

Date Written	5 th April 2018
Written by	G Sutton
Approved by	Principal
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Location and disseminations	A copy of the policy can be found, in the college admin office and on the college website.

Planning Visits

Whether the visit is to a local park, museum or swimming pool, or includes a residential stay in the UK or abroad, it is essential that formal planning take place before setting off. This involves considering the dangers and difficulties which may arise and making plans to reduce them. For residential visits at home or abroad, or for potentially hazardous activities, the school management should satisfy itself that the visit has been planned effectively and that risks are minimised.

In practice, risk assessments, should be carried out by the group lead. An assessment should be completed well before the visit, and should be approved by the Safeguarding Lead. A risk assessment for a visit need not be complex but it should be comprehensive. The person assessing the risks should be competent to do so. A formal assessment of the risks that might be met on a visit should have the aim of preventing the risks or reducing them. Students must not be placed in situations, which expose them to an unacceptable level of risk.

The risk assessment should be based on the following considerations:

- What are the hazards?
- Who might be affected by them?
- What safety measures need to be in place to reduce risks to an acceptable level?
- Can the group leader put the safety measures in place?

The person carrying out the risk assessment should record it and give copies to all teachers/supervisors on the visit, including school management with details of the measures they should take to avoid or reduce the risks.

The group leader should take the following factors into consideration when assessing the risks:

- The type of visit/activity and the level at which it is being undertaken
- The location, routes and modes of transport
- The competence, experience and qualifications of supervisory staff
- The ratios of teachers and supervisory staff to students
- The group members' age, competence, fitness and temperament and the suitability of the activity
- The special educational or medical needs of students
- The quality and suitability of available equipment
- Seasonal conditions, weather and timing
- Emergency procedures
- How to cope when a pupil becomes unable or unwilling to continue
- The need to monitor the risks throughout the visit.

Exploratory Visit

Ideally an exploratory visit should be made by any teacher who is to lead a group abroad or on a residential visit or who is to instruct or lead the group in an outdoor activity such as trekking in a location that is not familiar to them.

Other considerations

Other factors which should form part of the planning stage include:

- The facilities/equipment the group will need to take on the visit
- The facilities/equipment to be provided at the venue
- Staff training needs
- The designation of someone to record the details of the visit and to carry accident forms etc
- Transport arrangements
- Insurance arrangements
- Information to the provider
- Communication arrangements
- Supervision ratios
- Contingency measures for enforced change of plan or late return
- Information to day parents and boarders parents when applicable
- Preparing students
- Emergency arrangements
- Arrangements for sending students home early

First Aid

First Aid should form part of the risk assessment. Before undertaking any off-site activities the group leader should assess what level of first aid might be needed. On any kind of visit the group leader should have a good working knowledge of first aid and ensure that an adequate first-aid box is taken. For adventurous activities, visits abroad or residential visits it is sensible for at least one of the group's teachers to be a fully trained first-aider. All adults in the group should know how to contact the emergency services.

The minimum first-aid provision for a visit is:

- A suitably stocked first-aid box
- A person appointed to be in charge of first-aid arrangements

Other considerations when considering first-aid needs should include:

- The numbers in the group and the nature of the activity
- The likely injuries and how effective first aid would be
- The distance of the nearest hospital

All minibuses are required by law to carry a first-aid kit.

Supervision

Ratio

It is important to have a high enough ratio of adult supervisors to students for any visit. The factors to take into consideration include:

- Sex, age and ability of group
- Students with special educational or medical needs
- Nature of activities
- Experience of adults in off-site supervision
- Duration and nature of the journey
- Type of any accommodation
- Competence of staff, both general and on specific activities
- Requirements of the organisation/location to be visited
- Competence and behaviour of students
- First aid cover

1 adult for every 17 student aged 15+, 1 adult for every 24 students 17+, *Overnight accommodation* 1 adult for every 10 students.

In addition to the teacher in charge there should be enough supervisors to cope effectively with an emergency. When visits are to remote areas or involve hazardous activities, the risks may be greater and supervision levels should be set accordingly.

Supervisors' responsibilities

All adult supervisors, including teachers and parent/volunteer helpers, must understand their roles and responsibilities at all times. It may be helpful to put this in writing. In particular, all supervisors should be aware of any students who may require closer supervision, such as those with special needs or those likely to cause trouble. Teachers retain responsibility for the groups at all time.

Competences if leading an adventure activity

If the college is leading an adventure activity, such as canoeing, the school management must ensure that the group leader and other supervisors are suitably competent to lead or instruct students in the activity, bearing in mind that some students may be novices. Competences should be demonstrated by holding the relevant National Governing Body (NGB) award where it exists.

Head Counts

Whatever the length and nature of the visit, regular head counting of students should take place, particularly before leaving any venue. All supervisors should carry a list at all times. Students should not wear name badges. The group leader should establish rendezvous points and times and explain to students what to do if they become separated from the group.

Remote Supervision

The aim of visits for older students may be to encourage independence and investigative skills, and some of the time on visits such as trips abroad and fieldwork may be unsupervised. The group leader should establish during the planning stage of the visit whether the students are competent in remote supervision and should ensure parents have agreed this part of the visit. The group leader remains responsible for students even when not in direct contact with them.

Preparing Students

General

Students who are involved in a visit's planning and organisation, and who are well prepared will make more informed decisions and will be less at risk. Providing information and guidance to students is an important part of preparing for a school visit. Students should clearly understand what is expected of them and what the visit will entail.

Participation

The group leader should ensure that the students are capable of undertaking the proposed activity. Students should be encouraged to take on challenges during adventurous activities but should not be coerced into activities of which they have a genuine fear. Students whose behaviour is such that the group leader is concerned for their safety, or for that of others, should be withdrawn from the activity.

Equal Opportunities

Every effort should be made to ensure that college journeys and activities are available and accessible to all who wish to participate, irrespective of special educational or medical needs, ethnic origin, sex, religion etc. All should be encouraged to participate in as wide a range of activities as possible.

Information to Students

The group leader should issue a student information sheet containing:

- The aims and objectives of the visit/activity
- The background information about the place to be visited
- Basic foreign words where appropriate
- Relevant foreign culture and customs
- How to avoid specific dangers and why they should follow rules
- Why safety precautions are in place
- Why special safety precautions are in place for anyone with disabilities
- What standard of behaviour is expected from students
- Appropriate and inappropriate personal and social conduct
- Who is responsible for the group

- What not to bring back wither within the UK or from abroad
- What to do if approached by anyone from outside the group
- Rendezvous points and times communicated
- Emergency procedures including timings
- What to do if separated from the group

For residential visits all group members should carry the address and telephone number of the accommodation in case an individual becomes separated. If at any time there is a change in the planned schedule new activities should be assessed and students provided with the appropriate information.

Transport and Students

Students using transport on a visit should be made aware of basic safety rules including:

- Arrive on time and wait for the transport in a safe place
- Do not rush towards the transport when it arrives
- Wear your seatbelt and stay seated whilst travelling on transport
- Never tamper with any of the vehicle's equipment or driving controls
- Bags must not block aisles or cause obstructions
- Never attempt to get on or off the moving transport
- Never get off a vehicle held up by traffic lights or in traffic
- Never run about or pass someone on steps or stairs while transport is moving
- Never kneel or stand on seats
- Never distract or disturb the driver or impeded the driver's vision
- Stay clear of doors after boarding or leaving the transport
- After leaving the vehicle, always wait for it to move off before crossing the road
- If you have to cross roads to get to the transport in the UK always use the Green Cross Code
- If you feel unwell tell a teacher or supervisor

The group leader should ensure that students know what to do if they miss the scheduled departure time, and moreover staff know what to do when a student is lost/very late.

Communicating with parents

Parents should be informed in writing of any off-site activity or visit unless it is a regular part of the school curriculum which parents have already been informed about through the college prospectus or a letter. Seeking annual consent for such routine visits may be appropriate.

Before residential visits, or when the students are to travel abroad or engage in adventure activities, parents should be given details of the proposed visit.

Parental consent

- Group leaders should seek consent for:
- Non-routine visits involving day students
- Adventure activities
- Visits abroad

- Other residential visits
- Remote supervision

If parents withhold consent absolutely the students should not be taken on the visit but the curricular aims of the visit should be delivered to the student in some other way wherever possible.

Medical consent

This should form part of the parental consent form. Parents should be asked to agree to the student's receiving emergency treatment, including anaesthetic or blood transfusion, as considered necessary by the medical authorities. If parents do not agree to this, Head Teachers may decide to withdraw the child from the visit – given the additional responsibility this would entail for the group leader.

Planning Transport

Supervision on transport

The level of supervision necessary should be considered as part of the risk assessment for the journey. The group leader is responsible for the party at all times including maintaining good discipline.

The driver should not normally be responsible for supervision. Driver supervision may be sufficient if a small number of older children are being taken on a short journey. All group members should be made aware of the position of the emergency door and first-aid and anti-fire equipment on transport. The group leader should also be aware of alternative routes or means of travel in the event of delay or cancellation.

Factors that the group leader should consider when planning supervision on transport include:

- Safety when crossing roads as part of the journey – the group leader should ensure that students know how to observe the safety rules set out in the Highway Code and the Green Cross Code. Pedestrian crossings and traffic lights or footbridges should be used to cross roads, whenever possible.
- Safety on buses, trains, ferries and boats – the group leader should make clear to students how much or little freedom they have to 'roam'. Misbehaviour is a main cause of accidents to children on such means of transport. Appropriate supervision and discipline should be maintained at all times.
- Safety of the group in the event of an accident or breakdown – the group should remain under the direct supervision of the group leader or other teachers wherever possible.
- Head counts, by the group leader or another delegated teacher or supervisor, should always be carried out when the group is getting off or onto transport.
- Responsibility for checking that seat belts are fastened
- Students should be made aware that they are not allowed access to the driving area at any time.

Hiring Coaches

Use Empress Coaches whenever possible. The group leader is responsible for ensuring that coaches and buses are hired from a reputable company. Professional operators of buses and coaches are legally required to be licensed.

Buckswood School Minibus Driver

On occasion, St George's will use Buckswood School coach and bus services. The driver is responsible for the vehicle during the visit. The minibus driver must be qualified, check with Transport Manager that all is clear for you to drive a minibus and have a valid driving licence. The Principal should ensure that teachers driving school minibuses have a rest period before driving. Minibus drivers must always adhere to transport regulations.

The minibus driver must:

- Observe LEA and/or school management guidance
- Not drive when taking medication or undergoing treatment that might affect their ability or judgement
- Know what to do in an emergency
- Know how to use fire fighting and first-aid equipment
- Avoid driving for long periods and ensure that rests are taken when needed
- Clarify and comply with transport regulation and the requirements of the vehicle's insurance cover
- Take into consideration the effects of teaching and the working day
- Have regular medical checks eg. Eyesight

Types of visit

Adventure activities using licensed providers

When planning to use adventure activity facilities offered by a commercial company or by a local authority the group leader should follow the policy of the school and check:

- Whether the provider is legally required to hold a licence for the activities it offers and, if so,
- The provider actually holds a licence

The Adventure Activities Licensing Authority can check on the licence status of a provider. Their address is: Adventure Activity Licensing Authority, 17 Lambourne Crescent, Llanishen, Cardiff CF4 5GG Tel 01222 755715 Fax 01222 755757. Their Internet site is at:
<http://www.aala.org>

Many of the activities that pupils take part in will be covered by health and safety legislation alone. However the following activities – where undertaken by young people under 18 years unaccompanied by a parent – need a licence.

Holding a licence means that a provider has been inspected and the Licensing Authority are satisfied that appropriate safety measures are in place.

Adventure Activities using non-licensable providers

Not all providers are required to hold a licence. Voluntary bodies and schools providing for their own members and students respectively are exempt. Commercial bodies and local authorities are also exempt if their activities fall outside the scope of the regulations. Not holding a licence does not imply a lack of safety. It might simply mean the provider or the activity is not licensable.

If proposing to use a non-licensable provider, the group leader should obtain assurances in writing from the provider that:

- Risks have been assessed and that the provider's staff are competent to instruct and lead students of the group's age range on the activity. Competence could be demonstrated by holding the relevant NGB award where it exists or through successful participation in an NGB approved in-house scheme
- The equipment is appropriate and that its safe condition is checked before each use
- Operating procedures conform to the guidelines of the NGB for the activity where this is appropriate, including use of equipment, safety and emergency procedures.

The group leader and teachers retain ultimate responsibility for students at all times during adventure activities, even when the group is under instruction by a member of the provider's staff. The providers are responsible for the safe running of an activity. Clear handover and handbook procedures should be in place.

The group leader and teachers should have sufficient information on what the activity involves before it takes place. They should approach the instructor at an appropriate safe interval if they are concerned that the students may be at unnecessary risk.

College Adventure Activities

If a member of the staff is to organise, lead and instruct students on adventure activities they should complete the checks set out under Risk assessment.

The College Management should satisfy themselves that:

- The group leader and other supervisors are competent to act as leaders and/or instructors of students in the activity
- The group leader is competent in safety procedures and the planning of adventurous visits
- An appropriate risk assessment has been completed
- The supervision will be appropriate
- There is adequate first-aid provision, expertise and equipment within the group
- The emergency procedures include activity – specific measures and that supervisors are competent to carry them out
- The equipment is appropriate, safe and in good condition

The withdrawal of direct supervision should be a gradual four stage process.

- Accompanying the group
- Shadowing the group
- Checking regularly at agreed locations
- Checking occasionally at agreed locations

Coastal Visits

Group leaders and other teachers should be aware that many of the incidents affecting students have occurred by or in the sea. The group leader should bear the following points in mind when assessing the risks of a coastal activity:

- Tides, rip tides and sandbanks are potential hazards; timings and exit route should be checked.
- Ensure group members are aware of warning signs and flags
- Establish a base on the beach to which members of the group may return if separated
- Look for hazards such as glass, barbed wire and sewage outflows etc
- Group leaders should consider which areas of the terrain and sea are out of bounds
- Cliff tops can be highly dangerous for school groups even during daylight. The groups should keep to the path at all times.

Use of swimming pools on trips

Group leaders should follow the recommended safe supervision levels at the pool for their students. A minimum 1 adult to 15 Form 1 onwards

If considering the use of a swimming pool it is advisable to observe and check the following:

- Is there constant pool supervision by a sufficient number of qualified lifeguards?
- The group leader should stay at the poolside at a raised location. In such circumstances, the group leader, or a designated teacher, should have a relevant lifesaving award
- Is the water temperature appropriate?
- Is the water clear?
- Are there signs clearly indicating the depth?
- Does the deep end allow for safe diving?
- Have the students been instructed on how to behave in and around the water?

Residential visits

A good rule of thumb - ratio is 1 teacher to every 10 students. Issues for the group leader include the following:

- The group should ideally have adjoining rooms with teachers' quarters next to the students
- There must be at least one teacher for each sex for mixed groups
- There must be separate male and female sleeping/bathroom facilities for students and adults
- Ensure there is appropriate and safe heating and ventilation
- Ensure that the whole groups are aware of the lay-out of the accommodation, its fire precautions/exits (are instructions in English or otherwise clear)
- Locks on doors should work in the group's rooms but appropriate access should be available to teachers at all times
- There should be adequate space for storing clothes, luggage, equipment etc. and for the safe keeping of valuables
- Adequate lighting – it is advisable to bring a torch

The group leader should be aware of local fire procedure, including all exits.

Visit abroad

Organising your own visit

A group leader may decide to organise a package abroad without the help of an outside body. Package organisers have responsibilities under Directive 90/314/EEC. This is implemented in the UK by the Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours Regulations 1992 (The Package Travel Regulations). These regulations apply to packages sold or offered for sale in the UK. They define a package as a combination of any two of: accommodation, transport, or other tourist services not ancillary to transport.

Most package arrangements come with scope of the regulations unless they are 'occasional' or part of an educational course programme as compared with a leisure activity such as skiing.

Organising your own transport

Group leaders should ensure that drivers taking groups abroad are familiar with driving the coach or minibus in the countries being visited and those en route. EC regulations require the fitment and use of a tachograph and prescribe maximum limits on driving time and minimum requirements for breaks and rest periods. These regulations apply for most drivers of school passenger vehicles when undertaking an international journey. Different licence requirements would normally apply for driving abroad. DTLR can provide advice on the relevant transport legislation.

Factors to consider when travelling abroad include:

- The need to be aware that different legislation and regulations may apply for drivers' hours and record-keeping purposes, particularly in non-EU countries
- EU drivers' hours and tachograph regulations normally apply to any vehicle with 9 or more passenger seats on journeys through EU countries and some countries outside the EU. In other countries, drivers must observe the domestic rules of the countries being visited
- Special documentation is required for minibuses taken abroad
- All group members should be aware of unfamiliar right-hand drive traffic. The passenger doors on UK minibuses and coaches may not open on the kerb side in countries where travel is on the right hand side of the road. Extra care will be necessary when the group is climbing in and out of the vehicle. Detours may be necessary to ensure safety
- Carry capacity and loading requirements
- DTLR can provide information on legal requirements for travel abroad

Using a tour operator

Before using a tour operator the group leader should ensure it is reputable. Ascertaining this should form part of the risk assessment. The Civil Aviation Authority licenses travel organisers and tour operators selling air seats or packages with an air transport element (Air Travel Organisers Licence or ATOL)

A travel agent does not need to be an ATOL holder if acting only as an agent of an ATOL holder. But if so the group leader must check whether or not the whole package being supplied is covered by the ATOL. If it is not, the organiser must show evidence of other forms of security

to provide for the refund of advance payments and the costs of repatriation in the event of insolvency.

There are seven bonding bodies approved by the Department of Trade and Industry:

- Association of British travel Agents (ABTA)
- Federation of Tour Operators Trust (FTOT)
- Travel agents/tour operators
- Passenger Shipping Association (PSA)
- The Confederation of Passenger Transport (CPT)
- Yacht Charter Association (YCA)
- The Association of Bonded Travel Organisers Trust (ABTOT)

Planning and Preparation

It is good practice that an exploratory visit to the location should always be made. If this is not possible, the group leader should gather as much information as possible on the area to be visited/facilities from:

- The provider
- The Foreign and Commonwealth Office's Travel Advice Unit
- Other schools who used the facilities/been to the area
- National travel offices in the UK
- Embassies/consulates

Staffing the visit

A minimum ratio 1 adult to 10 students should be followed and at least two of the adults should be teachers. There should be enough adults in the group to cover an emergency. Mixed gender groups should have at least one male and one female teacher

Preparing students for visits abroad

Factors to consider for visits abroad include:

- Language – particularly common phrases
- Culture eg body language, rules and regulations of behaviour, dress codes, local customs, attitudes to gender etc
- Drugs, alcohol-usage
- Food and drink – group members should be warned of the dangers of drinking tap water in certain countries
- Money – how to carry money and valuables discreetly eg: money belts
- How to use phones abroad
- What to do in an emergency

Briefing meeting for parents

It is particularly important that parents are given the opportunity to discuss the trip with the group leader who will be taking the students overseas.

Vaccinations

The group leader should find out whether vaccination is necessary and ensure that all members of the group have received it in good time. Check whether the country to be visited requires

proof of vaccination. The Department of Health gives advice on vaccination requirements in their publication, Health Advice to travellers anywhere in the world.

Insurance

The group leader must ensure that the group has comprehensive travel insurance.

Language abilities

One of the adults with the group should be able to speak and read the language of the visited country. If not, it is strongly recommended that the leader or another adult learns enough of the language to hold a basic conversation and knows what to say in an emergency. It is also advisable that students have a basic knowledge of the local language before the visit

Visa/Passports

The group leader should ensure that all members of the group have valid passports and visa (if appropriate) in the early stages of planning the trip.

Photocopies of the group's passports should be taken for emergency use. Otherwise there can be problems if someone other than the designated leader has to accompany an injured student back to the UK. Visa waiver forms are available from Schengen state visits. Contact the Central Bureau for Educational Visits and Exchanges.

Paperwork

The group leader should ensure that they obtain and take with them:

- Travel tickets, passports, and visas. It is also advisable to carry a separate list of the numbers of any travel documents/passports, and photocopies of all the groups documents in a sealed waterproof bag.
- A copy of the contract with the centre/hotel etc, if appropriate
- Medical papers eg from E111s and significant medical histories
- Parental consent forms and permission for group leaders to authorise emergency treatment on parental behalf
- The phone numbers and addresses, at home and in college, of the principal and of the college contact
- The names of parents and the addresses and telephone numbers at which they can be contacted (home and workplace)
- Copies of a list of group members and their details
- Details of insurance arrangements and the company's telephone number
- The name, address and telephone number of the group's accommodation
- Location of local hospital/medical services

Information retained at school

Full details of the visit should be retained at school while the visit is in progress. This should include:

- The itinerary and contact telephone number/address of the group
- A list of group members and their details
- Contact names, addresses, telephone numbers of the parents and next of kin. Copies of parental consent forms

- Copies of travel documents, insurance documents, medical papers
- A copy of the contract with the centre/hotel etc, if appropriate

It is the College's Management's responsibility to ensure this information is available at all times. This is particularly important if the visit takes place when the college is closed.

During the visit

All students to carry an A4 information sheet at all time, plus ID card

All group members should carry an appropriate amount of foreign currency at all times eg money for telephone (or a phone card)

Emergencies

The group leader must ensure that all members of the group know what action to take if there is a problem

Contacts at home

It is advisable to have a teacher/contact at home 'on call' with a valid passport, who could go to the area being visited to provide support to the group in the event of an emergency.

Emergency procedures

Teachers in charge of students during a visit have a duty of care to make sure that the students are safe and healthy. 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.

If an accident happens, the priorities are to:

- Assess the situation
- Safeguard the uninjured members of the group
- Attend to the casualty
- Inform the emergency services and everyone who needs to know the incident

Who will take charge in an emergency?

The group leader would usually take charge in an emergency and would need to ensure that emergency procedures are in place and that back up cover is arranged

Pre-arranged college home contact. The college contacts main responsibility is to link the group with the college, the parents and to provide assistance as necessary.

Emergency Procedures framework for school base

The main factors for the college contact to consider include:

- Ensuring that the group leader is in control of the emergency and establishing if any assistance is required from the school base
- Contacting parents. Details of parents' contact numbers need to be available at all times while the group is on the visit. The college contact should act as a link between the group and parents. Parents should be kept as well informed as possible at all stages of the emergency.