



TRIPS AND EXTRA-CURRICULAR POLICY

PART 1: AIMS AND PRINCIPLES

Introduction

As part of its commitment to educating the whole person, RGS encourages a wide range of clubs, societies and extra-curricular activities which enhance the prescribed academic curriculum. Some of these are run by academic departments and will have direct relevance to academic subjects (e.g. Junior Science Club). Others may be supervised by teachers but have more general interest (e.g. Chess Club). Many Clubs and Societies are organised by senior pupils with the help of supervisory teachers. Such extra-curricular activities represent a vital aspect of the cultural and sporting life of the school, and encourage pupils to be involved in their own education in the widest sense of the word. The RGS also encourages visitors from outside the school to share their expertise or interests with pupils. These visitors often address assemblies, give General Studies lectures and speak to smaller groups of pupils.

Any extra-curricular activities and clubs should have clear, achievable aims and objectives which are included in and/or complement the School's academic Schemes of Work.

Aims

The aims of the extra-curricular programmes are to provide opportunities to:

- Broaden pupils' interest and experience outside the formal academic curriculum.
- Pursue/reinforce work encountered within the normal timetable. Pupils can pursue work/targets over long periods of time not usually possible within a normal scheme of work, i.e. Fieldwork.
- Undertake work not normally encountered within the routine timetable. This may provide the pupil, and indeed the teacher, with the opportunity to pursue a personal interest or hobby.
- Invite visitors/specialists to interact with a committed audience, e.g. a player from a local professional sporting team or music group may give some coaching.
- Organise visits to venues of specific interest, e.g. a visit to the stock exchange.
- Develop a project and to enter a competition. Such events can enhance the image and reputation of individuals and of the school.
- To allow practice for school teams/trials/auditions/performances, etc.
- To allow non-specialist staff/parents/others with a particular interest or talent to offer their experience and/or time to broaden and enrich the curriculum offered to the pupils, e.g. an art teacher may be a Volleyball coach and may wish to run a school club.
- To allow pupils of different ages and abilities to interact.

- To allow pupils and staff to interact in a somewhat less formal manner. This can improve pupil/staff relationships in the classroom.

Principles

All departments are committed to offering a variety of extra-curricular activities and clubs whenever practicable considering the restraints of staffing, cost and time.

The extra-curricular activities and clubs are open to all pupils, at an appropriate age of development.

All extra-curricular activities and clubs must be organised with the safety of participants as the major consideration. It must comply with School policy on Health and Safety. If the visit is offsite, it must have an agreed generic risk assessment and show on SOCS or be approved as a trip on Evolve.

Staff, parents and pupils should be aware of any itinerary, contingency plans, First Aid facilities, emergency phone numbers, etc.

Non-teacher supervisors must be informed as to their role. It must not be assumed that all adults know what to do and when to act.

If transport by minibus is involved staff must have regard to, and comply with, the School policy.

Significant participation in extra-curricular activities is an expectation of all members of the teaching staff.

The results of the extra-curricular activity or club, including photographs, should form the basis of display work especially for the 'open day'.

For educational visits off campus staff must ensure that the venue, organisation concerned and the transport company are all reliable, legal and safety conscious.

Pupils can derive a great deal of educational benefit from taking part in visits with the school. In particular, they have the opportunity to undergo experiences not available in the classroom. Visits help to develop a pupil's investigative skills and longer visits in particular encourage greater independence.

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PART 2: TRIPS AND EXPEDITIONS

Introduction

Most school visits take place without incident but following a number of tragic incidents involving schoolchildren in the last few years in the UK, there is a growing concern in schools about further ensuring the safety of pupils on school visits. Although no amount of planning can guarantee that a visit will be totally incident free, good planning and attention to safety measures can reduce the number of accidents and lessen the seriousness of those that do happen and that is the purpose of this policy document and the procedures surrounding trips. The policy which follows is based on the DFE document 'The Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits'.

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 takes place before setting off. This involves considering the dangers and difficulties which may arise and making plans to reduce them. Outline approval must be sought on Evolve before full planning and publicity is released. Once approval has been given the planning and risk assessment should then be completed on Evolve. On completion of the trip, any issue or concerns should be raised with the Assistant Head Co-curricular, or a Deputy Head.

Risk assessments

An assessment should be completed well before the visit, and uploaded to Evolve. Feedback will be given, any changes agreed and then it will be passed to the Health and Safety Manager and the Bursar for final checking and approval.

A formal assessment of the risks that might be met on a visit should have the aim of preventing the risks or reducing them. Pupils must not be placed in situations which expose them to an unacceptable level of risk. Safety must always be the prime consideration. If the risks cannot be contained, then the visit must not take place.

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?
- What steps will be taken in an emergency?

Having had the risk assessment approved the group leader should give copies to teachers/supervisors on the visit, with details of the measures they should take to avoid or reduce the risks.

Frequent visits to local venues can be covered by a generic risk assessment. This should be under constant review and updated as required.

The group leader and other supervisors should monitor the risks throughout the visit and take appropriate action as necessary.

Before booking a visit the group leader should obtain a written or documentary assurance that providers such as tour operators have themselves assessed the risks and have appropriate safety measures in place.

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 pupils;
- The group members' age, competence, fitness and temperament and the suitability of the activity;
- The special educational or medical needs of pupils;
- 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

Wherever possible an exploratory visit should be made by a 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.

In other cases, the group leader should undertake an exploratory visit, wherever that is possible, to:

- Ensure at first hand that the venue is suitable to meet the aims and objectives of the school visit;
- Obtain names and addresses of other schools who have used the venue;
- Obtain advice from the manager;
- Assess potential areas and levels of risk;
- Ensure that the venue can cater for the needs of the staff and pupils in the group;
- Become familiar with the area before taking a group of young people there.

If an exploratory visit is not feasible then the group leader will need to consider how to complete an adequate assessment of the risks. A minimum measure would be to obtain specific information from the venue and from local organisations such as tourist boards.

Many schools will take new groups of pupils to the same location each year. As some factors will change from year to year, it is prudent to re-assess the risks each time - even when the group leader stays the same.

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 parents;
- Preparing pupils;
- Emergency arrangements;
- Arrangements for sending pupils home early.

Financial planning

The group leader should ensure that parents have early written information about the costs of the visit, how much will come from school funds, and how much each parent will be charged or asked to contribute. Parents should be given enough time to prepare financially for the visit.

The group leader should reach a pre-agreement with parents on whether any funds left surplus after the visit will be returned to parents or retained for another visit.

Charging for visits

Parents should be made aware that financial help may be available from the school for the trip and how they should go about applying for that.

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 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.

First aid should be available and accessible at all times. The Health and Safety Executive recommends the following minimum contents for a travelling first-aid box where no special risk has been identified:

- A leaflet giving general advice on first aid;
- Six individually wrapped sterile adhesive dressings;
- One large sterile unmedicated wound dressing approximately 18 cm x 18 cm;
- Two triangular bandages;
- Two safety pins;
- Individually wrapped moist cleansing wipes;
- One pair of disposable gloves;
- A resuscitaid (for hygienic mouth to mouth resuscitation) would also be useful.

All minibuses are required by law to carry a first aid kit. RGS minibuses all have them though staff should check that it is in the bus and properly equipped.

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PART 3: SUPERVISION

Ratios

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

- Age and ability of group;
- Pupils 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 pupils;
- First aid cover.

Staffing ratios for visits are difficult to prescribe as they will vary according to the activity, age, group, location and the efficient use of resources. However, a general guide for visits to local historical sites and museums or for local walks, in normal circumstances 1 adult for every 15-20 pupils. (Trips abroad, trips involving hazardous activities or overnight trips in the UK should be at least 1:10 and possibly lower for younger boys).

However, Group leaders should assess the risks and consider an appropriate safe supervision level for their particular group. There should be a minimum of one teacher in charge.

In addition to the teacher in charge there should be enough supervisors to cope effectively with an emergency.

Parents/Volunteers

Where there is more than one teacher/supervisor a group leader should be appointed who has authority over the whole group. If more than one school is involved an overall group leader should be identified, usually the person with the most experience in the leading such visits.

Where a high adult:pupil ratio is required, it is not always feasible to use school staff alone. Parents/volunteers may be used to supplement the supervision ratio. They should be carefully selected and ideally they should be well known to the school and the pupil group. Anyone who has not had a criminal conviction check should never be left in sole charge of pupils.

Vetting suitability

The group leader should liaise with the HR Manager at the earliest opportunity about the current requirements for adults accompanying or staffing a trip who are not regular members of staff. Only adults who have been approved by the HR Manger may take part. Staff should refer to the Safeguarding Policy for further details.

For the protection of both adults and pupils, all adult supervisors should ensure that they are not alone with a pupil wherever possible.

Supervisors' responsibilities

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

Competences if schooling an adventure activity

If the school is leading an adventure activity, such as canoeing, the group leader must ensure that the supervisors are suitably competent to lead or instruct pupils in the activity, bearing in mind that some pupils 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 pupils should take place, particularly before leaving any venue. All supervisors should carry a list of all pupils and adults involved in the visit at all times. Pupils should not wear name badges. The group leader should establish rendezvous points and tell pupils what to do if they become separated from the group.

Remote supervision

The aim of visits for older pupils 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 pupils are competent in remote supervision and should ensure parents have agreed this part of the visit. The group leader remains responsible for pupils even when not in direct contact with them.

Parents should be told, before the visit, whether any form of remote supervision will take place.

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PART 4: PREPARING PUPILS

General

Pupils 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 pupils is an important part of preparing for a school visit. Pupils should clearly understand what is expected of them and what the visit will entail. Pupils must understand what standard of behaviour is expected of them and why rules must be followed. The lack of control and discipline can be a major cause of accidents. Pupils should also be told about any potential dangers and how they should act to ensure their own safety and that of others.

Participation

The group leader should ensure that the pupils are capable of undertaking the proposed activity. Pupils should be encouraged to take on challenges during adventurous activities but should not be coerced into activities of which they have a genuine fear.

Pupils whose behaviour is such that the group leader is concerned for their safety, or for that of others, should be withdrawn from the activity. On residential visits the group leader should consider whether such pupils should be sent home early. Parents and pupils should be told in advance of the visit about the procedures for dealing with misbehaviour, how a pupil will be returned home safely and who will meet the cost.

Equal opportunities

Every effort should be made to ensure that school 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 RGS pupils should be encouraged to participate in as wide a range of activities as possible. If a visit is to cater for pupils with special needs, a suitable venue should be selected.

Information to pupils

The group leader should decide how information is provided, but must ensure that the pupils understand key safety information. For some pupils on overnight visits it will be their first experience away from home on their own and in the close company of other pupils. Pupils should understand:

- 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 pupils; appropriate and inappropriate personal and social conduct including sexual activity; _ who is responsible for the group;
- What not to bring back either within the UK or from abroad such as drugs, knives etc;
- What to do if approached by anyone from outside the group;
- Rendezvous procedures;
- What to do if separated from the group;
- Emergency procedures.

- The aims and objectives of the visit/activity;
- The background information about the place to be visited;

For residential visits all group members should carry the address and telephone number of the accommodation in case an individual becomes separated. This applies to exchange visits when pupils will also need to know about any ground rules agreed between the group leader and host family.

Where visits involve multiple activities with differing requirements each activity will need to be assessed and separate information provided. Pupils should be aware of who is responsible in any instances where the group leader has delegated responsibility to another member of staff or instructor.

If at any time there is a change in the planned schedule new activities should be assessed and pupils provided with the appropriate information.

Preparing pupils for remote supervision

During any time that remote supervision takes place the group leader must ensure that pupils are aware of the ground rules and are adequately equipped to be on their own in a group. The size of each group should also be considered. As a minimum, pupils should have the following:

- Telephone numbers and emergency contacts if lost;
- Money;
- Maps and plans and any other information for them to act effectively;
- A knowledge of how to summon help;
- A knowledge of out of bounds areas or activities;
- Identity cards and a rendezvous point.

It is important that pupils are told not to go off on their own, are given instructions about permitted remote supervised activities and understand and accept the ground rules.

Transport and pupils

Pupils 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 lean out of or throw things from the window of the 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 impede the driver's vision;
- Stay clear of the doors after boarding 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 pupils know what to do if they miss the scheduled departure time.

Pupils with special educational and medical needs

Teachers planning trips should make every effort to include pupils with special educational or medical needs in school visits, whilst maintaining the safety of everyone in the group. Special attention should be given to appropriate supervision ratios and additional safety measures may need to be addressed at the planning stage.

Pupils with medical needs

Additional safety measures to those already in place in the school may be necessary to support pupils with medical needs during visits. Arrangements for taking medication and ensuring sufficient supplies for residential visits may be required.

All teachers supervising visits should be aware of a pupil's medical needs and any medical emergency procedures. Summary sheets held by all teachers, containing details of each pupil's needs and any other relevant information provided by parents, is one way of achieving this. If appropriate, a volunteer teacher should be trained in administering medication, if they have not already been so trained, and should take responsibility in a medical emergency. If the pupil's safety cannot be guaranteed, it may be appropriate to ask the parent or a care assistant to accompany a particular pupil.

The group leader should discuss the pupil's individual needs with the parents. Parents should be asked to supply:

- Details of medical conditions;
- Emergency contact numbers;
- The child's GP's name, address and phone number;
- Information on whether the pupil has spent a night away from home before and their ability to cope effectively;
- Written details of any medication required (including instructions on dosage/times) and parental permission to administer;
- Agreement for a volunteer teacher to administer;
- Information on any allergies/phobias;
- Information on any special dietary requirements;
- Information on any toileting difficulties, special equipment or aids to daily living;
- Special transport needs for pupils who require help with mobility.

Enquiries should be made at an early stage about access and facilities for securing wheelchairs on transport and at residential centres etc., if appropriate. If ramps are not going to be available in certain places, the organiser may wish to arrange to take portable ramps with them. The group leader should at an early stage assess whether manual handling skills will be needed and, if so, whether training should be sought.

All teachers supervising the visit should be given the opportunity to talk through any concerns they may have about their ability to support the child. Extra help should be requested if necessary, e.g. a care assistant.

If teachers are concerned about whether they can provide for a pupil's safety or the safety of other pupils on a trip because of a medical condition, they should seek general medical advice from the School Nurse or further information from the pupil's parents.

The group leader should check that the insurance policy covers staff and pupils with pre-existing medical needs.

Pupils with special educational needs

Any limitations or problems the pupil may have should be taken into account at the planning stage and when carrying out the risk assessment. Off-site visits may pose additional difficulties for a pupil with SEN and the behaviour of some pupils may prove challenging. The following factors should be taken into consideration:

- Is the pupil capable of taking part in and benefiting from the activity?
- Can the activity be adapted to enable the pupil to participate at a suitable level?
- Will additional/different resources be necessary?
- Is the pupil able to understand and follow instructions?
- Will additional supervision be necessary?

It may be helpful to the pupil if one of the supervisors already knows them well and appreciates their needs fully. The group leader should discuss the visit with the parents of pupils with SEN to ensure that suitable arrangements have been put in place to ensure their safety.

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PART 5: COMMUNICATING WITH PARENTS

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

Before residential visits, or when the pupils are to travel abroad or engage in adventure activities, parents should be encouraged to attend a briefing meeting where written details of the proposed visit should also be provided. There should be alternative arrangements for parents who cannot attend or who if there are parents who have difficulty with communication in English.

Parents need to be aware that the teachers and other adult supervisors on the visit will be exercising the same care that a prudent parent would. The following information on matters that might affect pupil health and safety should be given to parents:

- Dates of the visit;
- Visit's objectives;
- Times of departure and return - parents must have agreed to meet their child on return;
- The location where the pupils will be collected and returned;
- Mode(s) of travel;
- The size of the group and the level of supervision including any times when remote supervision may take place;
- Details of accommodation with security and supervisory arrangements on site;
- Details of provision for special educational or medical needs;
- Procedures for pupils who become ill;
- Names of leader, of other staff and of other accompanying adults;
- Details of the activities planned and of how the assessed risks will be managed;
- Standards of behaviour expected in respect of, for example, alcohol, smoking and general group discipline including prohibited items. This information may take the form of a code of conduct which parents should sign;
- What pupils should not take on the visit or bring back;
- Details of insurance, any exceptions in the policy and whether parents need to arrange additional cover;
- Clothing and equipment to be taken;
- Money to be taken;
- The information to be given by parents and what they will be asked to consent to;
- On exchange visits, the details of the host families. For example, whether they have hosted any of the school's pupils before.

Parental consent

Group leaders should seek consent for:

- Adventure activities;
- Visits abroad;
- Other residential visits;
- Remote supervision.

If parents withhold consent absolutely the pupil should not be taken on the visit but the curricular aims of the visit should be delivered to the pupil in some other way wherever possible (if appropriate). If the parents give a conditional consent the group leader in consultation with the Deputy Head will need to consider whether the pupil may be taken on the visit or not.

Medical consent

This is given via the consents when pupils join the school.

Early return

The group leader should tell parents if they will be expected to fund the early return of a pupil whose conduct gives cause for concern on a visit. A written agreement may be necessary.

Contact with parents during the visit

Group leaders should ensure that parents can contact their child via the school contact and the group leader in the event of a home emergency, and that they have a number to ring for information in the event of an incident during the visit or a late arrival home. Parents should therefore:

- Know the destination details;
- Be aware of the emergency contact arrangements at home (particularly important during holiday periods when the school may be closed) and at all the venues the group will visit;
- Provide contact numbers for day and night use in an emergency.

This is best done by means of the consent form.

Pupils' contact with parents

Group leaders should arrange for parents to be told by the school of the group's safe arrival for an overseas trip. The best way of doing this is through Clarion Call. But pupils may wish to speak to their parents individually. Such arrangements should be agreed with parents and pupils before the visit takes place. Parents concerned after a phone call should contact the school contact.

TRIPS AND EXTRA-CURRICULAR POLICY

PART 6: PLANNING TRANSPORT

General

The group leader must give careful thought to planning transport. The main factors to consider include:

- Passenger safety;
- The competence and training of the driver to drive the proposed vehicle and whether the driver holds the appropriate valid licence;
- Number of driving hours required for the journey and length of the driver's day (including non driving hours);
- Capacity and experience of driver to maintain concentration - whether more than one driver is needed to avoid driver fatigue;
- Type of journey - will the visit take place locally or will it include long distance driving i.e. Motorways?
- Traffic conditions;
- Contingency funds and arrangements in case of breakdown/emergency;
- Appropriate insurance cover;
- Weather;
- Journey time and distance;
- Stopping points on long journeys for toilet and refreshments;
- Supervision.

Legislation

When looking at the risk assessment the Health and Safety Manager will check that all travel arrangements, including the hire of private coaches or buses, are suitable for the nature of the visit.

The driver is responsible for the vehicle during the visit.

Seat belts: All minibuses and coaches which carry groups of three or more children up to 15 years of age inclusive must be fitted with a seat belt for each child. The seats must face forward and seat restraints must comply with legal requirements.

Supervision on transport

As a school which utilises many off-site facilities, pupil journeys form a regular part of school life. Journeys take place at all scales, from local to international, with groups of varying sizes and age groups and use many forms of public, private hire, school and private transport. Every journey must be effectively supervised and risk-assessed in either a generic or specific form.

This policy references OEAP NG* documents:

- Refer to NG document: ["Ratios and Effective Supervision"](#)
- Refer to NG document: ["Group management and Supervision"](#)

(*Outdoor Education Advisors Panel National Guidance)

RGS Policies

- Educational Visits
- Minibus
- First Aid

Aims

The aims of the Safety of Pupils when on Journeys Policy is:

- To allow for all pupils to remain safe on journeys
- To make the management of journeys practical for staff involved

Principles

- A school journey can be defined as travelling from one place to another, as part of a school activity.
- Journeys must be effectively supervised.
 - Effective supervision takes into account:
 - The method of transport
 - The length of journey
 - The age and gender of the young people to be supervised.
 - The ability of the young people (including their behavioural, medical, emotional and educational needs).
 - Staff competence.
- Repeat journeys must be reviewed to ensure that they continue to take into account the above.
- Pupils quickly learn the required routines and the behaviour of RGS pupils is generally excellent. However, this must not lead to complacency and effective supervision should still be provided.
- Unless the risk assessment states otherwise, pupils must always be supervised on school journeys.

Hiring coaches and buses

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. Schools using operators to transport pupils should ensure that the operators have the appropriate public service vehicle (PSV) operators' licence. When booking transport, the group leader should ensure that seat belts are available for pupils. Whilst seat belts must be fitted on coaches which carry groups of children, they are not legally required on buses. Buses where seatbelts are not fitted are not normally appropriate for visits involving long journeys.

If any of the group use a wheelchair, the group leader should ensure that transport used has appropriate access and securing facilities. It may be appropriate to use portable ramps.

Licences and Permits

A public service vehicle (PSV) licence is required by schools running or hiring their own vehicles where any payment is made towards the cost of pupils being carried. There are two types of licence - restricted (for up to two vehicles) and standard national (more than two vehicles). Local Traffic Commissioners can provide advice and application forms for PSV operator licences.

Private cars

Teachers and others who drive pupils in their own car must ensure their passengers' safety, that the vehicle is roadworthy, and that they have appropriate licence and insurance cover for carrying the pupils. Volunteers should be carefully vetted by the group leader before they are permitted to drive pupils in their car. If necessary, assurances should be requested.

The driver is responsible for making sure that pupils have a seat belt and use it at all times. Vehicles without seat belts should not be used.

Head teachers or group leaders who wish to use parents, volunteers or other pupils to help transport pupils in their own cars, must ensure that they are aware of their legal responsibility for the safety of the pupils in their cars. Parents' agreement should be sought (on the consent form) for their children to be carried in other parents' cars. It is advisable that parents driving pupils are not put in a position where they are alone with a pupil. The group leader should arrange a central dropping point for all pupils rather than individual home drops.

School minibus driver

The driver is responsible for the vehicle during the visit. The minibus driver must be qualified to drive a minibus and have a valid and clean driving licence. Minibus drivers must always adhere to transport regulations.

The minibus driver must:

- Observe the school 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 regulations and the requirements of the vehicle's insurance cover;
- Take into consideration the effects of teaching and the working day;
- Have regular medical checks e.g. Eyesight;
- Not use a mobile telephone while the vehicle is in motion or on the highway.

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PART 7: INSURANCE

General

The group leader must ensure, well before the group departs, that adequate insurance arrangements are in place.

Insurance cover for visits

Insurance policies are legal documents. They will impose conditions, limit the cover, and exclude certain people or activities. Insurance companies/travel firms can advise on particular types of insurance. However, the following are examples of cover which may be appropriate to many types of school visit:

- Employers liability;
- Public liability;
- Personal accident cover for teachers, other adults, and pupils;
- Costs of medical treatment;
- Specialised risk activities (often excluded from standard policies) and the costs of evacuation for medical reasons when abroad;
- Damage to or loss of hired equipment (check the wording of the hire agreement);
- Transport and accommodation expenses in case of emergency;
- Compensation against cancellation or delay;
- Compensation for loss of baggage and personal effects including money;
- Legal assistance in the recovery of claims; and failure or bankruptcy of the centre or travel company.

Additional arrangements may be necessary to obtain insurance cover for activities abroad and activities of a potentially hazardous nature. The group leader should scrutinise carefully the list of exclusions in the policy. If there is any doubt about the cover the insurer should be asked for clarification.

The group the leader should ascertain the details of the insurance held by the tour operator.

Additional cover may be necessary for participants with medical conditions. The group leader should check this with the insurance company before departure.

Cancellations

Some parents may cancel their child's place in the visit. The group leader should forward any cancellations to the insurer/operator as soon as possible, in writing, if a replacement is not available. Delay in notification may incur cancellation charges.

Transport

When hiring coaches etc., the group leader should check that the company used has appropriate insurance.

Use of school/private vehicles: the group leader should check with the Bursary that the insurance policy for the school minibus is appropriate to the journey. Taking the school minibus abroad may require extra insurance.

The group leader should check that the teacher driving the school minibus abroad is appropriately insured and that their driving licence is valid for the countries to be visited or passed through en route.

Teachers, other adults or pupils using their own cars to carry pupils on school visits should ensure that their vehicle is properly licensed and that the insurance covers its use on school business.

TRIPS AND EXTRA-CURRICULAR POLICY

PART 8: 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 check:

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

Over 900 providers currently hold a licence. The relevant legislation is the Activity Centres (Young Persons' Safety) Act 1995 and the associated Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 1996.

A licensed provider does not necessarily have to hold a licence for all its activities. Other activities offered may be accredited under non-statutory schemes. The provider can give information on what activities are licensed.

It is illegal for a provider of licensable status to offer a licensable activity without a valid licence. The Adventure Activities Licensing Authority can check on the licence status of a provider. Their address is: Adventure Activities Licensing Authority, 17 Lambourne Crescent, Llanishen, Cardiff CF4 5GG. Tel 01222 755715. Fax: 01222 755757. Their Internet site is at: <http://www.aala.org>

A licensed provider does not necessarily have to hold a licence for all its activities. 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 when commercial companies sell them, or when local authorities provide them with or without a charge:

- **Caving:** the exploration of underground passages, disused mines, or natural caves which requires the use of special equipment or expertise;

- **Climbing:** climbing, sea-level traversing, abseiling or scrambling over natural terrain or certain man-made structures which requires the use of special rock-climbing or ice-climbing equipment or expertise;
- **Trekking:** going on foot, horse (pony), pedal cycle, skis, skates or sledges over moorland, or on ground over 600 metres above sea level when it would take 30 minutes to reach an accessible road or refuge. Off-piste skiing requires a licence;
- **Watersports:** this comprises sailing, canoeing, kayaking, rafting and windsurfing, on the sea, tidal waters, inland waters at a location where any part of those waters is more than 50 metres from the nearest land, and turbulent inland waters. Rowing is exempt.

Holding a licence means that a provider has been inspected and the Licensing Authority are satisfied that appropriate safety measures are in place for the provision of the specified licensed adventure activities. Other elements of the provision - such as catering and accommodation - are not covered by the licensing scheme. These should be checked separately by the group leader.

Not all providers are required to hold a licence. Voluntary bodies and schools providing for their own members and pupils 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.

Many providers are accredited under non-statutory schemes run by, for example, the Wales Tourist Board, and certain National Governing Bodies (NGBs). Schools can contact these accreditors to ascertain a provider's management of safety. The British Activity Holiday Association can provide advice on accreditations.

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 pupils 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 national governing body for the activity where this is appropriate;
- Clear management of safety systems is in place;
- There is appropriate provision for first aid;
- There are emergency procedures (including arrangements for informing next of kin and for alerting the group leader); that the provider's staff are competent in the procedures and will hold emergency phone numbers and addresses of the group members; and that the group will have a fire drill as soon as possible on arrival at the provider's base.

The group leader may wish to ask the provider for names of other schools who have recently used its facilities.

The group leader should check and agree the provider's arrangements for supervision and recreation during the evenings and between adventure activities. The group leader should also provide any relevant information to the provider such as the group's age range and competence etc.

The group leader and teachers retain ultimate responsibility for pupils at all times during adventure activities, even when the group is under instruction by a member of the provider's staff. The provider is responsible for the safe running of an activity. Clear handover and handback procedures should be in place. Everyone, including the pupils, must have an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the school staff and the provider's staff.

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 pupils may be at unnecessary risk. Assurances may be sought that the provider has:

- Checked the suitability of the staff, including temporary workers, to work with young people.
- Clearly defined the roles and responsibilities of its staff;
- The appropriate security arrangements;
- Appropriate public liability insurance.

School-led adventure activities

If a member of the school staff is to organise, lead and instruct pupils on adventure activities they should complete the checks set out in this policy document under Risk Assessment in Part 2 above.

- Group leader and other supervisors should be competent to act as leaders and/or instructors of pupils in the activity - bearing in mind that some of these pupils may be novices. Competences should be demonstrated by holding the relevant NGB award where it exists. The relevant NGB can advise on this.
- The group leader should be competent in safety procedures and the planning of adventurous visits;
- An appropriate risk assessment must be completed;
- The supervision must be appropriate;
- There must be adequate first aid provision, expertise and equipment within the group;
- The emergency procedures must include activity specific measures and that supervisors are competent to carry them out;
- The equipment must be appropriate, safe and in good condition;
- Every pupil must be suited to the activity and properly prepared and equipped.

Employment of providers

Schools choosing to employ, rather than contract with, an unlicensed freelance provider of adventure activities - who would otherwise need a licence to trade - take full legal responsibility for all aspects of the activity. If the provider, in the employment of the school, provides licensable facilities to the pupils of another school, the employing school will need a licence.

Remote supervision during adventurous activities

Some adventurous activities - such as those under the Duke of Edinburgh Awards - require pupils to work in small groups without direct supervision. Particular attention needs to be given to the information provided to pupils before supervision can be withdrawn.

The training given to pupils must be sound and thorough and should be assessed separately. The instructor should have the appropriate qualifications or experience to provide training in the activity. The group leader should be satisfied that the pupils have acquired the necessary skills and have the necessary experience, confidence, physical ability and judgement to be left without direct supervision.

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.

Pupils should be familiar with all equipment used or taken without direct supervision and, in addition to training, an initial element of adult supervision in the use of equipment may be required. The condition and suitability of any equipment, particularly safety equipment, taken or used during these activities should be assessed separately.

Coastal visits

Group leaders and other teachers should be aware that many of the incidents affecting pupils have occurred by or in the sea. There are dangers on the coast quite apart from those incurred in swimming pools (for which see separate section below – Annex A Forms 1 and 2). 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 routes 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 out for hazards such as glass, barbed wire and sewage outflows etc.;
- Some of a group's time on a beach may be recreational. 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 group should keep to the path at all times. Group leaders should consider whether it is safe or legal for pupils to ride mountain bikes on coastal paths.

The local coastguard, harbour master, lifeguard or tourist information office can provide information and advice on the nature and location of hazards.

Swimming in the sea or other natural waters

Swimming and paddling in the sea or other natural waters are potentially dangerous activities for a school group. They should only be allowed as formal and supervised activities, preferably in recognised bathing areas which have official surveillance i.e. qualified lifeguard cover. Nonetheless, pupils should always be in sight of their supervisors. One supervisor should always stay out of the water for better surveillance.

The group leader, or another designated teacher in the group, should hold a relevant lifesaving award, especially where lifeguard cover may not be available. The group leader should assess the risks and consider an appropriate safe supervision level for their particular group before the activity takes place (at least a ratio of 1:10). A parental consent form must be completed before a pupil participates in any swimming activity in the sea or other natural waters (this should include the questions and information Annex 1 Form 2).

The group leader should:

- Be aware that many children who drown are strong swimmers;
- Ascertain for themselves the level of the pupil's swimming ability;
- Be aware of the local conditions - such as currents, weeds, a shelving, uneven or unstable bottom - using local information from the lifeguard, coastguard, harbourmaster, police or tourist information office;
- Designate a safe area of water for use by the group;
- Be aware of the dangerous effects of sudden immersion in cold water;
- Be aware of the dangers of paddling especially for young pupils;
- Ensure that pupils have not eaten (at least half an hour) before swimming;
- Ensure the activity is suitable for the pupils, especially any with disabilities;
- Adopt and explain the signals of distress and recall.

Swimming pools

Group leaders should follow the recommended safe supervision levels at the pool for their pupils. A minimum ratio is 1 adult to 20 pupils. Teachers should monitor the risks of regular swimming activities and adjust supervision levels for their individual groups as necessary. If considering the use of a swimming pool not used before or monitoring the hazards of a regularly used pool it is advisable to observe and check the following:

- Is there constant pool supervision by a sufficient number of qualified lifeguards?
- Where there is no lifeguard 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 and be accompanied by an appropriate number of supervisors;
- Is the water temperature appropriate?
- Is the water clear?
- Are there signs clearly indicating the depth- is there a shallow end and is the water there shallow enough?
- Does the pool cater for pupils with disabilities?

- Does the deep end allow for safe diving?
- Is there a poolside telephone?
- Are there a resuscitator and other pieces of first aid and rescue equipment, and is there someone trained to use them?
- Does the pool cater for any particular religious or cultural factors?
- Are the changing and showering facilities safe and hygienic?
- Can clothes be stored securely?
- Have the pupils been instructed how to behave in and around the water?

Farm visits

Farms can be dangerous even for the people who work on them. Taking children to a farm should be carefully planned. The risks to be assessed should include those arising from the misuse of farm machinery and the hazards associated with *E coli* 0157 food poisoning and other infections.

Check that the farm is well-managed; that it has a good reputation for safety standards and animal welfare; and that it maintains good washing facilities and clean grounds and public areas. Consider the merits of an exploratory visit.

There are some basic safety rules. Never let pupils:

- Place their faces against the animals or put their hands in their own mouths after feeding the animals;
- Eat until they have washed their hands;
- Sample any animal foodstuffs;
- Drink from farm taps (other than in designated public facilities);
- Ride on tractors or other machines;
- Play in the farm area.

Field studies

Field studies associated with a range of subjects including geography, biology, geology and history might take pupils to industrial sites and other urban areas as well as into the countryside and to the coast (see above, **Coastal visits**). The scope of field studies means that the group leaders, who will usually be subject specialists, should also be competent to the school and instruct their pupils within urban and non-urban environments at minimal risk. See Annex A and B for sources of advice and guidance.

Residential visits

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

- The group should ideally have adjoining rooms with teachers' quarters next to the pupils' - the leader should obtain a floor plan of the rooms reserved for the group's use in advance;
- There must be separate male and female sleeping/bathroom facilities for pupils and adults; the immediate accommodation area should be exclusively for the group's use;
- Ensure there is appropriate and safe heating and ventilation;
- Ensure that the whole group are aware of the lay-out of the accommodation, its fire precautions/exits (are instructions in English or otherwise clear?), its regulations and routine, and that everyone can identify key personnel;

- Security arrangements - where the reception is not staffed 24 hours a day, security arrangements should be in force to stop unauthorised visitors;
- The manager of the accommodation should be asked for assurances that the staff, including temporary workers, have been checked as suitable for work with young people. See also **vetting suitability** above.
- 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;
- Balconies should be stable, windows secure, and electrical connections safe; - where possible pupils should not be lodged in ground floor rooms;
- There should be recreational accommodation/ facilities for the group;
- The hotel/hostel should be able to meet any particular cultural or religious needs of the group;
- There should be an appropriate number of group supervisors on standby duty during the night.

Before booking a hostel/hotel abroad, the group leader should confirm it has fire exits and lifts with inner doors and that it meets local regulations. After arrival at any accommodation it is advisable to carry out a fire drill as soon as possible.

TRIPS AND EXTRA-CURRICULAR POLICY

PART 9: VISITS ABROAD

General

Travelling abroad can be hugely rewarding for pupils and adults alike, but it is important that careful preparation takes place. Much of the earlier advice in this policy document applies to visits abroad, but there are some additional factors that need to be considered, not least because the legislation may be different from that of the UK. Group leaders should always comply with the school policy on visits abroad. School visits abroad can be made in a number of ways.

Organising your own visit

It is recommended that all overseas trips are booked through a reputable travel agent. 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 extra- to transport. Most package arrangements come within the scope of the regulations unless they are 'occasional' or part of an educational course programme as compared with a leisure activity such as skiing. If it is more appropriate for the school to arrange trips directly, then in some circumstances, this is possible. Please see the Assistant Head (Co-c) or the Bursar to discuss and seek

approval before proceeding with the trip. The School holds insurance that allows us to act within The Package Tour regulations.

Organising your own transport

School minibuses other vehicles are not equipped or permitted to be taken overseas, if such transport is required, hire vehicles must be used and booked through a reputable travel agent. 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. DETR 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 recordkeeping 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, advice on domestic rules may be obtained from the relevant embassies of the countries concerned. See also *Taking a Minibus Abroad* (DETR);
- 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
- Carrying capacity and loading requirements;

DETR can provide information on legal requirements for travel abroad. See Annex B for address details.

Using a Tour Operator

Before using a tour operator, group leaders 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). The licence is a legal requirement and provides security against a licence holder going out of business.

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)
- Association of Independent Tour Operators Trust (AITOT)

- Passenger Shipping Association (PSA)
- The Confederation of Passenger Transport (CPT)
- Yacht Charter Association (YCA)
- The Association of Bonded Travel Organisers Trust (ABTOT)

Operators based abroad

Directive 90/314/EEC (as referred to above) applies to all states of the European Economic Area (EEA). Group leaders may wish to use a package organiser based abroad in an EEA state. If so, they should check that it satisfies the requirements of the national legislation implementing the Directive. Details may be available from national tourist offices or embassies/consulates.

Sources of further advice for school travel abroad

- The Department of Trade and Industry - for the regulations governing tour operators;
- The Schools and Group Travel Association (SAGTA) is an independent association with a members' code of good conduct and safety rules. All its members are in ABTA;
- Alternatively, there are voluntary bodies established to promote school journeys, such as the School Journey Association;
- Head teachers or group leaders who decide to arrange travel independently may also seek the advice and help of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's (FCO) Travel Advice Unit. The Unit's purpose is to help intending travellers to avoid trouble abroad. It can provide information on threats to personal safety arising from political unrest, lawlessness, violence etc.

Address details are provided in Annex B.

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 & commonwealth office's travel advice unit;
- Other schools who have used the facilities/been to the area;
- The local authority/schools in the area to be visited;
- National travel offices in the UK;
- Embassies/consulates;
- Travel agents/tour operators;

The Suzy Lamplugh Trust, a national charity for personal safety, who have produced guidance, including a book called *World Wise: Your Passport to Safer Travel*, a video of the same title, and information on the Internet. See Annex B for publication details and contact addresses.

Staffing the visit

Staffing ratios for visits abroad are difficult to prescribe as they will vary according to the activity, the pupils' age and sex, the location, and the efficient use of resources. A minimum ratio of 1 adult to 10 pupils is a general rule of thumb but at least two of the adults should be teachers. There should be enough adults in the group to cover an emergency.

Preparing pupils for visits abroad

Factors to consider for visits abroad include:

- Language - particularly common phrases;
- Culture e.g. 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. In some countries it is safer to drink bottled water, and care needs to be taken with raw vegetables, salads and unpeeled fruit, raw shellfish, underdone meat or fish;
- Money - how to carry money and valuables discreetly e.g. money belts, zip armllets. If larger amounts of money will be needed, it is advisable to take travellers cheques;
- How to use phones abroad, money required (a BT contact card allows calls to be charged to the home number) and the code for phoning home; - what to do in an emergency. See **emergencies** above.

Briefing meeting for parents

It is particularly important that parents are given the opportunity to ask questions about the running of specific trips. This may be via meeting, or electronic means.

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* (see Annex A).

Insurance

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

Foreign legislation

The group leader needs to check relevant legislation, particularly on health and safety e.g. fire regulations.

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 of the adults learns enough of the language to hold a basic conversation and knows what to say in an emergency.

Visas/passports

The group leader should ensure that all members of the group have valid passports and visas (if appropriate) in the early stages of planning the trip. A group passport may suffice in certain circumstances.

Photocopies of the group's passports should be taken for emergency use. Otherwise there can be problems if someone other than the designated the group leader has to accompany an injured pupil back to the UK.

Nationality

If the group includes pupils whose national or immigration status or entitlement to a British passport is in doubt, it is advisable to make early enquiries of the Home Office's Immigration and Nationality Directorate (see Annex B for address details) concerning the requirements of the immigration rules and the right of re-entry.

Pupils who are not nationals of any EU member state may need a visa to travel from the UK to another member state. However, they may receive visa exemption if they are members of a school group. Details and forms are available from the Central Bureau for Educational Visits and Exchanges. (See Annex B for contact details.)

Pupils other than EU nationals may require a separate passport and may need to use separate passport control channels from the rest of the group.

Emergency Medical Facilities

Some of these are available through reciprocal health care arrangements in European Community (EC) countries to EU Nationals. The GHIC from the NHS is the certificate of entitlement to free or reduced cost treatment and must be completed by the child's parent. It is available free online.

It is advisable to take a contingency fund as sometimes treatment must be paid for in advance and money has to be claimed back later.

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 group's documents in a sealed waterproof bag;
- A copy of the contract with the centre/hotel etc., if appropriate;
- Medical papers e.g. significant medical histories;
- Parental consent forms and permission for group leader to authorise emergency treatment on parental behalf;
- The phone numbers of the school emergency contact 01483 887134;
- The names of parents 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 the school

Full details of the visit should be retained on Evolve 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; and
- The school emergency contact numbers.

During the visit

It is advisable for pupils to carry a note in the relevant foreign language for use if they get lost, asking the reader to re-unite them with the group at the accommodation/meeting point, or to take them to the police station. They should also carry the group leader name and the duty contact's phone number.

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

It is important to be able to identify group members readily e.g. uniform, brightly coloured backpack, cap or item of clothing, badges. However, no student should display their name clearly on their clothing - this could result in their being isolated from the group by an apparently friendly, personal call.

Emergencies

The group leader must ensure that all members of the group know what action to take if there is a problem. The group leader and supervisors should know where the nearest British Embassy or Consulate is located and the telephone number. Depending on the age of the pupils, it may be appropriate to ensure that they have this information to hand.

Group leaders need to be aware that some diseases are more prevalent in some countries than in others and should know what action to take should a member of the group become infected. Many of the health problems of pupils on longer visits are caused by lack of food, of liquid or of sleep. The group leader should take this into account at the planning stage and take measures to prevent these risks. If appropriate, parents should be asked to provide suitably factored sun protection creams and sun hats/glasses. Group members should be advised about the dangers of over-exertion in the heat and of dehydration, which can cause headache, dizziness and nausea. In warm climates it is important to keep fluid levels high, take extra salt and wear loose, lightweight clothing - preferably made of cotton or other natural fibres.

Contacts at home

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

Travel by air

Taking a school group on an aircraft requires careful planning and preparation. The airline/travel agent will be able to advise on particular requirements. If the group includes any members with disabilities, it is advisable to check that the airline has a wheelchair service and lifting facility etc., if appropriate. The group leader should resist any attempt by the airline to split the group between different aircraft.

Exchange visits

The success of an exchange visit largely depends on good relationships and communications with the partner school. Individual school exchanges differ from other visits abroad in that pupils will spend most of their time with host families and are, therefore, not always under the direct supervision of school staff. Host families will not be subject to English law.

Pupils must be aware of the ground rules agreed between the group leader and the host family. Many of the considerations which apply to residential and day trips also apply here. In addition, the following should be ensured by the group leader:

- A good personal knowledge of the host school and counterpart;
- Satisfactory 'pairing' arrangements. The partner school should tell the host families of any special, medical or dietary needs of their guests, age and gender;
- Matches should be appropriate;
- Parents, pupils and the host school should be clear about the arrangements for collecting and distributing pupils to families, and for transporting pupils throughout the visit;
- The head teacher should retain a list of all the children involved and their family names and addresses;
- Pupils living with host families should have easy access to their teachers, usually by telephone;
- Parents should be made aware that their children living with host families will not always be under direct teacher-supervision.

Vetting host families

Exchange or home stay visits should be arranged through agencies, in which case the agency should have some responsibility for vetting the host families. Please see the Safeguarding Policy for more details. If the host school or placing agency does not have appropriate measures in place for carrying out checks to ensure the health, safety and welfare of exchange or home stay pupils, the group leader should seek further assurances and/or reconsider whether the visit should take place.

TRIPS AND EXTRA-CURRICULAR POLICY

PART 10: EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

General

Teachers in charge of pupils during a visit have a duty of care to make sure that the pupils 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 lifesaving action in an extreme situation. Emergency procedures are an essential part of planning a school visit. County and controlled schools should follow the school guidance on emergency planning procedures.

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 of 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. The group leader should liaise with the representative of the tour operator if one is being used.

Pre-arranged school home contact.

The school contact's main responsibility is to link the group with the school, the parents and the school (where appropriate), and to provide assistance as necessary. The named person should have all the necessary information about the visit. The emergency contact information on the database should be completed.

Emergency procedures framework

All those involved in the school trip, including supervisors, pupils and their parents, should be informed of who will take charge in an emergency, the named back up cover and what they are expected to do in an emergency.

Emergency procedures framework during the visit

If an emergency occurs on a school visit the main factors to consider include:

- Establish the nature and extent of the emergency as quickly as possible;
- Ensure that all the group are safe and looked after;
- Establish the names of any casualties and get immediate medical attention for them;
- Ensure that all group members who need to know are aware of the incident and that all group members are following the emergency procedures;
- Ensure that a teacher accompanies casualties to hospital and that the rest of the group are adequately supervised at all times and kept together;
- Notify the police if necessary;
- Notify the British Embassy/Consulate if an emergency occurs abroad; inform the school contact. The school contact number should be accessible at all times during the visit;
- Details of the incident to pass on to the school should include: nature, date and time of incident; location of incident; names of casualties and details of their injuries; names of others involved so that parents can be reassured; action taken so far; action yet to be taken (and by whom);
- Notify insurers, especially if medical assistance is required (this may be done by the school contact);
- Notify the provider/tour operator (this may be done by the school contact);
- Write down accurately and as soon as possible all relevant facts and witness details and preserve any vital evidence; keep a written account of all events, times and contacts after the incident;
- Complete an accident report form as soon as possible. Contact HSE or local authority inspector, if appropriate;
- Information should not be given to the media as this could cause distress to their families. Media enquiries should be referred to a designated media contact in the home area;
- No-one in the group should discuss legal liability with other parties.

Emergency procedures framework for school base.

Prior to the visit, the name and school and home telephone numbers of a school contact should be identified. It is advisable to arrange a second school contact as a reserve. Group leaders should bear in mind that the contact lines may become busy in the event of an incident and that alternative numbers to ring would be useful. The main factors for the school 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 school 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;
- The school contact should act as a link between the group and the school and arrange for the group to receive assistance, if necessary;
- Liaison with media contact. If a serious incident occurs, the school contact should liaise with the designated media contact as soon as possible;
- The reporting of the incident using appropriate forms, if necessary. Some incidents are reportable under the *Reporting Of Injuries, Diseases And Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR)*. For further information, see annex b.

Media contact

The School usually has a designated person to deal with media enquiries for county and controlled schools. GM schools normally make their own media arrangements - this is often through a school governor. The media contact should liaise with the school contact, the group leader and, where appropriate, the emergency services. In the event of an emergency all media enquiries should be referred to the media contact. The name of any casualty should not be given to the media.

After a serious incident

It is not always possible to assess whether group members not injured or directly involved in the incident have been traumatised or whether other pupils or staff in the school have been affected. In some cases, reactions do not surface immediately. Schools in this situation have sometimes found it helpful to contact local community support services and to seek professional advice on how to help individuals and the school as a whole cope with the effects of a tragedy.

Reviewed by: Assistant Head Co-curricular / Bursar

Date of last review: 29 June 2021

Date of next review: Trinity 2022