

# **Educational Visits**

# **Staff Handbook**

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# Procedure for organising trips

## Section A

### Responsibilities

#### 1. Headmistress

The Headmistress should ensure that:

- the group leader is competent to monitor the risks throughout the visit;
- adequate child protection procedures are in place;
- all necessary actions have been completed before the visit;
- the risk assessment has been completed and safety measures are in place;
- training needs have been assessed by a competent person and the needs of the staff and pupils have been considered;
- the group leader has experience in supervising the age groups going on the visit and will organise the group effectively;
- group leaders are allowed sufficient time to organise visits properly;
- non-teacher supervisors on the visit are appropriate people to supervise the pupils;
- ratio of supervisors to pupils is appropriate;
- parents have signed the consent form;
- arrangements have been made for medical needs and special educational needs of the pupils;
- adequate first-aid provision will be available;
- the mode of transport is appropriate;
- travel times out and back are known including pick-up and drop-off points;
- there is an adequate and relevant insurance cover;
- the school has the address and phone numbers of the visit's venue and have a contact name;
- school contacts have been nominated;
- the group leader, group supervisors and nominated school contacts have a copy of the agreed emergency procedures;
- the group leader, group supervisors and nominated school contacts have the names of all the adults and pupils travelling in the group and the contact details of parents and the teachers' and other supervisors' next of kin;
- there is a contingency plan for any delays including a late return home.

#### 2. Group Leader

The group leader should have overall responsibility for the supervision and conduct of the visit and should have regard to the health and safety of the group and the Headmistress should have approved him/her.

The group leader should:

- obtain the Headmistress's prior agreement before any off-site visit takes place;
- appoint a deputy group leader;
- clearly define each group supervisor's role and ensure all tasks have been assigned;
- be able to control and lead pupils of the relevant age;

- be suitably competent where appropriate to instruct pupils in the activity and be familiar with the location/centre where the activity will take place;
- be aware of child protection issues;
- ensure that adequate first-aid provision is available;
- undertake and complete the planning and preparation of the visit including a briefing of group members and parents (residential trips only);
- undertake and complete a comprehensive risk assessment;
- ensure that teachers and other supervisors are fully aware of what the proposed visit involves;
- have enough information on the pupils proposed for the visit to assess their suitability or be satisfied that their suitability has been assessed and confirmed;
- ensure the ratio of supervisors to pupils is appropriate for the needs of the group;
- consider stopping the visit if the risk to the health or safety of the pupils is unacceptable and have in place procedures for such an eventuality;
- ensure that group supervisors have details of the school contacts;
- ensure that group supervisors and the school contacts have a copy of the emergency procedures;
- ensure that the group's teachers and other supervisors have the details of pupils' special educational or medical needs which will be necessary for them to carry out their tasks effectively;

### **3. Teachers**

Teachers on school led visits act as employees of the governing body whether the visit takes place within normal school hours or outside those hours, by agreement with the Headmistress.

Teachers must:

- do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group and act as any responsible parents would do in the same circumstances;
- follow the instructions of the group leader and help with control and discipline;
- consider stopping the visit or the activity, notifying the group leader, if they think the risk to the health and safety of the pupils in their charge is unacceptable.

### **4. Adult Volunteers**

Non teacher adults on the visit should be clear about their roles and responsibilities during the visit. Non-teacher adults acting as supervisors must;

- do their best to ensure the health and safety of the group;
- not be left in sole charge of the pupils except where it has been previously agreed as part of the risk assessment;
- follow the instructions of the group leader and teacher supervisors and help with control and discipline;
- speak to the group leader or teacher supervisors if concerned about the health or safety of the pupils at any time during the visit.

### **5. Pupils**

The group leader must make it clear to the pupils that they must:

- not take unnecessary risks;

- follow the instructions of the group leader and other supervisors including those at the venue of the visit;
- dress and behave sensibly and responsibly;
- if abroad be sensitive to local codes and customs;
- look out for anything that might hurt or threaten themselves or anyone in the group and tell the group leader or supervisor about it.

Any pupil whose behaviour may be considered to be a danger to themselves or the group may be stopped from going on the visit. The curricular aims of the visit for these pupils should be fulfilled in other ways where possible.

## **6. Parents**

Parents should be able to make an informed choice on whether their child should go on the visit. The group leader should ensure that parents are given sufficient information in writing and are invited to any briefing sessions.

The group leader should always tell parents how they can help prepare for the visit by, for example, reinforcing the visit's code of conduct. Parents should also be asked to agree arrangements for sending a pupil home early at their expense.

Parents will need to:

- provide the group leader with emergency contact number/s;
- sign a consent form;
- give the group leader information about their child's emotional, psychological and physical health, which may be relevant to the visit and declare any pre-existing medical conditions which may affect their child's insurance for the trip

## Section B

### Planning to gain consent

The following tick list needs to be considered

Issue	Done / Not applicable
Places to visit	
Dates and times	
Transport requirements	
Provisional booking with the tour operator	
Financial arrangements	
Check school / other insurance	
Accommodation arrangements	
Agreed with other parties - exchange school etc	
Check the venue activities / facilities / equipment	
Identify suitable staff to accompany the trip plus a reserve	
Provisional names of other accompanying adults	
Check pupil ratios	
Risk assessment	

### Initial Planning before parents are approached

#### 3.1 Transport Arrangements

##### ❖ General

- Group members should be made aware that travel sickness tablets should only be taken by a pupil with previous authorisation from the parents.
- 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;

##### ❖ Road

A driver cannot safely drive and supervise children at the same time. Group leaders should ensure that:

- Transport by road has seat belts and that the pupils wear them;
- There is adequate supervision at all times when travelling;
- Supervisors are reserved seats that allow them to supervise properly;
- Pupils are supervised when boarding and leaving;
- Extra care is taken when leaving a vehicle in a country that drives on the right as some doors may open onto the road side;

- Standards of behaviour are met, and in particular that drivers are not distracted;
  - Evacuation procedures (see appendix) are clearly understood by everyone, luggage is securely stored and emergency exits are kept clear;
  - A member of staff should sit by the emergency exit to supervise in the event of an emergency evacuation. If the coach does not have an emergency exit then staff should make a judgement regarding the distribution of supervisors on the day;
  - There are adequate rests for drivers;
  - Head counts are carried out when the group is getting off or onto the transport;
  - Pupils should be made aware that they are not allowed access to the driving area at any time
- ❖ Trains, Ferries and Boats
- The group leader must make it clear to pupils how much or little freedom they have to 'roam';
  - Pupils should be made aware of the emergency procedures;
  - The group leader should arrange for seats to be reserved, where possible, well in advance to ensure the party can travel together
- ❖ Private cars
- Teachers and others who drive pupils in their own cars must ensure their passengers' safety, that the vehicle is roadworthy, and that they have the appropriate licence and insurance cover for carrying pupils;
  - The driver is responsible for making sure that pupils have a seat belt and use it at all times. Vehicles without seatbelts should not be used
  - Parents' agreement should be obtained on a consent form for their children to be carried in other parents'/ pupils' cars. It is advisable that the driver is not alone with a single pupil – **Excursion 6**
  - If pupils (including Sixth Form) are making their own way to a particular venue, they should have brought in a letter of consent in advance
- ❖ School Minibus
- Although it is the responsibility of the maintenance officer please liaise with him/her over its suitability for the purpose.
  - Any driver who carries pupils must have completed the minibus assessment course.

## 3.2 Financial Planning

**This must be discussed with the Accounts Assistant.**

For day visits:

- Inform parents as early as possible of the cost involved. See standard letter. [Standard Letters Link](#)
- Give them a clear deadline for payment

- State clearly to whom cheques should be payable
- All payments should be given directly to the Accounts Assistant who will deal with the financial arrangements and keep clear records of any monies received
- Please ensure that all costs will be met out of the amount collected
- Girls who are in receipt of bursaries will receive partial or full payment from the school for curriculum related trips. The Accounts Assistant maintains a record of all bursary pupils. Letters should be distributed to all girls

For residential visits/visits abroad:

- In the initial letter home, parents should be informed of the estimated cost of the visit and details of what is included in the total cost
- State your criteria for allocating places in the event the trip is oversubscribed
- Ask for an initial deposit large enough to show firm interest
- State that deposits will be non-refundable as they are used to secure tour arrangements. See standard letter template – locked text must be used
- Each group should carry an emergency float to cover any unforeseen events (doctor's fees, prescription charges and minor medical fees may need to be settled directly on the spot and reclaimed after the return journey to the UK)
- With small groups in particular it is essential to build into the price enough money to cover the cost of an extra member of staff, so that supervision would not be a problem in the case of an emergency
- Clear deadlines should be given for the deposit and all subsequent payments (allow plenty of time before the company's deadline)
- State clearly to whom cheques should be payable
- All money should be brought to school in a named envelope and given to the trip leader
- Girls should be encouraged to pass on any money as early as possible in the day
- Parents should also be informed of the amount of pocket money needed. It is a good idea to stipulate a maximum amount
- If it is a foreign visit, parents need to be told whether they will have to change the sterling into foreign currency, or whether school will do it
- It is a good idea for the Staff to keep the girls' money when they are away. Money should be placed in envelopes marked with the girl's name and kept in the centre/hotel safe. Girls should be given times when they are able to withdraw money and details should be recorded on each envelope. This system allows pupils to budget their money and prevent them from spending it/losing it during the first day or two
- All reasonable staff out of pocket expenses, travel and food may be recovered from the trip fund but this should not include alcohol
- Parents need to be informed of the use of any surplus funds ie will they be returned to parents?

### **3.3 Insurance**

The group leader must ensure that the group has comprehensive travel insurance. See the Bursar to check that the trip will be covered by the school's insurance. If not

tour operators often have their own and some operators include insurance as a compulsory item. If insurance other than the school's is being used the group leaders must ensure that all parents have a copy.

### **Advice on insurance:**

It is recommended that, wherever possible, teachers book residential trips with travel companies that can offer insurance for the whole trip, including flights, accommodation and itinerary.

ABTA and ATOL protection is available for travellers booking a package holiday with a UK tour operator, but this does not cover arrangements made by the independent traveller. For instance, flights and accommodation that are booked separately do not have ABTA or ATOL protection. Furthermore, there is no insurance available to cover the failure of an airline or the accommodation provider.

If you do decide to book flights separately please make sure that payments are made using the School's credit card; in the event of the failure of the airline the credit card company will refund the payment made. If a flight is cancelled by the airline there is a possibility that alternative flights will be offered. This may solve the problem but it is possible that a large group may not be able to travel together, presenting staffing problems, and times of replacement flights may make the itinerary impossible to fulfil. Airlines will not meet the cost of replacement itinerary in this case.

If, after due consideration of the above, you still decide to book separately, please add a friendly note to parents making it clear that, in the unlikely event of flights being cancelled or delayed, the school cannot take responsibility for consequential losses, eg: accommodation, meals, activities, etc.

## **3.4 Staffing**

**See staffing ratio on school trip document.**

- ❖ It is important to have a high enough ratio of adult supervisors to pupils for any visit. The factors to take into consideration include:
  - Sex, age and ability of the group;
  - Pupils with special educational or medical needs;
  - Nature of the activities;
  - Experience of adults in off-site supervision;
  - Duration and nature of the journey;
  - Type of 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.

It is the responsibility of the trip leader to ensure that the trip is staffed correctly. A stand-by member of staff needs to be identified to cover unforeseen circumstances.

Where a high adult: pupil ratio is required, it is not always feasible to use school staff alone. Carefully selected parents / volunteers, with or without an EDBS, may be used to supplement the supervision ratio but they must never be left in sole charge of pupils. Ideally the school and the pupil group should know them and a full EDBS check will be in place.

Parents/ volunteers must have a full EDBS to accompany any residential trip.

Detailed below the supervision ratios, which the Headmistress has decided should apply to school trips having regard to the age and understanding of the pupils, the sex of the party, the length of the journey, the destination, the nature of the activity and the support provided by organisers. These ratios have been approved by H M Revenue and Customs for the purpose of the School's dispensation from reporting payments and benefits arising in relation to school trips. Residential trips must be staffed by a minimum of two female staff. In exceptional circumstances this number may be revised by agreement.

For local day trips the staffing ratio may allow just one member of staff (either male or female) to accompany a small party of pupils but all risks must be adequately assessed.

Non-hazardous day trips	Pupils aged 5 to7	1:5
Non-hazardous day trips	Pupils aged 7 to 10	1:8
Residential trips	Pupils aged 7 to 10	1:8
Hazardous trips, including those where there are busy streets and crossings.	Pupils aged 5 to 10	1:5
Foreign trips	Pupils aged 5 to 10	1:5
Non-hazardous day trips	Pupils aged 11 to 17 (depending upon the above factors.)	1:10 or 1:15
Geography/Biology field trips	Pupils aged 11 to 17	1:10
Hazardous trips	Pupils aged 11 to 17	1:8
Foreign trips	Pupils aged 11 to 17	1:8

Ski trips	Pupils aged 11 to 17	1:10
Residential trips	Pupils aged 11 to 17	1:10

NB. If you wish to take an extra member of staff with you on a trip then you are advised that the cost of the staff member be divided between the members of staff on the trip. Parents should not be expected to pay for more staff than the ratio allows.

## Section C

### Once consent is obtained - Information to Parents and Pupils

#### Information to Parents

Parents should be informed in writing of any off-site visits unless it is a regular part of the school curriculum which parents have already been informed about through the school prospectus or a letter. The following information should be given to parents:

- Dates of the visit
- Visit's objectives
- Times of departure and return – parents must have agreed to meet their children on return
- Location where pupils will be collected and returned (with a map, if it is not at school)
- Mode of travel including the name of any travel company
- Itinerary and details of activities to be undertaken
- Cost and payment of the visit
- Name of leader and accompanying staff/other adults if known at the time
- The size of the group and level of supervision including any times when remote supervision may take place stating the staff/pupil ratio
- Clothing and equipment (if necessary)
- Standards of behaviour
- Money to be taken
- Consent form

Adding for residential/foreign visits

- Details of accommodation, with security and supervisory arrangements on site
- Details of insurance
- Details of provision for medical needs
- Procedures for pupils who become ill
- Emergency procedures
- What pupils should not take or bring back
- Standards of behaviour expected in respect of for example alcohol, sexual behaviour, smoking and general group discipline including prohibited items. This information may take the form of a code of conduct which parents should sign
- Sanctions
- Out of hours contact number. This should be the number of a mobile phone which should be issued to a school contact.

Parents should be encouraged to attend a briefing meeting where these issues would be discussed.

## Parental Consent

Parental consent must be sought for:

- Non-routine visits
- Visits abroad
- Adventure activities (both residential and non-residential)
- Any residential visit
- Remote supervision

Parents should complete a consent form.

For non-residential trips and course required trips this consent will be part of the trip letter – see course required letter and non-residential standard letter.

**Medical consent** will form part of the parental consent form **for residential trips and exchanges only**. Medical information and contact details for non-residential trips and regular trips should be obtained from the school database. Parents should be asked to agree to the pupils receiving emergency treatment, including anaesthetic or blood transfusion, as considered necessary by the medical authorities. If parents do not agree to this, the Headmistress/Party leader may decide to withdraw the child from the visit, given the additional responsibility this would entail. However, if the pupil were in need of a transfusion, it is likely that the medical staff would take ultimate responsibility for such a decision.

## Section D

### Final Planning

#### More detailed planning of visit

Issue	Done / Not applicable
Confirm booking	
Risk assessments	
Check the venue activities / facilities / equipment	
First aid provision	
Detailed information to parents	
Meeting with parents	
Preparation of pupils	
Emergency procedures	
Information pack	
Contact information	
Visa / passport arrangements	
Inform catering	
Information packs to emergency contacts	
Mobile phones	
Money and travel card	
Card with contact details for pupils	

#### Risk Assessment

An assessment should be completed well before the visit and should be checked for consistency and approved by the Headmistress. 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, the visit must not take place. If there is a sudden change in conditions, whatever it may be, Staff should be prepared to alter their arrangements. The risk assessment form is 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?

Risk assessment forms are available in Shared Documents (Read Staff) and a copy should be given to the Educational Visits Co-ordinator on completion.

Many visits are repeats of a previously successful visit, but it is essential not to become complacent. Different pupils may be involved and other factors, such as the weather, may need to be taken into account. It is important to re-assess the risks each time a visit is made.

When visits have been booked through tour operators, the group leader should obtain documentary assurance that providers have themselves assessed the risks and have appropriate safety measures in place. Tour operators should provide their own safety management system policy document.

In the event of a disruption at the tour destination (such as civil unrest or an act of terrorism) tour operators will provide details of the options available.

Group leaders, who will usually be subject specialists, should also be competent to lead and instruct their pupils within urban and non-urban environments at minimal risk. The usual risk assessment form should be completed. Leaders of groups going to the coast/rivers/lakes need to think about the following, if appropriate:

- The dangers of swimming (see separate section)
- Problems caused by currents, shelving, stepping stones, etc
- Tides and sandbanks are potential hazards
- Making the group aware of warning signs and flags
- Establishing a base to which members of the group may return
- Hazards such as glass and barbed wire
- Keeping to paths on cliff tops

The local tourist information office, lifeguard or coastguard would be able to supply further information. Field study centres should have their own code of practice.

### **Adventure Holidays**

Wherever possible, commercial companies should be used. It is the responsibility of the group leader to check

- Whether the provider has a licence for the activities it offers
- Whether the provider is legally required to hold a licence

The activities provided by companies like NST do not fall within the remit of the Adventure Activity Licensing Authority. They do, however, comply in full with their regulations. They do provide schools with their safety policy and operating procedures.

- The group leader should also check and agree the arrangements for supervision and recreation during the evenings and between activities
- Clear handover and hand over procedures should be in place
- Everyone must have a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities of both the school staff and the provider's staff.
- The group leader retains ultimate responsibility for the pupils at all times.

### **Farm Visits / Visits Involving Animals**

The risk assessment should include any problems that may arise from the misuse of farm machinery and the hazards associated with E coli food poisoning and other infections.

Pupils should not:

- Eat until they have washed their hands
- Sample any animal foodstuffs
- Drink from farm taps (except in the designated public facility area)
- Play in the farm area
- Ride on any machines
- Place their faces against animals or put their hands in their mouth after feeding the animals

### **Swimming - Excursion 2 and 3**

The appropriate consent form must have been returned in advance of the visit - **Excursion 3.**

**No swimming** is allowed unless:

- There is constant supervision by qualified lifeguards
- Or
- Where the group leader or another adult member of the party has a relevant life saving award and is accompanied by an appropriate number of other supervisors
- 
- |                     |              |                      |
|---------------------|--------------|----------------------|
| Up to and including | Y3           | 1 adult to 8 pupils  |
|                     | Y4 – 6       | 1 adult to 12 pupils |
|                     | Y7 and above | 1 adult to 20 pupils |
- The group leader should assess the risks and consider a safe supervision level before the activity takes place.
  - One adult should always stay out of the water to supervise from the shore/side of the pool.

If there is a lifeguard/qualified adult, the group leader should:

- Consider local conditions - currents, shelving, etc
- Designate a safe area of water for use by the group
- Realise the dangerous effects of sudden immersions in cold water
- Consider the dangers of paddling, especially for young pupils
- Explain the distress signals

For **swimming pools** – please refer to the checklist (**Excursion 2**).

### **Preliminary visits**

Wherever possible, a preliminary visit should be made to:

- Ensure that the venue is suitable to meet the aims and objectives of the school visit
- Assess potential areas and levels of risk
- Familiarise yourself with the area

- Obtain names and addresses of other schools who have used the venue
- Note down useful telephone numbers such as the emergency services (if abroad, in particular)
- Visit the tourist office, if abroad
- Obtain advice from the manager of any residential centre.

If a preliminary visit is not possible, the group leader should obtain information from other schools about the venue and from local organisations such as tourist boards.

### **First Aid**

First Aid forms an integral part of risk assessment. Each trip should have a designated member of staff in charge of First Aid with an appropriate First Aid certificate. A first aid kit must be taken on all off-site visits. Please see the office staff who will have a number of standard bags. All staff involved in a visit should know how to contact the emergency services.

### **Detailed information to parents - overnight or longer trips only Information packs must contain the following:**

- Itinerary
- Clothing and equipment
- Money arrangements
- Contact information
- Telephone line for return
- Emergency procedures
- Insurance details

### **Preparation of pupils**

Providing information and guidance to pupils is an important part of preparing for a school visit. They 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. They should be told that school rules apply on all visits. They should also be told about any potential dangers and how they should act to ensure their own safety and that of others.

Pupils should also be involved in planning, implementing and evaluating their own curricular work.

### **Information to Pupils**

The group leader should decide how information is provided – in a booklet and a briefing before the visit. They should understand:

- The aims and objectives of the visit
- Background information about the place to be visited
- Basic foreign vocabulary, where appropriate
- Relevant foreign culture and customs

- Why they should follow rules
- Why safety precautions are in place
- What standard of behaviour is expected of them
- Appropriate and inappropriate personal and social conduct
- What not to bring back either within the UK or from abroad
- What to do if approached by anyone from outside the group
- Rendezvous procedures
- What to do if separated from the group
- Emergency procedures
- Safety procedures re transport (see following suggestions)

### Coach

Do not rush towards transport when it arrives

Wear your seatbelt and stay seated

Bags must not block aisles

Never try to get on or off moving transport

Never kneel or stand on seats

Never distract the driver

Be careful crossing the road after leaving the vehicle, especially in a foreign country with traffic moving in a different direction

Listen to the instructions given by the driver

All litter should be placed in the bin bags provided

See coach evacuation procedure document (appendix)

### Train

No leaning out of any windows

Stay in seats unless going to the buffet car or toilet

Place all litter in the bags provided

Do not block the aisle with bags

### Ferry

Be aware of the designated seating area

Pupils must be in groups of at least four

Know the location of the information office / school staff

Listen to the emergency procedure

### Plane

Sit in the exact seat allocated

Place all hand luggage in the overhead storage cabins or under the seat in front

Do not block the aisle

Listen to the emergency procedure

## **Code of Conduct**

### **Non residential trips**

- Normal school rules will apply.
- All pupils should show respect to everyone with whom they come into contact.
- All pupils will be expected to be at meetings and rendezvous points on time.
- There will be no smoking, use of illegal substances or the consumption of alcohol on any school visit.
- Chewing gum is forbidden
- Girls must be in groups of at least 4 when not supervised directly by staff
- Girls must obey all instructions given by staff or supervising adult

### **Sanctions**

- If pupils are found to have seriously breached school regulations then disciplinary measures will be taken both during the visit and on return to school  
These include:
  - Smoking
  - Disobedience
  - Knowingly putting herself and others in danger by wandering off on her own or with others and not returning to the meeting point
- If there is a major problem with any of the girls, the group leader will telephone the school's emergency contact who will then take appropriate action.

### **Residential Trips**

#### **Code of Conduct**

- Normal school rules will apply.
- All pupils should show respect to everyone with whom they come into contact.
- All pupils will be expected to be at meetings and rendezvous points on time.
- All pupils are expected to present at mealtimes unless they are ill and have sought permission from a member of staff
- All pupils are expected to be in their rooms at night at the appointed time. Usually, this will be decided on arrival and will be staggered according to the age of the pupils. Inevitably, this could be subject to change, depending on the activities on a certain day.
- There will be no smoking or use of illegal substance on any school visit.
- Chewing gum is forbidden
- Pupils over the age of 18 may consume alcohol, in moderation, but only if they have their parents' written approval. This must be given to the party leader in advance. Local laws regarding the consumption of alcohol should be obeyed at all times.
- Girls must be in groups of at least 4 when not supervised directly by staff
- Girls must obey all instructions given by staff or supervising adult

## **Sanctions**

- If pupils are found to have seriously breached school regulations then disciplinary measures will be taken both during the visit and on return to school
- If pupils are found to have seriously breached school regulations eg smoking, they will be grounded immediately and parents will be contacted.
- If pupils break the regulations again, parents will be contacted immediately and pupils could be sent home at their parents' expense.
- If pupils break the law of the country which they are visiting they could be sent home immediately at their parents' expense.
- If a girl knowingly puts herself in danger by wandering off on her own and not returning to the meeting point, parents will be contacted and she could be sent home at her parents' expense.
- Other misdemeanours would result in a loss of privileges eg pupils would be grounded.
- If there is a major problem with any of the girls, the group leader will telephone the school's emergency contact who will then take appropriate action.

## **Emergency procedures**

- Group leaders should familiarise themselves with the Accident and Emergency Procedures on Educational Visits and take a copy with them on the trip.
- 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.

## **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 necessary, if an emergency occurs abroad
- Inform the school contact/s. 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 and details of injuries of casualties
  - Names of others involved so that parents can be reassured
  - Action taken so far
  - Action yet to be taken (and by whom)

- Notify insurers – this may be done by the school contact
- Notify the tour operator
- Ascertain telephone number for future calls
- Write down accurately all relevant facts and witness details and preserve any vital evidence
- Keep a written account of all events, times and contacts after the incident
- No one in the group should speak to the media – a contact at school will be assigned for this
- No one in the group should discuss legal liability with other parties.

### **For day trips**

The school office is the contact point. They should have all the necessary information regarding the trip.

A copy of all the documents relating to the trip should be sent to the office

### **For residential trips**

- Please arrange that two emergency contacts, two members of staff or the governing body, are available during the dates of the trip / excursion
- Please ensure that adequate arrangements have been made for communication with parents during the trip

### **Documentation**

If you are using a reputable company they will provide detailed information for party leaders, guiding them through the various procedures, including EHIC forms and passport information where necessary.

**EHIC** cards can be obtained on line and each member of the group should have one for travel to an EU country.

#### **Passports**

The status of British pupils is not always the same, so organisers should make sure of the status of members of the party before making any arrangements for passports. If group leaders are not sure of a child's citizenship, please contact the local passport office for advice. It is advisable that all pupils have their own up to date passport. If pupils are not British, it is worth seeing and checking their passports as soon as possible. Some countries require passports to be valid for at least 6 months.

#### **Visas**

Some countries require a valid visa for entry and exit. Please ensure that this is in place for pupils.

#### **Vaccinations**

Ensure that all pupils have proof of any vaccination requirements of the country being visited.

### **Information packs**

The following should have a complete set of tour documents to facilitate speedy assistance in the event of an emergency:

- Two emergency contacts
- The office

### **Excursion 4 – this should be completed and given to the office**

Any last minute changes should be communicated to the school contacts

They should have:

- An itinerary
- Contact number for the group and address of the accommodation
- List of all group members
- Contact names of parents and next of kin plus their addresses and telephone numbers
- Copies of parental consent forms
- Copies of travel documents, including insurance and medical details

## Section E

### During the visit

#### Supervision

At least one member of staff should always be responsible for a particular group of pupils. It makes it easier to do a head count and pupils know to whom they should report if there is a problem. Pupils should never be allowed to wander off on their own. In some cases, it might be possible for remote supervision to take place, ie pupils may be able to go off unsupervised in groups of no less than four. If this happens:

- ❖ 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 leading such visits.

The group leader is responsible overall for the group at all times. In delegating supervisory roles to other adults in the group, it is good practice for the group leader to:

- Allocate supervisory responsibility to each adult for named pupils;
- Ensure that each adult knows which pupils they are responsible for;
- Ensure that each pupil knows which adult is responsible for them;
- Ensure that all adults understand that they are responsible to the group leader for the supervision of the pupils assigned to them;
- Ensure that all adults and pupils are aware of the expected standards of behaviour.

- ❖ Head Counts

Whatever the length and nature of the visit, regular head counting of pupils should take place, particularly before leaving any venue. It is good practice for all supervisors to:

- Carry a list of all pupils and adults involved in the visit at all times;
- Ensure that all pupils are aware of rendezvous points;
- Ensure that all pupils know what to do if they become separated from the group.

- ❖ Close Supervision

- Close supervision occurs when the group remain within sight and contact of the supervisor;
- Remote supervision occurs when, as part of planned activities, a group works away from the supervisor but is subject to stated controls. The supervisor is present but not necessarily near or in sight, but his/her whereabouts are known.

#### ❖ Remote Supervision

- Pupils will be familiar with the environment and have details of the rendezvous points and the times of rendezvous;
- There must be clear lines of communication between the group, the supervisor and the school. Do not rely exclusively on mobile phones;
- Specify a meeting point where a member of staff can always be contacted;

The group leader must have done a risk assessment and must realise that they are still responsible for the pupils. They must:

- Have informed parents that this would happen
- Have made sure that pupils are aware of the ground rules
- Have given a rendezvous point to the pupils and a time at which to meet
- Have given instructions to the pupils on how to summon help
- Have given pupils a map/plan, if necessary
- Have given pupils the telephone number of the accommodation

In a situation like this, it would be a good idea to have a departmental mobile phone number, which could be issued to the pupils. Never give personal telephone numbers to the pupils.

#### ❖ Down time

Group leaders should ensure that pupils continue to be properly supervised during downtime before, between and after activities including the evenings on residential visits. It is good practice to:

- Ensure that all staff and pupils understand the standards of behaviour that apply at all times, not just during activities
- Ensure that handover between activities is properly supervised, with a named supervisor responsible for the group if there is a down time between activities
- Ensure that all supervisors understand that their supervisory role continues into the evening.

#### ❖ Rearranging groups

Potential danger points can occur when rearranging groups. In particular:

- When a large group is split into smaller groups for specific activities
- When a group transfers from one activity to another and changes supervisors
- When groups reform into a larger group.

It is therefore important that the supervisor:

- Clearly takes responsibility for the group when their part of the programme begins, making certain that the group members know;
- Clearly passes on responsibility for the group when their part of the programme is complete.
- The group members should know at all times who has responsibility for them.

#### ❖ Night Time

Group leaders should ensure that:

- Where possible the group's immediate accommodation is exclusively for the group's use;
- Where possible there is a teacher present on the floor whenever the pupils are there;
- Where hotel/hostel reception is not staffed 24 hours a day, security arrangements should be in force to stop unauthorised visits;
- In the absence of 24 hour staffing of reception, external doors should be secure against intrusion and windows closed as necessary to prevent intrusion;
- Where possible internal doors should be lockable but staff should have reasonable access to the pupils' accommodation at all times;
- All staff and pupils know the emergency procedures/escape routes in the event of fire. Where windows and doors are locked against intrusion at night, ensure that alternative escape routes are known and that all fire doors function properly

During the evening, duties should be shared fairly among the supervisors. Each evening at least one person (depending on the size of the group) should be designated as being on duty and therefore should not drink any alcohol. The drinking of alcohol by members of staff on any school trip should be responsible and must not put the trip at risk. It is imperative that Staff do not compromise themselves in any way and do not put themselves in a vulnerable position in the unlikely event of an emergency. Pupils have to know where to locate a teacher at all times, including during the night.

### **Accommodation**

On arrival at the centre/hotel, a risk assessment should be done and any concerns noted in writing. Any serious issues relating to fire doors/escapes etc should be discussed with the receptionist/owner and if necessary, the travel rep/tour operator/contact person should be consulted.

- At the first briefing with pupils, details of procedures in case of fire should be pointed out. Girls should be asked to read fire notices. Other safety issues should be discussed (see section on ground rules).
- There should be locks on all bedroom doors but teachers should have access at all times.
- If rooms cannot be locked, there must be a keypad on the accommodation block, to which only the group leader and accompanying adults know the code.
- Where possible, pupils should not be in ground floor rooms.
- Security arrangements should be in force to stop unauthorised visitors.
- Staff should be allocated rooms next to the pupils'. If possible, the group leader should plan the allocation of the rooms in advance, but often arrangements are altered by the manager/owner at the last minute.
- Balconies should be stable, windows secure and electrical connections safe.

Any problems should be reported to the manager/owner/receptionist immediately.

Valuables should be locked in a safe in the bedroom, or the centre/hotel safe.

## **Exchanges**

Accommodation when staying with families is taken on trust. No inspection takes place of the host families. The letter regarding code of conduct should state that pupils are subject to the rules of the household. Only in the extreme case where the accommodation is a Health and Safety risk should this be reported to staff who will take appropriate action. For staff accommodation during Exchanges consideration should be given to the fact that parents are paying. Staff should seek clean, convenient accommodation of a reasonable standard at a competitive and appropriate price equivalent to 3\*.

## **Appendix 1: Coach evacuation procedure**

### **Procedures for school bus providers in event of breakdown or accident.**

Coach drivers should be aware of the recommended guidance regarding coach breakdown/accident procedures and give clear instructions to passengers.

#### **1. Breakdown on the hard shoulder of a motorway/dual carriageway\***

- ensure coach engine has stopped, hazard lights are on and wheels turned away from the carriageway
- identify a safe rendezvous point - this should be at least 10 ft behind a safety barrier and forward of the coach.
- give clear instructions to the pupils about the exit point, row by row evacuation (see information below) and non-use of mobile phones
- disembark and lead row 2 to the rendezvous point
- \*\*telephone emergency services
- telephone coach company office who should immediately contact schools
- control communications with parents until advised on forward situation by emergency services
- ensure all pupils are accounted for and keep a written record if they are collected other than from their normal stop
- be as certain as you can be that the pupil knows the person who is collecting them

**\*Exceptional circumstances** – breakdown on a motorway/dual carriageway bridge when a safe rendezvous point cannot be identified or in the case of extreme/dangerous weather - move pupils to seats away from rear and traffic side of coach, keep pupils wearing seatbelts on the coach and pick up procedure from \*\* above

#### **2. Breakdown/ involvement in an accident on the carriageway of a motorway/dual carriageway**

- ensure coach engine has stopped and hazard lights are on
- identify safest exit from vehicle - this could be the offside exit or in exceptional circumstances the rear window, driver's door or roof exit

- check all oncoming traffic has come to a standstill
- follow Procedure 1 from second bullet point

Non-walking casualties should be left on the coach whilst the rest of the pupils are evacuated. You should return to assist casualties only when the rest of the pupils are safely assembled at the rendezvous point.

If a vehicle involved in the accident is carrying hazardous materials you should assess the extra risk to the group of evacuation – in exceptional circumstances it may be safer to keep the pupils on the coach. Be mindful of the risk of fire.

### **3. Breakdown/ minor accident on a normal road (non-motorway/ dual carriageway)**

- Assess the risk of keeping the pupils on the coach. If surrounding traffic is slow-moving (ie: a built-up area) it may be safe to keep the group on the coach. If this is the case move passengers to seats away from rear and traffic side of coach, keep group wearing seatbelts on the coach and pick up procedure from \*\* above.

### **4. Major accidents on a normal road (non-motorway/ dual carriageway)**

- Proceed as in 2 above.

#### **General points:**

Ensure the coach is stopped as soon as is safely possible if there is any suggestion that the coach is not fit to drive and ensure that onward travel only continues when any concerns have been satisfactorily resolved.

Personal mobile phone use by pupils should be limited to maintain concentration in an emergency and to minimise worry to parents and confusion about the forward situation.

Row by row evacuation plan:

- Tell pupils which row they are in. (Row 1 is the row behind the driver's seat along the length of the vehicle. Row 2 and 3 are on either side of the aisle. Row 4 is on the UK exit side.)
- Tell pupils the evacuation procedure. Row 2 stands, moves into the aisle, disembarks quickly. This procedure is repeated in turn by Row 3, Row 1 and Row 4.