



HEALTH AND SAFETY ON RESIDENTIAL AND NON-RESIDENTIAL OUT-OF SCHOOL VISITS

We believe that visits form an integral part of our approach to a child's development, and that breadth of opportunity is essential to inspire and motivate the young. A rich diversity of activities beyond the confines of the curriculum unlocks enthusiasm, builds self-confidence, and uncovers hidden talents, nurturing strengths which then impact on all aspects of a student's development.

A student's activities and trips need to be monitored in order to provide a balance of opportunities which does not overload the individual concerned.

OUT-OF SCHOOL VISITS CO-ORDINATOR

A senior member of the Senior School and Prep School who is an experienced visits leader whose main functions are to:-

- support individual leaders
- support the Head of Framlingham College and governors in their decision making roles
- organising the induction and training for leaders, staff and adult helpers
- assessing the competence of leaders, staff and adult helpers
- organising emergency planning
- record keeping monitoring and reviewing
- have access to training, advice and guidance

Out-Of-Schools Visits Health & Safety Procedures

All proposed trips are planned in advance, and cleared by the Senior Deputy Head at the Senior School and by the Head of Co-Curricular at the Prep School to ensure an overarching consistency.

All trips will normally be found in the College calendar, except where short notice opportunities arise.

Parental Consent Forms are the standard forms for seeking permission from parents. All trips operating out of normal office hours need a Parental Consent Form. However, any trip that operates within normal office hours also needs permission if the trip involves nursery children; has a higher level of risk than normal or if an additional cost is involved. The Prep School requests permission for all trips and it is good practice to tell parents about every trip.

For any residential trip a School Home Contact will be nominated, made known to the parents and this person will have details of the visit.

Costs to parents are always considered.

A risk assessment and Out-of-School Visits Approval Form will be completed by the member of staff leading the trip and submitted with supplementary paperwork as necessary to the Out-of-School Visits Coordinator for processing. This includes being signed by the relevant Headmaster. At the College this is returned to the Out-of-School Visits Coordinator and posted in Common Room. At the Prep School a copy is returned to the OOSV Coordinator, one is posted in the Staff workroom and a copy is given to the School Office.

The risk assessment templates and Out-of-School Visits Approval Forms can be downloaded from Firefly. At the College the Out-of-School Visits Approval Form is updated annually by the Out-of-School Visits Coordinator, but this is done termly at the Prep School.

Group Leaders will take copies of the risk assessment and approval form with together with a mobile phones, a first aid kit and details of emergency procedures. At the College the latter takes the form of an A5 emergency file obtained from the Out-of-School Visits Coordinator and at the prep school from the School Office. Emergency files are updated annually by the relevant Out-of-School Visits Coordinator.

Risk Assessment

The risk assessment associated with the Out-of-School Visits Form should proceed as a process, not a document, and be part of the planning. The process involves identifying hazards, assessing the risk and then taking steps to control it. No school trip can be entirely risk free, but activities should not proceed if risks are assessed to be too high. Routine trips can have a generic risk assessment, but individual risk assessments are required for new trips and those which involve a higher than normal level of risk.

DBS Clearance

Note that all staff and volunteers accompanying pupils are required to have appropriate DBS clearance. Guidance on the applicable regulations is available from the Finance Director.

Medical Information

Parents are responsible for ensuring that the College is aware of any medical problems, or any other personal problems that could affect their child during the trip. Residential trips require the full completion of a medical form sent to parents from the school before the trip departs. Failure to provide the information will prevent that child taking part. The information may be disclosed by phone to Housemasters/mistresses at the College or to Medical Centre staff at the Prep School, who may then fill in the form on their behalf.

The organiser of the trip should ensure that First Aid provision is considered when planning the trip. It is advised by the DCSF Guidance Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits that “the group leader should have a good working knowledge of first aid and ensure that an adequate first aid box is taken. For adventurous activities, visits abroad or residential visits it is sensible for at least one of the group’s teachers to be a fully trained first aider”.

Pupils

Pupils have an important role in Health & Safety matters. Before the trip they should be briefed in order to know who is in charge, how to behave and the code of conduct for the trip. They will also need to know what to do if they get lost or into difficulties. Parents should also ensure that their child understands his/her responsibilities during the trip.

Supervision

Recommended or required ratios should not be seen as automatically safe. They are statements of minimum levels of supervision. Group leaders should assess the risks and consider an appropriate safe supervision level for their particular trip. There should be a minimum of one teacher in charge and sufficient supervisors to cope effectively with an emergency. The factors that need to be taken into account include:-

- age, sex and ability of the group
- pupils with special educational or medical needs
- nature of activities
- experience, competence and qualifications held by staff
- duration and nature of the journey
- type of accommodation
- requirements of the organisation/location to be visited
- competence and behaviour of pupils
- first aid cover

Supervisors should be fully briefed by the group leader. They should understand the aims and objectives of the trip and be familiar with the venue. Supervisors should carry a copy of all of the group members and should regularly check that the entire group or sub-group that they are responsible for are present. For small groups a visual check will be sufficient, but larger groups will require a head count.

Group Leaders

The competence of the leader is a crucial factor. Competence comes from the possession of relevant qualifications but appropriate expertise and experience are also essential. The DFE describes the acquisition of competence as the process of learning from accumulated experience. The leader has the key role in risk assessment and makes ongoing re-assessments once the trip has begun. For all outdoor and adventurous activities that involve real danger a fully qualified and experienced leader must be in charge or assume charge for that aspect of the trip. If one is not available the trip does not take place or the activity is reduced to a non-dangerous level.

Safeguarding

For any trip it is essential that the group leader has all the required contact details for the Designated Safeguarding Lead (s) and that there is a named member of staff responsible for Safeguarding on the trip.

Using Outside Organisations.

Schools using an outside organisation to provide an activity must check they have appropriate safety standards and liability insurance. A clear onus falls upon the Group Leader to assess the risks before and during the visit as an ongoing process.

The Council for Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) awards the Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge to organisations who meet nationally recognised standards.

Schools can check if an organisation holds the LOtC Quality Badge.

If an organisation does not hold the badge, the school must check that they are an appropriate organisation to use. This could include checking:

- their insurance
- that they meet legal requirements

- their health and safety and emergency policies
- their risk assessments
- control measures
- their use of vehicles
- staff competence
- safeguarding
- accommodation
- any sub-contracting arrangements they have
- that they have a licence where needed

Caving, Climbing, trekking and watersports are obvious activities that should be identified and risk assessed as part of the visit beforehand. Staff managing or leading visits must not decide to add such activities during the trip.

Always consider the abilities of the children when assessing risk.

Organisations need a licence to provide some adventure activities. Organisations who hold the LOtC Quality Badge should hold a licence for the activity they provide. Licensing details can be found on the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) website.

Schools should take particular care when using hotel swimming pools and other water leisure activities which may not have a trained lifeguard. Although there are no swimming pool specific health and safety laws, the Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel (OEAP) provides advice when undertaking adventure specialist activities, including swimming.

The school should have an agreement with them that makes it clear what everyone is responsible for. This is especially important if they will be taking over supervision of the children.

Travel Abroad

Trips abroad can have extra risks and need a higher level of risk assessment.

It is important to research any organisation that is providing activities to ensure that it holds the LOtCQuality badge or similar local accreditation.

The HSE does not cover incidents overseas. However, it can investigate work done in Britain to support the trip, like risk assessments. School staff could also be liable under civil law for any injuries to the children due to negligence.

If the trip includes significant risks, such as challenging terrain, going to remote places or extreme climates, follow the guide to the British Standard for adventurous activities outside the United Kingdom as the basis for the planning and risk assessment. Schools should consider the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's detailed guidance on safer adventure travel and volunteering overseas when organising adventure visits abroad.

For all visits abroad, the Group Leader is responsible for considering the following factors:-

Vaccinations

The Group Leader must ensure that parents are aware that they are responsible for getting their son/daughter vaccinated through their own Doctor. Parents must make their own decisions on which vaccinations they would like their children to take, Parents of boarders may request that this is done through the Medical Centre and written permission for this is required. The Group leader must also inform staff who will be accompanying the trip that it is their responsibility to be vaccinated. The Group Leader also needs to check whether the country to be visited requires proof of vaccination and remind parents, staff and pupils.

Insurance

The Group Leader needs to obtain a copy of the travel insurance documents from the Out-of Schools Visit co-ordinator and ensure that all of the activities are covered.

Visas and Passports

The Group Leader needs to inform staff and parents that all members of the trip must have a valid Passport and visas (if appropriate) early in the planning stages. Expiry dates must be checked by them and they should be advised to have at least six months left on the passport from the date of return. In addition, the Group Leader must obtain two copies of the important pages of each member's passport and two spare passport photographs and keep them with him/her for the duration of the trip. Before the trip departs the Group Leader must make a decision and declare how the passports will be made secure to reduce the risk lost or theft.

Emergency Medical Facilities

For pupils and staff who hold an EU country passport, European Health Insurances cards are be obtained by parents and held by the Group Leader. It is also important to take a contingency fund to pay for any treatment that needs to be paid in advance and claimed back later.

Evaluating trips

All Group Leaders need to evaluate all visits once they have been concluded from the planning through to the visit itself. Schools should keep a record of any incidents, accidents and near misses.

This will help the school:

- evaluate whether its planning has worked
- learn from any incidents which took place