



The Schools at Somerhill

School Trips Policy

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Guidelines on Educational/Extra-curricular Trips and Visits

Introduction

The Governors recognise the importance of well planned trips as part of both the curricular and extra-curricular education of the pupils who attend The Schools at Somerhill. The welfare and safety of staff and pupils whilst on school trips is of paramount importance to the Governors. This policy outlines the procedures for organising a school trip. A copy of the DfES's Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits (HASPEV) is available from the Bursary and is also on the School's intranet in the staff shared area under trips. It is a useful document to use in conjunction with this policy.

Responsibilities

- The Principal of The Schools at Somerhill is responsible for ensuring that the Governing Body's policy is implemented throughout the three schools. It is his responsibility, in consultation with The Bursar, to review this policy.
- The Heads of each school are responsible for ensuring that all trips that are approved within their schools are properly planned and appropriately supervised.
- The Bursar is responsible for ensuring that no trips are allowed to take place without the appropriate arrangements, due notice of health and safety regulations are taken, and risk assessments have been completed where appropriate. Part of this process will be delegated to the Trip's Coordinator. The Bursar is also responsible for ensuring that any regulatory changes are brought to the attention of The Principal and the policy amended.
- The Trip Leader and supporting teachers have a common law "duty of care" for pupils under their supervision. They are also responsible to maintain order, discipline, and for safeguarding the health and safety of pupils.

Categories of trips/visits

Category A – These are trips which form part of the normal term-time programme and require the use of the school's transport (minibus). These are predominantly visits to other schools for sports' competitions and matches, and "minibus runs". There is no overnight stay involved.

Category B – These are trips which form part of the normal term-time programme and generally require the use of transport from an outside company. These are predominantly trips to theatres, museums, Thames Barrier etc. There is no overnight stay involved.

Category C – These are trips within the United Kingdom which occur both in term-time and holidays which have a duration longer than 24 hours. These may be organised by the school using its own resources or through outside travel companies. This involves an overnight stay or a number of nights away.

Category D – These are trips outside the United Kingdom which occur both in term-time and holidays. The duration of the trip is irrelevant, except for vetting purposes. These may be organised by the school using its own resources or through outside travel companies, or a combination of both.

Procedures

- The approval of appropriate Head (use Form 1A), or their nominated representative, is required for all trips away from school except those in Category A. The Principal's approval is required for all category D trips and the Bursar informed. In addition The Principal and the Bursar should be made aware of all trips that are in category C.
- Approval should be requested at earliest possible stage in the planning of a trip. An outline proposal should be made to the Head with enough information to allow a decision to be made.
- Once outline approval has been received, the necessary information must be provided to the Trips Co-ordinator (Claire Wilkes), along with a copy of the approval, so that arrangements can be started. A trip form must be completed and submitted by the Trip Leader to the appropriate head for final approval of the itinerary once in place. The following forms are to be used:

Form 1D – category B trips

Form 1N – category C trips

Form 1O – category D trips

Once signed, the form constitutes authorization to take the trip.

- If the trip includes a hazardous activity a written risk assessment must be completed. If an outside company is used for the hazardous activity, the trip leader must ensure that the company has appropriate risk assessments and that their staff are suitably qualified. Completed trip forms must be passed to Reception where they will be distributed to the necessary departments for actioning.
- The cost of trips and charges are to be decided by the Bursary in consultation with the Trip Leader.
- All letters sent to parents are to be approved by the appropriate Head and, if a letter contains a cost, with the approval of the Bursary.
- Once details are finalised, the Trip Co-ordinator will produce a "trip pack" which will include emergency contact details and any medical conditions of those travelling and be distributed to those staff that need them.
- It is the responsibility of the Trip Leader (for sporting fixtures – Heads of Sport) to make the necessary arrangements with the Bursary Department for cancellations of lunches, change in time of lunches, early departures and late returns. This applies to all trip categories.

Planning a trip/visit

A thorough understanding of matters affecting safety is essential for all staff planning or accompanying a school trip/visit and the aim of this section is to safeguard the position of members of staff. Recent legislation and experiences elsewhere in the country necessitate the introduction of procedures and guidelines that attempt to prevent accidents and poor management through the application of thoughtful planning and common sense.

- **Educational purpose** – The aims and objectives should be clearly defined from the offset. This will help determine for potential participants and their parents whether a trip is essential and part of the curriculum.
- **Approval** – Preliminary plans should be discussed and approved in outline with the appropriate Head Teacher. If the proposed trip is outside the UK or involves more than one school, then The Principal must be consulted. If the trip includes hazardous activities, the Bursar should be consulted for guidance. The outline plans should include
 - (a) date and time of departure and return
 - (b) age group travelling and staffing levels
 - (c) maximum/minimum numbers to be viable
 - (d) transport involved

Once outline approval has been given, detailed planning can be started by the Trip Leader with the help of the Trips Co-ordinator.

- **Staffing** – When selecting staff to accompany trips consideration should be given to their experience, and qualifications (ie first aid trained). If using outside staff/parents then Enhanced CRB checks must be made for all residential trips or if they are unsupervised. Staff from outside companies must have CRB checks to enhanced level. Staff must consider the nature of the activity and reduce the staff/pupil ratios accordingly taking into account activities, training and any hazards identified.

Minimum staff/pupil ratios are:

<u>Ratio</u>	<u>Pupils' Year Group</u>
1:4	Nursery/ Kindergarten
1:8	Reception, Years 1 and 2
1:12	Years 3 – 6
1:15	Years 7 and 8
1:10	All visits abroad and overnight stays in the UK

- **Communicating with Parents** - Once approval has been given for a trip, a letter should be sent to parents (a draft should be approved by the Head). It may include:
 - (a) the purpose and an outline itinerary of the trip
 - (b) the name of the trip leader and accompanying adults
 - (c) the times and dates of departure and return
 - (d) the estimated cost per pupil
 - (e) mode of transport
 - (f) accommodation arrangements (if required)
 - (g) information about insurance cover
 - (h) advice on clothing, equipment and pocket money.
 - (i) documents and inoculations required (ie passport, European Health Insurance Card)
 - (j) request for special medical needs of any travelling pupil
 - (k) any consultation evenings for parents to meet the trip leader

This information may be communicated in a number of letters to parents during the planning process depending on the nature of the trip.

- **Itinerary and programme** – When planning an itinerary and programme thought must be given to:
 - (a) Will the trip's aims be accomplished?
 - (b) Is there adequate supervision during the programme?
 - (c) Is any free time in the programme properly assessed and managed?
 - (d) If in accommodation, are there adequate fire precautions and are the pupils made aware of them?
 - (e) What potential hazards are there?
 - (f) What medical and first aid arrangements are required?

This is not an exhaustive list. Where practical, Trip Leaders should visit the location and assess the venue before a trip takes place. For all EYFS trips, the trip leader **must** visit the location prior to the visit and a risk assessment **must** be carried out for all trips.

- **Insurance** – The Trip Leader must ensure that the trip, either through the school's insurance policies or through the company used to book the trip, has the necessary insurance cover in consultation with the Bursary department. This must include appropriate cancellation/delay insurance, insurance against a company going into liquidation, medical insurance including casualty repatriation (if appropriate) as a minimum. The following school insurances are in place, but trip leaders must check with the Bursary department that they are still valid and appropriate.
 - (a) Employer Liability – This policy covers the school's legal liability to members of staff and other employees. Cover is provided on a world wide basis for educational and other trips. The limit of indemnity is £10 million for any one occurrence.
 - (b) Public Liability – This covers the legal liability of the school and members of staff in connection with injury to third parties, including pupils, and also to damage to property of third parties. Cover is provided on a world wide basis for educational and other trips. The limit of indemnity is £5 million for any one occurrence.
 - (c) Group Personal Accident – This policy covers all pupils in respect of any permanent disability or death. The maximum benefit is £155,000 and a scale of compensation applies in respect of various disabilities. This cover is world wide.
 - (d) Occasional Business Use – any members of staff using their own vehicle on the school's business are covered by fully comprehensive insurance.

This does not negate members of staff having in place all legally required documents for their vehicle, which, if not, would invalidate the school's cover. This cover is UK based only.

- **Communications** – Throughout the organisation and planning of the trip, and during the trip itself, establishment of effective means of communication are important. This does not stop once on the trip as it is important that trip leaders continue to communicate with adults accompanying the trip and the pupils.

The Trip Leader, with the help of the Trip Co-ordinator, will ensure that for trips outside the UK and residential trips in the UK that the relevant personnel receive emergency packs for each trip which will include emergency contact numbers, medical needs, details of each person's passport and what to do in an emergency.

- **Passports and Visas** – These will only be required for trips outside the UK. Parents should be advised at the earliest possible opportunity so that they have ample time to apply for visas if necessary and renew passports. It should be remembered that some countries require a passport to be valid for more than six months before the expiry date on the date of travel.

The trip leader should keep a record of the number, date and place of issue of each person's passport in case it should get lost. In the event that a passport is lost on a trip, the trip leader must report it to the local police and an application made to the nearest British Consulate. It is advisable that the location of the local British Consulate is known before the departure of the trip.

- **Clothing, equipment and pocket money** – It is essential that trip organisers ensure that all participants have guidance as to appropriate clothing/equipment taking into account weather conditions and any activities. Trip leaders must ensure that any protective clothing or equipment that is required for an activity is available and is worn. It may be necessary for some trip organisers to produce a comprehensive clothes/equipment list for parents. Guidance should be given to parents as to the appropriate pocket money needed for a trip. Trip leaders do not want to employ security vans to keep pocket money safe!

- **Preparing Pupils/participants for a trip** – This applies to all categories of trips as there will always be transport. The information should be conveyed to the pupils either through an informal talk or through a formal briefing dependent on the nature of the trip. Information should be split into two topics; 1. safety when travelling and 2. safety whilst on a trip.

1. When travelling by vehicle, pupils should be made aware of the following basic safety rules:
 - (a) Do not rush towards the transport as or when it arrives; remain in the safe location that the trip leader has organised and wait until called.
 - (b) Never attempt to get on or off moving transport.
 - (c) Seat belts must be worn and pupils must remain seated whilst travelling on transport.
 - (d) Bags must be stowed in the appropriate place and not block or obstruct the aisle.
 - (e) Never lean out of windows or throw anything out of them.
 - (f) Never distract/disturb the driver or impede his vision.
 - (g) If a pupil feels unwell, who to inform.
2. Before departure and/or during the trip pupils/staff members should be aware of the following:
 - (a) The aims and objectives of the trip.
 - (b) Background information on the place being visited. If the trip is overseas, the culture and customs, as well as a few basic words of communication.
 - (c) Specific safety precautions and why they are in place, i.e. headcounts at appropriate stages of the trip.
 - (d) What standard of behaviour is expected and what sanctions will be implemented for anti-social and unacceptable behaviour (ie sending home before the end of the trip). It may be advisable to draw up a code of conduct.
 - (e) What to do if approached by someone outside the trip personnel.
 - (f) Rendezvous procedures and what to do if separated from the group.

- (g) Any emergency procedures (ie fire evacuation procedures) including a missing persons' procedure. It would be advisable to have a practice drill of these procedures in unfamiliar location/ accommodation.
 - (h) Any pupils with medical needs and the pupils must be briefed on what to do if they feel ill.
- **Medical arrangements and first aid** – Any special medical needs of the pupils should be conveyed to the school by the parents by sending a medical consent form at the same time as the parents' consent for the trip is asked. It is advisable for trip leaders to check pupils' medical records kept by the First Aid Officer as well as sending out forms to parents. For trips to EEC countries, all participants should obtain an European Health Insurance Card (formerly E1 11) which are available online from the government website. Parents should be made aware that this may not cover all costs, and, as with other countries outside the EEC, may require full and appropriate medical insurance. All trips away from school must carry an appropriate first aid kit. There must always be one teacher/staff member on the trip that has been trained to Appointed Person level and on an EYFS age group trip to Paediatric First Aid level. All trip leaders must ensure that they are aware of any pupils who have special medical needs (i.e. asthma, allergies, epilepsy, diabetes) and must ensure that pupils know what to do and who to contact if they feel ill.

Planning transport – All transport is to be booked through the Trip Co-ordinator in Reception (Claire Wilkes). If school minibuses are being requested, it must be specified whether a driver is required. The school is responsible for ensuring that all transport conforms to legislation in that if transport is carrying groups of three or more children aged between 3 and 15 years inclusive that the transport is fitted with serviceable seat belts. It is the responsibility of the trip leader/driver to ensure that they are worn. It is also a legal requirement that booster seats be used in cars. For further clarification the Bursary department must be consulted. When using school owned transport the following points must be noted:

1. Category A trips do not require prior approval or require a trip form to be completed, but it is good practice to ensure that all drivers are aware of the route.
2. A risk assessment has been carried out by the school for driving and travelling in a minibus. The results of the assessment are kept in the "glove box" of each minibus. The school carries out weekly mechanical checks on all school vehicles, but this does not preclude the driver carrying out the checks prescribed as necessary before commencing a journey and what to do in the event of a breakdown/accident. **The serviceability of a school vehicle is the responsibility of THE DRIVER.** It is the responsibility of the teacher in charge of the trip to assess the destination and, if required, fill in a risk assessment.
3. Minibuses contain log books which must be filled in at the start of a journey and at the end. This is the driver's responsibility. The driver is also responsible for checking the serviceability of the vehicle and must carry out the prescribed checks.
4. All minibus drivers must have a D1 licence or D1 entitlement to drive a minibus. It is the policy of the school that all drivers must also have attended a Kent County Council "Minibus Awareness Course" which must be renewed every 3 years.

Other points that should be considered for all trips are:

5. Locate all fire exits on the vehicle allocating responsibility to adults accompanying the trip.
6. What to do in the event of a breakdown? School vehicles have "breakdown cover", details are in the glove box. All vehicles have fire extinguishers on board. When using a fire extinguisher you should not endanger your own life.
7. What to do for minor medical problems and for major medical emergencies? All school vehicles carry first aid kits.
8. If travelling in convoy, what to do if the convoy is split up?

9. Weather conditions/forecasts; do they pose an extra hazard?
 10. If travelling a long distance, toilet breaks and breaks for drivers. Breaks for drivers are legislated by law. Trip leaders are to seek advice from the Bursary department on the law and how it affects their trip.
- **Emergency Procedures** – Emergency procedures are an essential part of planning a school trip because, despite good planning and leadership, unforeseen emergencies, accidents or injuries may arise. In the event of an emergency situation, there are two control areas; the trip leader on the ground and the emergency contact at school. Depending on the seriousness of the emergency, The Principal (or in his absence The Bursar) will take the leadership role at school.
 1. Emergency on trip – The Trip/Group Leader should take charge and liaise with the school's emergency contact. The Trip/Group Leader must establish/carry out the following actions:
 - a) The nature and extent of the emergency as quickly as possible. That all the group are safe and supervised.(This information will need to be passed to the school contact)
 - b) The names of any casualties, the nature of their injuries, and organise the necessary medical attention required to treat their injuries. This may require calling the emergency services. (This information will need to be passed to the school contact)
 - c) If a casualty needs to go to hospital, an adult, who is part of the trip, must accompany them.
 - d) That other adults accompanying the trip are aware of the incident and their role in the emergency procedures.
 - e) Notify the police if necessary.
 - f) If the trip is overseas, notify the British Embassy/Consulate.
 - g) Write down accurately and as soon as possible all the relevant facts, witness details and any evidence noting also the times. This will be needed as an aide-memoire for when you complete a report which needs to be submitted to the Bursar as soon as practical. This will also help you when you are relaying details of the incident to the school contact.
 - h) No-one is to speak to the media except to refer them to the school. Under no circumstances are any names to be communicated to the media.
 - i) Under no circumstances is legal liability to be discussed or admitted to any third party.
 2. Emergency contact at school – is to establish from the Trip/Group Leader the nature and seriousness of the incident. If it is of a serious nature they are to immediately inform the Principal, or in his absence the Bursar. Once established the school contact should carry out the following (under the guidance of the Principal/Bursar in a serious emergency):
 - a) Ensure that the leader on the ground is in control of the incident and establish if any assistance can be given from the school base.
 - b) Contact parents using the "telephone tree" established by the Trip Leader.
 - c) If necessary notify the tour operator/provider.
 - d) Notify the school's insurance company and, if necessary, they will provide professional advice.
 - e) In the event of media interest in the incident, the Principal/Bursar must be informed and no statement/information is to be issued to the press without their sanction. The Principal/Bursar will inform/liaise with the Chairman of the Board of Governors and a press release will be issued. There is to be no deviation from the press release.

A Guide to Hazardous Activities

As part of pupils' development it is important that they are challenged both on an individual basis and on a team basis. Activities organised on trips can be physically, as well as mentally, challenging and require good planning and common sense to avoid unnecessary risk. Hazardous activities include any activities that are based on water, mountains, moors, heights, sports, and even a usually low risk activity that is away from quick rescue and medical facilities. This list is not comprehensive and the trip organiser/leader must use their judgement when organising an activity.

This will involve a risk assessment. The following must be considered when organising a trip that includes a hazardous activity:

- It is important that parents are informed in writing of any hazardous activities that their child may be involved in. Parents must give their written consent for their child to take part in that activity.
- Trip organisers, with the advice of the Bursary, when organising a trip that involves hazardous activities must ensure that these activities are covered under any insurance policy applied for in relation to the trip.
- No member of staff may lead a hazardous activity if they are not suitably qualified. Even if just helping they must be confident that they have the necessary knowledge/experience to do so safely without endangering the other participants or themselves. Where possible it is always advisable to undertake hazardous activities at specialist centres so that the most benefit can be derived for the participants.
- Activities that require specialist equipment and/or clothing must only be undertaken if it is available and serviceable. It is the responsibility of the trip leader/member of the school's staff accompanying the trip to ensure that it is worn if appropriate. This responsibility is not to be delegated to an outside organisation.
- For all hazardous activities a code of safe practice must be in place. This may include:
 - a) Appreciation of the value of planning and preparation; this should also include an alternative activity if for reasons of safety the activity is cancelled.
 - b) Awareness of potential hazards and dangers. These must be monitored to take into account any changes in weather etc that may affect the safety of the activity.
 - c) Importance of appropriate clothing and equipment
 - d) Procedures in the event of an emergency, accident, rescue, or missing person. How to recall and end an activity if needed.
 - e) Awareness of the dangers of certain medical conditions, for example hypothermia and Weil's disease.
 - f) Awareness of any requirements for emergency equipment and first aid kits.
 - g) The importance of responsible behaviour and sound judgement by all involved in the activity.