

FINBOROUGH SCHOOL TRIPS POLICY

Pupils can derive immense educational benefit by taking part in trips and visits with the school. Experiences not available in the classroom can enhance the development of personal and social skills and residential trips in particular can encourage greater independence. The knowledge and experience gained outside the classroom can consolidate and extend the learning that has taken place within it.

This policy is written with due regard to the DfE guidelines on 'The Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits'. It will provide a framework from which teachers can plan and provide visits that will provide pupils with a safe, healthy and secure experience.

Equal opportunities

This policy recognises that every pupil should have full access to each visit that is appropriate to their class, year or option subject, regardless of their abilities, therefore, developing further 'the whole child'.

Planning

Dates for trips and events must be organised a term in advance to allow calendar planning.

To organise a visit for pupils a trip form must be completed during the half term prior to the visit taking place, or in the case of a residential trip at least two terms in advance.

The form must show

- Details of the visit, times of departure and arrival, mode of travel;
- Whether the event is educational (show clear objectives) or for entertainment;
- The cost involved and how it is to be funded;
- Staff accompanying the trip (see guide ratios below) and arrangements made or necessitating cover for teaching duties; (Please clear arrangements with house and duty staff if the visit falls outside the 8.30 – 4.15pm school day).
Where the visit taken is to an educational organisation that the organisation is properly accredited with appropriately trained staff.

The form should be signed by the relevant Head and the Bursar before notification and permission request is sent to parents.

Risk Assessment

A school risk assessment form must be completed by the member of staff organising the trip and attached to the trip form.

The trip form should then be forwarded to the appropriate Head of school for authorisation.

The nominated group leader (nominated on agreement with the relevant head of school) is responsible for ensuring that the risk assessment is carried out and all supervising staff briefed.

The risk assessment must include the following key considerations:

- An assessment of potential hazards – to include an assessment of the likelihood of a risk and the potential seriousness of the risk.
- An assessment of which pupils, staff or other persons may be affected by those potential hazards. It is important to take particular care to ensure that vulnerable individuals are considered – such as those with a disability whether permanent or temporary.
- An evaluation of the steps that can be taken to minimise the risks identified.
- Guidance on how group leaders should put those risk reducing measures into action.
- A contingency plan for emergencies – such as emergency rendezvous locations, emergency telephone numbers to call etc.

It is important that copies of risk assessments be given to all supervisory staff and that a meeting prior to the visit take place to go over arrangements and risk assessments to ensure that all staff are aware of the risk reducing measures to be employed and any emergency arrangements. Copies of the risk assessment together with copies of the original trip form, lists of pupils and staff, must be left with the school office prior to departure. All trip forms and risk assessments will be filed and may be reused (with any necessary revisions) if the same trip were to be repeated at a future date.

Other factors that potentially affect risk – dependent on the type of trip being undertaken - include:

- Insurance cover.
- Equipment that may need to be taken with the party going on the trip – will the equipment be suitable for purpose (particularly important on outdoor pursuit or D of E trips).
- Medications and arrangements for the safe storage of the same.
- Pre-trip specialist training or preparation for staff or pupils.

It is important that all pupils going on the trip are aware of any key arrangements, such as reporting times, key hazards to be aware of, emergency or contingency arrangements and key telephone numbers. This information should be conveyed to pupils both in meetings and in written form – with copies to parents.

The following key forms are available for purposes of risk assessment and management:

- Trip form.
- Risk evaluation form.
- Managing risk action plan.
- Pupil visit key information form.
- Trip evaluation form.

Exploratory Visit

An exploratory visit should be made by any teacher who is to lead a group abroad or on a residential visit or who is to instruct or lead the group in an outdoor activity such as trekking in a location that is not familiar to them. In other cases the trip organiser should undertake an exploratory visit, wherever that is possible, if they are not familiar with the location and facilities:

If in the last resort an exploratory visit is not feasible then the trip organiser should obtain specific information by letter from the venue, or from other schools who have recently visited it outlining risks.

Information to Parents

Trip organisers should prepare information and permission letters for parents, to be forwarded to the school office via email for forwarding to parents once permission is granted from head of school.

Parents must inform the school about any medical needs / allergies / special dietary needs etc. of their child.

When children are going on a residential trip, parents must supply an emergency contact name and telephone number; this contact must be available for the duration of the trip.

The school must inform the parents about all aspects of the visit to enable them to make an informed choice as to whether or not they want their child to participate.

Authorisation:

All trips must be authorised via a trip form well in advance and should give clear indication that all the necessary background work in organising the trip has been fully covered e.g.

- Suitable accompanying staff.
- Risk assessment.
- Covers within school.
- Full cost estimates and billing details.
- Parental approval/ consent and indemnity for certain kinds of trips.
- Trips justification.
- Safety implications and supervision levels.
- Transport arrangements.
- Communication arrangements.
- Feeding/ watering arrangements.
- Lavatory arrangements.
- Petty cash arrangements.
- First aid kit and pupils with medical needs.

(The above list is not exhaustive).

Trip forms should be routed through the Heads of School for a decision on the merits of the proposed trip. The Heads of School will authorise the trip subject to any necessary amendments or alterations relating to the proposed visit, staff involved and levels of supervision.

First Aid

The trip organiser must ensure that adequate first aid arrangements are made bearing in mind the location and nature of the activity. Names of children going on trips should be checked for any medical requirements.

In all cases a First Aid kit should be collected prior to departure. In a situation where expert medical help is not readily available at least one member of staff should be a competent first aider. Staff members are not however expected to make medical judgments; in a situation requiring first aid, the group leader would be discharging a duty of care and acting in 'loco parentis' by administering the type of help and care that a parent would give to his/her own child. The principle should be to hand the patient over to more expert medical aid (be that rescue services, a doctor, etc) in as good a condition as possible. If it is felt that immediate attention is necessary a doctor or emergency services should be called. Please see the school First Aid and Medicines Policy for more information.

School Calendar

- Planned visits should be recorded in the School Calendar and permission of any staff whose classes are affected should be sought before going ahead.

Insurance

The school has normal Public and Employers Liability insurance covering indemnity for any act of negligence on the part of the school or an individual in its employ or acting under its authority. This insurance cover extends to school trips or activities off the premises and includes overseas trips.

When specific insurance is required – such as on some activity based residential trips – full details of the insurance cover will be communicated to parents along with other trip information referred to above.

Supervision

Supervision needs should be considered carefully during the planning stage.

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:

- Sex, 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, might be:

- 1 adult for every 10 pupils in prep 1 to 3 but if a higher ratio were possible, this would be encouraged.
- 1 adult for every 10 pupils in prep 4 to 6.
- 1 adult for every 10 -15 pupils in school year 7 onwards.

EYFS

In the EYFS adult to pupil ratios reflect the circumstance of being in unfamiliar surroundings and are much tighter. The ratios are never greater than 1:8 for Reception children and are generally 1:5 or better. In the Nursery the ratio is generally 1:4 and often 1:3. The risk assessment specifically guides the supervisory ratios; and visits to farms, the theatre or near water may influence even tighter ratios.

The above are examples only. Group leaders should assess the risks and consider an appropriate safe supervision level for their particular group.

- There must always be a minimum of three adults.
- There must be a paediatric trained first aider present on all trips.
- There must be sufficient supervisors to cope with an emergency.
- Some residential visits with mixed groups will need a teacher of each sex.
- Non-teaching staff or volunteer parents may be used where a higher ratio is required. These people should be carefully selected and known to the school and pupils. Never allow unsupervised access to children to anyone who has not been DBS checked.

Responsibility

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.
- Ensure that regular head counts take place, particularly before leaving any venue.
- Ensure that a list of all pupils and adults on the visit is carried at all times.

In accordance with DfE recommendations, pupils in years 1 – 3, should be easily identifiable, especially in densely populated areas. Pupils should NEVER wear namebadges as this makes them vulnerable to strangers pretending to know them. Badges displaying the school name and its emergency contact number can be useful.

In an Emergency

The Head teacher must ensure that group leaders have telephone numbers for contact in the event of an emergency such as a breakdown, illness or minor accident. During the school day (8am-6pm) this will normally be the main office. Beyond 6pm trip leaders should have the numbers of the Head and Key Stage leaders – both home and mobile. In the event of a major emergency the appropriate emergency services would be called and one of the SLT contacted.

Paperwork at School

It is important that full details of the visit should be retained at school while the visit is in progress. This should include, as appropriate:

- 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.
- Copy of the contract with the centre/hotel etc, if appropriate.

Trip Evaluation

It is the responsibility of the trip organiser to evaluate the merits or shortcomings of the trip upon their return for future reference.

RESIDENTIAL VISITS

The type of visit will depend on its purpose, the time of year, the distance to be travelled, the price and the nature of the group. It is possible to buy a package of accommodation and activities or these can be arranged separately. Whichever is chosen the site residential arrangements and the instructors should be suitable for the needs of the group.

Prior to the Visit

All of the considerations for a day visit will apply, as well as the specific points that follow:

The roles, duties and expectations of accompanying staff and helpers should be clearly defined and understood so that everyone is involved and clear about what is expected of them. This should be done through formal meetings rather than on an ad hoc basis. This is particularly true for inexperienced staff and adult helpers who may not appreciate that residential visits require a great deal of commitment and goodwill if they are to be successful.

Parents need to be fully informed of the type of visit proposed. This is best done through an initial letter followed by a parents' meeting at which they should be informed of the following:

- Reason and purpose of the visit.
- Nature of the programme (this must include details of all activities).
- Nature of the supervision arrangements.
- Expectations of behaviour (Code of Conduct).
- Method of travel, including names of coach companies, airlines, etc, as appropriate.
- Insurance arrangements.
- Cost and methods of payment.
- Pocket money and any arrangements for giving it out.
- Address and telephone number of venue.
- Type of accommodation, i.e. bunks, shared facilities, etc.
- Clothing requirements via a kit list (stress that clothing and other possessions should be clearly marked).
- Emergency contact telephone number.

- Procedures for storage and administration of medication.
- Banned items i.e. jewellery, mobile phones etc.
- The use of cameras/video cameras
- Sun protection requirements

This information should be confirmed in writing and parents/guardians should then be asked to complete and sign:

- A consent form.
- A medical information form.

In addition to the information above, participants will need to know about:

- The implications of communal living in terms of tolerance, chores, conduct towards others, etc.
- The purpose and aims of the visit.
- The nature of any specific work to be undertaken.
- Work/training which is necessary before going.
- How spare time might be used.
- Expectations of conduct.

On Arrival at the Residential Centre

When arriving at a staffed residential centre, the group leader should meet the centre manager or someone of similar status and agree on any routines and regulations that have not been previously given. The Group leader should ensure that any requests or stipulations agreed in writing prior to the journey (i.e. leaders' qualifications, fire regulations, first aid arrangements, etc.) still apply.

- Define limits early - remember the group is new to the site - explain boundaries/limitations - say what you want but do so only after consultation with the Centre Manager, and leaders of other parties if appropriate.
- Explain duty rotas and procedures in relationship to the site.

Fire Evacuation

The following points need to be noted:

- Check that all exit routes from dormitories and other sleeping accommodation is clearly indicated.
- The posted instructions are clear and all visitors are provided with this information.
- A leader of responsible age is appointed to each dormitory who will possess a reliable torch where emergency lighting is not provided.
- A fire drill is held during the first day for new visitors.
- The arrangements for calling the fire brigade are adequate and understood and that someone has the duty to make such a call on hearing the alarm where there is no member of the permanent staff on-site who already holds this duty.
- This person knows the location of the nearest telephones and the full address of the building/camp to enable prompt response by the fire brigade.
- All occupants are familiar with emergency procedures and escape routes.

Detailed Organisation/Administration

Supervisory Ratio - Accompanying Adults

Careful consideration should be given to this point and the activities to be carried out should be properly evaluated, to ensure that sufficient staff are available for supervision at all times. To implement this, a ratio of staff to young people of at least 1:10 will be needed for visits abroad. The majority of commercial school tour operators now offer an automatic supervisory place ratio of one adult to ten paying young people. These supervisory places should only be available for members of staff or designated supervisory adults.

At least two members of staff must accompany any group abroad, one of them clearly designated as group leader. A mixed group must be accompanied by male and female adults except where pupils are less than 11 years of age (i.e. year 6 and below) in which case they may be accompanied by two female staff. The group leader should be an experienced teacher and should be satisfied that there is sufficient experience and expertise in the staff team accompanying him/her.

Adults other than members of staff (i.e. husband/wife or teacher/youth worker, parent, student, foreign language assistant) may usefully accompany the group but the ultimate responsibility for the young people's welfare and safety lies with the teachers involved and in particular with the Group leader. Adults may only accompany the party as supervisors if they have no other commitment throughout the whole of the visit. Wherever possible, a second teacher should be designated as a deputy leader, be fully associated with the planning and organisation of the visit and be prepared to take responsibility for the group in case of emergency.

All adults should have been clearly briefed by the Group leader so that roles, duties and responsibilities are understood and accepted. All adults should be aware of their own role and duties, both to ensure that they feel involved and to give adequate supervision.

Group Composition/Parental Involvement

Information by letter to parents about the proposed educational visit should, in the case of visits abroad lasting more than two days, be complemented by a parents' meeting at which issues can be clarified, questions answered, etc. It may be advisable to prepare a booklet for parents, with detailed information about plans, requirements, etc.

Ground rules for the visit should be clearly established at an early stage. Parental consent forms should be completed and relevant medical/diet details should be obtained in good time before the journey begins. The Group leader must compile a full list of names, addresses and contact telephone numbers of parents/carers in case of emergency. A copy of this list should be left with the home based contact and the Health and Safety Team. Ensure that the Group leader has the 24 hour Emergency Helpline Number and Pager Number to contact the LA.

Financial Arrangements

Steps should be taken at an early stage to secure an initial deposit from party members and to allow for regular payment by instalments by agreed dates. Receipts and payments must be fully documented and the account details must be available for scrutiny by the Head teacher or LA representative at all times. A teacher should never - even temporarily - pay such money into his/her own account. When initially estimating the overall cost of a journey, it is best to include all expenses (including i.e. pocket money) and to give a realistic global figure to parents. A refund in the case of an over-estimate is always more acceptable than a supplementary charge.

The best exchange rates for foreign currency are usually obtained in this country. Where the visit will involve a need to pay large bills abroad, this is best done by Bankers' Draft.

Within European Community countries, reciprocal health insurance arrangements apply. It is important that parents should obtain a Form E111 (Certificate of Entitlement) in respect of their children from their local DHSS office or post office in good time before the journey begins. Group leaders should collect and safeguard these forms in respect of all members of the group so that they are readily available if required in the foreign country.

NB It is advisable to take photocopies of Form E111 (together with the originals) when travelling to an EC country. The original should always be retained by the Group leader and a copy be given to authorities abroad (i.e. local sickness insurance office) if necessary.

Great emphasis should be placed on traffic risks abroad, particularly when crossing roads. Work should be done on this before the visit, with reminders when in the foreign country (i.e. mandatory use of recognised crossings). Younger children should not be allowed to cross roads unsupervised in the early stages of the stay.

Passports / EHIC Cards

All students will have passports for international travel. These will be looked after by supervising staff other than in transit through checks.

EHIC cards are required for European visits

Before travelling abroad please ensure that the telephone number for the British Embassy in the country to be visited is obtained and carried by the group leader and deputy in case of an emergency.

Supervision of Pupils on the Journey and in Foreign Centres

Accompanying staff must accept responsibility for the good behaviour of their groups both on the journey and while abroad.

It will greatly ease supervision if each accompanying adult takes responsibility for a sub-group, with the Group leader or deputy being personally responsible for any young people who might create difficulties. Each sub-group leader will naturally have a list of the young people in his/her group, while the Group leader has a complete list, augmented by a card for each person giving personal details and a passport sized photograph. If a member of the party should go missing the local police would then have some concrete details to work from. Impress on everyone that if lost they should go for help to a public building (shop/museum) or find a person in uniform and not approach passers-by in the street.

Emergencies - the Duty Officer System

The Head teacher must ensure that group leaders have telephone numbers for a 24-hour standby person based contact (for minor problems) and the LA 24 hour emergency contact/pager number (for serious incidents). The home emergency contacts must be available 24/7. Groups must not be in the position of having to speak to an answer phone, leaving a message. A hierarchy of contacts is most desirable.

Support from the British Consul

The group leader should, before the visit commences, obtain from the Foreign Office, London (Monday to Friday, telephone 020 72703000) the address and telephone number of the British Consul and thus be assured of help from an English speaking person with knowledge of local services and regulations and access to emergency funds.

In the event of death or serious injury to any member of the party, the British Consul should be contacted immediately. He/she will inform the Foreign Office, which has a 24-hour open line service.

Visits, Inset and Risk Assessment

- A member of staff wishing to attend a course or meeting of professional importance should see the Head of School with details. As long as covers can be arranged staff are encouraged to attend outside events of this sort. Please make sure that dates for courses are recorded in the staff room diary and that useful information is passed on. (If you go to something in the evening, weekends or holidays that relates to school please keep the SLT informed). A staff meeting can be arranged for this if necessary.
- To organise a visit for pupils a trip form must be obtained in advance, showing whether the event is educational or entertainment, the costs involved and how it is to be funded. Please give a clear indication of the way in which the visit fits into the teaching programme if it is to be educational. Hand the trip form to the Head of School with information about staff accompanying the trip and any arrangements made or necessary for cover of classes or duties. **A school risk assessment form must be completed by the member of staff organising the trip and attached to the trip form, this may necessitate a preliminary visit in some cases.** Visits using an educational organisation must show on the trip form that the organisation is properly accredited with appropriately trained staff. Staff must have approval before a visit is undertaken and it will be given as long as the necessary covers can be organised. (Please clear arrangements with house and duty staff if the visit falls outside the 8.30 – 4.15pm school day).
- Trip organisers should prepare information and permission letters for parents. A copy of the proposed letter should be given to the Head of School for approval.
- When using the risk assessments provided by other centres or organisations – such as an activity centre – the organising staff must see and read that risk assessment and a copy must accompany the approved trip form.
- It is considered good practice to make preliminary visits to sites or organisations as part of the risk assessment and planning process and the school will support organising staff in terms of necessary expenses, cover arrangements etc in making such visits

Staff Room Diary

- Record any planned visits in the Staff Room diary and always seek permission of any staff whose classes are affected before going ahead.
- The **Risk Assessment form** (copies available in staff room) must be given to the relevant Deputy Head (Pre Prep, Prep / Senior) with the School Trip Form.
- The DCSF document 'Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits' is available for consultation in the staff room

Please inform the office of any visitors expected in school.