



Off Site Visit and Trips Policy

VIS Mission

VIS aims to provide our students with a first-class, well-rounded education while being immersed in a beautiful and safe mountain environment. Critical thinking, creativity and open-mindedness to the cultures and beliefs of others inspire learning at our school. With a strong emphasis on sports and the arts, we believe in developing the personality of each student and helping them to become principled global citizens.

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Introduction

This policy provides guidance for all adults who, in the course of their employment, have responsibility for pupils away from the School. This includes all educational visits, outdoor learning activities including sports' fixtures, field work and exchanges.

Rationale

VIS organises a range of off-site visits for pupils throughout the year. They are an important part of the education which the School provides. As well as providing opportunities for pupils to develop their knowledge and skills, they contribute to the raising of achievement, to the development of self confidence, independence, communication skills and teamwork and to the enhancement of interpersonal relationships.

1. Roles and Responsibilities

Duty of Care On all visits, staff and volunteer helpers have a legal duty of care for the health and safety of themselves and the participants. The law requires them to take reasonable care to avoid incidents which might have been foreseen. For a volunteer, the legal expectation of the standard of care is that of a "reasonable person", for a teacher that of a "reasonable professional". The Academy Trust has a legal duty to ensure that suitable risk management systems are in place and support, training and resources available to visit staff.

It is the responsibility of the school to ensure that:

- They are aware of their legal responsibilities as employers for the health and safety of staff and pupils.
- There is suitable guidance in place for off-site visits and the School has robust systems to support the implementation of the guidance.
- There are suitable risk management systems in place.
- The Off-site visits policy covers all aspects of the visit and supports inclusion.
- The School provides training and any necessary resources to enable teachers to manage with confidence off-site visits.
- Monitoring procedures are in place.
- Sufficient emergency procedures are in place and arrangements to support pupils with medical conditions.

Visit Leader

The visit leader has overall responsibility for supervision and conduct of the visit. The visit leader must:

- Follow the School off-site visits policy.
- Be confident to lead the visit and have the specific competence to do so eg have the relevant qualification, training or experience.
- to ensure that the activity is properly planned and includes appropriate risk assessments.
- Check that inclusion and accessibility issues have been addressed.
- Check safety and security issues.

- Ensure adequate control measures and precautions are in place and carry out continuous risk assessments during the visit.
- Ensure that environmental factors (eg weather, temperature, daylight hours) have been considered.
- Liaise with the Finance regarding the budget for the trip.
- Ensure that the roles and responsibilities of all visit staff are properly communicated and that the assistant leader is in a position to undertake the role of visit leader if necessary.
- Provide relevant information to all visit staff about the visit and pupils, including age, health information, capabilities, special needs, safeguarding and behavioural issues.
- Ensure informed parental consent has been obtained.
- Provide full information to pupils and parents regarding itinerary, accommodation, activities, transport arrangements, school insurance policy, unsupervised times during a visit and emergency telephone numbers.
- Check insurance details are adequate.
- Check child protection and safeguarding issues are addressed.
- Check all staff and any third party providers have emergency contact and emergency procedure details.
- Ensure that group safety is not compromised where a parent or relative of visit staff accompany a trip.
- Ensure there is access to first aid at an appropriate level and there are sufficient supplies of necessary medicines on the visit. Keep a record of their use.

Volunteers

Volunteers may take any role on a visit. They must, however, fulfil the requirements for the role assigned to them. The engagement of any volunteer must involve an appropriate level of vetting and induction. Volunteers would usually be assigned to the role of helper.

Parents

Parents should:

- Provide the School with up to date health requirements of their child and a 24/7 emergency contact number. Where a child has a significant medical condition, obtain from a doctor a letter confirming the child's fitness to travel.
- Return any forms by the date specified.
- Pay any required contribution.
- Ensure that they and their child have a clear understanding of the behaviour expected on a trip and sanctions.
- Where the visit is more complex have had the opportunity to attend a parents' meeting.
- Know who to contact in an emergency.

Pupils

They should be made aware of their responsibilities by the visit leader or other member of staff, for their own health and safety and for that of the group and:

- Adhere to the pupil code of behaviour for visits.
- Follow the instructions of the visit leader and other members of staff.
- Dress and behave sensibly and responsibly.
- Look out for anything that might hurt or threaten anyone in the group and tell the visit leader about it.
- Not take unnecessary risks.
- If abroad, be sensitive to local codes and customs.

2. Supervision

There are no prescribed ratios for off-site visits. Consideration will be given to the experience and competence of accompanying staff, characteristics of the activity and group, environmental conditions and distance from base.

For trips a ratio of one teacher to every 10 pupils is recommended. There should normally be a minimum of two staff for all trips abroad. It is also recommended that one male member of staff and one female member of staff accompany mixed sex groups. The visit leader has a duty of care for the group at all times unless delegated to a third party for a specific period. It is recommended that the visit leader divides the group into subgroups for more effective management. Regular head counts should take place throughout the visit and be the initial response to an incident. Everyone should know the destination (eg tube station), rendezvous points and know what to do if they get separated from the group. The responsibility for supervision is continuous. It may be:

- **Direct supervision** when the visit staff remain with the pupils throughout the visit.
- **Indirect supervision** when a group is given the freedom to explore an area or take part in an activity within clearly identified and agreed boundaries. It should be possible to quickly re-establish direct supervision if necessary.

Good practice includes:

- o Identifying clear geographical boundaries.
- o Setting a time limit.
- o Ensuring pupils stay together in small groups and know to wait for a leader to find them should they get lost.
- o Briefing pupils on location of visit staff.
- o On a residential visit ensuring pupils have details of their accommodation
- o If abroad, ensuring pupils carry small briefing card in the local language with the name of the School, accommodation details and health problems.
- o The group should be provided with the party leader's mobile 'phone number.

• **Remote supervision** when a group works at such a distance that direct supervision cannot quickly be reestablished eg Duke of Edinburgh expeditions or exchanges. However, the pupils must stay in small groups and the supervisor must be able to provide assistance within a reasonable time.

Clear guidelines must be set.

- o Pupils must be sufficiently trained. This should include first aid and emergency procedures.
- o They must be assessed as competent for the activity.
- o Staff must give clear guidelines about behaviour.
- o Parents should be aware of the degree of supervision and level of responsibility and independence expected of their child.
- o There must be clear lines of communication between the group and visit staff. Satellite and mobile 'phones provide an excellent way of maintaining communication but are not a failsafe method.
- o There should be defined time limits between contacts. Exceeding these should activate an agreed emergency response.
- o There should be clear arrangements for abandoning an activity where it cannot be completed without compromising safety.

This type of supervision is only appropriate where young people no longer need an adult leader and are capable of operating independently. When booking accommodation, checks should be made that the building is secure and meets fire regulations. It is important that leaders have sleeping accommodation close to that of pupils and have access to pupils' rooms if necessary. On arrival pupils should be advised of emergency procedures and escape routes. Arrangements should not compromise child protection issues.

3. Inclusion

When organising a visit, the School will ensure that activities are available and accessible to all, irrespective of special educational or medical needs or protected characteristics (gender, race, disability, religion, sexual orientation, gender reassignment). Every reasonable measure is taken to find a venue and activities which enable all pupils to participate, allow accessibility through adaptation or modification and integration through participation with peers. Care is taken to avoid indirect discrimination eg arranging a residential visit during a religious holiday. Where it is genuinely impossible to make alternative arrangements a visit may be approved in order not to deprive the rest of the group of worthwhile opportunities. The School offers financial support to parents in receipt of certain benefits to enable participation.

It may be necessary to exclude a pupil on the grounds that their behaviour presents an unacceptable risk to the health and safety of themselves and the rest of the group. This decision will not be taken lightly. Every effort will be made to enable participation through putting in place suitable strategies. Expectations of visit staff must be reasonable and within their competence.

4. Charging

The School does not charge for education provided during school hours, education provided outside school hours if part of the curriculum and transport in connection with an off-site visit. It may, however, ask for voluntary contributions.

5. Planning a Visit

I. Procedures for low and higher risk visits

Details of these procedures can be found in the Teacher Folder on Google Drive.

II. Transport

(i) Coaches – May Taxis to be used for a range of visits and fixtures.

(ii) Minibus – the school bus to be used whenever possible for all trips to reduce transport costs.

III. Use of Private Cars Visit staff may use private cars to transport pupils on off-site visits. However, they should normally not be put in a position where they are alone with a young person.

IV. Parental Consent

Consent forms will be sent for all higher risk trips, residential trips and visits abroad. All staff involved in the visit will ensure that pupils' details remain confidential and that personal information is shredded after the visit or removed from their digital version on their phones. It is not necessary to take the consent forms on the visit but staff should ensure that they have all relevant information eg trip printout of participant details. Visits abroad are the exception to this, as proof of parental consent for treatment may be requested by medical professions.

6. First Aid and Medication

First Aid

Qualified first-aiders are not necessary for all off-site visits. Visit staff will, however, ensure that a basic level of support is available at all times.

- At least one member of the visit team will have a working knowledge of first aid and is competent to use the first aid materials carried by the group.
- All visit staff will know how to access qualified first aid support.

Where a group of pupils is subject to remote supervision e.g. Duke of Edinburgh's Award, then the group must have:

- The ability to contact first aid support.
- Appropriate first aid materials and the level of competence required to look after themselves until help arrives.

Medication

The conditions of employment of teachers do not include administering medicines. However, the visit leader will assign one person on the visit team to be responsible for the management of medicines. This person should receive any necessary training (eg use of EpiPen). He/she should be familiar with the School's policy and instructions from parents or doctors and be briefed by parents on dealing with medical conditions which require management eg diabetes. Single consent forms for low risk visits and regular activities ask parents to provide details of any medical conditions their child has, medication he/she takes and to allow emergency treatment if necessary.*

Medicines taken abroad should be properly labelled and where relevant accompanied by a copy of the prescription. Where medication includes delivery by a syringe, a doctor's note should be obtained to show at border security.

6. Risk Assessment

At the planning stage the visit leader will, together with the assistant leader, identify any possible hazards or significant risks for the trip. The anticipated benefits of the trip will be weighed against the hazards and risks associated with the visit. These must be acceptable. Risks cannot be eliminated altogether. Exposure to well managed risks enables pupils to learn important life skills. Visit staff will ensure that appropriate and sufficient control measures are in place to manage these risks.

For all visits staff should fully complete the relevant templated risk assessment forms provided by the Local Authority. This form should be submitted to the Headmaster at least 14 days before the visit.

During all visits staff will carry out ongoing risk assessments using the dynamic risk assessment form. Any significant risks should be written down. The review process following the visit is an essential part of the risk assessment process. Lessons learnt from ongoing risk assessments will inform future planning.

Where a trip has already been risk assessed, a review of the existing assessments may be all that is needed. Any changes should be recorded.

7. Safeguarding

It is the responsibility of all visit staff to safeguard the welfare of pupils on educational visits. The School will ensure an adequate staff/participant ratio and gender mix of staff.

Where visits involve overnight stays, careful consideration will be given to sleeping arrangements and child protection issues. Parents will be informed of sleeping arrangements in advance.

One of the advantages of trips is the more relaxed relationship which can develop between staff and pupils. Staff will, however, always act in an open and transparent way and apply the same professional standards regardless of culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity.

They will avoid being alone with a child and maintain professional boundaries at all times, avoiding situations where their actions might be misinterpreted.

Staff may use social media, with the permission of the Headmaster, in the organisation of the visit and to provide ongoing information about the progress of the visit. Pupils should be reminded of the responsible use of social media. It is important that personal information and inappropriate images and comments are not circulated. Staff should keep their personal information secure and, where possible, use the school 'mobile for communicating with group members.

8. Emergency Plan

The visit staff will be able to cope with most incidents on an off-site visit. However, where there are serious incidents such as life threatening injuries, fatalities or missing persons, emergency procedures must be activated. All visit staff will carry the telephone numbers of the Senior Management Team who are the emergency contacts for off-site visits. The first contact will record all the information using the **School's First Contact Emergency Action Card**.

They will have copies of the contact details of all visit staff and pupils. The roles and responsibilities of SMT in an emergency are set out in the School's Emergency and Crisis Plan. If the Headmaster, or the Deputy Headmaster in his absence, considers the School requires help in coping with the emergency, he will contact the Chair of Governors. At the planning stage the visit leader will discuss emergency procedures with all visit staff. Roles for dealing with an emergency should, where possible, be allocated before departure by the visit leader eg first aid, communications, supervision of group, recording of details.

Emergency Procedures

The visit leader will take control, following the guidelines below.

- Remain calm. Assess the situation.
- Delegate roles.
- Safeguard him/ herself and any other uninjured members of the group.
- Ensure all members of the party are accounted for, safe, supervised and briefed. (They should be instructed not to use mobile phones.)
- Call the emergency services stating the name of the group, location, nature of emergency and number of injured persons, action so far.
- Call the first emergency contact at school. Provide a telephone number you can be called back on, and give details of the nature of emergency, time of incident, casualties and status, current location.
- Carry out first aid.

- Ensure that a member of the visit team accompanies any casualties to hospital and takes medical information and, if abroad, parental consent forms for emergency treatment.
- Deal with urgent physical needs of group – shelter, warmth, water.
- Deal with emotional needs of group.
- Keep a written log. *
- Refer all enquiries (press, parents) to the School.

Record the following:

- Time, nature and date of the incident.
- Accurate incident location.
- Names of casualties.
- Details of injuries.
- Actions taken, including all communications.
- Details of any moves from the incident site.
- Names and contact details of witnesses.
- Proposed actions.

9. Offsite PE and Sport Activities

In addition to the content which is set out in the previous sections of the policy, the following should be adhered to when organising offsite PE and sports activities which include:

- Inter-school fixtures
- Sports tournaments and festivals
- Sports tours

Roles and responsibilities

Teacher in charge:

- The member of staff in charge has the confidence and leadership skills needed for successful management of the groups and the activities.
- A risk assessment to cover the whole season has been completed.
- Emergency and contingency planning is in place.
- Required supervisory ratios are met.
- Parents are made aware of any significant risks and have given informed consent or given the opportunity to withdraw their child from any activity.
- Procedures for staff to respond to an emergency or crisis are in place.
- Adequate transport has been arranged.
- Parents are informed of team lists 24 hours before event.

At the start of the academic year or the appropriate term, the teacher i/c of a particular activity will be required to do the following:

- Obtain approval for fixtures from the Headmaster.
- Whenever possible, add all of the fixtures to the school calendar.
- Produce a generic risk assessment for the sports activity and travel.

- Obtain parental consent for team/squad members to participate offsite
- Obtain emergency contact details of participants.
- Obtain medical information of participants.

24 hours before the activity, the teacher i/c should ensure that: the team list, location and timing of the event is on google drive.

- The location and timing of the activity has been communicated to pupils who are expected to communicate this to their parents or guardians. Details are also made available on the School's website.
- Up-to-date information on the venue has been obtained.
- First Aid provision is adequate
- A register of participants is taken and a copy is left at school.
- Emergency contact details and essential medical information of participants is known in relation to all pupils and staff involved.
- Pupils are reminded to have their medication to hand.
- Contact details of all members of SMT are accessible in the event of an emergency or crisis
- Any procedures and precautions identified in the risk assessment are fully understood and implemented.
- An on-going risk assessment is employed using the blank risk assessment form.
- Staffing is sufficient to cope with any circumstances that might reasonably be foreseen including illness, injury or crisis.

Pupils must ensure that:

- Their parents are kept informed about their involvement in sports teams and events.
- Their parents are kept informed about the location and timing of the activity (including departure and return times).
- Personal medication is to hand during the activity.
- The correct kit including personal protective equipment (protective gear) is worn during the activity.
- School rules are adhered to where applicable and the code of behaviour for off-site visits is followed.