



EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Last Review:	November 2020
Date Ratified:	19 th November 2020
Next Review:	June 2023

Rationale

The school firmly believes that educational visits, within the UK and to other parts of the world, are an important aspect of the curriculum. For any visit involving students, safety is paramount and for this and other reasons, careful planning and organisation are essential. This policy sets out responsibilities, requirements and guidelines for planning, organising and managing school visits to ensure that students and staff may experience the best possible benefits from their visits and activities whilst at the same time minimising risks to their health, safety and welfare.

The Local Authority document for Offsite/Educational visits is available from The Trips & Visits Co-ordinator in the school office.

This document sets out in full, the current LA regulations and guidance on all types of educational visits. All staff organising any type of visit should refer to this document.

ORGANISATION AND ARRANGEMENTS

1. Planning

All staff will refer to and follow the 'Educational Visits Timeline' (there are separate timelines for day and foreign/residential visits) and also, for foreign visits, the 'Foreign Visits Procedures' when planning visits. All documentation required for planning an educational visit is available from The Trips & Visits Co-ordinator in the School Office.

The visit leader will talk to the Headteacher and obtain agreement in principle for the proposed visit before any definite plans are made.

All proposals for visits during an academic year must be initially notified to the Headteacher by the end of September of that year. Any requested after this date will only be agreed in exceptional circumstances. Initial notification of proposals for foreign visits must be made at least eight months in advance.

For non-residential visits in the UK all visit documentation must be fully completed at least three weeks' prior to the visit.

When the visit involves additional or high risk activities, foreign travel or is a residential visit then details of the visit will also be sent to the Local Authority for approval that all of the procedures have been satisfactorily completed. This must be done at least six weeks prior to the departure date for the visit for high risk activities and 6 months in advance for foreign travel.

Only visits with a direct link to the curriculum will usually be allowed to take place during term time. The Headteacher will decide on the suitability of the visit.

2. Health and Safety

Safety is ensured by adequate supervision, careful planning and a clear understanding of what degree of freedom is to be given to students.

3. Staffing Levels

- The minimum staffing requirements for day visits in the UK is 1 to 10-20.
- For visits involving an overnight stay the minimum staff/student ratio is 1 to 10, subject to there being at least 2 staff. For single sex parties one staff member must be of the same sex as the students. For mixed parties a staff member of each sex must be included.
- For visits abroad the minimum staff/student ratio is 1 to 10, subject to there being at least 2 staff. For single sex parties one staff member must be of the same sex as the students. For mixed parties a staff member of each sex must be included.
- For any visit in which activities classified as adventurous form part of the programme, the minimum staff/student ratio is 1 to 10, subject to there being at least two staff. In addition, specific regulations may apply to the staffing of the activities themselves.
- Adult helpers, other than teachers, may be included in the staff/student ratio provided they are acceptable to the Headteacher in the role which they will be required to fill. At least 50% of the supervisory staff must be school staff.
- Duke of Edinburgh Award. The qualifications and suitability of all persons involved with DofE activities will be verified by the Headteacher. The qualifications and approval process has been adopted from the GCC DofE policy. A list of these persons and their qualifications will be maintained and updated by the school's trips and visits coordinator.

4. Cover

Due consideration must be given in the planning of visits of the need to minimise the impact on staff cover and the need to employ supply teachers. The cost of the visit must incorporate supply cover for teaching staff when cover cannot be provided by colleagues.

5. Risk Assessments

The visit leader will carry out risk assessment(s) and complete risk assessment form(s) and submit these to the Headteacher for checking and approval before the visit goes ahead. Approval for any visit is conditional upon completion of satisfactory risk assessments. The Headteacher or School office (SJ) will give guidance on this if required.

6. Safeguarding

The safety and well-being of students and staff involved visits is paramount. All visits will be organised in such a way as they minimise risk to students and staff. All school's safeguarding guidelines will be applied with regard to vetting all adults involved with a school visit. These guidelines will also apply for foreign exchanges where families of students at the school are hosting students from partner schools.

7. Transport

Minibus

The Minibuses must be booked in advance. The driver is responsible for the vehicle during any visit. All staff will familiarise themselves with the minibus use procedures before use.

Hired coaches

If needed, coaches should be hired from approved operators through the School Office.

Private cars

No student may travel in a private car unless parental permission is given in advance and appropriate insurance cover is in place. The school's insurance policy provides business use cover for all staff.

8. Finance

Financial planning

The visit leader should inform and/or consult with the School's Finance Manager at an early stage in the planning process to ensure that the proper financial procedures are followed and that any required safeguards are in place. Approval of the visit is conditional on a budget plan being approved by the Finance Manager.

9. Insurance

Insurance for all visits is centrally covered by the School's insurance policy.

10. Communications / Documentation

Letter / Consent Form: Parents will be informed in writing as to what the visit involves and for non-residential visits outside of the school day they will be required to sign a single consent form at the start of the year. The school will write to all parents at the start of the year to inform parents of these procedures.

Meeting: An explanatory meeting may be held for parents if the visit leader feels that this is appropriate before residential visits.

Itinerary: An itinerary will be sent home before all visits (apart from games fixtures and day trips in the UK).

Communication with staff: Information regarding the nature, timing and students involved with the visit will be displayed in the staffroom. All of the relevant information regarding the visit will be given to the contact person. This will include:

- Medical information
- The itinerary
- Risk assessments

11. General letter and consent form

At the start of the school year, parents of all students will receive a letter giving general information about school visits. This will also ask parents to complete a medical form to be used for all activities and visits. Parents will be expected to inform the school of any amendments to their child's medical form. For residential trips parents will be asked to complete an additional medical form and a code of conduct form. For activities and trips within the school day consent is not required.

12. Responsibilities and Duties

Responsibilities of the Visit Leader

The visit leader will:

- Ensure that supervising staff are appointed with proper regard to their experience and competence to undertake the tasks assigned to them.
- Ensure that adequate arrangements are planned and implemented for the safety and well-being of all participants, staff and students, whilst on the visit.
- Brief students and other participants prior to the visit and ensure that they conduct themselves with due respect for the environment and the local community.

Responsibilities of Supervising Staff

All staff members and other adult helpers will be made aware of the expectations placed upon them. All staff and other helpers will fully understand and be comfortable with their role before accepting their place on the visit.

Staff will recognise their responsibilities for:

- Maintaining good order and discipline.
- Ensuring the safety and well-being of the students in their care.
- Informing the visit leader of any incident involving the students in their care which has implications for students' health and safety, general welfare or the good order of the visit as a whole.
- Report to the visit leader any concerns they may have concerning student behaviour or well-being during the visit.

12. Emergency Procedures

The School will appoint a member of the Senior Leadership Team as the emergency school contact for each visit. All major incidents should immediately be related to this person, especially those involving injury or that might attract media attention.

The Group Leader will leave full details of all students and accompanying adults on the visit with the emergency school contact, including the home contact details of parents/guardians and next-of-kin, as appropriate.



EDUCATIONAL VISITS TIMELINE – DAY VISITS (NON-RESIDENTIAL)

Weeks	Action	i/c	(✓/X)
-4 Months	Initial discussion with the Headteacher and agreement in principle.	Trip Leader	
-4 Months	Visit leader to compile outline proposal of visit (blue form), to be approved by the Headteacher. Staff/student ratio to be agreed.	Trip Leader	
-3 Months	Budget plan authorised by the Finance Manager.	Trip Leader	
-3Months	Letter sent to parents informing them about the activity/visit and payment details (if appropriate).	Trip Leader	
-3 Months	Consultation with the Headteacher to complete risk assessments that cover all activities associated with the visit. Students with medical needs to be identified – individual medical risk assessments to be compiled. Students with behavioural issues to be identified – discuss the need for a behaviour plan.	Trip Leader	
-3 Months	Meeting with the Headteacher to review all risk assessments and completed documentation. <i>Staffing agreed and training requirements identified.</i> All risk assessments and documentation to be authorised by the Headteacher.	Trip Leader	
-3 Months	Transport to be booked – through the Trips & Visits Administrator (TVA) (if not using the school minibus)	Trip Leader	
-2 Months	Initial team meeting to outline supervising staff responsibilities before, during and after the trip. Identified training to be scheduled ahead of the visit.	Trip Leader	
<i>The TVA will keep up-to-date information on amounts owing from students and will make this available to the Trip Leader upon request. The TVA will also issue receipts for payments received and be responsible for following up non-payment by students, in accordance with the Charging and Remissions Policy.</i>			
-1 Months	Cheques for payments for the visit must be requested from the Finance Office.	Trip Leader	
-2 Weeks	Information on the timings and student participating in the visit to be posted in the staff room.	Trip Leader Visit Staff	
-1 Day	Cheques for payments during the visit to be collected from the Finance Office	Trip Leader	
-1 Day	School mobile to be collected from the TVA	Trip Leader	
-1 Day	Copies of medical forms to be collected from the TVA	Trip Leader	
<i>Supervising staff will communicate medical, emotional, health and behaviour concerns to the Trip Leader throughout the trip. The Trip Leader will record all of these concerns on a 'Daily Monitoring' template.</i>			
On return	Meeting with the Headteacher to review completed trip evaluation forms and Daily Monitoring template.	Trip Leader	
+ 1 Week	The Headteacher will consider issues raised in the post trip evaluation meeting and make recommendations when appropriate.	Headteacher	



EDUCATIONAL VISITS TIMELINE – FOREIGN & RESIDENTIAL TRIPS

Weeks	Action	i/c	(✓/X)
-12 Months	Initial discussion with the Headteacher and agreement in principle.	Trip Leader	
-12 Months	Visit leader to compile outline proposal of visit (blue form) and approved by the Headteacher. Staff/student ratio to be agreed.	Trip Leader	
-12 Months	Produce a budget plan based on the number of students involved. Ensure that all costs have been factored in including: cost of staff cover, entrance fees, payment of activities, additional costs for parents (spending money), transport and accommodation. Staff must refer to the 'Foreign Visits Procedures' and Finance Manager for further assistance.	Trip Leader	
-12 Months	Budget plan authorised by the Finance Manager.	Trip Leader	
-12 Months	For visits abroad an initial letter sent to parents stating the purpose of the visit, approximate dates and asking for expressions of interest.		
-11 Months	Consultation with the Trips and Visits Co-Ordinator to complete risk assessments that cover all activities associated with the visit. Students with medical needs to be identified – individual medical risk assessments to be compiled. Students with behavioural issues to be identified – discuss the need for a behaviour plan.	Trip Leader	
-11 Months	Meeting with the Headteacher to review all risk assessments and completed documentation. <i>Staffing agreed and training requirements identified.</i> All risk assessments and documentation to be authorised by the Headteacher.	Trip Leader	
-11 Months	Confirmation letter sent to parents - deposit requested and payment plan enclosed.	Trip Leader	
-9 Months	Initial team meeting to outline supervising staff responsibilities before, during and after the trip. Identified training to be scheduled ahead of the visit.	Trip Leader	
<i>The Trips & Visits Administrator (TVA) will keep up-to-date information on amounts owing from students and will make this available to the Trip Leader upon request. The TVA will also issue receipts for payments received and be responsible for following up non-payment by students, in accordance with the payment policy.</i>			
-3 Months	Final confirmation letter to parents with itinerary, medical and code of conduct forms. Passport and EHIC cards requested.	Trip Leader	
-3 Months	Identified staff training completed.	Trip Leader	
-1 Months	Briefing for parents	Trip Leader Visit Staff	
-1 Month	Cheques and foreign currency for payments during the visit requested from the Finance Office.	Trip Leader	
-2 Weeks	Information on the timings and student participating in the visit to be posted in the staff room.	Trip Leader	
-1 Day	Collective passports, EHIC cards, travel cards, first aid kit, medical packs, copies of medical forms, emergency contacts and student information to be collected from the TVA.	Trip Leader	
-1 Day	Cheques and currency to be collected from the Finance Manager.	Trip Leader	
<i>The Trip Leader will convene a daily meeting attended by all supervising staff throughout the trip. All supervising staff will feedback on medical, emotional, health and behaviour concerns that have been noticed through the day. The Trip Leader will record all of these concerns on a 'Daily Monitoring' template.</i>			
On return	Meeting with the Headteacher to review completed trip evaluation forms and 'Daily Monitoring' form.	Trip Leader	
+ 1 Week	The Headteacher will consider issues raised in the post trip evaluation meeting and make recommendations when appropriate.	Headteacher	



Sir William Romney's School

EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY

Appendix 1

OFFSITE VISITS

The school has formally adopted, through its Local Governing Board, the Gloucestershire 'Guidance for Offsite Visit'. Further procedures have been agreed with the Governing Body to ensure that this policy is adhered to.

Aims and Purposes of Offsite Visits

The school has a strong commitment to the added value of learning outside the classroom and beyond the school premises.

Each year the school will arrange a number of activities that take place off the school site and out of school hours, which support the aims of the school. The range of activities which the Governing Body has given its approval includes:

- Out of hours Clubs (music, drama, art, science, sport, homework etc)
- School sports teams
- Regular local visits (places of worship, swimming, other local amenities)
- Day visits for particular groups
- Residential visits
- Overseas visits
- Adventurous Activities.

Approval Procedure

The Local Governing Board has delegated the consideration and approval of offsite visits and activities to the Headteacher. The Headteacher has nominated Miss Sarah Jones as the Off-site Visits Co-ordinator (OVC) and the Governing Body has approved this appointment.

Before a visit is advertised to parents the Headteacher will approve the initial plan. The Headteacher will also approve the completed plan and risk assessments for the visit before departure.

Staffing

The school recognises the key role of accompanying staff in ensuring the highest standards of learning, challenge and safety on a school visit.

Staff are encouraged and supported to develop their abilities in organising and managing visits. There will be a system within the school to allow less experienced members of staff to work alongside more experienced colleagues on visits. The selection of staff for offsite visits will be a key priority in the initial approval of any proposed visit. Staff will be suitably qualified and experienced for proposed activities.

The school values and recognises the contribution of volunteer adults and parent helpers assisting with offsite activities and visits. Any volunteer will be approved by both the Headteacher and Visit Leader and is entered on the voluntary helpers list kept by the School. They will be carefully briefed on the scope of their responsibility. Where it is appropriate the school will ensure that vetting and DBS screening is available for volunteers.

The appointed Visit Leader will be fully supported in the tasks required to arrange the visit. This will include, as necessary, making time or finances available to conduct an exploratory visit, briefing teachers and/or other staff, accessing training courses, reviewing and evaluating the visit or identifying time when the leader and OVC might work in partnership to undertake planning and risk assessments.

Visit staff will not be under the influence of alcohol or other drugs such that their ability to recognise hazards or respond to emergencies is in any way restricted.

Risk Assessment

The Visit Leader will identify the risks from any activity that is under their control and take appropriate steps to ensure all participants are safe. Good practice precautions and safety measures will be taken and this will be recorded in a risk assessment.

External Activity Providers

Where external contractors are involved in organising all or part of the visit, the contract will be made with the school on behalf of the students. All payments for the visit will be made through the school accounts.

The Visit Leader will make appropriate checks before committing the school to the contract. This will include seeking assurances about health and safety, and any accreditation and licensing.

Parental Consents

Written consent from parents will not be required for students to take part in the majority of off-site activities organised by the school as most of these activities take place during school hours and are a normal part of a child's education at school. However, parents will be told where their child will be at all times and of any extra safety measures required.

Written consent will be requested for activities that need a higher level of risk management or those that take place outside school hours. The school has a standard form, which will be used for this purpose.

As part of the parent consent they will be fully informed of the activities and arrangements for the visit. For all residential visits parents will be invited to a briefing meeting where they can ask for clarification of any aspect of the itinerary and organisation of the visit.

Parental authority will be requested for students to receive emergency treatment when appropriate, including administration of an anaesthetic or blood transfusion. If parents do not agree to this, the school may decide to withdraw the child from the visit.

Information about special/medical/dietary needs

The school maintains information about special educational, medical and dietary needs of all students, which will be referred to by the Visit Leader during the planning of all offsite visits. Parents will be reminded to provide up to date information.

Where necessary special arrangements will be made and information will be shared with relevant staff and training provided.

The expectations of Students and Parents

The school has a clear code of conduct for school visits based on the school 'Behaviour Policy'. This code of conduct will be part of the condition of booking by the parents. Students, whose behaviour is such that the Visit Leader is concerned for their safety, or for that of others, can be withdrawn from the activity. The Visit Leader will consider whether such students should be sent home early and parents will be expected to cover any costs of the journey home early.

Communication

The school will ensure there is appropriate and adequate communication with visiting groups (in normal and emergency situations).

Two members of the Senior Leadership Team will be appointed as the emergency contacts for each visit. All major incidents should immediately be relayed to this person(s), especially those involving injury or that might attract media attention.

The Visit Leader will leave full details of all students and accompanying adults on the visit with the emergency contacts, including the home contact details of parents and next-of-kin, as appropriate.

All incidents and accidents occurring on a visit will be reported back and recorded following normal school procedures for reporting and investigating accidents.

Review by the Local Authority

The school is supported in its arrangements for offsite visits by eVisits at Gloucestershire County Council. Where necessary the school will seek advice from eVisits.

All visits that involve an overnight stay, going abroad and any that involve adventurous activities will be notified to eVisits prior to departure. eVisits will provide an independent reassurance check of the plan and the precautions and safety measures that will be taken. Any advice provided will be fully considered prior to the trip taking place.

References to other policies

The school has policies for Charging and Remissions and Inclusion, which applies to all visits.