

Ewell Castle Junior School

Policy regarding Trips & Visits



1. Introduction

- Members of Staff assume being “in loco parentis” on any trip or visit until the pupil is returned to the care of the parent.
- The Head of Junior School (HoJS), whether accompanying the group or not has a responsibility in relation to appropriate levels of supervision and planning.
- The Principal and School Governors also have a responsibility in policy terms.
- Key questions to ask oneself at any time but particularly when considering a venture are:
 - If I were a parent would I be satisfied with the activity/arrangements?
 - If something goes wrong, could I convince the most sceptical colleague that the action taken was reasonable?

2. Levels of Supervision

The Staff/Pupil ratio for any trip/activity must be reviewed in the light of a variety of factors e.g. age/maturity of pupils, previous experience of staff, transport arrangements (eg. two drivers required for certain trips or driver + supervisor) and nature of activity. However there are some general principles that can be applied:

- **Day/part day visits – at least:**
 - Nursery:** 1 : 4 where possible (1:8 legal requirement)
 - Reception:** 1 : 5/6 where possible
 - Years 1 & 2:** 1 : 8
 - Years 3 – 6:** 1 : 12
- **Residential visits** – at least 1:10 with a minimum of 2 teachers.
- **Visit abroad** – at least 1:10, minimum 3 teachers, with at least one teacher conversant with the language, and customs & practices (e.g. medical services etc.)
- **Sporting fixture** – at least 1:16 if number exceeds this a parent will be in support.

A deputy party leader will always be clearly specified so that there is no doubt as to who will take responsibility in a situation in which the leader can not fulfil his/her responsibilities.

3. Composition of party/nature of supervision

- The leader of the party will have appropriate levels of experience to lead such a trip/visit.
- Other 'responsible' adults (usually not employed at Ewell Castle) may form part of a party and must:
 - be acceptable to both HoJS and party leader;
 - be briefed/trained as appropriate;
 - be clear as to their responsibilities/expectations of them;
 - never be left i/c a group of pupils;
 - be clear about their position in relation to personal and third party insurance.
 - have a CRB check (for overnight stays)

The situation regarding spouses, partners and children of staff will receive separate and specific consideration. If children of members of staff are permitted to attend then the responsibilities given to those members of staff will avoid any compromise or potential conflict of interests/responsibilities/loyalties.

- A meeting of all members of staff taking part in the trip should be held to discuss the proposal. Particular issues to be resolved will include:
 - Particular responsibilities for each member – deputy leader, first aider;
 - Emergency procedures
 - Financial details and responsibilities
 - Health issues of children in the partyIt is advisable to have reserve members of staff available.

4. Planning

- The **aims & objectives** of any trip/visit should be conveyed to the HoJS in the proposal made for the trip/visit.
- **A checklist** is available for day visits (and for residential visits/journeys abroad).
- **Guidelines/protocol** for school sports fixtures (home & away) are available.
- Preliminary Budget forms must be approved at 'approval stage' by the HoJS.
- During residential trips, arrangements for activities in the 'centre' should be such that pupils are fully occupied either on excursions, visits, project work, rest time or other organised/supervised activities and entertainment..
- Staff arranging for parties to make overseas visits must ensure that appropriate immunisation and vaccination procedures are carried out. Travel firms should provide the necessary information. The School Doctor is available for advice as is information available from the Department of Health.

5. Parental awareness & consent

- Parents should be informed in writing in advance of arrangements for school visits, including sports fixtures both home and away.
- For all **residential trips** it will be necessary for an **Information Meeting** with parents to be held when details of the trip are given. Details will include:
 - Financial arrangements
 - Itinerary to include timings of departure, arrival etc
 - Staffing/supervisor information
 - Insurance cover
 - Accommodation details
 - Clothing & any other requirements

Such information should be included for parents for all day and residential trips.

6. Insurance

The insurance arrangements of any trip must be approved by the HoJS and Bursar. Cover in relation to serious injury, damage to or loss of personal property and third party and personal liability, must be explained.

7. Transport

- School minibuses are available for trips. Negotiations may be necessary regarding other proposed use including cover of hire cost.
- Coach bookings should be co-ordinated with the JS Secretary.
- The use of private vehicles is restricted – appropriate insurance (“for purposes of work”) and permission (from parent/guardian) must be received. In these situations when such use is agreed then a member of staff may claim for mileage allowance to the Financial Administrator. The cost must be covered by the trip finances.
- Parents may be required to drive pupils to the swimming pool. In this instance, the parent may only transport their own child.

8. Financial management/arrangements

- All financial arrangements pertaining to any trip/visit must be clearly defined, in writing, so as to protect all parties involved.
- Arrangements for the collection of monies using the School ‘contra’ account is necessary.
- All cheques from parents must be handed promptly to the Finance Administrator via the HoJS. Careful records must be kept and receipts issued. Arrangements for the withdrawal of cash can be made similarly. Traveller’s cheques may be taken out – by at least two persons in their own names, when travelling abroad.

- The organiser should check with the HoJS that all income and expenditure has been correctly credited / debited.
- Parents should be advised of:
 - Total cost with precise details of what is covered;
 - Any additional insurance that may be advisable or required;
 - Maximum amount of pocket money deemed appropriate and the 'bank' facility adopted;
 - Part payment dates (as appropriate) and dates after which deposits are not refundable;
 - Cancellation arrangements.
- For major trips it is appropriate that there are regular internal checks and monitoring of financial transactions and account records. This will be undertaken by the HoJS or appointed deputy.
- No Trips or visits can be entertained without appropriate financing in place to cover costs incurred.
- Final Account Forms are 'signed off' by the HoJS.

9. Approval

- Once preliminary details have been resolved, a formal written request for approval of the visit/trip is to be made to the HoJS, including a Preliminary Budget Form.
- Arrangements for the trip can now proceed and initial letters sent out to parents. Confirmation with Centre/Tour organisers etc is usually made when letters of acceptance have been received from parents and the pupil numbers are confirmed.
- The HoJS must be advised of any significant alterations to the proposals.

10. Emergency procedures

- A member of the Senior Management Team will be designated as the 'Home Officer' and supervising staff must be aware of the means of contacting that person at all times.
- The Leader and deputy leader must be mindful of emergency procedures.
- All involved in the planning, approval and organisation of visits should assess safety issues. Appropriate risk assessments must be with HoJS before the trip leaves.
- In the situation of a serious emergency that cannot be resolved by an on-the-spot response, the Leader must:
 - Contact the HoJS or 'home' contact;
 - Not permit any member of the party to have access to telephone until advised so to do;

- Make no comments to the media until given authorisation. When authorisation is given comments will be controlled by the HoJS or home contact.

11. Other considerations:

- **Packed lunches**

If a packed lunch is required for staff or 'contract' diners when a trip entails staff and/or pupil missing a normal school lunch then at least two days notice of requirements should be given to the Catering Manager.

- **Mobile phones**

Staff must have the use of a school mobile phone on all trips/visits. A mobile is available from HoJS. Please give at least one week's notice.

Under normal circumstances, it is not felt necessary for pupils to take mobile phones on a trip or residential visit.

- **Conduct of staff**

Staff are reminded that they are acting in loco parentis at all times during school trips/visits and that they must behave as would any reasonable parent. Members of staff are expected to look after the children in their care and respond to their needs or emergencies at any time during that visit.

Staff are reminded of the policy with regard to Substance Abuse and example and expectations in this regard. Staff must ensure that their capability to fulfil their responsibilities is not impaired by factors such as tiredness, medication or consumption of alcohol or other substances.

12. The Trip/Visit:

Upon arrival :

- the Leader should take steps to inform members of the party of any special hazards or particular arrangements. In the case of overnight trips any previous undertaking which has been given to inform parents and contact person of safe arrival of the party should be implemented at the first opportunity;
- Evacuation procedures – including location of alarm points and portable fire fighting equipment, fire routines and assembly point should be established with members of the party;
- Location of appropriate emergency aid equipment/procedures determined;
- Duty rotas for teaching members of staff and responsibilities of accompanying adults to be confirmed;
- In the case of residential trips, an accommodation register is to be circulated to all adults members of the party;
- Banking arrangements for pocket money to be confirmed;

During the trip/visit:

- Copies of Parental Consent Forms for residential visits and the EHIC cards for foreign visits to be carried by the Leader;
- An Accident report form should be completed in the event of any accident.
- In the event of a serious accident requiring a pupil to remain at the 'centre' after the main party has left or if a pupil must leave prior to the departure of the main party then adequate supervision of the main party and accompaniment of the injured party must be resolved.
Notification to parents and School Duty Officer of such a serious accident must be made as soon as practicable.

After the trip/visit:

- Immediately upon return parents should be advised of any 'non-serious accident' sustained by their child.
- All completed Accident Report forms to be given to the HoJS.
- A Final Financial Statement form to be completed and passed on to the HoJS
- A report and evaluation of the trip/visit should be submitted in writing to the HoJS upon return. Written reports are welcome for :
 - the web-site
 - newsletter, and
 - a full report for the magazine. (These reports to be posted in the relevant folders on Junior Share.)

Results of (inter-school) competition or other notable events must also be relayed without delay for announcement at assembly/ posting on the good news board etc.

- It may be appropriate to arrange a 'Reunion Meeting' for members of the party to share photographs.

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