



## **Activities outside school - Educational Visits Policy**

### **1. Aims**

- 1.1. At Abingdon School we believe that learning outside the classroom is an essential component of our curriculum. Our educational trips are many and varied, but with a clear purpose offering our students unique opportunities to develop their resourcefulness and initiative, to extend their learning and to spend time together in an informal environment.

### **2. Legislation & Guidance**

- 1.2. It is the School's duty to ensure that all educational visits are safely managed and that the health, safety and welfare of students, staff and volunteers are maintained in accordance with Department for Education 'Health and Safety: Advice for Schools' - 3 June 2013 last updated 5 April 2022. Relevant legislation and further guidance is listed in the Annex.

### **2. Responsibilities**

- 2.1. The Governing body as employer will satisfy themselves that appropriate safety measures are in place and that training needs have been addressed.
- 2.2. The Headmaster ensures that if the Educational Visits Co-ordinator's role and responsibilities are designated to another senior member of staff, that member of staff is appropriately experienced and suitably trained to undertake the role.
- 2.3. The Educational Visits Co-ordinator, has delegated responsibility from the Headmaster and approval of the Governors to authorise all off-site School visits and to ensure that all trips are prepared and conducted in accordance with School Policies and the Outdoor Education Advisory Panel (OEAP) National Guidance.
- 2.4. The Trip Leader has overall responsibility for the supervision and conduct of the visit and continues to monitor the arrangements to ensure the ongoing health and safety of the group. The Trip Leader is responsible for following the School policy and procedures. Guidance for staff is provided on Firefly with the detailed procedures as necessary (this is located at <http://abingdon.fireflycloud.net/trips>).
- 2.5. In accordance with the School's alcohol policy, the trip leader will ensure that there is at least a 1:16 ratio of staff to students who do not consume alcohol if the students are staying in a hotel or with host families. For Duke of Edinburgh and other adventurous training activities, the ratio is reduced to 1:10.

### **3. Staff to pupil ratios**

- 3.1. It is important to have a high enough ratio of adult supervisors to students for any visit.

Various factors should be taken into consideration such as the age of the group, the nature of the activities, the duration and nature of the journey and the medical and/or specific educational needs of any students within the group.

- 3.2. Ratios are activity dependent and all ratios must be agreed with the EVC who can relax or strengthen these ratios as deemed appropriate.

## **4. Staffing**

- 4.1. The School recognises the key role of accompanying staff in ensuring the highest standards of learning, challenge and safety on a school visit. The selection of staff for educational visits is a key priority in determining the initial approval of any proposed visit. Where it is appropriate the School will ensure that DBS screening is available for volunteer adults assisting with educational visits e.g. overnight stays. Accompanying staff and adult helpers must have the appropriate skills.

## **5. Approval Procedure and Consent**

- 5.1. For any venture, preliminary discussion must be held with the EVC and, subject to satisfactory submission of a draft outline for the educational visit, initial approval will be given to continue. Written/electronic parental consent must be sought by the Trip Leader confirming that they have understood the purpose, estimated cost and arrangements for the visit and give permission for their child to go on the visit. This will also include consent to pass necessary personal data to third parties (activity providers, partner schools, travel companies etc). Parents are also requested to provide up to date emergency contact and medical information so that the appropriate first aid arrangements can be put in place. Students may not go on a visit if the signed consent form has not been received (consent from a recognised parental contact email address with the necessary permissions is also acceptable).

## **6. First Aid**

- 6.1. First aid requirements form part of the risk assessment carried out by the Trip Leader. Considerations include the nature and duration of the trip and the medical status of students and staff participating. There is a legal requirement to complete and retain accident forms, these should be completed on return to school.
- 6.2. The EVC can give permission to relax or strengthen First Aid provision as deemed appropriate.

## **7. Risk Assessment**

- 7.1. The Trip Leader must carry out the School risk assessment which must be approved by the Health, Safety and Risk Manager (HSRM) who assists the EVC. Ongoing 'dynamic' risk assessment will be continued by the Trip Leader throughout the trip to ensure that hazards are monitored and appropriate safety measures are put in place. It is the responsibility of the Trip Leader to ensure that all accompanying staff are familiarised with the risk assessment and to continue to brief staff and students throughout the trip.
- 7.2. When the trip involves adventurous activities e.g. trampolining, caving, climbing, trekking, skiing or water sports (other than rowing), the school will check that the external provider holds a licence as required by the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 2004 (for England, Scotland and Wales) and if not required, appropriate information is sought to

mitigate before the visit is authorised by the EVC.

- 7.3. All swimming (pool, lake, river or sea) activities must be clearly identified in the Trip itinerary and Risk Assessment with appropriate parental consent, staffing levels and relevant qualifications agreed individually with the EVC. In some circumstances, it may be appropriate to carry out a swim test.

## **8. Student Behaviour**

- 8.1. For all visits the students should be adequately briefed about the aims and expectations for the visit. Students should be engaged in evaluating the risks of the tasks they are about to undertake. In all cases parents and students should be made aware of the standards of behaviour expected and the sanctions which may be used in cases where the standards are breached. In all cases the parent consent form requires that parents agree that the School reserves the right to send their child home at the parents' expense if they jeopardise their safety, the safety of others or the good name of the School.

## **9. Mobile and Social Media contact whilst on a Trip**

- 9.1. Staff and students are to be aware of the effect that their mobile phone or social media contact may have, especially in the event of a natural disaster or security emergency. Sensitive information, images and personal opinions which may have ramifications for other individuals should not be sent or posted without prior consultation with the Trip Leader.

## **10. Emergency Procedures – Overseas and Residential Trips**

10. 1. The Trip Leader and staff must be familiar with and act in accordance with OEAP National Guidance, Requirements and Recommendations for Establishments.
10. 2. Staff must ensure that they keep emergency contact details for students and staff with them at all times, and that they have the correct insurance information readily available. In the event of a major incident they should follow the School Emergency Procedures for Trip Leaders.

## **11. Insurance**

- 11.1. The school holds a World Travel Policy which is renewed every September. This provides extensive insurance cover, some specified hazardous activities require an additional premium to maintain appropriate insurance cover. Trip Leaders must ensure that they check the travel insurance if they are undertaking hazardous activities and contact the insurer for advice if there is any doubt that the activity is not covered. The Trip Leader must keep the insurance details with them at all times on the trip.

## **12. Travel Arrangements**

- 12.1. Only reputable companies are used for transport. The travel requirements are risk assessed taking into account all the relevant factors such as distances to be travelled and likely weather conditions and appropriate arrangements are made to ensure optimal safety conditions for travel. All staff who drive students are checked for valid driving licences and asked to declare any relevant medical conditions annually. If they are driving a minibus they must have passed a recognised minibus test and they are required to complete and record

daily safety checks. The safety standards in some countries for roads and vehicles are variable and the Trip Leader must inform parents when this will be the case. The Trip Leader must carry out all reasonable checks to make sure that safety is maintained as far as is reasonably practicable.

### **13. Medical/Pastoral Information**

- 13.1. When assessing risk, particular attention is paid to any member of the group who has a disability, medical condition, specific educational need or pastoral concern. As previously stated parents are requested to provide any update of medical information on the consent form and to give consent for any emergency medical treatment which may be considered necessary. In addition the school database is checked for medical conditions. Key staff such as the School nurse are consulted where further information and advice is required. It is the Trip Leader's responsibility to take all medical information on the trip and ensure the relevant supervising staff are provided with appropriate information. Students must be reminded and checked that they have all the necessary medication and equipment. In certain circumstances, there may be a requirement for a Welfare Risk Assessment to be completed if there is a serious pastoral concern.

### **14. Educational Visit Evaluation**

- 14.1. The School recognises that every educational trip requires considerable time and effort to organise, and there are associated costs such as lessons missed, staff cover, study and revision time lost. For this reason the Trip Leader is required to state the purpose of the visit at the outset when seeking initial approval. The Trip Leader is also required to evaluate the trip on return and submit to the EVC.
- 14.2. A termly summary of off-site visits that have taken place is provided for the Health and Safety Committee and the Head will provide the Governors with an overview of school visits that have taken place.
- 14.3. This policy will be reviewed annually by the Head and EVC taking into account all of the above and submitted to the Chair of the Governors for approval.

#### **Educational Visits Coordinator**

Last internal review: April 2023

Last governor review: May 2023

Next governor review: May 2024

Appendix 1:

#### **Relevant Legislation and Guidance**

- Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 requires the School to ensure the health, safety and welfare of its staff and students, in so far as is reasonably practicable. Individuals in this case

employees )also have a duty to take care for the health and safety of themselves and others.

- The Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1999, requires the School to undertake risk assessments and to control any significant risks.
- 'School trips and outdoor learning activities: tackling the health and safety myths' published by the HSE
- Health and Safety on Educational Visits, produced by the DfE