

# Netherleigh and Rossefield School

## Educational Visits Policy

September 2016

### 1. Introduction

A wide variety of trips enrich the curriculum at Netherleigh and Rossefield School (School) for all year groups. However, it is recognised that class time is precious and therefore the dates, participant list and educational merit of each trip receive due consideration before details are advertised to pupils and parents.

In order to offer quality off site education colleagues must work collaboratively and respond positively to advice. The trip process inevitably generates a degree of bureaucracy which is unavoidable, but is been kept to a minimum and is intended to support colleagues who, by organising trips, make a valuable contribution to the education of our pupils. It is designed to give protection for everyone.

Therefore all trip leaders (and additional supervising staff) must work closely with senior colleagues to clarify responsibilities and ensure that trips run in accordance with UK law and national guidelines relating to educational visits (see below).

### 2. School Policy and National Guidance

School follows statutory guidance from the Department for Education (DfE) and has adopted national guidance from the Outdoor Education Advisors Panel (OEAP) to provide a framework for the effective running of School trips. (Colleagues should note that where national guidance differs from information in this policy, this policy takes precedence, but neither take precedence over UK law).

For reference, colleagues will want to consult:

<http://oeapng.info/>

The DfE's advice can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-and-safety-advice-for-Schools>

Also please familiarise yourself with the following:

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/services/education/School-trips.htm>

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/services/education/School-trips.pdf>

Other useful links include:

[www.lotc.org.uk](http://www.lotc.org.uk)

[www.oeap.info/](http://www.oeap.info/)

### 3. Good practice for trip management

The School aspires to model best practice with respect to the management of off-site education by:

- complying with UK law and statutory guidance, and responding to recommended best practice communicated by the OEAP
- prioritising the safety and welfare of pupils on trips above all other considerations, although it is accepted that risk cannot be eliminated completely
- tailoring itineraries to the age and capabilities of pupils
- using appropriately qualified and / or experienced trip leaders and supervisors
- choosing tour operators and other external providers carefully, paying close attention to recognised accreditations
- offering trips that are good value for money
- having in place appropriate arrangements to deal with incidents and emergencies
- ensuring that all parties involved in a trip have the necessary relevant information and are aware of their own responsibilities such that educational visits are as safe and enjoyable as possible.

### 4. Trip administration and approval

***A trip must be formally approved (see below) before details can be entered in the School diary and published to pupils and parents.***

During the early stages of planning it is likely that many trip details will be provisional, but these will include dates and times, an outline itinerary and the cost.

Trip leaders are encouraged to liaise with the Headmaster and School Secretary at the earliest stages of trip planning to facilitate the smooth running of the trip application process.

The School will make available details of each proposed trip to pupils and parents at the first opportunity.

Trips will be approved in two stages:

**4.1 Provisional approval** must be sought at the earliest moment through conversation with the Headmaster about the viability of a trip before investing time and effort in the Educational Visits Approval Form.

The trip will be approved at this stage pending an assessment of viability and educational benefit against costs. Additionally, it must be demonstrated that:

- sufficient funds are available to cover the full cost of the trip, or
- a robust and transparent process is in place for publishing costs and terms and conditions to pupils and parents, and a suitable schedule of payments has been arranged.

Costs and key details must be communicated to pupils and parents clearly in writing **before** they make a commitment to a School trip. The principle is straightforward: parents must know what they are signing up to.

- The School Secretary will make and manage the booking. This will be discussed and agreed as part of the provisional approval process.
- It is essential that trip leaders submit the Education Visits Approval Form for these trips as early as possible so that arrangements with external providers can be discussed and finalised in good time and timely bookings can be made.
- As is the case for all trips that require payment from parents, the cost, terms and conditions relating to payment and the schedule of payments must be communicated to pupils and parents clearly in writing **before** they make a commitment to a School trip run by an external provider. These will be available from external providers for their trip packages, but it is likely that it will be trip leaders who make these available to parents at the same time that they publish their own trip letters.
- It may be appropriate to supply pupils and parents with details of any insurance offered by an external provider that is additional to the School cover.

**4.2 Full approval** must be gained as soon as possible after provisional approval has been granted, (although for some routine trips it may be possible to grant both at once), and requires submission of a completed Educational Visit Approval Form to the Headmaster including final details regarding:

- itinerary
- pupil participation
- supervision
- risk management

A signature is required from the Headmaster for full approval so that a trip may ultimately take place.

Once full approval has been gained, the completed Educational Visits Approval Form, along with all relevant medical/pupil details and other trip documentation must accompany the party when they travel off-site. The School Office will have access to a copy of the completed Educational Visits Approval Form.

## 5. Responsibilities

OEAP national guidance regarding who is responsible for what can be found at:

<http://oeapng.info/downloads/legal-framework-and-employer-systems/>

In the practical organisation of trips, specific responsibilities at School are as follows:

- Working closely with the Proprietor, the Headmaster takes responsibility for giving or withholding permission for a trip to go ahead.
- The Headmaster has oversight of all operational aspects of trip planning and running. He must satisfy himself that trip leaders have taken all reasonably practicable steps to ensure the smooth running of any given trip, that risks have been managed and, ultimately, an enhanced duty of care will be delivered for participants.

All colleagues share a responsibility for ensuring that the staff involved are suitably competent, experienced and able to run the trip.

- The trip leader has the key responsibility for ensuring that all aspects of planning and necessary administration, as directed by the Educational Visits Policy and Approval Form, are completed as required. The visit leader is formally accountable for all aspects of the trip in the planning stage and in the field, and for the delivery of an enhanced duty of care for all participants.

Trip leaders must demonstrate the ability to operate to recognised standards of good practice (as set out in the School's Educational Visits Policy and OEAP national guidance). Trip leaders will be deemed specifically competent to lead an educational visit based upon their experience and / or qualifications.

Trip leaders should be fully aware of their abilities, but also of their limitations. Please see the OEAP national guidance (link below) for additional advice:

<http://oeapng.info/visit-leader/>

It is recognised good practice for trip leaders to:

- i) be knowledgeable about relevant School policies and national guidance
- ii) define the roles and responsibilities of other staff to ensure effective supervision, appointing an assistant leader if appropriate
- iii) provide relevant information to staff participants, including the nature and location of the visit and relevant information regarding pupils
- iv) ensure there is no conflict of interest if the child of a member of staff, who is a pupil at School, participates in a School trip
- v) pay close attention to Safeguarding ensuring that any significant risks are managed effectively
- vi) ensure that informed parental consent has been obtained as necessary
- vii) provide relevant information to parents and pupils, and arrange pre-visit information meetings where appropriate
- viii) make sure there is access to first aid at an appropriate level
- ix) provide staff and any external providers with emergency contact and emergency procedure details
- x) monitor all aspects of the visit, including the quality of any activities provided by an external provider
- xi) evaluate all aspects of the visit, both during and after the event
- xii) report any accidents, incidents or near misses.

*The trip leader is accountable to The Headmaster and Governors for running the trip in the way set out in the fully approved Educational Visits Application Form and associated trip documents, including those related to group and risk management.*

- Assistant leaders and other supervising staff also have a responsibility for the safe running of a trip or activity. An assistant leader/staff supervisor should:
  - i) be knowledgeable about relevant School policies and national guidance
  - ii) be sufficiently competent and confident to take over if the visit leader is incapacitated
  - iii) contribute to the ongoing monitoring of all aspects of the visit, including the quality of any activities provided by an external provider
  - iv) contribute to the evaluation of the activity/visit after the event.

*The Assistant leader and any other supervising staff on a trip are expected to support the trip leader in implementing the group and risk management procedures set out in the fully approved Educational Visits Approval Form and associated documents.*

- When working with external providers it is imperative to avoid 'grey areas'. Individual and shared responsibilities must be clearly defined, for example when climbing instructors take responsibility for the health and safety of pupils for the duration of a specific, instructor-led activity.

Should any provider run an activity that in any way causes concern, the accompanying School staff have a formal responsibility to stop the activity at the first appropriate opportunity.

- Parents must provide the School with all relevant details about their child such that the highest possible standards of safety and welfare can be provided for all participants, including staff, on a trip.

Relevant medical and dietary information will be requested of parents on an annual basis by the School and this must be consulted during the trip planning phase.

Parents must meet the full cost of any given trip as required.

Parents will be encouraged to take an interest in the destination of a trip and to find out more about it with their child, and to impress upon their child the importance of following instructions from teachers to maximise the enjoyment and benefit of a trip for all.

- Pupils take some responsibility for their own health and safety, and for the security of their possessions, on a School trip.

Pupils are required to follow instructions from their teachers and behave appropriately in a considerate and well-disciplined manner that reflects positively upon the School.

In extreme cases, poor discipline during a trip may result in a pupil being sent home at the expense of their parents. Trip leaders must consult with the Headmaster before taking this course of action and parents must be informed that this is a group management strategy that trip leaders may impose in extremis.

## **6. Costs and finance**

Parents will meet the full cost of a trip and there is no cap on the potential cost of any given trip. However, trip leaders will give careful consideration as to whether or not a trip represents good value for money and they will make every effort to keep costs down.

The cost for a trip must be realistic and take into account all potential expenses. Trip leaders cannot expect School to fund any short fall centrally.

From time to time, fundraising programmes / events may be organised by teachers to help pupils to meet the cost of a trip. Trip leaders / teachers must not however promise to raise a set amount or suggest that the full cost of the trip will be offset by a guaranteed contribution from a fundraising programme. Trip leaders must be clear, parents are responsible for meeting the cost of the trip, but this may be offset by an unknown contribution from any fundraising that might be undertaken.

Teachers must not be expected to commit large amounts of time and energy to fundraising for trips, given that the delivery of excellent teaching is their priority. Fundraising for trips should be led by the pupils and their parents with oversight from teachers.

The School Office will take responsibility for the collection of trip fees from parents. If money is given to teachers then this will be passed on to the School Secretary, Proprietor or Headmaster at the earliest opportunity.

## 7. Supervision

The legal expectation is that teachers, due to their professional training and experience, will provide ***an enhanced duty of care*** during a trip. This exceeds the level of supervision that would be reasonably expected of a responsible parent and thus presumptions about teachers acting 'in loco parentis' are misleading.

There must be an element of supervision at all times during a trip (including overnight stays). Supervision may be relaxed a little at times depending upon the situation, for example once students are on a coach, but trip leaders and other supervising staff do not enjoy 'free time' in the true sense of the phrase and are at no point absolved of responsibility for pupils.

It is vital that all supervising adults and participants are fully informed about the level of supervision and control which trip leaders intend to exercise. Trip leaders should involve other supervising staff in discussion and planning and allow them to express reservations about the trip.

Contrary to common myth, there are no prescribed staff / pupil ratios for different kinds of School trip. Trip leaders will make judgements about how many supervisors they need based upon an assessment of their own level of experience, the itinerary, the potential risks, the pupils and the staff that are available.

Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits (HASPEV; 1998), now replaced by national guidance from the OEAP, suggested the following ratios as a starting point for decision making with respect to staff / pupil ratios:

- School years 1 - 3, 1:6
- School years 4 – 6, 1: 10/15
- School years 7 onwards, 1:15/20

The OEAP is clear, that without special safeguards these ratios will not be sufficient to meet the needs of most residential or more complex visits.

Most co-educational residential visits should be accompanied by at least one male and one female member of staff.

Trip leaders and supervisors must be employees of School. From time to time other adults and senior pupils may join the trip party but these individuals will not be part of the supervisory ratio of staff to pupils and cannot take responsibility for pupils.

Other adults (not employees of School) on a trip must be supervised at all times by School staff if they do not possess a clean DBS certificate. A clean DBS certificate is required for all adults working with School pupils if their contact with young people is:

- frequent (once a week or more)
- on four or more days in any period of thirty days
- between 2am and 6am (when there is the opportunity to have contact with children)

Advice on this issue can be obtained from the Headmaster.

It will not normally be possible for the family members of School staff, other than their partner or children if they are pupils at School, to attend a trip. When a member of staff accompanies their child on a trip, the trip leader must invest a degree of thought in the supervision arrangements to prevent any conflict of interest that may arise.

## **8. Participants**

School endorses these principles:

- a presumption of entitlement to participate
- accessibility through direct or realistic adaptation or modification
- integration through participation with peers.

School recognises that it is unlawful to:

- treat a disabled young person less favourably
- fail to take reasonable steps to ensure that a disabled person is not placed at a substantial disadvantage without justification.

Expectations of staff must be sensible and that which is required of them with regards to the inclusion of pupils on a trip will reflect their level of competence and must be reasonable.

There may sometimes be grounds for The Headmaster to prevent a pupil from attending a trip on the following bases:

- Behavioural: there may be times when a trip leader has grounds for being nervous about including in the party a pupil whose behaviour or trustworthiness is questionable. In such cases, the trip leader must consult with the Senior Management Team.
- Special Education Needs: School will seek to make 'reasonable adjustment' to accommodate any pupil's needs on a School trip. This may include differentiated activities and supervision in accordance with guidelines.
- Financial: non-payment of School fees will usually prevent a pupil from taking part in any trip that has a cost implication. Trip leaders should liaise with School Secretary before they confirm that any pupil has a guaranteed place on a trip.

Full approval requires that all relevant medical details pertaining to pupils are included in the Educational Visits Approval Form. These details must accompany the trip. The trip leader is responsible for bringing any potential issues/concerns to the attention of the other supervisors on a trip.

Excellent conduct is expected from School pupils on trips. Trip leaders should however, give some thought to how they will respond to any discipline issues encountered away from home. In extreme cases, and only after a conversation with the Headmaster or another member of the Senior Management Team, it may be necessary to send a pupil home at the expense of their parents.

The School Behaviour Policy applies on all School trips.

## 9. Consent

Parental consent is no longer required for routine trips within the School day that do not require a specific payment. Pupils and parents must, however, be fully informed about every trip in good time and parents must have the opportunity to withdraw their daughter/son from a trip.

Trip leaders may, however, wish to collect a form of written consent for any 'routine' trip should they feel that this is useful. But, if consents **are** requested, they **must** be obtained for a pupil to participate in a trip.

Parents must complete and sign a School trip consent form for educational visits that require a specific payment, an overnight stay and / or have particular risks associated with them, for example an Outdoor Education weekend.

## 10. Risk management

Only those hazards that could potentially result in death or a life changing injury should be part of a formal, written risk assessment.

The School provides generic risk assessments that should be tailored to the individual needs of each trip and signed and dated by a trip leader for appending to the Educational Visits Approval Form.

National guidance for trip leaders regarding risk management and 'The Radar' is available at:

<http://oeapng.info/visit-leader/>

and also via:

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg163.pdf>

## 11. Emergency procedures

For residential and out of hours visits, trip leaders must appoint a home contact drawn from the Senior Management Team, who will have access to the completed Educational Visits Approval Form and relevant trip details.

A copy of the emergency response procedures and contact numbers should be carried by all members of staff accompanying a trip.

For some trips it may be appropriate to brief parents with respect to the proper procedures for contacting their child on a School trip in case of an emergency.

- Minor incidents may include a simple first aid application, a low level behavioural problem or, maybe, a case of homesickness. These should be dealt with by the staff accompanying the pupils.
- Major incidents are usually defined as those requiring support from an external agency or emergency service. Again, these can often be dealt with in the first instance by the accompanying members of staff. Only afterwards will the home contact be informed.

However, in the case of a serious major incident, where the outcome has been or could potentially be a life changing injury or death, the home contact must be notified at the first possible opportunity.



With respect to all major incidents it is essential staff:

- keep a written record of all facts with times and dates
- preserve vital evidence; photos may help
- co-operate fully with official enquires.
- do not admit liability
- do not comment to the media without the express authority of the Headmaster
- take reasonable action to prevent misleading information being communicated by pupils.

In the immediate aftermath of a serious major incident, it will be the responsibility of the Senior Management Team and Proprietors to work with families, the authorities, any external travel company / provider and the media to coordinate a response. The priority for School staff on the trip will be the safety and welfare of the pupils who are with them and cooperating with the emergency services 'on the ground'.

External providers often provide critical incident support. In such instances it is the responsibility of the trip leader to clarify how the external provider will work with the Senior Management Team in the event of a serious major incident (an exchange of contact details etc.). This will be a condition of full approval.

## **12. Insurance**

Employer's Liability Insurance is a statutory requirement and School have arranged a policy that will respond and, if appropriate, indemnify against all claims for compensation for bodily injury suffered by any person with a contract of employment. This cover also extends to those persons who are acting in an authorised voluntary capacity.

School also holds Public Liability insurance, which will indemnify the School against all claims for compensation for bodily injury from persons not in its employ, as well as for the accidental loss of, or damage caused to, third party property where School are deemed to have been negligent. Employees (as agents of the employer) are indemnified against all such claims, as are voluntary helpers acting under the direction of the employer's staff if they commit a negligent act. The indemnity includes activities such as off-site activities and outside visits organised by all departments for which School may be considered responsible.

External providers may also provide insurance cover as part of their trip / activity packages and these details must be published to parents before they make a commitment to a trip.

## **13. After a trip**

Accidents and near misses must be reported to the Headmaster on return to School. Trip leaders also have a responsibility to contact the Deputy Head if they have any concerns regarding the conduct of staff and / or pupils on a trip.