**Gillotts School**

**Educational Visits Policy**

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1. **Introduction**

This policy covers all events organised on site, educational visits off site and local sports fixtures. These range from visiting speakers to walks around the locality and residential visits of several days’ duration; also outdoor and adventurous activities and visits abroad. This policy has been developed to ensure visits are managed following school procedures and best practice guidance, including:

* Health and Safety: Advice for Schools (DfE 2013, updated Nov 18)
* Outdoor Education Advisors’ Panel (OEAP)
* National Guidance

A policy such as this cannot cover all eventualities which might be encountered, but seeks to put in place a framework within which visit leaders and/or the EVC can apply their own decision-making processes.

1. **Aims and Objectives for Educational Visits**

Good quality learning outside the classroom environment adds value to classroom learning. Through a programme of structured educational visits, which are linked to the curriculum or for personal development, we aim to:

* Provide opportunities for first-hand experiences to enhance student learning
* Provide opportunities to take part in outdoor adventure activities
* Ensure that all such visits are conducted in a safe manner
* Provide access to such experiences whatever the student’s age, ability or circumstance.

1. **Responsibilities**

The school has procedures in place which are based on the national guidance from OEAP, as summarised below in Appendix 1.

Responsibilities for Health and Safety on school visits are determined as below.

* *The Governing Body* ensure there are robust procedures in place for the management of Health & Safety within school and monitor the effectiveness of these procedures.
* *The Business Manager* develops school visit procedures in line with national guidance; ensures staff are aware of national, local and school policy; monitors visits and activities to ensure they are run in a safe manner; and quality assures risk assessments for each visit to ensure safe practice is being followed.
* *The Designated Visit Leader* takes overall responsibility for the well-being of the students during the visit; follows school procedures for visit management; provides a risk assessment that has been adapted according to any circumstances which may occur including consideration of the nature of the visit and the students taking part.
* *All responsible adults* (staff and those volunteers with a DBS check) under instruction from the visit leader take immediate responsibility for a group of students, follow risk assessments, and ensure students are kept safe at all times.

The school’s Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) is the school’s Business Manager.

1. **Training**

The EVC will attend appropriate training and revalidation with a provider recommended by OEAP (eg Oxfordshire Outdoor Learning).

Visit Leaders will be approved by the Headteacher and will have attended appropriate training. For day visits, new visit leaders will need to have been a supporting adult on at least one other similar visit and must seek guidance from the EVC. For residential and/or overseas visits, visit leaders must have completed the visit leader training provided by Oxfordshire Outdoor Learning and have significant experience in accompanying similar visits.

1. **Insurance**

***Insurance for school visits*:** Students participating in visits and activities will have annual travel insurance provided through Zurich Schools Journey Insurance policy or through the tour operator as appropriate. Any differences to this will be notified to parents/carers as appropriate before any consent or payment is made.

***Insurance requirements for booking a visit/on site visit with a third party***

Owners of property being visited or suppliers of a visiting service should provide evidence that they hold £5 million public liability insurance as they may be held liable in the event of an accident which is proven to be their fault.

1. **Risk Assessments**

Risk assessments are compiled for all Educational Visits off site and where appropriate for events on site also. This requires that the Visit Leader, where possible, has made a pre-visit in order to be able to plan for the visit and to conduct a Risk Assessment appropriately. Risk Assessments must be simple, manageable, proportional, suitable and sufficient. The system must:

* identify significant hazards;
* assess the risk of harm;
* put control measures in place;
* check if anything else is needed;
* use a simple assessment language – high/medium/low;
* consider the site and its environment, the group, the activity and the leaders;
* consider whether the residual risk is an acceptable level for the visit to take place.

Risk assessments must be signed by the Visit Leader and EVC before the visit takes place. All responsible adults should be made aware of the risk assessment(s).

A range of Risk Assessments which cover likely potential hazards is available within the staff shared area or from the EVC. These should be ***adapted***to take account of the local context including the nature of the visit and the students involved. For regular events it is acceptable to put in place a risk assessment which covers the whole year; however, any ‘new’ activities introduced will need to be risk assessed.

1. **Financing Educational Visits**

The school complies with the Education Act 1996 (section 451), as outlined in the school’s Charging and Remissions policy. For most visits, parents will be asked for a voluntary contribution; families can access financial support from Henley Educational Trust if appropriate. Some visits (eg the school ski visit) require full payment.

1. **Staffing Ratios**

Staffing ratios should be considered with regard to the nature of the visit and the students taking part.

In almost all circumstances, there should be (i) at least one qualified teacher per class and (ii) one other adult present. The exception to this may be, for example, where activities are taking place at another local school and their staff are part of the overall supervision. Any variation to this should be discussed with the EVC.

1. **DBS**

All helpers should be appropriately vetted, and careful consideration should be given as to whether voluntary helpers are engaging in regulated activity. If so they should be required to have a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Enhanced check with barred list check. Regulated Activity includes taking sole responsibility for a group of children, or participating on a regular basis.

1. **Transport**

The driver of a vehicle cannot drive and supervise young people at the same time. Therefore, if in your judgement the young people may need supervising during the journey - because of age, maturity, behaviour, special needs or medical issues etc, then a second adult to provide this supervision is necessary. This will always be the case for a minibus, with children with significant behavioural or medical issues. Drivers of the school minibus will have undertaken and passed a minibus proficiency test with an Oxfordshire County Council approved tester and hold the relevant permit.

Where private cars are used, the adult driving should produce to the HR Manager in advance of the visit:

* A certificate of insurance (this should include Class 1 Business Use for staff employed by the school);
* A driving licence (any endorsements should be made aware to the Headteacher, who will risk assess the suitability of the driver);
* For vehicles over three years old, a valid MOT certificate.

1. **First Aid**

First Aid cover should always be planned for. This should take into account:

* The nature of the activity;
* The nature of the group;
* The likely injuries associated with the activity;
* The extent to which the group will be isolated from the support of the emergency services (both in terms of distance and response time).

Qualified first-aiders may not be necessary for all off-site activities and visits. However, a basic level of first aid support must be available at all times. This will require that one or more of the staff leading the activity:

* Has a working knowledge of simple first aid and is competent to use the first aid materials carried with the group;
* Knows how to access, and is able to access, qualified first aid support;
* Carries a first aid kit.

Risk assessments for visits should cover where First Aid provision can be accessed.

1. **The Use of External Providers**

The school will ensure that any external providers used for hazardous activities are appropriately accredited and licensed. Examples of such schemes include:

* Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) Quality Badge (covers both quality and safety of all activities offered);
* Adventure Activities Licensing Authority (AALA) licence (- this statutory scheme covers only safety management);
* Adventuremark (- covers only safety);
* National Governing Body centre approval schemes (applicable where the only provision is a single, specialist activity).

The school will ensure that tour operators used for overseas visits also have industry recognised accreditation such as ABTA, IATA.

1. **Consent**

The school will seek specific consent from parents for any visit for which any of the following apply:

* Involves travelling by coach, minibus or car;
* Takes place outside of the school day;
* Involves hazardous activities.

For local/non-hazardous activities, the school will seek consent from parents when a child joins the school. This will be renewed annually.

1. **Additional Needs and Inclusion**

Students with additional needs should be included within school visits wherever possible and this should be planned for. Where a medical need might lead to risk (for the student or others), this should be incorporated into the risk assessment. The Headteacher reserves the right to withdraw a child from an educational visit if it is not possible to mitigate the risk to the student or to others posed by the student’s medical needs. The Headteacher reserves the right to withdraw a student from educational visits on the grounds of behaviour. This is not a sanction, and would only be made where the student’s behaviour is likely to create Health & Safety issues on the visit. Inhalers, epipens, etc. must be carried by the adult responsible for the group. It is the responsibility of the Visit Leader to ensure that students with medical conditions are identified and that this information is shared on a need-to-know basis with those who might be taking responsibility for the student.

1. **Water**

Swimming and paddling in the sea or other natural waters are potentially dangerous activities for a school group. Swimming in the sea on a coastal visit will not be allowed. Paddling will only be allowed as part of a closely supervised activity. Students should always be in sight of their teachers. One adult should always stay out of the water for better surveillance. Swimming should always be conducted in the presence of, and under the supervision of, qualified lifeguards or instructors.

Where students are close to water (for example, a lake in the local park), this must be specifically considered within the risk assessment. Where students are using inland stretches of water, consideration should also be given to the transmission of infection such as Weil’s disease.

1. **Farm visits**

Consideration should be given to:

* Farm machinery
* Infections from e coli or other diseases
* Risk from animal bites, etc
* Handwashing facilities
* Safety standards and animal welfare

1. **Crossing Roads**

If you are likely to cross a road on your visit with a group of students, plan to cross using Pelican Crossings or Zebra Crossings. If these are not within a suitable walking distance discuss with the school’s EVC the resources needed to follow best practice.

1. **Headcounts**

Regular headcounts should be undertaken throughout the visit. These must *always* include: when leaving the school building; when seated on the coach before embarking (both outward and return journey); and at any other transition points throughout the day (e.g. the end of lunchtime).

1. **Sun Safety**

When organising an outdoor visit in the summer, consideration should be given to the risk of sunburn and heatstroke. Measures taken to prevent this are likely to include:

* Wearing tops which cover the shoulders
* Wearing sunhats
* Having access to shade and/or drinking water
* Not participating in activities which are too energetic
* Use of suntan lotions

1. **Food**

Staff should be aware of any allergies within the group, particularly if students are able to purchase food during the visit.

1. **Money & valuables**

Students should not be *required* to bring money on a visit or visit. If there are necessary costs, these should be factored into the published price of the visit. Where students are allowed to bring money, for example to visit a souvenir shop, group leaders must:

* Decide whether students (in the case of older students) or adults are responsible for the money, and;
* Set a maximum amount to be brought.

Students should not bring valuables (phones, ipods etc) on visits.

1. **Emergencies**

**All visit leaders and accompanying staff should carry details of the school Emergency Procedures**

It is the responsibility of the Visit leader to ensure emergency arrangements are in place for their visit. This includes ensuring that all involved know who the emergency contact point in the school is for the visit. During school hours, this would be the Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher/EVC or, if the Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher/EVC is accompanying the visit, the most senior member of staff present in school. For out of hours and residential visits, the Visit Leader will be provided with 24 hour contact details which should be shared with all staff accompanying the visit.

In the event of an emergency, staff should:

* Keep calm
* Put the welfare of the students first at all times.
* Risk assess continually and take steps to avoid further accident injury
* Follow directions given by the Visit Leader, or by those in a position of authority (venue staff, emergency services)
* Contact the emergency services first (if required), followed by the Headteacher and school. The Headteacher will inform the local authority where required
* Contact the group leader/other staff if they have become separated from the group.

1. **Maintenance of records**

All paperwork relating to school visits is maintained by the Business Manager. Records will be retained for six academic years, except where there has been an incident recorded, in which case they will be retained in accordance with the relevant protocols for the retention of data.

1. **Policy Review**

To be reviewed by the Business Manager annually July/August or as required.

**APPENDIX 1: PROCEDURE FOR ARRANGING A SCHOOL VISIT**

Visits should be agreed in principle each year at calendar setting time (May/June) in advance of the next academic year. Calendar approval **must** then be followed up by adherence to the school’s more detailed procedures for the management of visits as below. Please raise any questions with GLS (Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC)) allowing good time for any issue to be resolved.

Although the visit leader can expect other members of staff supporting the visit to assist in the admin and organisation, it is the responsibility of the visit leader to ensure all procedures are followed and completed on time and therefore provide as safe a visit as reasonably possible for students.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | ***Person responsible*** | ***Date completed*** |
| FULLY complete every section of the Educational Visits Proposal form for submission to the EVC at least 10 term time weeks before the date of the visit. (At least 6 months for a residential visit and 12 months for a residential overseas visit depending on the nature of the visit and the requirements of any tour operator.) The more lead time the better so costs can be spread and any hiccups dealt with without panic. | Visit Leader |  |
| The form must have accurate costings – KD can obtain transport quotes, visit leader to establish entrance fees, ticket costs etc, supply costs are detailed on the visit proposal form. The school covers the cost of insurance for UK day visits. Visit leaders should check and provide confirmation that insurance is covered by a tour operator/visit provider for residential visits. | Visit Leader |  |
| Ensure Exams time table and school calendar are checked for clashes – note date on proposal form when these checks were made and confirmed OK. | Visit Leader |  |
| Check with Cover Manager that supply would be available as required for the visit – ask Cover Manager to ‘pencil-in’, to be confirmed in due course. Note date on proposal form when this is done. | Visit Leader |  |
| A draft letter to parents must be included with the proposal form for consideration. If a visit is likely to be oversubscribed the letter must advise a ballot will take place if this happens and then students will be advised who has been allocated a place. Example letters can be provided, please request from EVC. | Visit Leader |  |
| A draft itinerary must be included with the proposal form for consideration. This is a very short summary of the proposed journey including estimated time of departure and arrival. EVC can provide template. | Visit Leader |  |
| A draft risk assessments must be included. These will need to be reviewed nearer departure and consideration made for any medical/behavioural issues with students taking part. EVC can provide examples. | Visit Leader |  |
| The cost must not be a best guess but accurately reflect the details provided by a tour operator/visit provider/venue to be visited. A copy of the quote must be attached to the proposal form. | Visit Leader |  |
| Please submit **all of the above** to EVC electronically. This must come from the visit leader’s email account as this acts as a signature to the visit leader statement at the bottom of the proposal form. The visit will not be passed to LT for approval until all of the above is provided. | Visit Leader |  |
| Check the proposal, the letter, the risk assessments, the itinerary and the quote, raise any queries with visit leader and when resolved, pass to LT for approval. | EVC |  |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Respond to EVC re any queries in a timely fashion to ensure visit launch is not delayed. | Visit Leader |  |
| Submit all relevant paperwork to LT for approval. | EVC |  |
| Advise visit leader once visit is approved. | EVC |  |
| Add visit to school calendar, advise HoH visit is being launched (if applicable), advise Student Services and Kari in finance that visit is being launched. | EVC |  |
| **Once approved** | |  |
| Confirm supply arrangements with Cover Manager by completion of a ‘pink form’ for all staff taking part. The initial enquiry about supply availability does not constitute booking supply – normal procedures must be followed. | Visit Leader |  |
| Provide EVC with details of the students who are to be invited to take part in visit (eg whole year group, Yr 10 geographers etc). Visits can still be launched in assembly etc but students should be advised the letter will be sent home electronically by SchoolComms. | Visit Leader |  |
| Provide Mary with final letter and details of students (from visit leader) to be contacted so this can be sent by SchoolComms. | EVC |  |
| Distribute letters electronically via SchoolComms. Any students where the email fails will be given a hard copy. Mary will give this to relevant House Admin to distribute. | Mary |  |
| Liaise with HoH to enable support of PP students to make application if appropriate. | Visit Leader and HoH |  |
| Set trip up on Scopay system either just for consent (if numbers are limited) or including payment. | EVC |  |
| **Once closing date has passed (closing date for replies should be at least 4 weeks before the date of the visit for day visits, 6 months or more for residential/overseas)** | |  |
| Hold ballot if oversubscribed (- this possibility must be advised to parents in the initial letter). | Visit Leader with Kari |  |
| Produce list for visit leader of those students who are on the visit and those that aren’t, including those that have paid either in full or a deposit or who are applying to HET or need to arrange alternative payments. | Kari |  |
| Once places are allocated, advise students who has a place and who hasn’t. Unsuccessful applicants can be held on a waiting list if parents agree. This can be done via SchoolComms (again, ask Mary to send the relevant letters/notifications to the relevant families) or via student notices, face to face, list up in teaching areas. Each visit will be different so visit leader should take a judgement on this. Liaise with EVC over method. Request an initial contact list from Kari. | Visit Leader |  |
| Once places are allocated and confirmed, produce an initial contact list. (Visit leader should request this of Kari as she will not be aware the preceding procedures are complete and therefore the time to produce this.) | Kari |  |
| Review the contact list for health issues that need to be taken in to consideration and action as necessary. Refer to Kari and/or school nurse for advice. | Visit Leader |  |
| As appropriate (usually only for residential visits where students are not well known to visit leader), contact HoH to advise of any behavioural issues that need to be considered. | Visit Leader |  |
| Once students are confirmed, review and update the draft risk assessment, make sure it is relevant to the visit and the students taking part. GLS is very happy to help with this - please contact to make an appointment. Risk assessment must be shared with all staff taking part in the visit – they must all sign to say they have read and understood (this can be done electronically or in hard copy). Pass final risk assessment with signatures to GLS at least 3 weeks before visit. A copy should be held by visit leader and taken on the visit. It is a live document and should be updated as necessary. Ensure *Emergency Procedures for Off Site Visits* is understood and attached to each copy of the Risk Assessment. | Visit Leader |  |
| Confirmation to visit leader that Risk Assessment has been approved. | EVC |  |
| Confirm final itinerary and provide to EVC at least 3 weeks before visit (- this might be a completely new itinerary or simply an email that confirms there are no changes to the itinerary sent at proposal stage). | Visit Leader |  |
| **Financial – pre visit (**Payments should be received at least 4 weeks before date of visit) | |  |
| The trip will have already been set up on Scopay. We can provide regular updates by request of payments received from students and made to suppliers. | Kari |  |
| Student Services/Kari provide information to House Bases to help chase families for money/reply slips. | Henri/Kari |  |
| Start chasing for outstanding payments (immediately after reply deadline and/or for staged payments) and reply slips. | Kari and/or House Bases |  |
| If payment is being phased and details of the staged payments were not advised in the original letter, write to parents with details of staged payments requirements. Care should be taken to ensure these are in line with any payment schedule from the tour operator if relevant. (This letter can be combined with other information. See below\*.) | Visit Leader |  |
| Order any foreign currency/sterling float through finance department (- please allow 2 weeks for the finance office to order currency). | Visit Leader |  |
| Collect float from finance office. | Visit Leader |  |
| Check with Finance that all payments are received at least 3 weeks before departure. | Visit Leader |  |
| **Visit resources** |  |  |
| Confirm coach transport with Kari. | Visit Leader |  |
| Confirm booking with coach company. | Kari |  |
| If staff using own vehicle, name of staff and date insurance, MOT, and licence details given to Gaynor. | Visit Leader |  |
| If using school minibus, confirm booking with PE (- staff must have taken the OCC approved test before they can drive the minibus – see GLS for more information). | Visit Leader |  |
| Name of company tickets/flights/tour operator booked. | Visit Leader |  |
| Check all information has been provided to the tour operator/airline as required. In particular payment schedules, passenger information. | Visit Leader |  |
| Resources ordered. | Visit Leader |  |
| Date visit insurance details confirmed. The school covers insurance for UK day visits. | Visit Leader |  |
| **Other Visit Leader responsibilities to be checked/actioned** |  |  |
| All Consent and Information forms are complete and current. The annual update of information on SIMS is acceptable for day visits but a new consent form must be completed for residential and/or \*overseas visits. These should be checked to ensure they are the same as SIMS then these forms be taken on the visit so leader is in possession of full information about all students at all times. | Visit Leader |  |
| Medical needs of students have been checked (see contact list and consent forms) and appropriate arrangements made. Kari can help with medical issues and advise of any IHPs (Individual Health Plans). The school nurse will support any IHPs and how a student can still take part in a visit but this needs to be considered well in advance. | Visit Leader |  |
| Ensure there is an accompanying qualified first aider (- will take first aid kit on visit). | Visit Leader |  |
| If visit is out of hours, obtain and take on visit, contact details for at least two of the senior leadership team in case of emergencies. | Visit Leader |  |
| The week before the trip, provide details of the trip and a list of students taking part to be published in the staff bulletin so staff know some of their students may be missing from lessons. | Visit Leader |  |
| \****For overseas visits***  (may need to be varied once Brexit happens) |  |  |
| Advise parents of the need to obtain an EHIC card for all travel in Europe. Refer them to the link <http://www.ehic.uk.com/apply.html> | Visit Leader |  |
| Ensure all students have a valid passport with an expiry date acceptable to county being visited. | Visit Leader |  |
| Although the school updates the information each September, parents should complete a new Consent and Information form to ensure all contacts and medical history are current. This is best sent to parents with the invite to the information evening so details are as current as possible. Stress to parents the need to update us of anything not advised on the form. | Visit Leader |  |
| Check travel information specific to the country being visited on the following website  <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice>  This should be visited regularly in the lead up to the visit for any travel updates from the Foreign Office. Revise Risk assessment accordingly. | Visit Leader |  |
| \****For overseas and for UK residential visits****.* |  |  |
| Arrange parents’ information evening. This needs to be about 4-6 weeks before the visit and can be used to advise final itinerary, reiterate important information, check EHICs and passports, current Information and Consent forms are all received, enforce code of conduct/behaviour expectations/consequences of poor behaviour and answer questions from parents. Book hall with premises team then advise parents. | Visit Leader |  |
| ***For local sports fixtures*** |  |  |
| As teams may not be decided until the day of the fixture, students participating in school sports fixtures must provide blanket consent from parents at the beginning of each school year for them to take part throughout the year. The team will be advised by the PE team by the morning of the fixture at the latest. Students will inform parents. Lead PE member of staff for the relevant fixture will provide the EVC with a contact list before departure. This will be available to Headteacher and Headteacher’s PA in the Business Manager’s office, should it be required. | PE staff |  |

A contact list should be compiled for every off site visit, which includes:

* The names of all students attending the visit;
* Emergency contact details for every student;
* Any medical issues that need to be considered.

If prepared in advance, this should be updated on the day by blanking out any students who are absent. A copy should be provided to:

* The Attendance Secretary
* The Visit Leader
* The Headteacher
* The EVC
* Any other school staff supporting the visit.

The emergency contact details of all students should be easily accessible at all times. This may be via the EVC or Attendance Secretary during the school day. It is essential student contact details for visits running outside the school day (e.g. residentials, late evenings, weekends), are held by a member of staff and be available should they be needed.

**Preparing students for the visit**

Providing information and guidance to students is an important part of preparing for a school visit. Students should have a clear understanding about what is expected of them and what the visit will entail. Students must understand the expected standard of behaviour and why this must be followed. Lack of control and discipline can be a major contributory factor when accidents occur. Students should also be told about any potential dangers and how they should act to ensure their own and other’s safety.