



Off-Site Activities Policy and Procedures

It is School policy to offer a number and variety of off-site activities. These events, whether academic or sporting activities, or those offering the challenge of leadership in potentially more hostile environments such as DoE expeditions, or those of a more recreational nature, offer our students valuable life skills. It is incumbent upon us to do all that is reasonably possible to ensure not only that activities are valuable and enjoyable but also that our events are well organised and above all safe.

Any activity contains risk, but risk can be minimised to an acceptable level by thorough preparation and planning. This is our professional and moral obligation.

The Co-ordinator of Off-Site Activities

It is not the role of the Co-ordinator to invite or plan any activity.

Acting with the authority of the Head the Co-ordinator will initiate a procedure, which will be followed by those staff who are leaders of any of the prescribed activities which have been authorised by the Head.

The aim of the Co-ordinator is to present a *helpful* format and to act as a check on the planning of the activities as they progress throughout the year.

The Co-ordinator should refer to the 'Educational Visits – a safety guide for learning outside the classroom' (2010) for further guidance. [Health and Safety on Educational Visits \(DfE, Nov 2018\) ?](#)

The vast experience of colleagues is of huge value and they will be asked to supply a *debrief statement* after the event as by this means much can be learned of value to others as they plan future events.

The variety of activities makes it difficult to compile a formula which will be totally relevant to all.

Colleagues must use the prescribed forms and follow the procedure as fully as possible for the activity in question.

Games Fixtures

The procedure applies to ALL off-site activities *with the exception of single day games fixtures*, which will run solely under the arrangements of the Director of Sport.

Team lists and expected return time must be left with the school offices or if on a weekend/holiday period must be left with the on duty Teacher.

Duke of Edinburgh (D of E) Activities

D of E activities will operate under the current D of E Health and Safety Procedure.

The forms required should be photocopied and completed as the planning proceeds and then submitted to the Co-ordinator.

A full Administration Instruction is to be made available to the Co-ordinator by the group leader and a copy is to be left with the Emergency Point of Contact.



1. All Other Off-Site Activities

1.1 Preliminary Planning Paperwork

All Rougemont School 'Educational Visits & Trips Paperwork (Form 01-06)' must be completed and submitted to the Co-ordinator at appropriate stages in the planning in line with the guidelines and flow chart provided.

Single day/evening activities – must be submitted no later than five days prior to the date of the event.

Activities with duration in excess of one day – must be submitted no later than three weeks prior to the start date, or three weeks before the end of the term, whichever comes first.

- Those planning a visit must submit completed School Visits forms to the Educational Visits Co-ordinator who will then forward to the Head.
- Permission must be received from the Head for the activity to take place.
- A risk assessment must be carried out in accordance with the procedure.

1.2 Overall Considerations for Organisers

- regulations and advice governing the planning
- financial regulations which may apply
- permission received from the Head
- categories of visits and journeys within the UK and abroad
- risk and hazardous activities
- supervision; pupil/teacher ratio
- the role of the leader
- information to parents and detailed consent forms
- legal, financial, insurance and travel arrangements
- emergency procedures
- the use of mini-buses
- code of conduct to ensure the party is well-behaved

2. Check-List for Party Organiser/Leader

2.1 Definition

Party leaders are those who have overall charge of organising the party and are responsible for that group for the duration of the off-site visit, except for times contracted with the activity centre when a specified activity is taking place

2.2 Qualifications and Experience

The Head must be satisfied that the qualifications (where relevant), experience and the general health of the leader and other staff are adequate to meet the varied demands of supervising and controlling pupils in an off-site environment.

2.3 Factors to be Considered When Undertaking a Risk Assessment:

- The type of activity and the level at which it is being undertaken
- The location
- The age, competence, fitness, temperament and experience of the group
- The ratio of appropriate staff to pupils
- The quality and suitability of any special equipment including clothing
- Seasonal conditions, weather and survival requirements



- Emergency procedures
- Have risks been assessed prior to the activity and control procedures identified, bearing in mind costs and practicality?
- Does the group leader have the required qualification *and* experience?
- Will the group leader work within policy guidelines from management?
- Will the injured person receive swift and effective attention?
- Be prepared to conduct a Dynamic Risk Assessment during the trip/visit should the need arise.

Risk assessment is nothing more than a careful examination of what could cause harm to people, so that you can decide whether you have done what is reasonably practicable to prevent harm.

2.4 Staffing Ratios

The level of supervision will be dependent on the nature of the activity. (All staff must be DBS Checked)

The recommended ratios are –

- In the case of a mixed group, there should be at least one adult of each sex if the group is staying out overnight
- Suggested ratios on day visits vary from 1:15 and 1:12
- In the case of residential activities, a ratio of 1:10 is usual where pupils are minors

2.5 The Location

Where the Head considers it necessary, the Party Leader should visit the location in advance of the event. (The Lands' End Enquiry found that a lack of knowledge of the area was a factor in the accident).

2.6 Hotels and Hostels

Great care must be taken when using accommodation offered by travel companies and activity centres. In a survey in 1994 it was found that many hotels used by tour operators did not comply with EC safety standards

*Party Leaders should ask for written verification from the travel company that the accommodation complies with EC standards and ensure that fire evacuation procedures are known by members of the party. If the travel company cannot give such verification, parents should be advised **in writing** that 'while the accommodation is recommended by the travel company, the company is unable to confirm that the accommodation complies with EC standards.'*

2.7 Accident and Emergency Procedure

The Party Leader must instigate a procedure to be used in the event of any serious accident or emergency.

This is itemised in this document and must include a communication chain via the Head or other designated adult.

A copy of the 'Incident Management Procedure Flowchart' is to be carried by the Party Leader for the duration of the trip.

2.8 Insurance and Public Liability

In addition to the School public liability policy, *most* pupils are separately insured under a School endorsed personal accident plan. However, the School insurance also includes a group travel policy which is a scheme instigated direct by the Director of Business and Finance and is a special policy for school travel and



No pupil is to participate in the activity/journey/visit unless a signed consent form has been returned. A letter is unacceptable.

2.9 Emergency Procedure Advice

The following notes are for guidance only, as any incidents will be variable as will the situation 'on the ground'. Following the 'Incident Management Procedure Flowchart' will help alleviate the pressure during an emergency.

Ascertain as far as possible the extent and seriousness of any injury. Common Law expects people acting in 'loco parentis' to take the same care and decisions as would a reasonable and careful parent.

Common Law indicates that the age of the pupil and the nature and location of the activity are factors in determining the supervision required which is a factor when any injury occurs.

- Render first-aid *within the capability of the first aider*. Other than in emergency, a pupil should not be given any medication or creams or dressings or treatment which would necessitate physical contact with the pupil.
- Avoid moving an injured person where possible. Cover them and keep them warm and reassured until professional help arrives.
- Call appropriate emergency services. Try to give clear location and where possible a Grid Reference.
- Make sure that all other members of the group are accounted for and safe.
- If a casualty is moved to hospital, **they must be accompanied by an adult from the group who has parental permission to act on their behalf**. If for any reason this is not practicable the child must be **placed in the care of Emergency Services staff only**.
- Arrange for the remainder of the group either to continue or return to base.
- Leave one adult only to liaise with rescue services-avoid 'too many cooks'.
- Contact base-camp, hotel, etc.
- Contact the Head or the appointed school contact.
- No contact should be made directly with parents without the agreement of the Head, or his appointed deputy or school contact. Do not allow pupils to make phone calls until the Head, or his appointed deputy, has informed the parents/guardians of an injured party. Confused reports will only cause stress and panic.
- Do not discuss or admit liability at this stage.
- Refer any media interest to the Head.

Other than minor, albeit important, information, such as a later than published return time, especially at night, any incident of a serious nature such as a road accident should not be reported to anyone other than the emergency services until the Head or his appointed deputy has been fully acquainted with the situation.

2.10 Individual Injuries or Illness

- If a pupil becomes ill, or sustains any injury, medical help and advice must be sought. Even if the pupil is able to continue with the activity, a member of staff must make contact with the parent/guardian as soon as possible.
- Do not permit the pupil to telephone home until an adult has spoken with the parent/guardian and given clear information.
- Ask the doctor/hospital to supply a written report on the condition and the action taken.
- On a single day/evening activity, if it is not deemed necessary to telephone, then a member of staff must meet the parent/guardian immediately on return to acquaint them with the situation.
- Never allow the situation where an injury, no matter how minor, is not treated and reported.



- On return to school the standard accident report form, copy enclosed, should be completed. Copies of any medical notes/reports must be included.

3. Off-Site Activities – Good Practice Guide

3.1 The school has very experienced staff running off-site activities and the standards of both staff supervision and pupil behaviour are usually excellent. However, the following points are of guidance to those who may be involved with the task of supervision of pupils off-site, perhaps for the first time. The situation is very different from that found within school and requires a much wider awareness of what is required.

The best form of leadership is by example. The pupils will not readily accept seeing different standards from their accompanying adults than those which are being demanded of them. In matters of dress and responsible conduct, the lead must come from the staff.

Although a linked system will usually apply for staff 'on duty' there is really no time when a colleague can totally abdicate their responsibility to the party as the totally unforeseen may occur and the staff must be able to handle the situation correctly.

3.2 Travel

The journey, especially if involving a ferry or a flight, can be the most demanding part of the activity.

In the case of a large party, it should not be left to the leader to be responsible for everybody. It is helpful if a group, perhaps ten pupils, are allocated to one member of staff as a 'travel family'. The group can be checked, accounted for on and off a coach or aircraft etc and then the adult can inform the leader that the group is in order.

To state the obvious, a headcount must be made after an occasion that pupils have dispersed, such as at a motorway service area.

On School minibuses or coaches, Pupils should:

- Be quiet and not cause distraction to the driver.
- Occupy a seat throughout the journey.
- Use seat belts where provided.
- Observe the driver's rules.
- Not board or leave a moving vehicle.
- Never put head or limbs out of windows or roof vents.
- Never stand up when the vehicle is in motion.
- Never drop litter.
- Never be allowed to have chewing gum.

Always keep an eye on the 'back-seat brigade,' especially as they are often the potentially badly-behaved. If need be move them to the front.

Organise adequate toilet/food breaks by asking the advice of the driver. Most coach drivers respond well to a well-disciplined coach and to staff who include his/her wishes where possible.

Remind pupils to be courteous to the driver and a 'word of thanks' goes a long way. After really long trips, over a few days, a tip is appropriate from travel funds.

3.3 Money and Valuables

Thefts do happen. In the first instance, the pupils should be discouraged from taking unnecessary valuables on school trips. Our pupils, other schools, hotel staff and other guests all present a theft hazard.



Encourage pupils to lock valuables away in lockers or suitcases whenever possible. Although insurance claims can be made in some circumstances it is often a problem.

Whilst abroad, pupils are an easy target and pupils should be warned to take extra care and minimise the amount of pocket money they have out with them.

3.4 Free Time

If pupils are allowed free time for sight-seeing or shopping they must stay in small groups. It is important to ensure that they know the location of coach parks or the pick-up location. They should be given rendezvous points where they will find members of staff, perhaps at set times. The location should be clear and easy to find. They should be reminded of any local conditions such as the fact that traffic will be travelling on the right and that, on a crossing, they must allow for this different direction.

3.5 Return Times

On the return journey always plan to meet the return time as stated. If a delay of more than 15mins is envisaged, try to estimate a realistic arrival time at school. If able, pupils can 'phone home from a service station in good time for their parents to schedule their arrival at school or it could be done via the communication chain. On arrival at school, staff should ensure that pupils are met and collected. If a child is not collected after a reasonable time, they should attempt to telephone the adult who is collecting them. Always ensure that an adult stays with the pupil until the person collecting them arrives. This is especially important at night.