



Educational School Visits Policy

Person responsible	Director of Finance and Operations (DFO) and Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC)
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1. Introduction and Aims

The Policy applies equally to the Foundation Stage (Reception Class), Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 as taught at Bute House Preparatory School (the School).

The Policy must be read in conjunction with the following Policies: Missing Child and Child Missing Education, Health and Safety, Safeguarding, Learning Enrichment and Positive Behaviour.

The Policy has been written considering the ISSR, EYFS, Education and Skills Act 2008, Childcare Act 2006, Equality Act, Health and Safety at Work 1974, Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR), Package Travel and Linked Travel Arrangements Regulations 2018, and the OEAP (Outdoor Education Advisory Policy). This Policy has regard to the guidance and advice including: Health and Safety on educational visits (DFE, November 2018), Health and Safety Executive: School trips and outdoor learning activities (Health and Safety Executive (HSE), June 2011) and KCSIE (September 2025).

The purpose of this Policy is to establish a framework for all school trips that will manage risks and challenges to health, safety and welfare of pupils, to actively promote the wellbeing of pupils and a whole school culture of openness, equality and protection from all forms of harm and abuse. This is in line with the whole school approach to promoting pupil safeguarding and well-being.

Experiences gained by pupils from off-site educational opportunities should not be seen in isolation but as a vital part of a broad and balanced curriculum:

- Personal and social education: skills are developed through activities such as problem solving, decision making and teamwork
- Environmental education: visiting natural and man-made sites increases environmental awareness
- Aesthetic and creative development is achieved through project and topic work, theatre, concert, gallery and museum visits
- Physical activity promotes health
- Residential experiences such as living, working and playing together develop social skills

The range of activities could include:

- Residential trips during school time using licensed providers
- Overseas adventurous activities out of school time using licensed providers
- Day or part day visits on foot or using public transport
- After school sporting visits
- Field studies

2. Scope and Responsibilities

The EVC and DFO are responsible for reviewing the Educational School Visits Policy. All final decisions on the Policy rest with the Head. The Governing Body assumes overall responsibility for the implementation of this Policy.

3. Residential Trips Approval Process

The Governors and the Head approve specific residential trips. Day-to-day responsibility for all procedures is delegated to the DFO and the EVC.

4. Insurance

All approved school trips are covered by the School's insurers. The duty of care under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 extends to pupils and employees participating in off-site visits. The School cannot accept liability for the failure of insurance beyond the control of the School or where the School has made reasonable enquiries and exercised reasonable care.

5. Responsibility – The Trip Leader

The leader will be a person approved by the Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) at the School. New members of staff at the School, no matter what their previous experience has been, will not be leaders of trips until they have participated in a trip which has been monitored by an experienced member of the School, and are therefore familiar with the responsibilities of a trip leader at the School.

In exceptional cases where a staff member has not participated in a school trip but is the most appropriate member of staff to lead the trip, permission to lead it may be given by the EVC after careful consideration of the experience of the other staff on the trip, its nature and activities involved.

The leader has full responsibility for the safe running of the trip, pupils' safety and behaviour and for following this guidance. They must also ensure that all adult participants understand their roles and are clear about rules, responsibilities and expectations. A trip debrief form must be completed upon return to School and saved in the trips folder.

Any safeguarding concerns must be reported immediately and following the School's safeguarding procedures.

The DSL/Deputy DSL and Head will be told of any safeguarding incidents, and these will be logged in CPOMS. External agencies will be contacted where a pupil is in immediate danger or risk of harm.

6. Planning for a Visit and Risk Assessments

All off-site activities must first have the approval of the Senior Deputy Head (who will also liaise with the Head if necessary) who must be satisfied with the purpose, planning, risk assessments, first aid arrangements and staffing for the proposed activity. Any concerns about the ethnic or religious impact of a proposed visit should be raised before such a visit is arranged.

The trip leader should complete the relevant checklist and forms in order to gain approval. A risk assessment is carried out to identify any potential hazards for each outing using the School's risk assessment form and this is reviewed by the EVC and DFO prior to each trip. This includes an assessment of the adult to pupil ratios. For many types of outings, the risk assessment may identify that additional staff are needed to ensure pupils' safety.

Most venues will have their own risk assessments, and these will be requested where available.

The risk assessment should include the specific medication for each outing, and a copy of pupils' health care plans, where applicable.

The five major elements of a risk assessment are:

- Identification of hazards
- Who might be affected
- How risks can be reduced to an acceptable level
- Whether these measures can be implemented
- Contingency plans if all else fails

These variables should be considered when undertaking risk assessments:

- Age of pupils
- Number of pupils

- Previous experience of pupils and adults
- Time of year and day
- Travel arrangements
- Hazards on the journey and site
- Nature of activity

Risk assessment forms must be signed off by the EVC and the DFO. For residential trips, the risk assessment form must also be signed off by the Head. Completed risk assessments, including the venue's, are kept in the trips folder on Teacherlink.

For every trip, the following information is kept in the School office or the main reception desk: date, time and venue of outing, method of transport, risk assessments, time of return and the names of all pupils going on the outing, along with the names of staff responsible for them and relevant mobile phone number(s).

7. Overview of Staffing Requirements for Residential Trips

- Trip leader – overall responsibility rests with the trip leader therefore, all final decisions, including medical ones (with first aider), must be agreed by them. In a crisis, the trip leader should contact the Head or DFO to activate a Crisis Management Plan.
- The next most senior member of staff to take charge if the trip leader is incapacitated.
- First Aider – this person will have had regular previous experience as a First Aider and will hold a current First Aid certificate
- A minimum staff:pupil ratio of 1:10

8. Communication with Parents

When the pupils start at the School parents sign a consent form for all trips.

A detailed letter to parents must be sent at least two weeks ahead of the planned trip, including:

- Curriculum aims of the visit
- Transport arrangements
- Address and contact details of the venue
- Details of meeting/collection times and places

For residential trips, letters should be sent out at least four weeks ahead of the planned trip and must include all the above and:

- Medical questionnaire and emergency medical treatment consent, to be signed and returned
- Price
- Clothing and equipment lists
- Emergency contact details and passport, if needed for overseas trips
- GHIC or EHIC as appropriate, visa details, etc., if needed for overseas trips

An information meeting must be held at which details such as a clothing list, activities schedule, itineraries and other specific information regarding the residential trip are shared with parents.

9. Supervision - Ratios of Adults to Pupils

All adults included in the ratio will have been DBS-checked. The School requires that there are at least two members of staff on each trip.

In exceptional circumstances, where parent volunteers accompany a trip, they will be included in the supervision ratio and will need to be DBS-checked and fully briefed prior to the trip.

Parents who have been invited to a sports event or other, and require transportation to/from the venue, need to be briefed on the emergency procedures. In this case, parents do not count towards the supervision ratio and therefore, do not need to be DBS-checked.

The supervising adults must be briefed with full instructions. Pupils should also be briefed before leaving and should be wearing proper clothing for the visit and wrist bands must be worn.

Supervision ratios will be dependent on the age of pupils, the activity undertaken, the length of the trip, the experience of the adults and whether the group will be split during the visit. The DfE guidance for a trip that does not involve hazardous activities is:

One adult for every 4 pupils in Reception
One adult for every 6 pupils in Years 1 and 2
One adult for every 6 - 10 pupils in Year 3
One adult for every 10 – 15 pupils in Years 4 - 6
For all residential trips the ratio for Years 4-6 is always a minimum of 1:10

EYFS outings will always be accompanied by a paediatric First Aider.

10. Equipment

On each trip the following should be taken:

- A first aid kit, plus a portable first aid kit if necessary, including a critical incident card
- School mobile phones
- List of pupils and staff going on trip
- Emergency contact details, crisis plan and consent details
- Medical consent forms for residential trips
- Details of any pupils with medical or specific learning difficulties that could have an impact on the trip
- Any medication needed by individual pupils such as epipens or inhalers

Note that if there is more than one vehicle, the above equipment should be taken on each vehicle.

All hard copies with personal identifiable information, such as class lists, contact names and addresses taken on the trip, will be securely disposed of on return to School.

11. Preparing Pupils for the Trip

Pupils must be:

- Reminded of the purpose of the trip and expected behaviour
- Given clear safety information before departure and while at the venue as well as the procedures in the case of an emergency
- Given green wrist bands with the School's name, number and the extension to use printed on it. This extension is only to be used in an EMERGENCY and School staff know that the emergency phone must be answered immediately. Pupils must WEAR these wristbands at all times. All the wristbands must be collected on return to School. Pupils do not need to wear the green wristbands for any sports fixtures.

12. Venue and Accommodation

If any trip is to a venue that has not been used before or not for some time, a pre-visit and meeting must be arranged between the trip leader and the provider, and fire drills and procedures should be checked. Additionally, for residential trips, the sleeping accommodation, bathrooms, drying facilities, evening relaxation areas, dining and kitchen areas should be checked and hygiene certificates seen. Toilet and first aid facilities on site should be identified and the location of

hospital facilities ascertained. The trip leader should ensure that all staff who will be in contact with the pupils are suitably qualified and have DBS checks.

On return, the trip leader must confirm any verbal arrangements in writing and inform the EVC or Head how the preliminary visit went and what impressions and knowledge they have gained.

13. Transport

The School normally uses the same coach company, Westway Coaches, and conducts regular checks with them. On residential trips or trips abroad checks will be made of the safety record of the transport providers confirming that all vehicles have seat belts.

Staff or supervising adults accompanying the trip should be spread throughout the coach with at least one adult at the front and back of the coach, and on upper and lower decks of the coach. In addition, there should be at least one First Aider on each vehicle where more than one is being used for a trip. Seatbelts must be worn and checked by a supervising adult before departure.

Where more than one vehicle is being used for a trip, a list of the staff and pupils who are travelling on each vehicle must be left with the School office. If, during the trip, there are any changes to the passenger lists, the School must be informed immediately by telephone.

If the trip leader is not happy with a driver or the condition of the vehicle, they must stop the coach and contact the school or coach company and request another driver/vehicle.

On occasion, public transport may be used for trips within central London. Assistance from TfL should be sought whenever possible if using the underground system.

At the end of the trip, all pupils must return to School to be collected. In exceptional circumstances, a parent may request to collect their child from the trip venue – this must be arranged in advance, with permission granted by the Head.

If a parent who has arranged to collect their child from the venue is late, the trip leader will return to School with the pupil, and the parent must make arrangements to collect the pupil from School.

14. Private Use of Cars

- Transporting pupils in staff cars is not prohibited, but it should only happen **in exceptional circumstances** (e.g. emergencies).
- To minimise safeguarding risks, such as one member of staff being alone in a car with a pupil, **another adult should be present**.
- Written parental consent should always be obtained beforehand, even for short journeys.
- Emergency situations might justify verbal consent initially, but it should be documented afterwards.

- The staff member's insurance policy must cover business use and specifically include transporting pupils.

15. On Arrival at the Site

Pupils should be notified of an easily identifiable place for meeting in case they are separated from the main group.

Pupils should be reminded of any safety or general behavioural rules specific to the site and nature of the visit. Clear standards should be communicated to pupils and always adhered to. The School's Positive Behaviour Policy applies at all times.

Regular head counts are an essential part of off-site activities risk assessment.

Farm visits:

Extra precautions are necessary as farms can be particularly hazardous to pupils.

Before the visit it is important to check that the farm is well managed and has good safety and animal welfare standards. It must also have good and easily accessible washing facilities.

It is important to ensure that the pupils do not:

- Put their faces against animals or put their fingers in their mouths after handling animals.
- Eat until they have washed their hands.
- Sample animal foodstuffs.
- Drink from taps other than from designated water fountains.
- Ride on tractors or play on machinery.
- Play in the farm area.

The briefing which takes place in School before the visit should contain the above instructions and pupils should be told again on arrival at the farm.

It is essential to be fully aware of the Crisis Management Plan in the event of a serious incident on a trip.

All staff on the trip are informed of the emergency procedures. At least one school mobile telephone, emergency contact and medical details for pupils, and a first aid kit are taken on each trip.

16. Information for Residential Trips and Trips Abroad

Organiser and Responsibilities

The trip leader should ensure that there is an appropriate staff/pupil ratio and that all staff should know and understand their designated duties. If abroad, the trip leader should know the address and telephone number of the nearest British Embassy. Tour operators need to be ABTA or ATOL bonded, as appropriate. In the case of a public health incident or other pandemics, all Government advice should be followed.

The residential first aid kit should be checked and carried by the adult designated for medical duties. No pupil should keep their own medicines except in the case of inhalers or similar. A notebook or medicine form should be filled in for all medicines given (name, date, time, dose and name of medicine). This includes travel sickness pills. This information should be given to a doctor in case of emergency.

Each parent must give consent for emergency treatment as part of their daughter's medical information form. An accident book should also be completed for all first aid (even plasters).

In the event of a serious incident, the centre or activity provider should have all relevant forms. The School should be informed immediately. Staff should not speak to the press or allow the pupils to do so.

Pupils should be told the procedure in the event of an emergency and shown the nearest fire exits. Members of staff should be allocated specific rooms that they will need to check in the event of a fire alarm.

Two members of staff should be assigned to duty during the evening and night, and pupils should be told who these people are and who to wake up in the night. If a pupil comes for help during the night, they should not be taken into a staff bedroom. If a pupil needs comfort for more than a few minutes of time, the second member of staff on duty should be woken up. Staff must be careful of physical contact with pupils if they are alone (see Staff Handbook and First Aid Policy for guidance). Staff on duty in the evenings should not drink any alcohol and other staff should not drink alcohol when pupils are present and only in strict moderation.

Staff will be given duty breaks during the day for rest and recuperation, and these will be provisionally scheduled by the trip leader in advance of the trip but could be subject to change during the trip.

The trip leader should ensure that emergency contact numbers are with each group as well as at School, with the Head, and any other School contact.

17. General Points

- Pupils should shower or bath every day
- Individual pupils should carry specific medications (e.g. inhalers or EpiPens)
- Staff should sit with pupils at meals, be observant as to the amount they are eating and drinking and ensure that they drink enough fluids.
- Staff should ensure that any bedwetters have a cover on their mattress and (covertly) check their beds every morning
- Bedrooms should be kept tidy
- Staff may take hairdryers with them on trips, but pupils should not use these without supervision

Pupils should know what to do in an emergency, for example, if they lose their group.

In a medical emergency, staff should contact emergency services immediately or arrange for medical attention and attend a hospital or see a doctor as soon as possible. Parents must be contacted immediately if their daughter experiences medical problems and requires medications not on the first aid list while she is on the trip. A member of staff should accompany the injured or sick pupil taking all medical details with them and inform the School immediately.

In the event of a suspected or confirmed terrorist threat, the trip leader will follow the guidance of the emergency services and venue staff, prioritising the immediate safety of pupils and staff using recognised procedures such as *Run, Hide, Tell* where appropriate. Pupils will be accounted for as soon as it is safe to do so, the School will be informed immediately, and communication with parents will be coordinated through the School. Staff will remain calm, maintain supervision of pupils, and follow emergency evacuation, lockdown or shelter procedures as directed by the relevant authorities.

18. Procedure if a Pupil is Missing Whilst on a Trip

Please refer to the *Missing Child and Child Missing Education* policy.

In case of a major crisis or emergency the trip leader should follow the Crisis Management Plan (CMP).

The trip leader will inform the Head or DFO. The Head or DFO will inform members of the Crisis Management Team (CMT) and all others via a WhatsApp messaging group. CMT will respond to given crisis as stated in the CMP.

19. Summary of Guidelines for All Trips

- A preliminary visit for all new off-site activities is required
- Verbal approval is required from EVC and the Senior Deputy Head for new visits
- Senior Deputy Head to liaise with Head and inform as necessary
- Booking form, ratios and risk assessment to be completed by trip leader and approved by EVC and then given to the Purchasing Officer in the Finance Department two weeks before the trip in order for the transport and catering requirements to be booked.
- All paperwork, including medical information and permission slip to be completed by parent
- Trip leader to arrange briefing for staff accompanying the trip
- Trip leader to arrange briefing for the pupils attending the trip
- Trip leader to take a copy of risk assessments and critical incident card on trip
- All medication to be returned to parents once the pupils have returned
- Trip debrief form to be completed and saved in the trip folder on Teacherlink upon return to School. Records must be kept of “near miss” situations and these should be considered if a similar visit is planned.

20. Monitoring and Review

The EVC will regularly monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of this Policy which will also be subject to critical review by the Governing Body on an annual basis. The date of the next review is shown on the first page.