

Longdean School



Trips and Visits Policy

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Trips and Visits Policy

A guide for staff leading school visits

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Acronyms used throughout the policy

HASPEV - Health & Safety of pupils on educational visits

OVC

EVOLVE

Policy Statement

The school recognises the need to provide a rich and inspiring learning environment so that students can maximise their learning potential. As such we recognise the value of trips and visits and the way they can engage a student in any given subject or enhance their understanding of the world around them. It is important to us that our educational offer within and outside the formal curriculum allows students to experience and learn from such visits.

Context

Educational visits can be wonderful experiences for staff and students alike. Run correctly, they can stand on their own as valuable learning experiences and, if schools are serious about developing the whole child, then they must commit to students being exposed to such opportunities.

In the current climate, staff can be forgiven for thinking that it is simply too much effort to organise and run an educational visit; that they are opening themselves to litigation and all manner of problems if anything goes wrong.

Educational visits can:

- Raise achievement by boosting self-esteem and motivation
- Develop key skills
- Develop social education and citizenship
- Promote education for sustainable development
- Promote health and fitness

The National Curriculum tells us that we should:

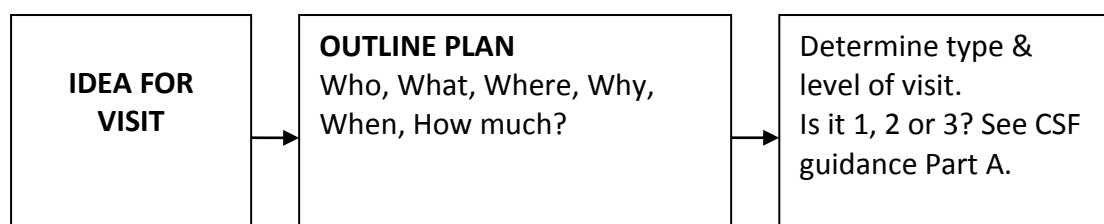
- ‘...give pupils the opportunity to become creative, innovative and enterprising and capable of leadership.’
- ‘...enable pupils to respond positively to opportunities, challenges and responsibilities, to manage risk and cope with change and adversity.’

Staff who have participated in successful trips will all testify to the strengthening of relationships with students that continues into the classroom on return. Offsite visits give students who might otherwise struggle in the classroom the opportunity to shine; it is often the most unlikely of children who excel on such visits.

However, the DCSF document, ‘Health and Safety: responsibilities and Powers’, published in 2001 applies to all educational visits. It states that the Employer, (namely the school) retains overall responsibility for health, safety and welfare. This means that trip organisers and leaders have significant responsibilities; at no time can they just hand over the care and safety of their children to a centre or other body and relinquish this responsibility.

If things go wrong then the documentation and paperwork will be what saves staff from prosecution. Hence this guidance, which exists to ensure that staff at Longdean continue to offer our students the kind of positive experiences that they will continue to treasure long after they have left us. The paperwork that is involved exists to help ensure that you have considered the most likely risks.

2. The Process



Detailed Planning

This should be undertaken by the Trip leader in consultation with other supervisory staff.

Carry out the below checklist in conjunction with the checklist guidance Part B. This should be completed using form OV1 (see appendix).

- Planning (P20) – Risk Assessment, Assess provider/venue. Who will pay for the visit?
- Transport (P45) – Transport options?
- Supervision (P27) – Who will lead the group & who will help organise?
- Responsibilities (P12)
- Residential visits (P54)
- Travel insurance (P49)
- Planning for emergencies (P60) – emergency contingency plans
(For level 2 & 3 visits– also refer to CSF guidance Part D)
- Adventurous activities (P54) – Assessment by Technical adviser?
- Overseas visits (Part D P23)

Once you have completed this, please see the Cover Manager to confirm dates are okay. Only when the Cover Manager has agreed your proposed dates should you get a trips form from the Finance Office. Submit completed trips form to Finance Office. They will check aspects of your planning and pass completed form to OVC for final permission. The green form (OV1) must be fully completed including staffing, finances and trip details.

Timeline

Ideally all planned trips should be in the calendar, but there are many reasons as to why this is not always possible. Therefore the timings here are minimums.

Level 1 trips (day trips to relatively local places)

1. The trip leader is responsible for liaising with the Cover Manager regarding cover and staffing implications.
2. Trip form, signed by OVC is then passed to Finance Office. The trip *must* be agreed by OVC and Finance office *the half term prior to the trips proposed date*.
3. Letter to parents can then be given to the Administration Office for typing.

Level 2 and 3 trips (overnight and overseas), should be planned well in advance and the norm will therefore be that they are calendared. The process is the same as with Level 1 trips, but this should be completed the term before the trip is due to take place to allow for proper risk assessment, staffing issues to be resolved and to give parents the time to raise the money and it to be collected in properly.

Final Preparations

(Use Checklists in CSF guidance Part B)

- Communicate with parents & getting consent (P37)
- Prepare children (P32)
- Brief supervisors (adults participating on trip)
- Final payments

After this, the visit may take place. It should be evaluated within 9 working days of your return and this form (available through the staff shared area, offsite visits folder) should be copied to the OVC.

Legal Responsibilities

- Teachers have a duty of care for young people under their supervision
- The age and ability of the students, together with the nature and location of the activity, should help determine the degree of supervision required.
- HCC advice is that the ratio of staff to students should not be the main concern. A reliable group for example may well not need the same levels of supervision as a more challenging group. It is the location of the trip, the activities to be undertaken as well as the profile of the students which should determine staffing levels.
- Suggested adult pupil ratios however, are 1 adult for every 15-20 students in Year 7 above. However, this ratio is for good conditions and low risk activities. If in doubt consult your OVC.
- An injury or damage may not be reasonably foreseeable, in which case it is an accident.
- Negligence however, may arise from lack of due care and would depend on answers to questions such as
 1. *Was there a duty of care?*
 2. *Was there a breach of that duty?*
 3. *Did harm result directly from the failure to exercise reasonable care?*

- The ability to demonstrate that we have written policies and procedures in place and that we have a documented risk assessment and plan, has been proven to achieve excellent results when defending claims.
- All visits need to be based on a risk assessment, which should focus on significant things. The Trip organiser should keep a record of their risk assessment, independent of the copy they pass to the OVC. Trip Leaders should go through the risk assessment with other supervisors (at a department meeting perhaps).
- Risk assessments are ongoing throughout a trip. This need not be as onerous as it suggests as teachers are doing risk assessments virtually every moment of the day. The difference here is that you may well be doing them in unfamiliar surroundings and on a more formal basis.
- It is good practice, though not a statutory duty, to have a plan B in case things go wrong. For example, the coach is not able to drop you and the students where you intended and there is a walk alongside a busy road that suddenly you have to negotiate. How will you do this safely? A good way of thinking might be; 'Would I let *my* child do this?'
- As a rule of thumb, *never* make a decision on the spur of the moment or under pressure without completing a thorough risk assessment. Such decisions have been proven time and again to be disastrous, even fatal.
- With regard to overseas visits, Chris Lowe, former President of the Secondary Headteacher's Association and a lawyer, says, 'Tour operators are expert in these matters and in my view you would be foolish to ignore that expertise... Nevertheless, you must satisfy yourself that all accommodation and other aspects of your stay abroad conform to the standards you expect for the programme of activities you are undertaking.'
- Remember, err on the side of safety in all cases.

4. Other points of note

- Leaders of trips should make sure that all those in a supervisory capacity have been fully briefed about arrangements. This may mean a handout but will definitely mean an oral briefing.
- You should acquaint yourself with the guidance of the DfES (HASPEV) which is in the Trips folder in the staff shared area.
- Parents must be consulted and complete a consent form, (see CSF guidance B). Obviously if you are leading an adventurous activity or going overseas (or both!) this consent form should cover all possibilities and parents need to absolutely clear what it is they are agreeing to.
- Trip Leaders must be aware of medical and dietary requirements of all students. You would be advised to collate this information on paper and take it with you.
- Refusing to take a disabled student would need to be justified or else it would be illegal.
- Students who maybe at risk (from themselves), should have an individual risk assessment form completed (OV5). However, adjustments made to the trip *should not* impinge unduly on the purpose of the trip. For example, inviting a parent to accompany a child (for whatever reason)

may not be appropriate if the purpose of the trip is to engender independence or relationships.

- Good practice demands that every trip is evaluated to see if it met its intended aims and objectives and whether there were any 'near misses'. The latter need to be recorded in the OVC's log, which is kept centrally.
- In arranging for staff to accompany any visit, Trip Leaders should refer to the staff list (also in staff shared area, Trips folder), which details all staff experience. This does not in itself guarantee their participation in a trip; the Trip leader would have to negotiate with the staff concerned and the Cover Supervisor.
- Whilst the Headteacher has overall responsibility for trips and visits run by Longdean School Staff and involving Longdean students he has delegated the approval of trips and the monitoring of them to the Assistant Headteacher.

5. Index of Forms – these are all downloadable from staff shared area, in the Trips folder.

FORM	TITLE
FORM OV 1 (CSF4252)	LEVEL 1 VISITS AUDIT CHECKLIST AND APPROVAL
FORM OV 4 (CSF4255)	RISK ASSESSMENT FORM
FORM OV 5 (CSF4256)	INDIVIDUAL RISK ASSESSMENT
FORM OV 6 (CSF4257)	PROVIDERS ASSESSMENT FORM (FOR LEVEL 2 & 3 VISITS)
FORM OV 7A (CSF4258)	PARENTAL CONSENT FORM – these will be kept centrally and reviewed annually. Please check with OVC before you ask parents to complete another form.
OV 7B (CSF4259)	SELF CONSENT FOR ADULTS
OV 7C (CSF4260)	ANNUAL PARENTAL CONSENT FORM
OV 7D (CSF4261)	VOLUNTEER DRIVERS FORM (Staff transporting children need occasional business use on their insurance)
FORM OV 8 (CSF4262)	SUMMARY OF INFORMATION ABOUT VISIT PARTICIPANTS

FORM OV 9 (CSF4263)	EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION
FORM OV 10 (CSF4264)	OFFSITE VISITS MISSING PERSONS FORM
FORM OV 11 (CSF4265)	REVIEW OF VISITS FORM

6. References and further reading

- Trip Leaders must be familiar with HASPEV (staff shared area, Off-site visits folder)
- The School Travel Forum has a website: www.educationaltravel.org.uk
- Details of licensed activity centres are available from the AALA at: www.aala.org.uk
- British Activity Holidays Association (BAHA): www.baha.org.uk