Offsite Activities Policy

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

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Owner	Mrs L Spokes, EVC
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Table of Contents

Introduction 3
Role of the Education Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) 3
Responsibilities 3
Procedures - Evolve 4
Cost of trips 5
Adventurous Activities 5
Inclusion 5
Health and Safety and Risk Assessments 6
Supervision 6
Over Subscribed Visits 7
Emergency Contact 7
Role of the Duty Officer 7
Use of staff vehicles 8
Exchange Visits 8
Third Party Companies 8
Parental contact 8
Local visits 9
How to Apply for a Trip (for Leaders) 10
Trip Leaders Procedures 11
Trip Rules (for Leaders to share) 12
Residential Trips Packs 12
Policy Monitoring 12
Links 12

Introduction

Offsite activities visits enhance student interest and develop both the subject and the wider school curriculum. The social benefits attributable to school visits, particularly residential trips can be considerable and contribute to the curriculum. For some students with disadvantaged social and economic backgrounds the opportunities can often be significant. We believe that all students should experience the world beyond the classroom regardless of ability or circumstances and have the opportunity to enhance their cultural capital. Educational visits can stimulate enquiry and help students become independent, resilient and challenge thinking.

This policy ensures that all offsite activities are well planned and that health and safety of students and staff is paramount

Role of the Education Visits Co-ordinator (EVC)

Educational visits can have a significant impact on the school day in terms of staff and student absences and these need to be balanced against the educational merits of the visit. The EVC has oversight of all offsite activities before, during and after the visit. They are also responsible for the management of risks and to ensure that the requirements of this policy are adhered to.

Responsibilities

Trip Leader

The trip leader is responsible for planning the offsite activity, taking into account any health and safety requirements. It is a requirement that they must be a qualified teacher of St John's School and have previous trips experience. They must appoint a deputy to support them and take the lead role if necessary. They should liaise with the trips administrator frequently to make sure the correct information/details are communicated to parents/carers. They must also finalise the visit and complete a comprehensive risk assessment for approval with the EVC. It is important that the trip leader clarifies and communicates the intent of the trip/visit.

Staff (on the visit)

Staff should support the trip leader and assist in general control. They must inform the trip leader of any concerns. Staff are responsible to provide effective supervision in the event of a critical incident/emergency which could occur at any point in time and should therefore not consume alcohol and ensure that their conduct is professional at all times.

Parents/Carers

Parents/carers need to complete all paperwork that the school requires eg, consent forms, emergency details, current health issues including medication taken.

Students

Students must follow all instructions on the visit, dress appropriately and follow the code of conduct which we will emailed once a place on the trip confirmed.

Procedures - Evolve

All offsite activities applications must follow a common procedure.

St John's uses **Evolve**. This requires a Pre-application Form, to be completed on-line in Evolve (Outline Approval) before any communication to parents, staff and students. This will ensure that:

- There is an educational or enrichment value, consistent with the ethos of St. John's
- The visit is inclusive of all students
- Cover needs are minimal
- Impact of the staff absence on student/school education
- There are no clashes on the school calendar with any events/exams etc
- The visit is appropriate to needs of all students
- The visit is led by an *experienced* member of staff
- Cost of the trip shows value for money and follows the principles of "best value"
- Travel time involved compared to duration of educational experience is fair
- Timing relative to exams/beginning of the year and does not disrupt students learning.

Once outline approval has been granted by the EVC then a full application can be made by completing the form on Evolve.

Different approval levels apply to different category activities but all need to be approved by the EVC:

Category 1: Principal and Hampshire Outdoor Education approval required. High risk-residential of one or more nights, overseas visits and coastal or river related activities, e.g. Geography field trips, ski trips, activity centres.

Category 2: Assistant Vice Principal approval required. Outside the locality day or to a place not visited before. Transport such as a coach required and risks are higher but manageable, e.g. theatre trips.

Category 3: Assistant Vice Principal approval required. Low risk, carried out often within the locality. Activities like visiting the local village church. A rigorous Risk Assessment must still be completed.

Adventurous Activities

An adventurous activity is defined as "an activity which is exciting and challenging and which involves significant inherent risk of harm, without which the activity would lose much of its value, or which takes place in a remote or hazardous location" OEAP. For an adventurous activity to be approved the trip leader must be experienced in the activity, listing their training

in the risk assessment. All adventurous activities need to be approved by the LA in Evolve even if they are not residential. Duke of Edinburgh expedition, field work, a trip involving water and skiing are examples of an adventurous activity.

Duke of Edinburgh

D of E is classed as an adventurous activity. The itinerary/plan, two base contacts and suitable, clear route maps must be included in the risk assessment. When students have been invited to participate then the D of E leader should look at the suitability of all students, including behaviour points and attendance data. There is no appeals process for non-selection but there must be evidence to support the decision.

Cost of trips

Visits which are not central to the curriculum can charge. Letters to parents must not mislead parents and create an impression that a school visit is essential and integral to an examination course. The specifications in some subject areas where field work is a compulsory part of the course assessment- such as A-level Geography, are an exception to this. It can be pointed out that if there are insufficient voluntary contributions then it is likely the trip will not be able to go ahead and Pupil Premium students can apply for financial help. Payment plans can be set up with the trip administrator. If a parent withdraws a student from a trip at any point or if the students' behaviour prevents them for taking part the cost will not be refunded unless another student takes their place.

Inclusion

There is a statutory responsibility upon schools to ensure that educational visits should be as inclusive as possible and EVCs should ensure that trip leaders have taken appropriate steps to make the trip accessible to SEND, disadvantaged students and those whose circumstances may otherwise prevent their participation in the trip/activity. Students with additional needs who are taken on educational visits need to be reviewed in terms of the Risk Assessment and an appropriate management plan agreed, if needed. With more serious medical situations, parental approval/awareness regarding the management will be required. These additional management plans must be included in the RA. There may be an additional requirement to ensure that staff have any specialist training to meet the medical needs of students or have arrangements in place during the visit to ensure adequate provision.

Once a trip has been advertised and names collected then the EVC must share this with SLT and the pastoral team to advise if there are any students with behavioural problems who may need one to one supervision or be withdrawn for the trip. If an appropriate level of supervision cannot be achieved for a particularly difficult student then in the context of the school behaviour code, it is possible that the student may not go on the visit. A trip leader who takes a student, who has a school history of un-cooperative behaviour, on a school visit

will need to be confident that there is enough management in place to prevent this student being a danger to themselves and other students. Classcharts should be used to see a students' history of behaviour as well as asking the pastoral team.

The sleeping arrangements for residential visits should be considered for transgender students before the trip is undertaken. Each individual case needs to be carefully considered and in depth conversations had between the student and parent/carer. It might be that the school has to pay for a single room.

Health and Safety and Risk Assessments

The planning of school visits ensure that all experience the best possible outcomes, minimising the risk to their health and safety. All school visits "offsite" will be risk assessed and signed off by the EVC. This person should have considerable experience of trips, be aware of the relevant legal requirements and have relevant EVC training. Party leaders should make full use of the generic risks and management information on the Evolve web site (Resources section) and complete a risk assessment using the school template.

All risk assessments must be written by the trip leader and should be specifically related to the environment/venue being visited, the actual students participating and the specific activities being undertaken. This should include accommodation supervision and any evening or downtime activities. The risk assessment is a legal document and once completed must be shared with all staff members on the trip/visit.

Trip leaders should appreciate that their risk assessment will be scrutinised by the EVC and for residential and adventurous activities also by Hampshire Outdoor Education (and possibly by other third parties in the event of an accident/incident and their response to certain scenarios will be tested-particularly with visits that have a higher risk profile). The visit cannot proceed unless this process has been satisfactorily completed.

One accompanying member of staff must be first aid trained and able to assist with medical needs (anaphylactic training for example).

The main legislation covering school trips is the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and regulations made under that Act. The trip leader has legal responsibility and common law duty of care for students once they are on the trip/visit.

Supervision

When someone takes on responsibility, they take on a duty of care to ensure safety. Trip leaders must ensure that students are supervised appropriately, taking into consideration, the location, age, gender and nature of the visit. Staff to student ratios are not prescribed by law. The following ratios are recommended based on safety, by Hampshire Outdoor Education. Ratios do not include the centre base staff.

		Ratio	Qualifications
Category 1 *High risk* – Residential, water based	Year 7 – 9	1:12	• An experienced group leader • An experienced deputy leader • Responsible adults • Leaders should reflect the gender of the group.
	Year 10-11	1:12	
	Year 12 -13	1:12	
Category 2 *Medium Risk* - Day	Year 7 - 9	1:12	
	Year 10-11	1:15	
	Year 12 -13	1:20	
Category 3 *Low Risk* – Local Visit	Year 7 - 9	1:20	
	Year 10-11	1:20	
	Year 12 -13	1:20	

Over Subscribed Visits

If there are limited places available on a school visit then the trips administrator should look to see if there are any participating students that have already attended a school visit in that academic year. Attendance and behaviour of students should also be considered. This must be communicated to parents in the initial invitation letter. There must be a document to show how the decision has been reached.

Emergency Contact

If there is an emergency when on a visit within the school day- contact the school and ask for the trips administrator in the first instance or the EVC.
For visits outside of school hours there will be two contact numbers which will be senior leaders allocated on a rota basis to be duty officers. Please note the school's Reception number **cannot be used** for this. These duty officers will have both the RA and trip details provided by the EVC. In all situations, Hampshire Outdoor Education & PE Service will provide support services.

The 'Duty Officer' may have to consider the nature of the emergency:
Coach crash
Medical – outbreak of food poisoning,
School party in quarantine
Student death
Student hospitalised
Parent death in the UK.
Student detained by police for theft, alcohol or drug related offence.
Return journey prevented by ash cloud, company collapse or civil unrest

A member of staff must record the time, date and nature of any incident and contact the school/duty officer immediately.

Role of the Duty Officer

The duty officer (SLT or EVC) is on call when a school visit is out of school hours or residential. The Trips administrator will give the contacts and all details of the visit to the duty officer. If there is an emergency the duty officer should establish:

- Are the group safe? Is the party leader able to continue and be an effective decision maker? Can the deputy leader cope with the situation?
- Does the school need to send additional support out to the location – is this realistic and who should be sent?
- Does the parent/career need to be notified?
- Who is going to deal with the media?
- Should the trip continue or should the party return home – how can this be achieved?
- Do any agencies need to be informed such as embassies? Does the insurance company need a police report or early notification?
- Does the emergency situation require specialist support such as trauma councillors or legal advice?

The duty officer should contact the Principal if there is a problem and possibly Hampshire Outdoor Education if serious or guidance needed.

Use of staff vehicles

The use of staff vehicles to transport students is subject to the same conditions as for minibus drivers in that they should be an approved minibus driver (with evidence of appropriate and up to date training). Staff using their own vehicles should have a clean licence, business use insurance and the vehicle must have a current MOT certificate, if legally required. Parental consent is needed to transport students in staff vehicles.

Exchange Visits

The trip leader must ensure checks are carried out with the host school on exchange accommodation. The school organising the International School Exchange is fully responsible for duty of care for the students, staff and others involved. DBS checks must be carried out for all adults over 16 who will be residing in the household in the UK when accommodating exchange student. Similar checks must be followed for host families abroad.

Third Party Companies

There is an expectation that a course or educational visit recommended by the school should be of good educational value and undertaken in a safe environment with an approved provider. This includes residential courses, outdoor pursuits and international travel companies.

Parental contact

Students cannot participate on educational visits without written parental permission. A parental signature on a reply slip, usually linked to the information letter, or ticked consent

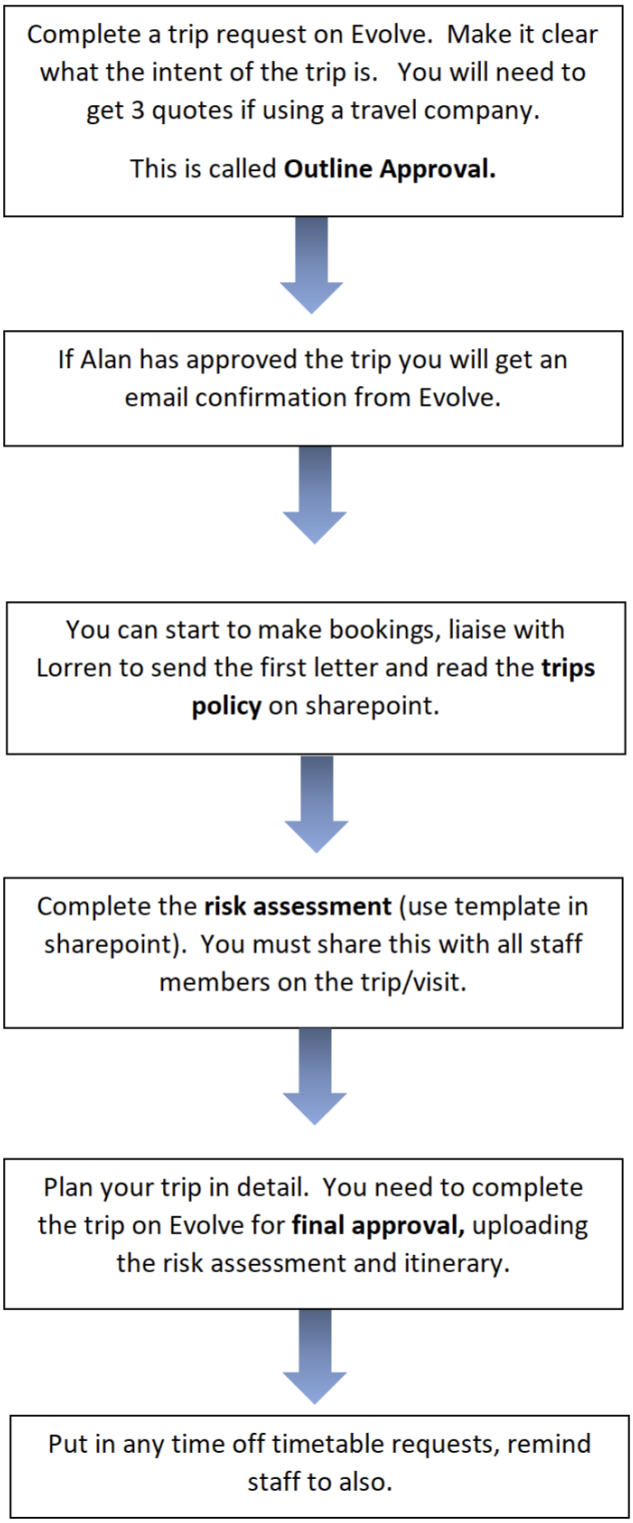
box on ParentPay is sufficient. With most residential visits such as language exchanges then an information evening with opportunities for parental questions is considered good practice.

Local visits (LAV)

Local visits within walking distance of the school which are undertaken in lesson time should still complete approval through Evolve. The EVC/Vice Principal needs to be aware of the visit and should also be confident with the arrangements. A Risk Assessment should be completed and a list of students who are off site should be left with the school office in case of an evacuation emergency. Medical and parental contact details should be carried by the trip leader.

How to Apply for a Trip (for Leaders)

All trip leaders must follow this flow chart which is also in the St John's sharepoint area.



Trip Leaders Procedures

Trip leaders must follow these points after the trip has been fully approved by the EVC/SLT. This should be ticked once completed and can be uploaded to Evolve.

To do:	Tick when done	Where and how
Check you have the right supervision, including trained staff if necessary		See the ratios guide on sharepoint
Check there is a first aider on the trip		See the up to date list on sharepoint
Check the student list – highlight any medical/dietary needs		See Evolve register
Hold a meeting with students before to discuss the trip rules and code of conduct, share the itinerary and expectations		Hold a meeting either in lesson or lunch time/after school
Make sure all staff on the trip are aware of students with needs, share the expectations and itinerary with them		Hold a staff meeting
Appoint a deputy who can take over if needed		Make this clear in the risk assessment
Check the emergency number works		Ask a student or staff member to try the number as soon as you arrive at the destination
Residential trips only		
Sort rooming before and notify students, separating male and female students		

Trip Rules (for Leaders to share)

These rules need to be shared with students before the trip in a trips meeting/lesson displayed on a powerpoint. Accompanying staff should also be aware of their role and enforce these rules.

Students will:

- Follow the instructions of all staff at all times without argument and be polite
- Do not endanger themselves or put others at risk
- No eating on the coach
- Not chew gum
- Be punctual and trustworthy, lateness causes unnecessary delays and anxiety for others
- Be responsible for their own belongings on the trip/visit including mobile phones and money if permitted
- Not smoke, vape or consume alcohol at any time or purchase any of these items
- Be considerate of the general public, keep your voice low
- Always remain in groups of at least 3 if given free time, and have the school mobile number of the trip leader
- Wear suitable clothing, appropriate to the character of the trip/visit. Logos should not cause offence to others.
- Remain in their own bedrooms, if on a residential trip when given a "lights out" time and be respectful to other guests

The safety and security of all students and staff is paramount at all times and high standards of behaviour are expected and required throughout any school trip, from the moment you leave the school building.

Residential Trips Packs

A trips pack is sent home via email for parents to sign which asks for various information: medical needs, dietary requirements, behaviour consent and use of mobile phones.

Policy Monitoring

This policy is available to all staff on the school sharepoint (trips) and published on the school website for parents/carers. It will be reviewed every year by the EVC and The Principal.

Links

- https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-and-safety-on-educational-visits/health -and-safety-on-educational-visits
- https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1974/37/contents
- https://www.hse.gov.uk/services/education/faqs.htm
- https://oeapng.info/about-national-guidance/