

Educational Trips and Visits Policy

PART I: GENERAL INFORMATION

INTRODUCTION

At Rokeby School, we believe that learning outside the classroom is an essential component of our curriculum. It gives our pupils unique opportunities to develop their resourcefulness and initiative and to spend time together in an informal environment. Each trip is different. Some are directly related to the curriculum, some are designed to promote social awareness, or to enhance physical skills, self-reliance and team-working. Others will extend their knowledge of the world. The common factor is that they all make an essential contribution to your son's development and education in the broadest sense of the word.

OUR TRIPS AND VISITS

We regularly take pupils on day trips to: historic sites, museums, galleries, natural features, farms and Roman remains to support the curriculum in History, Art, Geography, English Biology and Classics. There are theatre trips for pupils of all levels. We run trips to France each year and post-Common Entrance trips include a full Valedictory program involving an outward bound residential trip and days out.

Departments arrange their own residential trips in the holiday times, including trips to Italy, France and Belgium.

We send rugby and soccer on tours to Dublin, South Africa and Holland. We have an annual ski trip to either North America or Europe.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Headmaster

The Headmaster will:

- i) ensure that the Trips staff involved in trips are suitably trained and competent to discharge their responsibilities;
- ii) ensure that arrangements are in place for the Governing Body to be aware of and authorise school visits;
- iii) satisfy himself that appropriate risk assessments including pre-visit assessments have been satisfactorily undertaken – this also includes the competence and insurance cover of any external agencies involved in the trip;
- iv) check that each trip has an appropriate Trip/Group Leader where and will consider the Leader's competence and ability to maintain discipline;
- v) ensure that all staff and non-staff are both competent and appropriate to be on the trip;
- vi) confirm in writing that non-staff volunteers can attend the visit and make sure that CRB disclosures are in place where necessary;

- vii) ensure that parents are fully informed about the trip, have provided their consent and can be contacted for its duration;
- viii) make time available for the Trips committee to train any staff and non-staff supervisors before the trip commences;
- ix) ensure the school has emergency procedures in place in case of a major incident.

Deputy Head and Deputy Head of Pre-Prep

These members of the SLT are responsible for ensuring that there is a reasonable spread of trips throughout the years and in keeping with school aims and that the calendar for trips and visits is regularly updated. Also they will ensure that each Trip Leader is following the guidelines and preparing fully for the school trip.

Trip Leader

The Trip Leader is responsible for ensuring that the trip guidelines are followed carefully and that the outing is fully prepared, with the details outlined in this policy and the trips pack given careful thought and preparation. On the trip itself the Trip Leader is responsible for ensuring all aspects of the trip are carried out successfully and with due regard to the welfare, health and safety of the pupils and staff on the trip. The Trip Leader is the first and main point of contact on a trip and must ensure that the Headmaster and emergency contact are kept fully informed of any matters arising which might be of concern. On return the trip leader must discharge their duties to conclude the trip and then, finally, complete a Trip Review Form, found in the Trips Pack.

INFORMATION ON PLANNED TRIPS AND ACTIVITIES

The school calendar lists the trips and visits that are due to take place over the coming term together with a list of planned home and away sports fixtures. You will always be notified in advance:

- If your child has been selected for a sports team, and will be given a list of fixtures. We very much welcome family and friends at all our matches, both home and away.
- If your child is going to be out of school during the school day in order to visit a local museum, theatre, nature reserve or historic site. We will always seek your permission if the visit involves an extra charge, supplying a packed lunch or late return to school.
- We send details of planned trips and activities well in advance to all parents of pupils of the relevant year group or cohort. Parents who opt for these trips are always invited into the school for a full briefing before their son departs on a trip or visit that involves an overnight stay, either in the UK or overseas.

CONSENT

We require your specific, individual written consent if we are to take your son on a trip or visit that extends beyond the normal school day, involves an overnight stay, collection from a different venue, an overseas visit or extra cost to you. Please note that we are unable to take your son without a completed and signed consent form, which includes details of where you may be contacted in an emergency. This form will be sent to you well in advance and must reach the school at least five working days before the start of the trip.

SAFETY

Safety is top priority for us. We expect you to support the school in ensuring that your son follows the instructions given either by a member of staff, or by a qualified instructor, and uses the proper equipment. We reserve the right to send any pupil home early at their parents' expense, if they decline to follow reasonable instructions given for their own safety, (or do not follow the school's behavior code).

Driving the School Minibus

Please refer to the School Vehicles Policy

PERSONAL LIABILITY AND INSURANCE

The law places the Group Leader "in loco parentis". The DCSF Guidance "The Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits: A Good Practice Guide," (www.teachernet.gov.uk), should be read by all Group Leaders. It explains that their responsibility is to "act as any reasonable parent would do in the same circumstances." Staff who take part in visits and activities outside school may feel concerned about the possibility of being held personally liable if an accident should occur. However, they can be assured that Rokeby Educational Trust, as their employer will always stand behind them in the unlikely event of an accident occurring, provided they have exercised reasonable care and followed the school's guidelines.

Rokeby Educational Trust Limited school has £5M of Employers' Liability Insurance and £15M of public liability insurance, as well as a group travel policy that covers most visits inside the UK and overseas. Cover includes cancellation or delay, medical expenses, replacement of passports, personal possessions and money. The policy covers most school visits, including skiing holidays; but does not cover all adventurous activities, such as climbing or scuba diving. Any member of staff organising an adventurous or hazardous activity should therefore check, via the Bursar, whether or not the activity is covered by the school's policy. An extension usually can be arranged. The Group Leader should ensure that s/he takes a copy of the school's travel insurance with him/her on all but the shortest of visits.

Rokeby School's policy is to discourage staff from transporting pupils in their private cars, and never to allow them to be transported in cars belonging to parent helpers (unless the parents make a private arrangement that does not involve the school). Where a member of staff transports a pupil in his/her car, insurance cover is automatically provided through the school's "occasional business use" motor policy. That ensures that motor insurance claims arising whilst a member of staff is using their own car for school business purposes can be settled without involving their own motor insurer. Staff must refer to the relevant section of the Safeguarding Policy "staff taking pupils in their own car".

PREPARATORY ARRANGEMENTS

The amount of advance preparatory work needed will obviously vary considerably with the type of activity. Very little preparation may be needed for walking with a group of pupils to a local museum, spending an hour there and walking back in time for school lunch. By contrast, a visit lasting a week or more to a country outside the EU, requires considerable research and preparation. Repeat visits and shorter visits will need less planning, and can be

arranged at shorter notice, though it is always desirable to give parents as much notice as possible when planning visits for school holidays and half-terms.

The list that follows is designed to cover all the planning that a Trip/Group leader needs to undertake for a longer type of visit. It is designed to be as comprehensive as possible. *Text in italics indicates that the action may not be required (or the timescale may be shortened) for: trips within the school day, theatre and museum visits, sports fixtures, or day visits using school transport.*

Planning the trip

With reference to the School Trips Guidelines in the Staff Handbook, obtain a trips proposal form from the main school office. This will need to be completed and handed to the Headmaster for approval. Please have regard to the following points when preparing to complete either the trip proposal or the following 'trips pack':

- Discuss preliminary plan, including purpose, location, transport, hotels, activities, itinerary, number & age of participants with the Deputy Head or Deputy Head of Pre-Prep
- Calculate the staff to pupil ratio, (see below)
- Prepare a draft itinerary
- Decide mode of transport for all legs of the journey.
- Prepare fully inclusive costs for the visit, including an appropriate contingency for delays and emergencies. (The costs of the accompanying staff must be included).
- Check that the provider of adventurous activities is licensed and the individual instructors possess a recognised qualification from a national body, such as the Adventure Activities Licensing Authority.
- Obtain clear statement from the Centre about their responsibilities for the safety of the pupils before making any commitment. Ask for copies of their risk assessments
- Prepare the risk assessment(s), (see below),
- *Check the school's insurance cover, (see above) if the visit involves hazardous activities.*
- Find other members of staff who are willing to participate in the trip, bearing in mind the need to have both male and female teaching staff to participate in a visit. It is desirable to have at least one member of staff who speaks the language of the country to be visited. The Headmaster will give final approval of staff that may attend. At Rokeby School we are always happy to include volunteers from the Administration staff on residential trips (out of term time) amongst the supervising staff with prior permission from the Bursar. We hope that any sports coaches and visiting Music Staff will participate in sports and music tours. They are also welcome to help with other visits. Office staff may assist with day trips and theatre visits. We do not usually encourage parents to accompany school visits other than the ski trip, we welcome them at all sports fixtures.
- *If parent volunteers participate: Arrange for any volunteers participating in the trip to obtain an enhanced CRB disclosure. (The Bursar's office will make the necessary arrangements).*
- *If you require families to host overseas students – Arrange to see the Bursar for the latest information regarding host families obtaining enhanced CRB disclosures and any other necessary checks required.*
- *Check that the tour company/airline is ATOL/ABTA bonded to provide cover in the event of the bankruptcy of the provider.*
- *Carry out a reconnaissance visit if the location is not one that the school has visited before. (If a reconnaissance visit is impossible, a reference from another school that has visited the site may suffice).*
- *Establish the minimum and maximum numbers for the visit to be viable (bearing in mind that*

the costs of the accompanying staff will be divided amongst the participants)

- Ascertain the medical and visa requirements
- Establish when the deposits are required by tour operators/airlines/activity centre etc, and ensure that the size of the deposit requested from parents is sufficient to cover these costs (including the costs of deposits for accompanying staff)
- Depending upon the destination: check with the Travel Advice Unit of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office
- If necessary attend a First Aid and/or minibus driving course beforehand.

Staff/Pupil Ratios

The DCSF recommended staff to pupil ratios for visits and off-site activities is:

Ratio	Pupils' Year Group
1:6	1- 3 inclusive (with a higher ratio for the under 5s)
1:10	Years 4 – 6
1:15/20	Years 7 upwards (with a larger ration permitted for over 16s)
1:10	All visits abroad

Please refer to the school forms for the present agreed ratios.

The Risk Assessment

All Trip/Group Leaders must conduct a thorough risk assessment on the potential hazards involved in a visit, trip or activity that they are planning. The steps that they should follow are set out in the model risk assessment form that is part of DCSF Guidance “The Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits: A Good Practice Guide,” (www.teachernet.gov.uk). This form can be downloaded and guides the user in:

- Identifying the potential hazards of the place being visited.
- Listing the groups of people that are especially at risk from the significant hazards.
- Listing existing controls or notifying where the information may be found.
- Considering how he/she would cope with the hazards which are not currently identified or fully controlled.
- Carrying out continual monitoring of hazards throughout the visit.

Samples of risk assessments are available from the Deputy Head or the Deputy Head of the Pre-Prep for guidance.

Professionally-operated licensed activity centres and tour operators specialising in school visits will conduct their own risk assessments. The Trip/Group Leader should ask for copies at the planning stage. Provided that he/she is satisfied, it will meet the requirements of Rokeby School, for the activity part of the visit. Additional risk assessments will probably be needed to ensure complete coverage of all aspects of the visit. Risk assessments carried out by the school for previous visits can generally be updated and re-used, unless there has been a change of circumstances.

DURING THE VISIT OR ACTIVITY

Primary responsibility for the safe conduct of the visit rests with Group Leader. He or she has sole responsibility for amending the itinerary in the event of unforeseen delay or sudden deterioration in weather conditions. He or she will liaise with the partner school in the event of difficulties between a pupil and their host family. S/He may delegate part or all of the responsibility for the following to one or more of the accompanying staff:

- Carrying out a head count on getting on and off each form of transport, entering or leaving a museum, restaurant, activity centre, hotel etc.
- Checking that all pupils wear their seat belts.
- Checking the fire exits and escape routes at each hotel or hostel. Ensuring that every pupil walks through the emergency escape route at each hotel.
- Ensuring that sleeping accommodation is suitable and located together (preferably not on the ground floor).
- Setting times for pupils to be in their rooms at night. Conducting checks (using the other staff).
- Setting agreed times and locations for checking pupils when they work or are allowed out unsupervised in small groups.
- Enforcing expected standards of behaviour.
- Looking after – or reminding pupils to look after – passports and valuables
- Storing cash, travelers’ cheques and tickets in the hotel safe.
- Keeping an account of all expenditure.
- Recording all accidents and near misses.

ILLNESS OR MINOR ACCIDENTS

If a Pupil has a minor accident or becomes ill, the Trip/Group leader, or another member of staff will take him/her to the local hospital or clinic. If the trip is outside the UK, s/he will notify the insurers on their helpline to arrange (where possible) for the medical bill to be sent directly to the insurance company for settlement. If the accident is more serious (such as a broken leg when skiing), the school’s medical insurers may arrange for the pupil, accompanied by a member of staff to be repatriated to the UK. At Rokeby School we expect the Trip/Group Leader to phone the pupil’s parents if their child has suffered an accident or injury that is serious enough to require medical treatment – as opposed to minor cuts and bruises.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

In the event of a serious accident resulting in the death or injury of one or more of the pupils and staff, the Group Leader’s first priority would be to summon the emergency services, and to arrange for medical attention for the injured. One of the accompanying members of staff should accompany the injured pupil(s) to hospital. Ensuring that the rest of the group were safe and looked after, and informing the Headmaster or on-call member of the SLT of what had happened would be the next tasks for the Trip/Group Leader, who would need to give as full, calm and factual account as the circumstances permitted. Where the full facts had not yet emerged, he or she should say so, and ensure that follow-up communications with the Headmaster are maintained. He/she would also need to arrange (perhaps using the Deputy Leader or another member of staff) for the school’s insurers to be contacted as quickly as possible, together with the British Consul, if the accident happened overseas. A full record should be kept of the incident, the injuries and of the actions taken.

At Rokeby School, depending on the nature of the incident, we may implement our own crisis management plan for informing as swiftly as possible both the families of the injured, and the families of those who are unhurt. We recognise that in an era of instant communications it may not be possible for us to be the first to break the news. Nevertheless, we firmly believe that we have an important duty to speak personally to the parents of any pupil who has suffered some injury or mishap. We will use mass communication methods (SMS, email, messages on our web) for communicating with those whose children are not affected.

Where possible, communication with the media should be left to the Headmaster. The Group Leader should refer the media to the school. If comment is unavoidable, it should be factual, calm and no attempt made to cover gaps in knowledge. Pupils should be discouraged from talking to the media.

DELAYED RETURN

If a visit is delayed, the Group Leader should phone the school office, or the 'on call' member of the SLT, who will in turn phone all the parents on their contact numbers to alert them to the delay and the revised time of arrival.

ON RETURN

Each Group Leader is asked to provide the Headmaster with a report on the visit, reports of accidents and near misses on his/her return. Personal observations and lessons learned are always valuable. The Group leader should return all school property, together with a report of any lost or damaged property.

Expenditure

The Group Leader is responsible for returning any unused cash or travelers' cheques to the Bursary together with all related transaction vouchers. The Group Leader is also responsible for producing a schedule of all expenditure on the trip. Unused balances will be returned to the parents by way of credits shown on the next school bill.

Report for Governors

The Headmaster's termly report to the Governors usually contains a synopsis of all the school trips and visits that have taken place since the last visit.