

EDUCATIONAL VISITS AND OUT OF COLLEGE ACTIVITIES POLICY

- The visit/trip should have a clear educational value and have clearly stated aims and objectives
- The visit/trip should ideally be blocked into the trips week designated as such by the Student Provision Team before the start of the academic year. Approval for staff participation in visits/trips will be given by the Student Provision Team after consideration of the impact of staff absence.
- In compliance with LEA codes of practice all residential visits/trips will have a minimum staff to students ratio of 1:12 and this should be reduced by negotiation with the Educational Visits Co-ordinator where high risk activities are involved.
- In compliance with LEA codes of practice all residential visits/trips involving a mix of male and female participants should have at least one male and one female member of staff in attendance. Additionally, a standby member of staff of each sex should be identified to avoid cancellation of visits/trips should a member of staff be forced to withdraw.
- To allow staff flexibility in planning for visits/trips and at the same time to show due consideration to LEA codes of practice, the ratio of staff to students for non-residential visits/trips should be a minimum 1:20. However, where high risk activities are involved, the ratio should be reduced by negotiation with the Educational Visits Co-ordinator.
- It is considered desirable for a male and female member of staff to accompany students on non-residential visits/trips, although it is recognised that numbers/commitments of staff will not always make this possible.
- Staff using the minibus must comply with all the minibus regulations
- A College mobile phone must be taken on all visits and trips by at least one accompanying member of staff and this must be switched on at all times.
- Staff will adhere to the common law requirements for those acting 'in loco parentis' to exercise the same care as would a reasonable parent.
- To comply with risk assessment requirements, the recognised group leader will undertake and write up a full Risk Assessment of all the activities to be undertaken and will give a copy to the Educational Visits Co-ordinator at least one week prior to the trip/visit. Risk Assessments must be adhered to at all times during the visit and variations should not be made to procedures without a secondary Full Risk Assessment detailing the reasons for the variation being made.
- Students must obey College rules regarding alcohol and drugs whilst taking part in College trips and visits. No drugs are permitted under any circumstances (other than medicines prescribed for personal use and simple treatments to relieve obvious medical symptoms). Alcoholic drinks are only allowed for those above the legal purchasing age and in moderation and only with the express permission of the group leader. Parents must be advised prior to the trip that students breaking these rules may be sent home at their own expense.
- Students should be made aware of College insurance cover and advised that if they feel this is inadequate for their requirements then they should make their own arrangements for additional insurance.
- It is important to ensure that any trip /activity can be shown to give good value for money.

EDUCATIONAL VISITS AND OUT OF COLLEGE ACTIVITIES
PROCEDURES and GUIDELINES

Table of Contents

1. Introduction	2
2. Educational Visits – The College view	2
3. The Legal Framework	2
4. Management of Educational Visits Policies and Practices	3
5. Ratio of staff to students - Residential visits/trips.....	3
6. Ratio of staff to students - Non-Residential visits/trips	4
7. Timing of Trips/New Trips	4
8. Staff only visits	5
9. Trip Planning Process	5
10. Eligible Items of Expenditure.....	7
11. Staff Costs	8
12. Ski Trip Staff Costs	8
13. Contingency Costs.....	8
14. Risk Assessments in Outdoor Activities	8
15. Use of Tour Operators	9
16. Use of Tour Operators based abroad	9
17. Insurance	10
18. Use of private cars to transport students/staff on educational visits.....	10
19. Cancellations	11
20. Early Return	11
21. Language Abilities.....	11
22. First Aid.....	11
23. Responsiveness to Medical Needs/Specific Learning Difficulties &Disabilities	11
24. Accessibility of trips/visits for students with specific medical needs and/or specific learning difficulties and disabilities	12
25. Use of Adult Volunteers	13
26. Vetting suitability of volunteers.....	14
27. Remote Supervision.....	14
28. Exchange or Home-Stay Visit Supervision	14
29. Controlling accommodation on residential visits	15
30. Risk Assessments.....	16
31. Communication during the trip	19

1. Introduction

This guide defines the policies and practices within which all educational visits operate at BHASVIC. The purpose of these policies and practices is to:

- Ensure all educational visits are managed in such a way as to minimise risks to staff and students and others affected by the activities undertaken.
- Provide the key resource for staff to plan and manage educational visits with due regard to College policy.

2. Educational Visits – The College view

The college recognises that while all educational visits have an element of risk, they are a most valuable element of the students' experience. Educational visits are integrated into the provision within most curriculum areas across the college, and as such, many students will at some point in their programme of study participate in such activities. As such, clear and robust policies and practices and their application are critical to safeguard all concerned.

In planning an educational visit, organisers should make a realistic assessment as to whether or not the particular trip represents the most cost-effective way of fulfilling the learning objectives. Other alternative strategies may also be considered: video/film/computer simulations/lectures/role play etc; before a definitive decision is made that the proposed trip is the best strategy.

Should there be a need to investigate an incident or accident that has occurred during the course of an off-site visit, the way in which the college policies and practices with reference to educational visits have been undertaken will form a substantial part of the evidence used to determine culpability.

3. The Legal Framework

In the establishment of its policies and practices with regard to educational visits, the college acknowledges the following legal framework:

Employer's Responsibilities

DfES Circular 0803/2001, "Health and Safety, Responsibilities and powers" and Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and associated regulations.

"The employer has a duty to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of staff and the health and safety of pupils and visitors on and off site whilst on school/college activities."

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992

“Require the employer to assess risks, introduce measures to control risks and to tell employees about the measures taken.”

Employees’ Responsibilities

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992

“The employee must take reasonable care of their own, and others’, health and safety, cooperate with their employers, carry out activities in accordance with training and instructions, and inform the employer of any serious risks.”

“Teachers have a common law duty to act with care as befits a trained and experienced professional.”

“A breach of duty would be seen (by a court) as failing to meet the standard of a reasonable professional. The comparators would be other similar teachers. The teacher’s job is to recognise something is wrong, not to diagnose specific faults or advise on remedies on areas outside their general professional practice. However, if they have specific higher level expertise (say) in management or outdoor pursuits, from training or experience, their actions would be judged against that higher standard.”

“Teachers are not in loco parentis as the care they are expected to give is in a professional not family context, and the number and type of specific interactions required are different in principle from those exercised by parents. There is a body of opinion across the profession as to reasonable standards, not necessarily applicable to individual parents and families.”

4. Management of Educational Visits Policies and Practices

The Educational Visits Co-ordinator has responsibility for the College’s Educational Visits Policies and Practices, which have been defined with due consideration to the above statutes and good practice guide “Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits,” published by the DfES in 1998.

5. Ratio of staff to students - Residential visits/trips

- In compliance with LEA codes of practice all residential visits/trips will have a maximum staff to students ratio of 1:12 and that this should be reduced by negotiation with the Educational Visits Co-ordinator where high risk activities are involved.
- In compliance with LEA codes of practice all residential visits/trips involving a mix of male and female participants should have at least one male and one female member of staff in attendance. Additionally, a standby member of staff of each sex should be identified to avoid cancellation of visits/trips should a member of staff be forced to withdraw.

6. Ratio of staff to students - Non-Residential visits/trips

- To allow staff flexibility in planning for visits/trips and at the same time to show due consideration to LEA codes of practice, the ratio of staff to students for non-residential visits/trips should be a maximum 1:20. However, where high risk activities are involved, the ratio should be reduced by negotiation with the Educational Visits Co-ordinator.
- It is considered desirable for a male and female member of staff to accompany students on non-residential visits/trips, although it is recognised that numbers/commitments of staff will not always make this possible. However, it is imperative that any trip involving a single member of staff must be safeguarded by that member of staff having a college mobile telephone with him or her.

7. Timing of Trips/New Trips

- Staff organising visits/trips in individual subject areas should, wherever practicable, rationalise non-residential visits/trips throughout the academic year to ensure an optimum balance is achieved between syllabus requirements and impacts on delivery/attendance in other subject areas.
- Residential visits should, wherever practicable, be blocked into the week defined at the start of the academic year, and new visits will need to be agreed by the Student Provision Team in advance of any planning and development and should comply with the criteria for new trips highlighted below:
 1. The visit/trip should have a clear educational value to the student participants, and have clearly stated aims and objectives in relation to the associated curriculum area.
 2. The visit/trip should ideally be blocked into the trips week defined by the Student Provision Team at the start of the academic year.
 3. To comply with risk assessment requirements, the recognised group leader should provide hard copy evidence to the Educational Visits Co-ordinator that they have superseded the visit/trip by undertaking a risk assessment.
 4. An outline itinerary must be presented with Part 1 of the residential visits/trips form as a pre-requisite for approval.
 5. The planning of the visit/trip should show due consideration to other curriculum activities, such as exams and staff inset days planned for the same time.
 6. Approval for staff participation in visits/trips will be given after consideration of the impact of staff absence from the individual programme area and cross college perspectives.
 7. As a consequence of participation in visits/trips, no member of staff should be absent from college for more than two weeks in any one block during term time.

8. Final approval for new visits/trips will be given at the discretion of SPT after consultation with the Educational Visits Co-ordinator.

8. Staff only visits

- Staff only visits should, wherever practicable, be blocked into the visits/trips week defined at the start of the academic year, and visits will need to be agreed by the Student Provision Team and the Corporation if the visit/trip involves travel outside of the UK. In advance of any planning and development organisers should ensure that the visit complies with the following criteria:
 1. The visit/trip, where in receipt of college funds and/or using colleges resources, should have a clear staff development/curriculum value for the participants/college, and, where appropriate, have clearly stated aims and objectives in relation to the associated curriculum/work areas of the participants.
 2. To comply with risk assessment requirements, the recognised group leader should provide hard copy evidence to the Educational Visits Co-ordinator that they have undertaken a risk assessment in advance of the trip.
 3. An outline itinerary must be presented with Part 1 of the residential/non-residential visits/trips form as a pre-requisite for approval.
 4. The planning of the visit/trip should show due consideration to other curriculum activities, such as exams and staff inset days planned for the same time.
 5. Approval for individual staff participation in visits/trips will be given after consideration of the impact of staff absence from the individual programme area and cross college perspectives. Final decisions will be at the discretion of the Principal.
 6. As a consequence of participation in visits/trips, a member of staff should not normally be absent from college for more than one week in any one block during term time.

9. Trip Planning Process

Stage 1 - Planning

Staff organising the visit should consider the following planning questions at this stage:

- What is the aim of the visit ?
- Where does it fit into the students' curricular or staff development needs ?
- Is the aim of the visit being achieved in the most efficient and effective manner ?
- Could the activity be undertaken as effectively on the College site or nearby ?

- What advice from the Educational Visits Co-ordinator is needed before proceeding ?
- What are the skills/competencies required of the accompanying staff ?
- What relevant skills are required of the provider i.e. tour operator/guide/instructor ?
- Does the proposed venue/tour operator/service provide good value for money?

After the planning questions have been considered staff organising the visit should then proceed to Stage 2.

Stage 2 - Authorisation

Residential

A minimum of one month prior to the visit/trip complete section 1 of the residential trips form and return to the Educational Visits Co-ordinator for authorisation of the trip in principle. Should authorisation be given, proceed to stages 3 and 4. If, however, authorisation is not given consult with the Educational Visits Co-ordinator regarding amendments.

Non-Residential

A minimum of three weeks prior to the visit/trip complete section 1 of the non-residential trips form and return to the Educational Visits Co-ordinator for authorisation of the trip in principle. Should authorisation be given, go to stages 3 and 4. If, however, authorisation is not given consult with the Educational Visits Co-ordinator regarding amendments.

Stage 3 – Finance Account

- 1 Ask a member of staff in the Finance Office to open a trip account for you to keep a detailed record of all cash and cheques submitted.
2. If you are collecting in cheques to pay for a coach/train fare etc., ask staff to make out the cheques payable to BHASVIC. Once sufficient funds have been deposited in the trip account they will be able to issue you with a cheque to cover your bills and/or pay invoices. Note, however, that money can only be paid out after it has been paid in.
- 3 All monies (cash and cheques) must be paid in to the Finance Office.

Stage 4

A minimum of one week prior to the visit staff should complete section 2 of the residential trips form or non-residential trips form and return to the Educational Visits Co-ordinator for final check.

Prior to departure collect the mobile phone - including battery charger - from the Finance Office to be retained by the member of staff in charge at all times. It is also at this stage that the participants in the visit/trip should be asked to sign the "Code of Conduct for visits/trips," copies of which are available from the Educational Visits Co-ordinator.

Information to be forwarded to the Reception by the group leader as part of Stage 4.

Residentials:

- List of students/staff as defined in Part 2 of the Residential Trips Form
- Emergency contact details of staff and students
- Itinerary details
- Contact details for the group for the duration of the trip – including definition of "key contact" for emergency situations and a list of secondary contacts. (See emergency communication during the trip)

Non – residential

- Information as defined within Part 2 of the Non-Residential Trips Form

On return from the visit trip complete a trip accounts form outlining:

- a) money received
- b) details of expenditure (See eligible items for expenditure below).

You should attach originals of all receipts to these accounts for the College auditors. It is important, therefore, that you request receipts from organisations to whom you are sending money or cheques.

10. Eligible Items of Expenditure

The following items of expenditure for staff will be eligible for reimbursement from funds within an individual trip account as appropriate:

- Food and Drink (**Not** including alcohol) not to exceed £20 per person per day
- Admission Fees

- Transport Charges
- Emergency First Aid materials
- Maps/guides/resources as appropriate for the safety of the visit/trip

11. Staff Costs

- Staff should not normally have to pay transport, admission or accommodation costs when taking students on College trips relating to the curriculum.
- Staff should investigate whether or not they are entitled to free places for accompanying their students. If not, reasonable staff costs may be passed on to students as long as they do not exceed 10% of the original students' costs - i.e. if a student's train fare and admission ticket cost £20, then up to £2 may be added to this to cover a member of staff's train fare and/or admission ticket. If staff costs will exceed 10% please consult with the Educational Visits Co-ordinator.

12. Ski Trip Staff Costs

It will be normal practice for all staff places on visits/trips to either be paid for out of the charges to students and/or through free places offered by tour operators etc. However, in some trips, such as the annual ski trip, the number of staff in attendance means that it is untenable to pay for their costs out of student charges. In these instances, recognised group leader/s should not have to pay for any element of the transport/accommodation costs. All other staff will be entitled to share equally remaining discounts provided by the tour operator, whilst recognising that all staff in receipt of discounts will be allocated duties and responsibilities to support the leadership of the trip.

13. Contingency Costs

Group leaders should build into the charges for the students a 3% contingency fund to offset against unforeseen costs, including emergency medical treatment or charges for breakages etc. It is important to recognise that the College cannot subsidise any trip and that all costs must be covered by the charges to participants.

14. Risk Assessments in Outdoor Activities

Ensuring full compliance with statutory regulations and codes of practice concerning outdoor activities provision, the member of staff in charge must complete a risk assessment of the location/service provision at all sites of outdoor activities. Where UK outdoor activity centres are used they should be licensed under the Activity Centres (Young Persons' Safety) Act 1995 and the associated Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 1996.

Holding a license means that a provider has been inspected and the Licensed Authority are satisfied that appropriate safety measures are in place for the provision of the specified licensed adventure activities. Other elements of the provision – such as catering and accommodation – are not covered by the licensing scheme. These must be checked as an element of the risk assessment by the group leader.

If proposing to use a non-licensable provider, the group leader should obtain assurances in writing from the provider that:

- Risks have been assessed and that the provider's staff are competent to instruct and lead students. Certified measures of competence should be demonstrated.
- The equipment is appropriate and that its safe condition is checked before each use.
- Operating procedures conform to a national governing body standard where appropriate.
- Clear management of safety systems are in place.
- There is appropriate provision for first aid.

The group leader and other supervisory staff retain ultimate responsibility for students at all times during adventure activities, even when the group is under instruction by a member of the provider's staff. The provider is responsible for the safe running of an activity. Clear handover procedures should be in place and understood by all parties. Everyone, including the students, must have an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the College staff and provider's staff before activities begin.

In preparation of the risk assessment, the group leader should have sufficient information on what the activity involves before it takes place. They should intervene at appropriate safe intervals if they are concerned that students may be at unnecessary risk.

The group leader must not allow activities to be undertaken with direct or remote supervision if they are not satisfied that the students have acquired the necessary skills, confidence, physical ability or judgement to continue safely with the activity.

15. Use of Tour Operators

- To avoid obligations under the EC Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours Regulations 1992, where package tours/trips involve the provision of two or more services i.e. travel and accommodation, organisers should ensure that they use the services of a tour operator and that they are registered with ABTA, AITO and preferably SAGTA.

16. Use of Tour Operators based abroad

Although unlikely, some trips may seek use of the services of a tour operator based abroad. If this is the case, group leaders should refer to Directive

90/314/EEC (available from the Educational Visits Co-ordinator) concerning use of operators based abroad. All trips should be booked through a recognised agency with legal and liable standing.

17. Insurance

- With the advice of its brokers, the college has arranged a policy for travel insurance on behalf of both staff and students while they are on college organised trips. A summary of the cover provided by the policy is available on request from the Educational Visits Co-ordinator. Staff must be made aware of this information by the organiser and advised that if they feel this is inadequate for their requirements then they should make their own arrangements for additional insurance.

18. Use of private cars to transport students/staff on educational visits

Students should not be asked to transport themselves or others to or from a College trip; however, students who request to use their own transport may be allowed to use their own transport may be allowed to do so at the discretion of the group leader. If this is to be granted:

- 1) Students must obtain permission prior to the trip from the group leader.
- 2) This permission can only be granted with parental acknowledgement that the student is travelling independently and at their own risk.
- 3) Students must undertake to contact the College immediately and directly should there be any transport delay or problem.

Teachers and others who drive pupils in their own car must ensure their passenger's safety, that the vehicle is roadworthy, and that they have appropriate licence and insurance cover for carrying the students. Volunteers should be carefully vetted by the College before they are permitted to drive students in their car. Group leaders should seek advice from the Educational Visits Co-ordinator should a volunteer wish to offer their services as a driver. (See vetting suitability for volunteers on educational visits/trips).

The driver is responsible for making sure that students have a seat belt and use it at all times. Vehicles without seat belts should not be used.

Group leaders who wish to use parents, volunteers or other students to help transport students in their own cars, must ensure that they are aware of their legal responsibility for the safety of the students in their cars. Parents' agreement should be sought (on the consent form) for their children to be carried in other parents' cars. It is advisable that parents driving students are not put in a position where they are alone with a student. The group leader should arrange a central dropping point for all students rather than their individual home drops.

Teachers, other adults or students using their own cars to carry students on College trips should ensure that their vehicle is properly licensed and that the insurance covers its use on College business.

19. Cancellations

Some parents/students may cancel a place on a trip. The group leader should forward any cancellations to the insurer/operator as soon as possible, in writing, if a replacement is not available. Delay in notification may incur cancellation charges.

Charging systems should be such that cancellations do not jeopardise the running of the trip. It should be made clear in writing at the outset:

1. Whether or not deposits are returnable and up to what point this is the case.
2. The dates by which instalments and final payment must be made.
3. Whether or not, and the dates by which, any other monies can be refunded if there is a subsequent cancellation.
4. The details of the insurance policy under which costs incurred by cancellation can be claimed.

20. Early Return

The group leader should tell parents that they will be expected to fund the early return of a student whose conduct gives cause for concern on a trip. This will include costs to repatriate/return a member of staff to accompany the student. The early return of a student will not be actioned without due notice to parents. Where a student requests early repatriation/return for extenuating circumstances, this will be considered by the group leader in the light of the impact on the trip as a whole. Parents will be liable to meet all costs incurred. There can be no guarantee that the College can meet specific requests for the early return of students.

21. Language Abilities

One of the adults with the group should be able to speak the language of the visited country. If not, it is strongly recommended that the leader or another adult learns enough of the language to hold a basic conversation and knows what to say in an emergency or that the services of a tour guide, or equivalent, are available throughout the trip.

22. First Aid

First aid should form part of the risk assessment. Before undertaking any off-site activities, the group leader should assess what level of first aid might be needed. On any kind of visit the group leader should have a good working knowledge of first aid, and/or have a designated first aider/medical officer in

the party and ensure that an adequate first-aid box is taken relative to the trip. For adventurous activities, trips abroad or residential trips it is sensible for at least one of the group's teachers to be fully trained first-aider (four day course or equivalent) and/or appropriate first aid provision is available through third parties. All adults in the group should now how to contact the emergency services in the location/s visited during the trip.

The minimum first-aid provision for a residential trip is:

- a suitably stocked first-aid box;
- a person appointed to be in charge of first-aid arrangements.

Other considerations when considering first-aid needs should include:

- the numbers in the group and the nature of the activity;
- the likely injuries and how effective first aid would be;
- the distance to the nearest hospital;
- the ability of first aid services to reach you.

23. Responsiveness to Medical Needs/Specific Learning Difficulties and Disabilities

Additional safety measures to those already in place in the College may be necessary to support students with specific medical or SLDD needs during trips. Arrangements for taking medication and ensuring sufficient supplies for residential visits may be required.

All teachers, other adults and volunteers should be aware of a student's specific needs and any specific emergency procedures. (Subject to the consent of the individual student). Summary sheets held by all teachers, containing details of each student's needs and any other relevant information provided by parents, is one way of achieving this. If appropriate, a teacher, other adult or volunteer should be trained in administering medication and/or supporting the student effectively, if they have not already been so trained, and should take responsibility in an emergency. If the student's safety cannot be guaranteed, it may be appropriate to ask the parent or a care assistant to accompany a particular student. In extreme cases, it may be appropriate to decline a place to a student on a specific trip, should the risk to the student and/or others on the trip be deemed unmanageable.

If a group leader is concerned about whether they can provide for student's safety or the safety of others on a trip because of a medical condition and/or specific learning difficulties or disabilities, they should liaise with the College's Health and Safety Officer, Educational Visits Co-ordinator and the student's parents ahead of confirmation of the student's place on the trip.

The group leader should check that the insurance policy covers staff and pupils with pre-existing medical conditions and/or specific learning difficulties or disabilities.

24. Accessibility of trips/visits for students with specific medical needs and/or specific learning difficulties and disabilities

BHASVIC is mindful of its responsibilities under the Disability Discrimination Act Part 4, to make reasonable adjustments to its procedures in the safe management of visits/trips to minimise any risks associated with the participation of a student with specific medical needs and/or specific learning difficulties and disabilities. Should he/she deem it appropriate to depart from normal procedures, it is the responsibility of the College's Educational Visits Co-ordinator, to consult with the Principal, at least one calendar month ahead of the trip/visit, before any such departure is sanctioned.

The College's decision as to what is reasonably practicable will be based on an assessment of the costs associated with staff time and or capital expenditure and the impact on risk associated with any proposed adjustments to normal procedures. Where the risk assessment – inclusive of any adjustments – suggests an unacceptable level or risk and/or adversely affects other participants on the trip/visit, then the College will not support an individual student's participation. All interested and affected parties should be consulted. Such a decision will not be reached without due consultation with parents/guardians and the student.

Following due process, the College will seek to offer an alternative route for the individual to access the required learning, where the trip/visit provides a learning opportunity associated with the student's learning aims, should it decide it is unable to support an individual student's participation in a trip/visit on the basis of his/her specific medical needs and/or specific learning difficulties and disabilities.

25. Use of Adult Volunteers

The college does not allow non-staff to have any defined role or responsibility during a visit. Support staff on any visit should be clear about their roles and responsibilities during a visit and when acting as a supervisor of students they must:

- Do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group, including full compliance with any actions agreed within the risk assessment for the visit.
- Not be left in sole charge of pupils at any time, other than where they are acting in a group leader capacity and the risks for this have been reviewed by the Educational Visits Co-ordinator and the Vice Principal, Director of Curriculum and Guidance
- Follow the instructions of the group leader and teacher supervisors and help with control and discipline.

- Speak to the group leader or teacher supervisors if concerned about the health or safety of students or others at any time during the visit.

26. Vetting suitability of volunteers

The group leader needs to be clear about the need to vet volunteers who wish to be supervisors, in particular for residential visits. The suitability of potential supervisors should be assessed by the group leader and the Educational Visits Co-ordinator in the initial planning stages for the visit. Where there is any doubt about suitability further investigations should be made and if any doubt remains the adult should not be allowed to take a supervisory role during the visit. Similar considerations should be made for adults who have no supervisory role but who wish to take part in the visit.

27. Remote Supervision

The aim of many visits in a post-16 setting may be to encourage independence and investigative skills, and some of the time on visits such as trips abroad and fieldwork may be unsupervised. The group leader should establish during the planning stage of the visit whether the pupils are competent in remote supervision and should ensure parents have agreed this part of the visit.

28. Exchange or Home-Stay Visit Supervision

The college is mindful that exchange or home stay visits differ from other visits in that students will spend most of their time with host families and are, therefore, not always under direct supervision of College staff. It is important for group leaders to note the host families abroad will not be subject to English law.

Students must be clearly informed ahead of any exchange or home stay visit of the ground rules agreed between the group leader and the host family. In defining those ground rules, the following should be ensured by the group leader:

- A good personal knowledge of the host school/college/organisation and key contact.
- Satisfactory 'pairing' arrangements. The partner school/college/organisation should tell the host families of any special, medical or dietary needs of their guests, age and gender.
- Matches of hosts to students should be appropriate.
- Parents, students and the host school/college/organisation should be clear about the arrangements for collecting and distributing students to families, and for transporting students throughout the visit.
- The Educational Visits Co-ordinator should retain a list of all the students involved and their family names and addresses.

- Students living with host families should have easy access to their teachers, usually by telephone.
- Parents should be made aware that students living with host families will not always be under direct teacher-supervision.

If the host school/college/organisation does not have appropriate measures in place for carrying out checks to ensure the health, safety and welfare of exchange or home stay pupils, the group leader should seek further assurances and/or reconsider whether the visit should take place.

29. Controlling accommodation on residential visits

In managing the risks associated with accommodating staff and students on residential visits the following issues should be considered by the group leader:

- The group should ideally have adjoining rooms with teachers' quarters next to the students'. The group leader should obtain a floor plan of the rooms reserved for the group's use in advance.
- There must be separate male and female sleeping facilities for students and adults.
- The immediate accommodation area (sleeping areas) should be exclusively for the group's use, wherever practicable.
- Ensure that there is appropriate and safe heating and ventilation.
- Ensure that the whole group are aware of the lay-out of the accommodation, its fire precautions/exits, its regulations and routines and that everyone can identify key personnel.
- Security arrangements – where the reception is not staffed 24 hours a day, security arrangements should be in force to stop unauthorised visitors.
- Concerns re-appropriateness of behaviour of staff in the accommodation should be reported immediately to the Manager.
- Locks on doors should work in the group's rooms but appropriate access should be available to teachers at all times.
- There should be adequate space for storing clothes, luggage, equipment etc, and for the safe keeping of valuables.
- Access to first aid and medical support should be clearly understood by the group leader for communication to staff and students as appropriate.
- Balconies should be stable, windows secure, and electrical connections safe.
- Where possible students should not be lodged in ground floor rooms.
- The fire alarm must be audible throughout the accommodation.
- The group leader must be assured that the needs of any particular cultural or religious needs of students within the group can be accommodated.
- The accommodation must have fire exits and lifts with inner doors and that it meets local regulations. After arrival at any accommodation it is imperative to carry out a fire drill as soon as possible.

30. Risk Assessments

Risk assessments will be the responsibility of the group leader (or other competent person appointed by the Educational Visits Co-ordinator) and should be completed and submitted for approval by the Educational Visits Co-ordinator with the Section 1 paperwork for the non-residential and residential visits. Completion of the risk assessment will run alongside management of student and staff adherence to the “Code of Conduct statement for visits/trips” in managing the risks associated with the visit/trip.

Generally, risk assessments for educational visits will be comprehensive but not complex. However, in most cases technical formulae or expert health and safety advice will not be required. Where such advice is necessary, as in the case of the annual ski trip, the Educational Visits Co-ordinator will refer the risk assessment to the Health and Safety Officer for its approval.

A formal assessment of the risks that might be met on a visit should have the aim of preventing risks or reducing them. Students must not be placed in situations which expose them to an unacceptable level of risk. Safety must always be the prime consideration. If the risks cannot be contained then the visit must not take place.

The college’s risk assessment proforma must be used as a minimum to record the risk assessment. While the risk factors of outdoor and educational visits and travel could never be contained in a single list, the following need to be considered:

The Students

- Age
- Ability and knowledge
- Degree of self-discipline
- State of health
- Disposition to carelessness
- Susceptibility to accidents and ill health
- Learning difficulties and disabilities

The Activity

- Group size
- Supervision
- Controls organised by third parties
- Physical activities (demands)
- Experimentation-demonstrations

The Location

- Indoor/Outdoor

- Time of day
- Environmental and weather conditions
- Space and organisational layout
- Presence of hazards such as water, electricity etc.
- Accessibility
- Political situation

The Journey

- Distance
- Mode of Travel (air,sea,rail,road)
- Route
- Vehicle safety
- Stopping points

The Supervisors/Instructors

- Experience
- Familiarity with location/students/activity
- Age
- Training
- Physical ability
- Skills/Languages

Third Party Agents

- Safety rules and safety policy
- Emergency procedures
- Maintenance of equipment
- Testing of systems and routines
- Accreditations

General Considerations

- What should happen if things go wrong
- Authority to change or cancel activities
- Communications (Sufficient mobile phones for trips should be provided by the College. However, when considering communications, staff should be aware that mobile phones cannot be relied upon as the only means of communication. Buddy systems, whistles, radios and check point systems must be considered)
- The necessity for food, drinks and maps

Copies of the risk assessment should be copied to all teachers/supervisors on visit and discussed as a team activity as part of the planning of the activity.

Any trip should be preceded by completion of a new risk assessment and/or examination of an existing risk assessment, where the trip has previously been undertaken, to ensure the controls defined remain valid.

Risk assessments for all residential visits and for any activities that involve significant risk should be forwarded by the Educational Visits Co-ordinator to the Health and Safety Officer for his consideration at an early stage in the trip planning so that discussions and revisions can take place if necessary. All risk assessments will be retained by the Educational Visits Co-ordinator.

The qualifications of group leaders for any activity should be checked to ensure that they are suitable, sufficient and relevant to lead that activity. At the same time, staff should be aware that they should consider the fitness of staff and students for an activity at the time of the activity and should design/pace the activity accordingly.

Although it will be frequently appropriate, and even necessary, for a member of staff to ask questions of a student/students in order to ascertain whether an activity is viable, no student/students should ever be placed in a position of responsibility for the decision that is eventually made.

All risk assessments should consider whether the environment is suitable for someone to be in the area on their own – which would be very rare – and under what circumstances. The group leader should make this clear to all supervisory staff, who should be aware that injured students, whatever or wherever the activity, should not be left unattended.

Should accidents or incidents happen to students, their emotional state as well as their physical condition should be taken into account both at the time and afterwards, to ensure there is no ongoing trauma.

Changes to risk assessment should not generally be made. In the rare event that it may be necessary and possible (e.g. due to unforeseen circumstances or in an emergency situation where not changing the assessment may increase the risk etc.), then only authorised staff can do this. They must then ensure that they can put sufficient additional controls in place to ensure that the activity is still of low risk. These must be documented at the time and detailed to the Educational Visits Co-ordinator on return to College.

Group leaders should assure supervisory staff that the College will fully support them in cancelling an activity, if in their view the risks are too high at the time. The College will expect staff to err on the side of caution in this decision.

One of the risks that should be taken into account is that students may not always do what has been discussed. It is established in health and safety regulations that lack of experience and immaturity of young people must be taken into account in risk assessments. Staff should be mindful of this.

31. Communication during the trip

- If an emergency occurs on your trip, and if you are unable to contact the College Office (generally before 8 a.m. and after 4.30 p.m. and at weekends), you must contact the Educational Visits Co-ordinator on the emergency number that will be given to you before your departure.
 - If you can contact the College, it is imperative that you liaise directly with the Educational Visits Co-ordinator, and/or a member of the Student Provision or Senior Management Teams, to explain the situation clearly
 - In responding to emergencies, the College will seek, in the first instance, to communicate to the “key contact” detailed in the information given to Reception as part of Stage 4 of the trips planning process. If it is unable to make contact then secondary contact information will be used.

END

Document History: Approved at December Corporation December 2004 Approved at December Corporation 2005
--