

OLDHAM HULME GRAMMAR SCHOOL

SCHOOL VISITS POLICY

This policy is applicable from EYFS through to year 13

Principles

The school recognises the value of the many school visits which take place during the year. It recognises, however, that trips away from school do involve additional risks, and that the planning and organisation of such trips requires considerable effort on the part of the Trip Leader in order to ensure the safety of pupils. Trips and visits may be:

- social and cultural
- educational and academic
- recreational and physically challenging
- Many will involve elements of all three. The following broad policy notes should be read in conjunction with the full school guidelines for school visits.
- In terms of the pricing of school visits staff should aim to be covering the costs of the trip, not generating a surplus.

This policy is seen as a way of helping staff to plan trips with full regard for safety. A school trip is defined as an activity, either educational or otherwise, which takes place off school premises and which is recognised and sanctioned by the school following the completion of a trip application form. It covers day and overnight trips, in and outside the UK, during school term and holiday time. Regular sporting activities that do not count as 'trips' do not require an individual trip application form. They are subject to separate risk assessments.

Advance planning

- Outline approval should be sought from the Deputy Principal for senior school visits and the Head of Nursery and Infants for early years and key stage 1 visits and the Head of Juniors for Juniors visits. Permission should be requested before any other planning takes place.
- The school visit form should be completed and should be passed to the person authorising the visit.
- Dates and times of the proposed trip should be checked with the appropriate person and the details entered in the school diary.
- Transport and other tour arrangements should then be made and confirmed in writing. Transport should be arranged through the Finance office.
- All payments should be made through Parentpay and a 2.5% administration fee should be included in the pricing of the trip.
- Adequate staffing must be planned at this stage which will reflect the nature of the trip and the age of the students. The Education Visits Co-ordinator (Deputy Principal) should be able to satisfy the Principal that all participating teachers have the necessary training and technical skills and that they are conversant with the requirements of the ruling body for a particular sport or activity.
- DBS checks will be carried out on parents and/or volunteers in unsupervised charge of pupils or when accompanying overnight visits.
- A risk assessment must be completed on the school visit form or be attached to the form if provided by an outside venue. See the school's Risk Assessment policy. [Risk Assessment - Guidance - Policy](#)
- School will ensure that vehicles in which children are being transported, and the driver of those vehicles, are adequately insured.
- Insurance must be in place for all school trips. The School provides a policy which covers medical expenses, loss of money or personal possessions, public liability and cancellation or curtailment cover. The Trip Leader may purchase insurance cover as part of a package from the tour operator, but it must be at least as comprehensive as that afforded by the School's policy. If the School's policy is to be used the Finance office must be informed of the dates of the trip and the numbers participating, before the departure date.

Contact with parents

Parents should be sent written details (by letter or email) of the proposed trip which include the following:

- dates, times and proposed itinerary

- cost including details of extra costs, guidance on pocket money etc
- details of staffing
- insurance (especially for foreign trips)
- payment arrangements
- details of rules for conduct of pupils during the trip
- a reply slip that indicates any pre existing medical conditions of pupils (day trips only)
- Parents should be asked to give their consent, either through Parentpay or a reply slip. For any trip involving an overnight stay this should involve consent for members of staff to act *in loco parentis* in terms of agreeing to medical treatment in an emergency. Parents should also provide emergency contact numbers and a medical report detailing any medical conditions, including any known allergies suffered by their sons and daughters.

Further Arrangements

Ideally, for visits involving overnight stays, a parents' evening should be held. But in any case parents should be given details of estimated return time and emergency procedures for informing them of late or early arrivals.

A full list of members of the party must be provided for the school office and the Deputy Principal or Head of Nursery and Infants or Head of Juniors. For trips during school time, a list should also be placed on the common room notice boards or circulated electronically. A responsible person to act as a school contact must be appointed and their contact number should be written on the school visits form. The school office will be the contact point for parents.

Medical

The Trip Leader must be aware of any special medical or dietary requirements of any of the participants. This information is held on the School database and staff must take details with them, seeking advice from the School Nurse, if necessary, before the trip. Medical details should be filled in on the school visit form . If necessary, members of the party should receive appropriate injections and immunisation prior to the trip. Where practical, one member of staff should hold a first aid qualification. Appropriate first aid and emergency equipment should be carried on the trip when travelling abroad.

Risk Assessments

All overnight trips require a written risk assessment to be produced. Day and evening trips also require risk assessments and these should be completed on the school visit form . Risk assessments will identify possible areas of risk and show the ways in which the Trip Organiser has managed the risk. If an incident does occur on a trip, the school will need to provide evidence that risks had been assessed before departure. Trip Organisers will need an overall risk assessment which should include such areas as accommodation, down-time, remote supervision and activities.

Professionally operated licensed activity centres and tour operators specialising in school visits will conduct their own risk assessments. The Trip Leader should ask for copies at the planning stage. Provided that he/she is satisfied, it will meet the requirements of the school, for the activity part 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. All risk assessments will be viewed as dynamic risk assessments and will take account of changes in hazards both prior to embarking on a trip and as a trip progresses. This will include regular review of all changes in weather and travel conditions and arrangements.

During the school visit

It is essential that all pupils on the trip are supervised with the degree of care which might be expected from a responsible parent in similar circumstances.

Emergency procedures

It is the responsibility of the party leader to see that all staff accompanying the visit have copies of relevant documentation on pupils' medical conditions and emergency contact numbers. For day trips, staff should carry the list of SLT contacts for use in an emergency. School issued mobile phones are available from reception for the express purpose for use on school trips. For overnight trips the parents of participating pupils must be asked to provide an emergency

contact telephone number throughout the period of the trip.

Party leaders should also ensure that all staff are aware of the emergency procedures as set out in the guidelines.

After the visit

A brief written report on the trip should be provided for the Deputy Principal - Pastoral or Head of Nursery and Infants or Juniors and if relevant for the newsletter or website.

All paperwork must be returned to the school office for retention or shredding

DETAILED GUIDELINES FOR SCHOOL VISITS

Planning

Once outline approval is obtained and the dates and times agreed, then transport and other tour arrangements should be made. Other than for day trips, it is generally advisable to use a tour operator in which case the company must be ABTA bonded (It is also suggested that if organisers are using an outside agency, in the UK they should check that the outside agency conforms to appropriate safety standards and has liability insurance. Organisers should look for the [LOtC] award (The Council for Learning Outside the Classroom). Trips involving local coach operators should be arranged through the Finance office. All such details should be confirmed in writing.

The staff composition of the visit should be planned to ensure an appropriate level of supervision and expertise. It is desirable that at least one member of the team has experience of school visits and that one is a qualified first aider. For Early Years trips a qualified paediatric first aider should accompany the trip. The staff: pupil ratio will reflect the nature of the trip but may be as low as 1:6 for trips involving potentially hazardous activity, to 1:20 for cultural visits. The following guidelines are recommended

Nursery	1 adult to 2 – 4 pupils
Reception	1 adult to 4 pupils
Years 1 -2	1 adult to 5 – 6 pupils
Year 3	1 adult to 6 pupils
Years 4 – 6	1 adult to 10 – 15 pupils
Years 7+	1 adult to 15 – 20 pupils

If non-teaching staff (eg parents) are to be included in these calculations, then this must be authorised by the Principal or Deputy Principal or the Head of Nursery and Infants or Juniors. At this stage it will be necessary to allocate the division of responsibilities amongst the staff team. (All volunteers on residential trips must be DBS cleared. On day trips volunteers might not be DBS cleared but must be accompanied by teaching staff at all times and should never be left alone with children. All volunteers should have completed the volunteer application form [See Volunteer Policy.])Volunteers Policy, Agreement and Safeguarding

Making arrangements

The following checklist should be used by party leaders to ensure that all the necessary arrangements are in hand. (Not all these points apply to day-trips or to trips held during the school holidays)

- aims and objectives of the visit
- deputy leader appointed
- provisional itinerary drafted
- costing and what is included/excluded. The Trip Leader must budget for all known or anticipated costs before inviting pupils to participate.
- arrangements for collection and accounting of money
- confirmation of dates and times for school calendar
- information to the Catering Manager (for large term-time group visits)
- transport, accommodation and places of interest booked
- confirmation of safety standards of any transport used

- passport application forms completed with certified photographs (Where applicable)
- identity cards arranged (Where applicable)
- spare photographs/copies of passport page filed for emergency use
- insurance details clarified and circulated to parents if relevant
- emergency contacts arranged
- medical information and consent forms circulated to parents (All group leaders must read the names on the list of serious medical conditions, which can be found on the staff portal, under medical conditions. Leaders should tick the relevant box to show that they have read the serious medical conditions list and if they have identified an individual(s), they have discussed the pupil's condition and care plan with the other adults on the trip.)
- Risk assessments to be completed.
- when planning an activity involving caving, climbing, trekking, skiing or watersports the organiser must ensure that the provider holds a licence as required by the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 2004 (for England Scotland and Wales). [OC 331/5 - Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 2004 ... - HSE](#) For foreign providers (eg foreign ski schools) they must hold the equivalent licence. (All group leaders who are organising adventure travel should read bsi booklet "Safer adventures" [Safer adventures: Managing the risks of adventure travel - BSI](#) and follow the guidelines. The guidelines conform to BS8848:2014. The booklet is available from the Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) - Deputy Principal - Pastoral.) All Adventure activities should be identified and risk assessed as part of the visit beforehand. Staff managing or leading activities must not decide to add such activities during the trip.
- Water leisure activities and hotel swimming pools require parental consent.

Contact with parents

Parents should be sent written information about the proposed trip which includes the following details

- dates, times and proposed itinerary. This should include precise departure arrangements and provision for notifying parents of any alteration to scheduled return times. Details of flight numbers, channel crossing numbers etc. should be provided.
- cost including details of extras, guidance on pocket money etc. If staff are to provide a bank then accounting procedures must be explained. If pupils are to bring their own pocket money then advice should be given about any necessary arrangements for currency exchange and arrangements for keeping pocket money safe. Parents should be advised not to provide pupils with excessive sums of pocket money since this can be divisive and can create security and insurance problems.
- details of staffing including a member of staff to contact about concerns over pupils' medical conditions. For trips involving overnight stays, parents need emergency contact numbers of staff on the trip and a responsible adult to act as emergency contact at home.
- where relevant, information about insurance, preferably a copy of the policy summary. NB it is unwise for a member of staff to make his/her own summary. This is not usually necessary for term-time day excursions. For foreign trips, completion of a Global Health insurance Card [Apply for a free UK Global Health Insurance Card \(GHIC\) - NHS](#) should be considered. Whilst it is necessary to ensure that insurance for foreign trips contains medical cover, public liability etc. it should be pointed out to parents that most policies carry an excess and that in any case losses through theft can only be recovered if they are reported to the local police and appropriate documentation is completed at the time. Parents and pupils should be made aware that no insurer can be expected to indemnify parents against pupils simply leaving something behind; pupils should be told not to bring valuables with them. Parents may be advised to check household insurance for cover of items such as contact lenses, dental appliances etc.
- payment arrangements including dates of instalments (if relevant) and terms of cancellation. All payments must go through the Finance office. Parents should be made aware that any deposit paid for a trip may be non-refundable.
- details of rules for conduct of pupils during the trip
- a consent form. For any trip involving an overnight stay this should involve consent for members of staff to act *in loco parentis* in terms of agreeing to medical treatment in an emergency. Parents should also provide emergency contact numbers and a medical report detailing any medical conditions, including any known allergies suffered by their sons and daughters.

- depending on the nature of the trip, some guidance about clothing, especially if safety is an issue (eg skiing holidays, fell walking etc)

General Rules

This list is not exhaustive but is merely a suggested checklist. General rules should include

- the importance of good conduct and courtesy at all times to all, including other pupils
- guidance on alcohol and smoking. Pupils should not be permitted to smoke at any time and no one should smoke in hotel bedrooms. If sixth formers are to be permitted to consume alcohol, in accordance with the law of the country to be visited, then written permission from parents must be obtained and clear guidelines established to avoid abuse. In any event pupils should be forbidden to have alcohol in their rooms
- unnecessary valuables (eg jewellery other than a watch) should not be brought on a school trip
- reminders about litter
- reminders about road traffic especially if abroad
- information and cautions about the countryside and its wildlife
- any other specific health and safety problems such as mosquitoes, sunburn, heat stroke, dehydration, altitude sickness, and storm drill
- forbidding the use of chewing gum on the coach and deterring its use at any time
- forbidding the purchase of knives, lighters and other dangerous or restricted items

Minibus Travel

Specific guidelines for self-drive minibus travel is prescribed in separate health and safety guidelines and these minibus guidelines should be consulted.

Coach Travel

The relationship between teaching staff and coach drivers can be difficult. Both are accustomed to taking command on excursions. Potential conflict can often be avoided by making contact with the coach operator, and preferably the driver(s) in advance. This is also helpful in dealing with such matters as the supply and sale of on-board drinks and snacks. Many drivers regard this as one of their perks. Conflict can be avoided by sorting out such matters with the coach operator well in advance. Before departure the driver may go through the emergency procedures himself but this may also be done by the party leader who should also set out their rules for the use of the coach. The party leader's briefing should include:

- instructions that pupils should remain seated with their seat belts on
- the location of emergency exits and insistence that access to them is clear at all times
- the safe stowage of luggage
- the on-board WC (if fitted) is for emergency use only; instructions for use
- the arrangements for collection of litter, especially canned drinks
- the use of mobile phones to listen to music should be limited to those with headphones
- a reminder that chewing gum is forbidden on the coach
- the importance of care at service stations and attention to traffic
- that coach hot drinks machines produce scalding hot water (it is unwise to permit pupils to use them)
- a warning about sudden noises, flash photography or other activities which might distract the drivers.

Nursery and Infants staff must ensure they have a first aid kit, spare clothes and spilt bodily fluids kit with them.

Travel by ferry

Before boarding the ferry pupils should be divided into small groups, each in the charge of a responsible adult. They should be given clear instructions about where on the boat they are permitted to go. It is inadvisable to permit younger pupils on deck without the presence of a member of staff. Pupils should be warned about slippery decks and told not to run. Meeting points and times should be arranged and pupils should be told where duty staff can be found. Most ferries have a pa system and pupils should be told to report to the purser's office in an emergency.

Travel by air

When travelling by air it is important to ensure that other passengers are not disturbed by the party and that pupils are clear about meeting places before and after customs, immigration etc. On long-haul flights ensure that pupils do not become dehydrated. It is advisable for the party leader to make him/herself known to cabin staff and ask to be informed of any problems with the group. It is good practice for a member of staff to seek to reassure any pupil who has not flown before.

At the hotel or hostel

Pupils should be briefed as soon as possible after arrival. This should include

- rules on hygiene and safety (eg drinking water, use of balconies etc)
- emergency procedures (eg fire escapes)
- care of personal belongings
- rooms, keys, access etc
- medical matters and first aid
- list of sleeping arrangements including staff rooms for emergency contact
- instructions not to congregate in bedrooms or corridors
- warnings about hotel equipment, furnishings etc.
- reminder about courtesy to other guests
- reminder about courtesy to hotel/accommodation staff (it is advisable to ask pupils to address any complaints to staff organisers and not to hotel or coach staff directly)
- warning that floors of shower-rooms or bathrooms may become dangerously slippery when wet
- quiet hours established and adhered to
- meal arrangements, including these days, how to behave if there is formal dining

Emergency procedures

It is the responsibility of the party leader to see that all staff accompanying the visit have copies of relevant documentation on pupils' medical conditions and emergency contact numbers. They should also ensure that all staff are aware of the following

- all incidents including reported sickness should be recorded in an incident book.
- a member of staff should be present if the pupil is to be seen by a third party (doctor, dentist, police officer etc). Notes should be taken if appropriate
- serious incidents should be reported to the parents and the Principal as soon as practicable. Staff should be aware of the rules regarding reportable injuries for the country visited.
- injured or sick pupils must not be left behind at the hotel, or in the resort, without the presence of a responsible adult. On foreign trips it may be necessary for a member of staff to remain behind until a pupil's parent or guardian arrives

Serious incidents

Details of the school's action plan for major incidents will be documented elsewhere but in the case of a serious incident on a school trip the following points should be noted

- every effort should be made to contact and brief the Principal or the emergency contact or the school office
- a responsible person should take charge of all press enquiries until the Principal or a member of senior management can be reached.
- members of staff supervising the trip should take measures to minimise the risk of miscommunication, rumour or the spread of panic by the misuse of mobile technology by the pupils.
- no member of staff should admit liability.

Evaluating trips

There should be a clear process for evaluating all visits once they have been concluded from the planning through to the visit itself. School will keep a record of any incidents, accidents and near misses. This will help with future planning and enable group leaders to learn from any incidents that took place.

Educational visits coordinator

School has a trained educational visits coordinator. This is currently the Deputy Principal. The coordinator will help colleagues in school to assess and manage risks.

School Visits policy reviewed: March 2023

Next Review Due: March 2025