

Staff Lead: Director of Resources
Governors Committee: P&R
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School Visits Policy

Rationale:

The school recognises the importance of school visits to enhance the academic and social and personal development curriculum. The vast majority of school visits take place with very little risk and are completed successfully. However the potential for mishap is obviously significant and potentially fatal. This policy is designed to guide the trip leader through the process of running a successful and safe school visit.

Procedure:

- School Visits:** This procedure applies to all school visits whether they take place in school hours or not. School visits includes every offsite activity such as fieldwork, school trips and exchanges. Sport fixtures which are beyond the normal after school times should also be considered as school visits. Work experience is managed by Mrs J Lawrence and Mrs L Dimond and covered by Education Business Partnership South West guidelines.
- Risk Assessment:** Every trip must have been fully assessed for risk and appropriate actions set in place by the group leader, all questions relating to risk assessment must be referred to the Health and Safety Officer. It may be necessary for staff to enter their trips on the EVOLVE website, which can be done under the guidance of Mandy Dixon in the Finance Office
- Approval and Application:** Before any school trip can take place approval must be gained from the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), at least 3 months in advance. The Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher has discretion to approve visits with a shorter timescale in exceptional circumstances. For all residential visits Governing Body and Local Authority approval is needed. All this takes time so application forms; risk assessments and a draft copy of your letter to parents must be completed at least three months before any visit can take place. The application form and risk assessment help the Leadership Group to establish that the trip will be well run and in line with guidance from the Local Authority (LA) and Department for Education (DFE). All the forms which are needed can be found on Staff Shared/Extra Curricular/Trips/Various Forms.
- Back at School:** School visits must take account of what happens at school when they are taking place. A maximum of 2 teachers are allowed on most trips, although there are exceptions for trips such as longer residential trips. Cover work should be left by absent teachers (see cover work guidelines). All staff will be informed of who will be on the trip using the following procedure... A list of names of those involved should be posted on the staff notice board in the staff room as well as the school reception. In addition, this information can be emailed to all staff. Please note the Attendance Officer must be informed of any school trips and all students participating to ensure accuracy of the registers. An accurate registration of both students and staff must take place and be handed into the school office before leaving the school site. If you are scheduled to return after 5pm you must take contact details of the duty member of SLT to enable you to inform them of your safe return. If there is any concern this person must contact The Educational Visits Coordinator or the Head Teacher.

5. **Helping your application:** Priority will be given where a trip is tightly linked to the curriculum. Where departments can arrange their own cover this will help an application.
6. **Charging:** When visits take place in the school day you are only permitted to ask for voluntary contributions towards the cost of the visit. However, your letter can also state that if not enough contributions are received it is likely that a trip will not run. Please contact the Finance Office for an appropriate letter.

When visits take place after school, in holiday time or at weekends a charge can be made. The finance office will not pay out deposits for organised trips unless the finance is in place to cover the costs. Parents must be informed in writing when non-refundable deposits are being paid on their behalf.

7. **Adult ratios:**
 - Adult to pupil ratios must be 1:15 for a normal day visit. However, if the destination has any potential hazards such as water, cliff faces, busy roads etc. then there should be a minimum of two adults. Please refer to item no 13.
 - Camping and overnight visits, hazardous visits and visits abroad must have a ratio of 1:10.
 - If the party is mixed sex then there must be adults of each sex supervising the visit (an exception to this is where post 16 visits are supervised by single sex staff and parents and the Chair of Governors have been notified and written consent received authorising the visit from parents / guardians). If non-teaching staff are used they must have DBS clearance, be approved by SLT and sign a proforma confirming their acceptance of the situation. All adults, including teachers should have had a DBS check. Invigilators may be used in this role.
8. **Parental letter:** Sample letters in the house style are to be found on Staff Shared/Extra Curricular/Trips/Letters. Further to that which is stated above the letter should include:
 - Where you are going and the reasons for the visit
 - An outline of the activities which students will engage in
 - Dates and times of the trip with particular attention to return time and from where students can be collected.
 - Behavioural expectations during the trip: students must be reminded that they are ambassadors for the school at all times. Students behaviour will be monitored in the period leading up to the trip
 - Staffing ratios. On mixed trips inform parents of the staff who will be accompanying the visit and specify whether or not students will be unsupervised at any time. No student will be left unsupervised for longer than a period of three hours, and all students and staff will receive contact details in case of emergency
 - Information about any centre you may be visiting and how it has been approved for school visits.
 - Clothing required for the visit.
 - Money required for the visit.
 - That we take no responsibility for electrical goods such as an MP3 players and mobile telephones.
 - Cost/Voluntary contribution: see point 6 above.
 - Parental consent in the form of a simple tick box is required.
 - A designated member of staff on each trip will be responsible for copying each child's parental consent form (held in the Finance Office) to take on the trip and also taking any medication for students.
 - Parental consent needs to be in writing for those who are visiting a foreign country to consume moderate amounts of alcohol, when appropriate.

9. **Transport:** Along with water this is the most dangerous aspect of any trip. Only accredited coach companies should be used. Private cars should not be used for school visits unless they have business use insurance and authorisation of the Headteacher. For the use of school mini-buses see below.
10. **Use of minibuses:** This is a very dangerous aspect of our work. The most important thing to realise is that as the driver of the vehicle you are responsible for it. Only staff who have been approved to drive the minibuses may do so. You will be responsible for completing a basic vehicle check before you use it, per the checklist in each mini bus folder. You must complete a basic vehicle check before you use it, see attached checklist. Mini bus use will be charged at 50p per mile for the first 100 miles and 35p per mile after that.
11. **First Aid:** First Aid provision is to be subject to the overall risk assessment process for the trip / visit. Where a First Aider is present, this person should take responsibility for the First Aid kit. First Aid kits are available from the General Office by prior arrangement.
12. **Accident/Incident reporting:** In the unfortunate event of something going wrong you must take time to write down what led up to the incident (please take Accident Report form with you), when and how the incident happened and what was done in the aftermath. Upon your return to school please hand the completed form to Educational Visits Coordinator. (Mandy Dixon in the Finance Office).
13. **Hazardous activities** include the following: Airborne activities, angling, camping, caving and mine exploration, coastering, conservation activities, cycling, expeditions, field study courses in remote locations, ghyll scrambling, horse riding and pony trekking, mountain and fell walking, night walking, orienteering, rock climbing and abseiling, skiing, visits abroad and all water sports. This is not an exhaustive list. Please check with Educational Visits Coordinator.
14. **Insurance:** This has been arranged to cover every school visit. A cost of 50p per student should be built into your trip costs. This covers every trip and every activity except winter sports where you will need to speak to the Finance office for further information. It includes cancellation, medical expenses, personal accident, personal effects and legal liability.
15. **Emergency procedures:**
 - Identify your named contact (Duty member of SLT) at school with their mobile telephone number. Take the School Trip phone with you this contain SLT contact numbers.
 - Before any activity begins make sure everyone knows the pre-arranged meeting point for anyone who becomes separated from the group.
 - Make sure you have a contingency plan for early return.
 - There must be staff briefing at the beginning of each day to confirm arrangements for the day, and clarify staff roles and expectations, ensuring all staff are clear about their duties. The group leader should keep a written itinerary that specifies staff duties and responsibilities for the day
 - Designate one person to deal with the emergency. It may be the group leader or another member of staff. School accident forms should be taken and used in the event of an accident
 - Note:
 - Name of victim
 - Nature, date and time of incident.
 - Details of injuries or fatalities.
 - Action taken so far.
 - Your contact phone number
 - Move the rest of the group away from any incident to a safe location as soon as is practical. Remember you have a responsibility to the whole group.

- Inform your named contact at school as soon as you have done the above.
 - Do **not** talk to the press. This includes students.
 - Brief the rest of the group on what has happened, why it has happened and what you are doing about it. Tell the group **not** to talk to the press.(as above)
16. **Group management:** Divide students into small groups for registration. Each adult is then responsible for registering a group to ensure everyone is present at any time. Registration of the groups should be completed every three hours. Within the groups of 15 the adult could further delegate the counting of a small number of pupils, for instance three students could count another four students. So that the group leader has only to look for these three pupils to do a quick check.
17. **Student guidelines:** You must give students clear written guidelines about high levels of expectation regarding their behaviour, stressing that they are ambassadors for the school. These should be signed in agreement of by both the students and their parents. This applies to behaviour on coaches and minibuses, where they can and cannot go, about how to interact with members of the public and, if they are to work without adult presence, about where and when to meet their responsible adult. KS4 pupils should never be unaccompanied for more than one hour at a time and only then when in groups of at least four. KS3 pupils must never be unaccompanied. There may be exceptions to this when at enclosed tourist attractions such as Theme Parks or Zoos. In these circumstances as long as there is single known contact point which is always occupied by a member of staff pupils may go for up to three hours without being checked upon. Always provide students with the mobile phone number of their staff leader, so that they are always contactable.
18. **Alcohol.** Staff are allowed to drink alcohol as part of the social and cultural experience of the visit. If students are visiting a foreign country, they may drink a moderate amount of alcohol with their parents' written consent, as this may be part of the cultural experience of the visit. Students who are 18 years or over will be allowed to drink alcohol in moderation and take full responsibility for their actions and behaviour. Staff have a working responsibility which on residential trips lasts for 24 hours a day. In the event of mishap you will be accountable for your actions. Staff need to be allocated "duty times" when acting in a supervisory capacity, in a pro-active way. No staff should drink alcohol during this "duty period" or for a maximum of eight hours before the duty commences. No staff should drink alcohol 8 hours before driving the minibus or any other vehicle.
19. **Roles and Responsibilities:** Prior to the visit there should be a staff meeting for staff to be given very clear guidelines in writing and this should form part of the pre-visit meetings about their roles and responsibilities on the trip, i.e. with regard to behaviour, alcohol consumption. (Please refer to the Child Protection guidelines which staff must read before the visit and sign). This meeting must have a register taken to confirm attendance.
20. **Website:** All trips should contribute a brief update for the website and photos if possible. These should be sent to library@melkshamoak.wilts.sch.uk

Melksham Oak Community School Visits Checklist

A minimum of 1 month before you intend to go you must;

1. Read Visits Policy	
2. Complete appropriate school visit form (day trip, residential/abroad) Trips cannot go on the school calendar until this is done	
3. Complete risk assessment	
4. Complete financial planning form	
5. Send all three forms and a copy of your proposed letter to parents to PBO	
6. Receive confirmation or otherwise	
7. Make bookings (inc mini bus, first aid kit, mobile phone)	
8. Gain parental consent	
9. Complete emergency contact information	
10. Inform canteen of numbers you will be taking at least seven days prior to going. Arrange for collection of free school meals.	
11. Inform staff at briefing the week before you go and put a list of names of who is going on the trip on the staff room notice board	

On the day

- 1. Place a register in the school reception of the staff and students on the visit, and leave us your mobile contact number.**
- 2. Check that you have with you; first aid kit, mobile phone.**
- 3. Inform Duty SLT member you are back safe and sound.**