



## **SCHOOL JOURNEYS**

### **Aims:**

Visits off site are an essential and integral part of Duke of Kent School life. They expand and enrich the educational experience we offer. Members of staff are encouraged to initiate or take a supporting role in visits whenever appropriate. One staff member, however, must take overall responsibility for the organisation and running of any visit (the 'trip organiser'). This policy aims to communicate the ways in which educational visits can be conducted as safely and efficiently as possible.

### **General Principles:**

Duke of Kent School places the highest priority on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of its pupils. All staff must consider pupil safety and welfare in planning and carrying out any activity or educational visit. Staff should remember that they have a duty to look after pupils in the same way that a 'prudent parent' would do so.

The aim of the assessment process is to identify the anticipated risks, assess them and record any significant findings. Common sense should be used in assessing and managing the risks of any activity. Health and Safety measures should always be proportionate to the risks of any activity. Sensible management of risk does not mean that a risk assessment is carried out for every activity.

Trip organisers and activity leaders must be competent for the activities they are leading. Staff will be given the training they need so they can keep themselves and children safe and manage risks effectively. Where appropriate, leaders with specialist skills and qualifications will lead adventurous activities.

Any queries or concerns regarding educational visits should be referred to a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

### **Relevant Documents**

This policy has been written with reference to the following documents; these contain useful information for staff planning, risk assessing and accompanying educational visits.

Department for Education: Health and Safety: Responsibilities and duties for schools (Nov 2018)  
Health and Safety Executive: School Trips and Outdoor Learning Activities (June 2011)  
Department for Education: Advice on Driving School Minibuses: for school employers, Head teachers and other school staff (September 2013)

GOV.UK: Health and Safety on educational visits (Nov 2018)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-and-safety-on-educational-visits/health-and-safety-on-educational-visits>

Health and Safety Executive: Frequently Asked Questions (Education)

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/services/education/faqs.htm#school-trips>

ROSPA: Minibus safety. A code of Practice

## Planning

- 1.1 It is crucial to the safety and well-being of pupils and to the efficient running of the School that all such visits be properly planned and notified and requests to run off-site visits should in the first instance be put in writing to the Head. While some visits can only be planned at short notice and while it is not the intention to stifle spontaneity, planning in advance wherever possible allows staff, parents and pupils alike to make suitable advance arrangements. To ensure entry in the School Calendar, trips should be planned at least a term in advance.
- 1.2 Appropriate Risk Assessments are undertaken for all educational visits off site other than routine trips (e.g. sport fixtures). Risk Assessment Forms are kept in the Staff Room and should be left at the Office to be signed off by the Head or Deputy Head, (or another member of the Senior Leadership Team delegated by the Head) in advance of all trips.
- 1.3 A full and accurate list of children/staff/other adults going on the visit must be included in the Risk Assessment or notified to the School Office before departure. The trip organiser is responsible for communicating to the Office any changes, for example if a pupil is off sick on the day of the trip.
- 1.4 Ensure that a suitable emergency response plan is in place to cover what to do should there be an incident away from School. (Please see Major Incidents Policy and Disaster Recovery Plan).

## Parental Consent

- 2.1 Written consent from parents is not required for pupils taking part in the majority of off-site activities organised by the School providing these take place during school hours and are a normal part of the pupil's education at the School.  
Upon pupil enrolment, parents will be invited to sign a consent form to cover the following events;
  - 2.1.1. all visits (including residential trips) which take place during the holidays, weekend or outside the school day.
  - 2.1.2. adventure activities at any time.
  - 2.1.3. off-site sporting fixtures outside the school day.
  - 2.1.4. all off-site activities for nursery pupils.

In any event, the School will tell parents about each visit via specific communication or more generally through the termly calendar and of any extra safety measures required. This will give parents the opportunity to withdraw their child from any particular visit or activity.

- 2.2 For larger scale trips (e.g. a study trip abroad or a ski trip), parent briefing meetings are essential.
- 2.3 If the cost of any visit is to be quoted in correspondence with parents, staff must check costings with the Finance Bursar first.
- 2.4 Parents are responsible for ensuring that the School Nurse and School Office have access to accurate medical information and contact details for all pupils.

## Safety

- 3.1 This is of paramount importance throughout the planning and carrying out of any visit. Where appropriate, after consultation with the Head, it may be necessary to carry out a risk assessment in the form of a 'dry run' or reconnaissance visit.
- 3.2 Members of staff are required to apply sensible judgments to all safety issues, but they are not expected to be able to anticipate everything that could possibly go wrong on a visit involving large numbers of children. They should apply standards which might reasonably be used by 'a prudent parent', erring on the side of caution when in doubt and applying many of the same principles used in teaching and controlling a class.
- 3.3 Staff should pay particular attention to the following:
- A proper staff/pupil ratio should be established for visits. In general 1:10 is considered suitable but the specific nature of the visit and the maturity of the pupils, should be taken into account and more adults taken where appropriate. With regard to sports fixtures it is considered that one coach per team is sufficient. Pre-Prep and EYFS supervision ratios will be determined during the risk assessment process.
  - Particular care should be taken to identify children with actual or potential health problems and to ensure that sensible precautions have been taken. The trip organiser is responsible for checking his or her list of pupils with the Medical Room Supervisor to identify any potential or anticipated health issues and for ensuring that arrangements have been made to cater for children suffering from known medical conditions.
  - The trip organiser should ensure that a First Aid box is taken on the visit and consideration should be given to the accessibility of further medical assistance should the need arise. For visits involving overnight stays, a member of staff should be assigned to looking after any medical problems which may arise.
  - Children should not be sent, especially under the age of 10, to Public Conveniences by themselves. They should go in groups of three or more with an adult close by.
  - A mobile phone or phones must be taken on any visit off-site. The School phone is available from the Office for this purpose. If a personal phone is taken, the Office must be given the number in advance and the member of staff must adhere to the Safeguarding Policy relating to the use of personal mobile phones.
  - The trip organiser must inform parents of any injury or illness that has taken place on an educational visit; any injury or illness of pupils or staff must also be reported by the trip organiser to the Operations Bursar on return to the School.
  - The School has a supply of booster seats which should be used only in exceptional circumstances as required for car visits. Any child who is older than three and younger than twelve, BUT smaller than 4'5" or 135cms must use a child seat or booster seat to travel in a car. However, these rules do not apply to minibuses which are the preferred mode of transport.
  - In the case of 'risky activities' such as climbing, caving, trekking or water sports, the school only works with accredited/licenced organisations e.g. LOtC Quality Award/AALA/AAIAC. The Council for Learning Outside the Classroom awards the Learning Outside the Classroom Quality badge to organisations who meet nationally recognised standards and the School will look to work with those organisations holding this quality badge. **Where organisations are providing activities not covered under The Council for Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) quality badge, the trip organiser must check that they are an appropriate organisation to use. This would include checking insurances, whether they are meeting their legal requirements, verification of health and safety policies and emergency procedures, risk assessments and control measures, use of vehicles, staff competence, safeguarding procedures and policies, any sub-contractor arrangements and licences held where needed.**
- In the case of trips abroad, the School works with renowned providers of School tours who provide support and advice on Health and Safety and Management of Risk. These

organisations often provide pre-trip visits for accompanying teachers; these are attended wherever possible. Advice and guidance from the Foreign & Commonwealth Office is sought as necessary.

### **Behaviour of Pupils**

- 4.1 The aim in this regard is for excellence at all times. In terms of good citizenship for the children, safety for all involved and for the general good reputation of the School, high standards should be set at all times and behaviour should be closely monitored.
- 4.2 The trip organiser should consult with the relevant Head of Section to ensure that any known issues connected with the conduct of, or relationships between pupils are considered from the planning stage and appropriately managed.
- 4.3 Codes of conduct may be used for residential trips; these must be agreed in advance by the trip organiser and the relevant Head of Section and sent to parents to be signed.
- 4.3 Children should be reminded where appropriate to thank drivers/officials and anyone who has contributed to their enjoyment of the visit.
- 4.4 If children do on occasion misbehave in public, attention should be drawn to their behaviour in a firm but quiet fashion and any appropriate sanctions be applied on returning to School (for a day trip). Where appropriate apologies should be made immediately. The Head of Section should receive a full report of any behaviour lower than the standard expected.
- 4.5 Misbehaviour on a residential trip may result in the pupil being returned from the trip. The trip organiser should consult with the Head or Deputy Head before taking action. Parents must be informed as soon as a decision to return a pupil from a trip has been taken.
- 4.6 The School Code of Conduct applies at all times on educational trips and visits.

### **Pupils Missing on Outings/Expeditions**

- 5.1 Staff arranging outings should consider the possibility of a child going missing while assessing risk for their trip and should take necessary measures to reduce the risk as far as possible; this includes ensuring that staff: pupil ratios are appropriate to the activity and the group.
- 5.2 The following procedures are to be followed:
  - Where coach or minibus travel forms part of the outing, pupils will be counted onto the vehicle with a double-check register taken prior to any departure; pupils need to be made aware of the importance of answering clearly to their names when registered.
  - Pupils must be informed by the Group Leader of the rules to follow during the outing including how to avoid getting lost and what to do in the event of becoming detached from their group.
  - Each adult on the outing must have a full group list as well as a clear understanding of any responsibility they have for sub-groups of pupils.
  - In the event that a pupil is identified as missing, the Group Leader will ascertain the pupil's last known whereabouts report the absence to the venue and to the School Office.
  - The School Office will open a Missing Pupil sheet and log any actions taken.
  - The trip organiser will notify the Police and their advice will be followed.
  - The School Office will report the situation to the Deputy Head (or in his absence Head of Section) who will notify the parents and keep them advised.
  - Where possible a member of staff will remain at the venue and assist with the search at the end of the outing.
  - The Deputy Head will, in consultation with the trip organiser, investigate the incident and present the Head with a report, to be kept on the pupil's file.

## **Practical Details of Trip Organising for Staff:**

- 6.1 Reserving minibuses or ordering coaches should be done through the School Office by email as soon as a suitable date has been agreed and at least one week in advance. Do not assume a minibus has been reserved until confirmed by the School Office by email.
- 6.2 Minibuses should be used wherever possible to keep costs down, but members of staff should not put themselves in a position where, for example, they may have to drive long distances at the end of a long day. As a guideline, journeys of more than an hour may come into this category.
- 6.3 Large coaches should not be expected to come into the Top Car Park. Instead, children should be led down the drive to allow easier access and departure.
- 6.4 **Staff Absence/Lesson Setting:** the member of Staff in charge of the visit should ensure that all classes and other duties will be adequately covered. The Deputy Head should therefore be consulted at an early stage of planning. Notice of the visit should be published as soon as possible, including a list of those taking part.
- 6.5 **Organising Meals:** in general, please allow at least one week's notice to our catering staff for packed lunch and similar requirements. Numbers missing any set meals should also be notified. More extensive catering requirements should be discussed with the Catering Manager at an early stage of planning. Appropriate request forms, available from the Staff Room, should be used.
- 6.6 **Returning from Visits:** an orderly atmosphere must be maintained and minimum disturbance to the rest of the School should take place. Should the visit run significantly past the proposed return time, please telephone the School so that parents can be kept informed. Contact with a responsible adult at the School must therefore be arranged in advance where appropriate for outings taking place outside of Extended Day hours.
- 6.7 **Photography:** Please consider taking a photographic record of the visit, transferring photographs to the shared area of the Staff Server.
- 6.8 Food should not generally be consumed on coaches or on School minibuses. A venue to consume packed lunches should be decided upon in advance where possible and access to toilets and provision of bin bags for litter should be made. Coaches and minibuses should be checked at the end of each visit by the trip organiser to ensure cleanliness for the next users.
- 6.9 At the end of the visit, trip organisers will evaluate the visit and a record of any incidents/accidents/near misses should be given to the Operations Bursar to see whether planning was effective and learn from any incidents which took place.

## **Minibus Usage**

- 7.1 Children from all year groups may use the School minibuses. No pupil must be allowed onto a bus without a member of staff.
- 7.2 It is the responsibility of the driver to ensure that, at the beginning of each journey, all passengers are wearing seatbelts and that the doors are secure. A visual check of tyres and lights is advised.
- 7.3 Children should remain seated with seat belts fastened throughout the journey. There are fourteen/sixteen passenger spaces on each bus depending upon which bus is being used. When possible, children should sit in the back of the bus.
- 7.4 No food or drink, except when authorized due to necessity, should be carried on board.
- 7.5 There is a First Aid Kit in each bus.
- 7.6 Any member of staff wishing to take out a bus (other than for fixtures or events on the school calendar) must have permission from the Head or the duty member of staff if the Head is not available. Buses are only available for school business.
- 7.7 New members of staff wishing to drive a school bus must check with the Operations Bursar to confirm insurance cover and to be briefed on use and receive appropriate minibus training from the School's external Assessor.

- 7.8 All buses must be booked through the School Office one week in advance.
- 7.9 The school will, from time to time, provide refresher minibus training courses for all members of staff driving School minibuses.
- 7.10 Insurance and breakdown details, and a sheet reminding drivers of what to do in the event of an emergency, are retained in the cab of each minibus.
- 7.11 All drivers who have passed their normal driving test after 31 December 1996 may be required to take an additional minibus test before they can drive a school minibus in order to have their driving licence accredited. Clarification should be sought from the Operations Bursar. Those who passed their test before this date do not.
- 7.12 Members of staff are responsible for bringing to the attention of the Operations Bursary Department any penalties received on their licence.
- 7.13 Attention is drawn to the speed limits for minibuses, which are NOT the same as for cars.
- 7.14 Any member of staff with practical queries about driving the minibuses should consult the Operations Bursar.
- 7.15 Drivers of minibuses are responsible for leaving them in a clean condition and for reporting to the Operations Bursar any concerns whatsoever about the minibuses.

**Person Responsible for this policy: The Operations Bursar**

**Reviewed: September 2019**

**Next Review: September 2020**