



St John's
School Billericay

Safety on School Trips Policy

Date: September 2024
Those Responsible: Mr J Summers - Health & Safety Officer

To be reviewed: August 2025

Safety on School Trips

Reference: This policy has been written with the DfES document 'Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits' as guidance.

Education should provide children with training to deal with the hazards which are sure to arise in later life and it should also develop the natural instinct to venture and explore along with the resulting growth of independence. There is no doubt whatever that school visits and journeys are an essential part of the school curriculum and a valuable part of the education provided for our children. Properly planned and organised trips out-of-school are a marvelous opportunity to add an extra dimension to children's understanding of their environment. Pupils taken outside school premises have the opportunity to return with new skills, experience and enthusiasm to add extra purpose and relevance to classroom activities.

AIMS

The three aims of a school journey are:

1. To attempt to educate in the child a love of all that the city, town or countryside can offer, whether ancient or modern, and to stimulate the mental, spiritual and physical development of the child.
2. To learn how to spend a planned holiday intelligently and happily, and to share with others a community life.
3. To acquire resourcefulness, initiative and self-reliance and to cultivate good fellowship and unselfishness.

LEGAL RESPONSIBILITY

Teachers undertake school journeys on a voluntary basis but they are responsible for all pupils in their care in the normal way throughout the entire journey.

The teacher must be careful, not careless, or, as is known in legal terms, negligent. Negligence at law means either doing something that the reasonable man in the same circumstances would not do or failing to do what the reasonable man would have done. **The law expects nobody to do the impossible.**

The leader's role is crucial, calling for firm relationships with pupils and colleagues, organisational skills and, in certain cases, relevant training and qualifications.

A teacher's duty of care on a school trip is not confined to normal school hours. It lasts throughout the time away and can be put aside only at times when responsibility for the care of children can be reasonably delegated to some other person or persons.

PREPARATION

Successful safety planning depends to a large degree on the leader being able to foresee all the dangers and difficulties which could arise, and making plans to avoid them. Proper planning will also enhance the educational value of the trip and ensure its aims are achieved.

A formal assessment of the risks that might be met on a visit should have the aim of preventing the risks or reducing them. Pupils must not be placed in a situation which expose them to an unacceptable level of risk.

A risk assessment must be completed for every trip undertaken. This should also include any insurance details that may supplement or replace the normal cover of the school.

SUPERVISION

On all school trips, there must be a complete programme of supervision.

Relevant factors to consider when deciding on supervision levels will include:

- The age, sex and numbers of children
- Their previous experience away from school or home
- Their previous experience of specific activities included in the schedule
- Their general capabilities, responsibility and discipline
- The time of year
- The location and travel arrangements
- The experience and quality of the supervisory staff available.

In general, the Adult: Student ratio should be:

1:10 for travel only. This assumes the destination has qualified adults on site.

1:8 for trips where our adults will be the only adults in charge for the duration.

However, there must be a minimum of 2 adults in any case, and at least one adult must be female if there are any female students going on the trip. Also, every adult must either be a school employee or the details of the staffing must have been discussed and approved by Bea Raynard or Amy Fleming.

Supervision works best when:

- The aims and objectives of the visit are clearly understood by all involved
- The visit and activities have been carefully and thoughtfully planned
- Participants have been involved in the overall plan, including identifying potential hazards
- Clear guidelines for standards of behaviour have been agreed.

The supervisor, who will normally be a teacher:

- Is responsible for the safety of his/her group at all times
- Will have a clear plan of the activity to be undertaken and its educational objectives
- Needs to anticipate potential hazards and act where necessary
- Needs to continuously monitor the appropriateness of the activity, the physical and mental conditions of the group members and the suitability of the prevailing conditions
- Needs to exercise appropriate control of the group
- Will have a clear understanding of the emergency procedures and be equipped to carry them out

- Must have a list of students with medical problems
- Must carry either the school mobile phone or a mobile phone whose number has been given to the school.

Whatever the length and nature of the visit, regular head-counting of pupils should take place, particularly before leaving any venue. All supervisors should carry a list of all pupils and adults involved in the visit at all times. Pupils, particularly in Pre Reception to Form 1, should be easily identifiable, especially if the visit is to a densely populated area. Brightly coloured caps, T-shirts or a school uniform can help identify group members more easily. Pupils should not wear name badges (because of the risk of the child being approached and named by a stranger).

At least one mobile phone must be carried on all school trips, so that the School Office can be contacted in the event of an emergency.

INFORMATION TO PARENTS

For all trips the school will require the written consent of parents and in order to give consent, the parents must have all the necessary information. The giving of information must be reciprocal. Teachers will need a fair amount of information from parents. Details, for example, about health and fitness are vital. The passing of information should be in writing. Parents must give clear consent for a student to participate.

It is necessary to obtain written parental consent to any necessary medical treatment for children under 16 because, in a sudden emergency, there will not be time to contact parents.

In the vast majority of cases, parents will have no reservations about school trips and will give unconditional consent to their child going on the activity. If consent is refused, or is made conditional in a way that would impose an unnecessary burden on staff, or would create an unacceptable risk to the rest of the group, then the child concerned should not be taken. The pupils' safety and the safety of the pupil group is the paramount consideration.

FIRST AID

This policy is concerned with accident prevention but, when an accident does occur, teachers should be able to care for the victim effectively. First aid means the immediate and sustained care given to the victim of an accident or sudden illness until such a time as professional assistance is available.

First aid may be needed at any time, so the first aid kit should always be easily accessible.

A list of any students with medical issues must go with the trip leader.

TRAVEL

i) on foot

In the case of many local trips, there will be no need for transport to be arranged, and the group will go on foot. Manoeuvring a group of children along crowded streets and across busy roads is a task that carries enormous responsibility.

ii) by coach

Details of times and routes etc should be known in advance. The position of the emergency door and also of the first aid equipment should be checked on entering the coach. The fitting of seat belts should also be checked. Vehicles carrying three or more children on an organized trip must be fitted with seat belts which must be worn at all times. There will need to be at least two members of staff on the coach to supervise and to deal with any emergency that arises.

Any potential travel sickness sufferers are best seated at the front of the coach. Strong paper or polythene bags and a stock of paper tissues should be taken and a sickness procedure agreed with the driver before departure. To avoid any possibility of confusion, travel sickness tablets should be administered only with previous authorization from parents.

iii) by minibus

Every minibus must:

- Be adequately insured
- Have a valid MoT certificate (if applicable)
- Display a valid tax disc
- Be correctly licensed
- Be well maintained.

Each minibus driver is personally responsible for the fitness and condition of the minibus. It is crucial that the minibus is thoroughly checked internally and externally before going on any journey.

It is advisable that another adult travels on the minibus, in addition to the driver.

RESIDENTIAL CENTRES

Residential courses where pupils live and work together present great learning opportunities and an exciting environment, but safety must not be ignored.

The preparation and briefing of both staff and pupils must be comprehensive. It has to cover both the residential aspect and each of the planned activities. As well as the other matters already referred to, this preparation should include:

- An assessment of the suitability of the accommodation and the facilities provided. This will include the number of resident staff and their roles, and the centre's location and surrounding area.
- Information about safety rules and general rules of conduct at the centre and outdoors.
- Details of equipment provided at the centre. It may be that guidance and instruction is needed to ensure that this equipment is used safely
- A list of clothing and personal items required for the centre will be needed.

The leader should take a list of emergency contact addresses and telephone numbers so that if a child is injured or becomes ill, parents can be contacted as soon as possible.

A register of room numbers and occupants should be made up and circulated to all supervisors. Ideally the group should have adjoining rooms (ideally not on the ground floor) with teachers' rooms next to the pupils, but sleeping and bathroom facilities for pupils and adults must be completely separate. There should be working locks on the pupils' doors but with appropriate access for teachers.

There should be appropriate security arrangements in place to stop unauthorized visitors, and also adequate fire safety standards; that is, suitable fire exits, and firefighting equipment, an audible fire alarm and emergency evacuation procedures.

For further details, refer to Safety on School Trips

Risk Assessment for Day/Local Visits

Name of party leader:

Date of visit:

Location of visit:

How the location is to be reached:

What hazards are likely to be encountered travelling to and from the location:

How will these hazards be controlled:

What hazards are likely to be encountered at the location:

How will these hazards be controlled:

Names and any special needs of young people on the visit eg asthma pumps, medication etc.:

