

## SCHOOL OUTINGS POLICY

*School trips and visits make pleasant changes to classroom-based activities and stimulate the development of a child. However taking groups of individuals out of school is one of the potentially most hazardous things that any individual may be called upon to do. One of the prime interests of the school is the health and safety of its pupils at all times. Everyone involved in such activity must take reasonable care of their own, and others' health and safety, cooperate with the party leader and carry out instructions in accordance with these guidelines.*

This guide is intended to enable all parents/volunteers to understand their responsibilities in connection with school outings and trips. It is designed to help manage and control the health and safety risks associated with taking pupils out of school and ensure enjoyable and stress-free trips and activities. These guidelines must be fully implemented each and every time a group of pupils leaves the premises. These reflect the guidance contained in the DfES's "Health & Safety of pupils on Educational Visits" and the French Education Ministry's "Sorties Scolaires"

### **THE PARTY LEADER**

The party leader has full responsibility for the safe running of the activity including prior agreement for the activity to take place. He/she will have planned the visit carefully and may have previously visited the destination in order to assess the risk. A risk assessment should be available to those assisting in the outing. The party leader will have clear aims and objectives in relation to the trip or activity and through careful planning will have clarified procedures, routines and arrangements for the duration of the visit.

### **PARENT/VOLUNTEERS**

**The party leader will make clear to any Parents/Volunteers accompanying any trip what their role and responsibilities involved. This may be done by discussion prior to the trip or through written instructions. Parents/Volunteers must understand that they have a responsibility to follow closely the instructions of the party leader.**

Parent/Volunteers who accompany school trips and outings must:

- Accept normal common law duty of care to act as a responsible parent towards all the children, particularly those placed in their care by the party leader.
- Be responsible for the pupils in their care at all times throughout the entire journey and activity.
- Be prepared to follow the instructions of the party leader, keeping, at all times to the arrangements made for the group.
- Maintain good order and discipline at all times.

**The success of most educational visits relies upon the good services and willingness of Parents and volunteers to accompany the trip. At L'École des Petits, we greatly value the contribution and effort that so many parents/volunteers make in helping the school to organise so many and such varied outings for our pupils. This guide is designed to ensure that our trips and outings are educationally worthwhile, enjoyable and above all safe for pupils and adults involved.**

## **SCHOOL JOURNEYS**

This guide is intended to enable all staff to further understand their legal obligations and responsibilities in connection with school outings and trips. It is designed to help you to manage and control the health and safety risks associated with taking pupils out of school. These guidelines must be fully and properly implemented each and every time a group of pupils leaves the premises.

This paper covers:

- The purpose and types of school trip
- Legal responsibilities
- Staff: pupil ratio
- Risk assessment

This information should be used in conjunction with union documents and any other specialist advice from professional bodies.

### **General warning**

**Taking groups of pupils out of school is one of the most potentially hazardous things that any teacher may be called upon to do so. All schools have a responsibility to produce guidelines on the procedures for trips, transport and outside activities relating to age and stage development of the pupils.**

**Employees 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 risk.**

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

### **PARTY LEADER**

The party leader has full responsibility for the safe running of the activity including prior agreement for the activity to take place, following guidelines laid down and ensuring that all participants are aware of their roles.

We must do the following:

- Understand the importance of carrying out risk assessment for all school trips and outings.
- Provide the best off-site protection for staff and pupils.
- Ensure that identified procedures are correctly followed.

- Provide parents with reassurance that one of the prime interests of the school is for the health and safety for their pupils.
- Cover ourselves legally and enable us to consider legal requirements in relation to best practice.
- Ensure successful, enjoyable and stress-free trips and activities.
- Ensure high standard/high-quality visits.
- Ensure we have clear aims and objectives in relation to the trip or activity.
- Ensure adequate preparation.
- Identify the relationship of trips and other outside activities to the curriculum.
- Clarify procedures and lines of responsibility.
- Consider arrangements for children travelling safely to and from school.
- Consider safety education as part of the curriculum.
- Identify the additional training needs of staff.
- Identify the resource needs.
- Enable all costs to be evaluated and taken into account.

### **THE PURPOSE OF SCHOOL TRIPS**

- To stimulate the mental, spiritual and physical development of the child,
- To enable the child to spend time intelligently and happily, sharing experiences with the others.
- To enable the child to acquire resourcefulness, initiative and self-reliance and to become more aware of the risks of everyday life when outside the school environment.
- To enable children to develop social skills.
- To fulfil the requirements of the NC orders/ ELGs.

**School trips and visits make pleasant changes to classroom-based activities and stimulate the development of the whole child.**

### **TYPES OF SCHOOL TRIP**

- Short visits close to school (library, local shop or factory, field study)
- Visits to places of educational interest some distance from school (farm, museum, sites of historical or geographical interest)
- Visits to other schools (for sports or drama events)
- Charity walks or sponsored events
- Evening visits to theatre or cinema visits to residential centres and study courses
- Visits to outdoor activity centres

**All school trips and visits require meticulous planning and organisation. Assess the potential dangers and plan to avoid them.**

## **LEGAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

**Before undertaking any school trip you are legally required to complete a full written risk assessment. Schools have a duty of care towards pupils and in an activity where there is an element of risk, you need to show that you have considered, and as a result taken 'all reasonable precautions'. As part of your legal Health and Safety duties, you will need to show that there is effective communication at all levels.**

### **HEADTEACHER**

- Is responsible for the negligence of any teacher which arises in the course of their employment.
- Should offer advice on insurance.
- Must be satisfied that the school trip has a clear educational value.
- Must ensure that the school can run efficiently in the absence of anyone on a trip.
- Has a responsibility to ensure that all school trips comply with regulations in every respect and if this responsibility is delegated, it must be to a competent person.
- Must ensure that all activities are properly planned and supervised and that pupils' safety is paramount.

### **TEACHERS**

- Have a common law duty to act with care as befits a trained and experienced adult.
- Must ensure the meticulous planning and preparation of the school trip including a risk assessment of all activities.
- Are responsible for all pupils in their care throughout the entire journey.
- Must safeguard the health and safety of pupils both on the school premises and in authorised activities elsewhere.
- Must maintain good order and discipline at all times.

### **NON-TEACHERS**

- Must accept the normal common law duty of care to act as a responsible parent towards the children
- Are not held accountable as teachers.

## **STAFF: PUPIL RATIO**

There is no definitive number for staff: pupil ratio. A number of factors must be considered:

- The age, sex and ability of the pupils
- The number of pupils involved
- Their previous experience of being away from school/home and of the activities involved
- The amount of risk
- The time of year
- The experience and quality of the supervisory staff available.

In all cases, the duty remains with the Headteacher and leader to ensure adequate supervision for the particular group and for the particular activity. At L'Ecole des Petits, the age of the children in the class determines the number of adults needed for school outings. For example, 3-year-olds in Level 1 requires 1 adult:3 children, whilst for 6-year-olds in C.P the ratio is 1 adult: 6 children.

Permission must be sought from the Headteacher should a teacher wish to deviate in any way from the standard ratios set. A judgement can only be made when all risks have been assessed. Teachers should keep a written record of that assessment and reasons for the final decision.

### **PLANNING A SCHOOL TRIP**

Preparation and planning are the key to a successful and safe school trip. This depends to a large extent on the leader's ability to carry out an accurate risk assessment; to foresee all the dangers and difficulties and to make plans to avoid them. Advance planning could reveal that to allow a particular activity or the whole trip could expose the children to unacceptable levels of risk. Although it is very disappointing to cancel a trip, it is the only responsible course of action to take.

### **RISK ASSESSMENT**

There are five steps to risk assessment. They are:

- Look for hazards
- Decide who might be harmed and why
- Evaluate the risks and decide whether the existing precautions are adequate or whether more should be done
- Record your findings
- Review your assessment and revise if necessary

Risk assessment for educational visits can be usefully considered as having three levels.

- **Generic activity risk assessments** which are likely to apply to the activity wherever and whenever it takes place
- **Visit/site-specific risk assessments** which will differ from place to place and group to group
- **Ongoing risk assessments** that take account of, for example, illness of staff or pupils, changes of weather, availability of preferred activity

It is this latter category- ongoing risk assessment that is crucial if new dangers emerge during the visit. Changing circumstances can radically alter the safety of an activity and staff should always err on the side of caution.

## **PRE-VISITS**

In order to undertake a full and comprehensive assessment of risks, it will be essential in most cases to undertake a pre-visit. Even when the visit is made regularly, risks should be reassessed from time to time. When undertaking a risk assessment, a number of variables need to be taken into account:

- The number of pupils involved
- The age of pupils, their sex, ability and general behaviour
- The previous experience of the group in undertaking off-site visits
- The time of day and the time of year
- The travel arrangements
- The hazards of the environment being visited
- The numbers, experience and quality of the accompanying staff and volunteers
- The nature of the activity.

## **VOLUNTARY HELP**

The success of an educational visit often relies on upon the good services and willingness of volunteers to accompany the trip. The role of the volunteer must be carefully considered and their legal responsibilities carefully understood. To offer help voluntarily does not negate legal responsibilities.

Checks should be carried out on volunteers who will have regular contact with pupils.

The school guidelines and a clear statement of the volunteer's responsibilities should be made available before they take part. The school should always make the final decision as to which volunteers accompany a visit: not all volunteers are suitable.

Every volunteer accompanying should know precisely what their role is and understand that they have a responsibility to follow the instructions of the party leader.

## **COMMUNICATION**

Parents should always be made aware when their children are leaving the school premises. In certain circumstances, parents may wish to exercise their rights to refuse to allow their child to take part in a visit. Under such circumstances, the school will make alternative arrangements for the pupil.

## **FIRST AID**

In all cases, it would be appropriate to ensure a first aid box is available during the course of an off-site visit. It is sensible to have at least one trained first-aider on every visit. However, this is not always possible.

## **INSURANCE**

When a trip is undertaken as part of the normal school curriculum, even though it is conducted off-site, the insurance arrangements for the school will prevail. For residential trips, particularly trips abroad, the company must be informed prior to the departure.



## **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

Refer to the school procedures for Critical Incidents.

## **DISCIPLINE**

Activities will always be conducted according to the school's disciplinary policy. The need to ensure appropriate behaviour during an activity will be assisted by thorough preparation of the pupils, staff and volunteers taking part in the visit. Clear standards should be identified and adhered to.

## **EDUCATIONAL VISITS RISK ASSESSMENT POLICY**

As with all aspects of our school, the safety of our pupils is paramount. Therefore to ensure that we take every care possible we have devised the following form that is to be completed in advance of educational visits. This is to be filled in by the group leader (teacher) and then returned to the Educational Visits Coordinator (Sophie Moyon) for filing. Most of the information required is available from the coordinator, or from the documentation forwarded to the school by the relevant organisation.

Where possible it is recommended that teachers visit new locations before the outing with children takes place.

Team leaders should receive the school outing information and travel details at least one day prior to the visit.

It is vital to consider the following points prior to a visit:

- **Children with food allergies, asthma or pollen allergies.** Teachers may want to encourage parents to accompany their child on a visit in case of serious allergies or medical conditions. If medication is brought along, it should be clearly labelled with the child's name, and teachers must bring consent forms allowing medical treatment to be administered by a qualified person.
- **Accompanying adults.** The recommended ratio varies according to the pupil's age.
- **Team leaders** should be provided with a school first aid kit by the Health and Safety Coordinator (Mrs Brisset, Headmistress), as well as a mobile phone in case of accidents and emergencies. (Teachers may wish to bring their own as long as their number is registered with the school).
- **Transport:** if accompanying adults are transporting children in private cars it is important to note that they must be covered by any school insurance in case any accidents occur.
- **Accompanying parents** are to sign the consent form to state that they have read, understood and agreed to the terms and conditions. This form is to be returned to the team leader for filing.

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This document although correct at the time of publication, does not form a contract between the recipient and the School. The School reserves the right to make changes at any time which it considers to be necessary for legal, administrative or educational reasons.

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