

# Educational Visits Policy



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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### Guidelines

This policy sets out the principles and criteria of good practice whilst leaving a good deal to the expertise and judgment of those approving, leading or supervising the visit. A “culture of safety” is the prime consideration.

Pupils can derive a great deal of educational benefit from participating in educational visits with their school. Educational visits often bring the curriculum alive. They encourage pupils to learn, make the subject more exciting and consolidate the learning process. They are an ideal vehicle for learning life skills, risk management and gaining maturity.

Educational visits may vary from a local trip to an overseas expedition. The planning required will vary but the principles of assessing risk and putting in place reasonable control measures remain the same.

Taking pupils out of school can be a source of anxiety to teachers but careful planning and understanding of what is required is the basis for confidence. This policy is referred to at the start of each academic year and staff are also directed to various DfE policies. Staff should consult the Educational Visits Procedures document available in the Staff Handbook. Planning for an Educational Visit is completed using EVOLVE (Edufocus).

### The Golden Rule

Teachers in charge of pupils during a visit have a duty of care to make sure that the pupils are safe and healthy. They also have a common law duty to act as a reasonably prudent parent would. These duties apply to all school visits. Teachers and other staff in charge of pupils also have a common law duty to act as any reasonably prudent parent would do in the same circumstances.

1. The **Council of the Trust** is ultimately responsible for the health and safety at work of all staff and pupils. The Council’s day to day responsibility is delegated to the Heads.

2. The **Head** is responsible for staff, pupils and any accompanying adults, eg parents, on every school visit. It is important for everyone involved that the Head considers the EVC’s recommendations in relation to each trip and only approves it when they are satisfied that all appropriate safeguards are in place. There should be a written record that they have been approved.

3. The **Party Leader** is responsible for the planning, organisation and co-ordination of the trip, and for taking day to day decisions once the trip is in progress. Party Leaders must:

- be a member of staff employed by the Trust. Whilst Party Leader are normally a member of teaching staff, non-teaching staff may also lead trips
- have prior experience of being an Assistant Leader on similar visits before leading a school party.
- have adequate training, experience and be competent for the type of trip and activities being undertaken (more information ed. visit staff training, experience and competence **here**)
- have been approved as Trip Leader by the Head.

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4. The **accompanying staff** are in loco parentis (i.e. responsible for taking immediate and appropriate decisions) of the pupils in their charge at any given time. Case-law has established that a teacher is unlikely to be held negligent if his or her decision is one within the reasonable range of options available to a reasonable teacher in the particular circumstances.

5. Even if **other adults**, eg parents, accompany the trip, the staff remain responsible in law for the pupils. It is, therefore, essential that adults are properly briefed on their role.

## 2. AIMS

### It is School Policy:

- To encourage visits and work outside school which enhances the curriculum
- For pupils to enjoy residential experiences during their schooling
- To offer a wide and stimulation programme of visits and trips in the UK and overseas

The School believes that such opportunities enhance the character, learning, skills and experience of its pupils and help strengthen relationships within the school between pupils and between pupils and staff.

### Aims of this Policy

All activities which take place outside School are liable to potential hazards. It is appropriate, therefore, that special consideration be given to their organisation. This Policy will assist in the planning and expected conduct for all off-site school trips. Inevitably, most of the following is specifically relevant to lengthy long-distance trips, in the UK or abroad. However, much of the good practice in this document can also be applied to local, one day or evening trips.

## 3. EDUCATIONAL VISITS CO-ORDINATOR (EVC)

The Director of Enrichment and Partnerships (Senior and Prep) act as the EVC, on behalf of the Head. The role is to:

- Consider and approve proposals for trips
- Ensure that appropriate documentation exists in Evolve, including risk assessments (liaising with the Transport and H&S Managers when required)
- Ensure planning and documentation meets with School Policy
- Organise the training of leaders
- Support trip leaders
- Organise emergency planning including the emergency contact for each visit
- Evaluate and monitor trips
- Review policies and systems annually, especially in the light of any incidents
- Ensure that DBS disclosures are in place as necessary
- Work with the group leader to obtain the consent or refusal of parents and to provide full details of the visit beforehand so that parents can consent or refuse consent on a fully informed basis

The EVC reviews trips regularly.

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#### 4. TRIP LEADERS: COMPETENCE AND TRAINING

The DfE identifies the competence of the leader as a crucial factor, especially in outdoor activities. It is the primary factor ensuring safe practice. The School is responsible for assessing the competence of staff to lead school trips and to provide information, support and training. The School must be satisfied that staff roles and responsibilities are commensurate with their experiences and competence to undertake them. Competence is wider than just holding of qualifications. All adult supervisors should fully understand their roles and responsibilities at all times. Staff will not be allowed to lead a trip until they have accompanied other trips at least once. Staff leading trips involving anything other than local travel will be required to attend the GDST Trip Leader course.

#### 5. AUTHORISATION/ESSENTIAL PLANNING INFORMATION

The GDST is committed to using **EVOLVE** to manage all educational visits and school trips. School visits / off-site activities are defined by the initial five questions asked when undertaking trip-planning using the EVOLVE online trip management software system. These questions determine the level of trip planning, risk assessment and trip management detail that is required. (NB The Evolve question set and procedures should be tailored to follow GDST guidelines). The questions ask whether:

1. The trip activity is off or onsite?
2. If offsite whether it is overseas?
3. Is it a residential activity?
4. Does it include adventurous activities?
5. And will this activity be led by an activity provider or by a member of staff?

On the basis of these answers EVOLVE then determines the level and detail required to safely plan and manage that trip. The more questions you answer yes to, the more rigorous the requirements are. Therefore the amount of guidance you should seek and follow increases similarly.

Subsequently, when entering details of the proposed activities on a trip, a question arises about whether the trip goes to a venue or an activity provider. In terms of a definition a 'venue' is a location such as a museum, art gallery etc. where some activities may be provided but these will be low risk, whereas a 'provider' is a facility where a structured higher risk activity is carried out i.e. a climbing session at an indoor climbing wall.

EVOLVE will also determine the approval chain to be followed and will not allow trip planning to continue until the steps to gaining full trip approval are completed. This approval chain mirrors previously used paper systems and can be set up to provide both an initial outline and then a subsequent final approval.

Due to its link to SIMS, EVOLVE is updated daily and so is able to display the most up to date information, if any paperwork is to be printed off and taken on the trip, it is important that this is printed off just prior to the trip, and not too far in advance, to ensure that it is current.

Evolve sends reminders for tasks, sets out suitable timescales for trip planning, manages the approval process and trip planning cannot be progressed without the inputting of information

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or approval from various people such as the school nurse, finance dept., curriculum cover organiser etc.

- The visit should be educationally justifiable, with a clearly defined educational purpose, and related or complementary to the philosophy outlined at the beginning of this section. There should be stated aims for the visit, which are in line with the School's overall policy.
- Any school trip must be individually sanctioned by the Assistant Head on behalf of the Head to whom a request should be made at least half a term in advance for a day trip and two terms in advance for a residential trip. The Duke of Edinburgh Award Co-ordinator will liaise directly with the EVC. Each trip must have a SLT link assigned. The EVC has the right to decline a proposal on the grounds of several criteria, e.g. cost, purpose, suitability of trip leader/staff.
- Overseas trips must be sanctioned by the EVC who must satisfy themselves that the person planning the visit is competent to do so and has the necessary relevant experience. Outside expert help to ensure that the visit has been planned effectively and that risks are minimised may be called upon to assess proposals for major tours. Advice can be obtained from the GDST Health & Safety Adviser. Where possible, for trips abroad, the GDST preferred supplies should be used and all trips must be ABTA and ATOL protected. A Three Year plan for residential trips is kept up-to-date by the EVC to allow careful planning to take place.
- No group letter should be sent to parents without the Head's prior approval. Copies of all communications with parents should be lodged with all other relevant paperwork on Evolve.
- All trips should be value for money and Trip Leaders should seek at least three quotations.
- Organisers should make sure that the costings (including building in the costs of the preliminary visit) and methods of payment are agreed with the Assistant EVC and are made clear. All accounts need to be audited after the trip. All payments should be by Parent Pay. A 10% contingency should be added to all trip budgets.
- Insurance cover is provided by the GDST insurers, CHUBB (see 501a). Any queries should be directed to the Assistant EVC.
- The School reserves the right not to allow certain pupils to join a visit on the grounds of their history of inappropriate behaviour or on the grounds of potential danger to themselves or others. If a pupil is excluded from School they cannot be allowed to go on a school visit. They or their parents are liable for any financial loss resulting, for example, in the case of non-returnable deposits or cancellation fees.
- Pre-trip planning meetings are essential and minutes should be kept; meetings during the trip are crucial; a post-trip evaluation report is also necessary.

## 6. PRELIMINARY VISIT

Whenever possible there should be a preliminary visit by the leader or at the very least very careful research into the venue and its facilities. Other schools may be consulted, and it may be particularly useful to consult other GDST schools. Site-specific risk assessments must be carried out for certain visits and time must be allocated to this. The cost of this must be included

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in the eventual charge made to pupils.

## **7. COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS AND PUPILS**

Parents are responsible for ensuring the School is aware of any medical and/or dental health problems, or any personal problem that could affect their child during the trip. Parents should also ensure that their child understands his/her responsibilities during the trip. The School will provide parents with key contact details and other important information. Parents should carefully keep details of the itinerary and timetable and who to contact if there is an urgent need to get in touch with their child during the trip.

The EVC and/or trip leader (as appropriate) should address all pupils before residential trips. The briefing includes safety, discipline, Child Protection and terrorism. For major tours abroad pupils and parents should be addressed together.

- Once the visit/trip has been approved and planned, parents will need preliminary information before deciding whether their children should take part. This should include the purpose of the visit, dates and times, which pupils it is aimed at, destination, method of travel, itinerary, accommodation, the provisional programme, estimated cost/payment arrangements, supervision of the party, details of insurance cover, and mention of any special hazards. It should be made clear whether deposits are returnable.
- Parents should be asked to disclose any relevant medical information and must inform the Organiser of any health issues arising since the completion of the GDST Medical Consent Form. Organisers should be aware of health issues and keep this information with them, briefing members of staff accompanying the trip.
- Before departure a letter should be sent to parents with final comprehensive details about the visit. The brief should include a statement on the code of behaviour expected from their children and that the School Rules still apply during the course of the trip. The guiding principle must be that students must at all times behave as their parents and teachers would wish them to behave.
- The pupils should be given a written brief and also be briefed verbally, particularly about behaviour and safety matters. Pupils will need to be regularly briefed during the trip itself, especially at the start of the day and at appropriate points during the day.
- Copies of the final written brief to parents, plus a list of names of the party and telephone contact numbers, should be stored on Evolve. Contact details should include all relevant residential contact numbers as well as home numbers of all members of the party (pupils and staff).
- If a pupil asks to travel home under her own arrangements, or to remain behind (in London, say) this should be discussed with the EVC. A letter will be required, signed by a parent, before permission is given. For this purpose, an email from a parent from a known email address will suffice.
- All pupils will be required to return to School or be collected by parents, unless the School has written permission from parents. This is to ensure there is no delay in the

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return time to school. Parents should meet their children promptly.

## **8. PARENTS**

Parents are responsible for ensuring the School is aware of any medical and/or dental health problems, or any personal problem that could affect their daughter during the trip. Parents should also ensure that their daughter understands her responsibilities during the trip. The School will provide parents with key contact details and other important information. Parents should carefully keep details of the itinerary and timetable and who to contact if there is an urgent need to get in touch with their daughter during the trip.

## **9. DISCIPLINE**

Before the trip pupils should know the code of behaviour expected for the trip (see 504).

Parents will already have been informed of expectations (see Communication). Organisers should lay down explicit ground rules so that pupils know how they are expected to behave. On any school expedition they are subject to school discipline and the laws of the land, and are representing the School. The clear code of rules should, as far as practicable, be agreed with participants.

- Normal school rules will apply to trips (with the exception of dress on visits outside school time, e.g. to the theatre or on holiday visits).
- Smoking is forbidden as is the buying or drinking of alcohol for all students.
- Pupils need to be made aware of any potential dangers, the need to obey instructions, to be punctual and to avoid noisy and inconsiderate behaviour at all times and not least in public places, especially when in transit. It is important to stress the importance of behaviour on coaches, trains, aircraft and ferries. Pupils also need to be reminded of the need to be responsible for their own property. Pupils should be told of emergency procedures (for example if separated from the party or in case of accident).
- Where an activity is governed by a national authority, e.g. walking in a National Park, these rules should be drawn to the attention of the group.
- If staying in a hotel, make sure pupils know what the rules are on bedtimes, the rules governing separate sleeping areas and general conduct of pupils, courtesy to other guests and general conduct. Organisers should take definite steps to ensure that all pupils are back at the hotel (and in bed) by the time decreed.
- Bullying in any form is unacceptable and should be dealt with promptly (see school Anti-Bullying Policy on the school website or available on request).
- The School reserves the right to send home any pupil involved in a serious breach of School rules. (In the case of an overseas trip, this would present serious difficulties but may still be necessary. The tour leader would liaise with the Deputy Head at School). A pupil may need to be segregated from the rest of the party.
- The SLT link and EVC should be informed of any major incident as soon as possible. A written report should later be submitted.

### **Staff and Student Discipline**

Staff should ensure that individuals on excursions and trips are not allowed to go off on their own. The law requires staff to exercise adequate supervision. Whilst detailed regulations would be inappropriate and much will depend on the age of the pupil and local circumstances,

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in general, where Senior School pupils are allowed “free time” in groups, pupils should always be placed in small groups of not less than four who must be told to keep together.

## 10. COMPOSITION OF THE PARTY SUPERVISION AND STAFF: PUPIL RATIOS

Each supervisor will be given a written statement, detailing roles and responsibilities.

A school party should normally be composed of pupils and staff; other adults (e.g. spouses/partners of staff, parents) may also be included to establish the appropriate adult/pupil ratio, but may not be left alone with children for substantial periods. Adults who have not been DBS checked will not have unsupervised access to children. All volunteers working with the School are DBS checked, regardless of how many times they volunteer or whether they have unsupervised access. All School parties should have a named leader (and a deputy) who must be a serving staff member at Sutton High School.

Accompanying adults must be given explicit advice about their role and responsibilities but the trip leader always retains ultimate responsibility

Additional members e.g. children of staff may only join a trip with prior approval of the EVC. The implications must be subject to risk assessment especially in light of the Glenridding Beck Tragedy.

It is not possible to be precise about the appropriate ratio of adults to pupils. In assessing staffing ratios the following factors are significant:

- The age and ability of the pupils
- Pupils with special educational needs or medical needs
- Experience of adults in off-site supervision
- Duration and nature of the journey
- Type of any accommodation
- Competence of staff, both general and on specific activities
- Requirements of the organisation/location to be visited
- First aid cover
- The type of activity
- Their previous experience away from home or school
- Their general capabilities, maturity and discipline
- Their training for the trip
- Location and travel arrangements

### Supervision Ratios on Lower Risk Day Trips and Activities

The recommended adult : pupil ratios for lower risk trips and activities are:

- 1:20 (senior pupils under 18)
- 1:10 (junior pupils in yrs. 4-6)
- 1:6 (junior pupils in yrs. 1-3)
- A higher ratio may be appropriate for pupils under 5.
- Heads (or designated senior member of staff) should use their discretion for pupils in yrs 12-13.

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Depending on the circumstances a higher ratio may be necessary. For example, additional staff may be required e.g. if there are pupils with special needs are participating on the trip/activity.

- Where the adult: pupil ratio requires more than one adult, at least 2 of these should be members of staff. Parents or other adult volunteer helpers may make up any necessary numbers in addition to these. However, the majority of adults should be staff. If parents or other adult helpers accompany the trip, they must be aware who the Party Leader is and be briefed in advance on their responsibilities.
- For their own protection, **male members of staff** should normally be accompanied by a female member of staff. **Mixed gender groups** should have at least one male and one female member of staff.
- **Remote supervision** may be appropriate for certain activities or elements of a visit; the Party Leader should ensure that pupils understand the ground rules and that parents have agreed to this part of the visit. 'Ground rules' should include:
  - A member of staff being on duty at fixed place in the locality
  - Pupils to be in groups of 4 or more so that if one has an accident, one can remain with her and the other two can go for help.
  - Pupils to return by a specified time.

## 2. Supervision Ratios at Away Matches and Off-site Sport Fixtures

Due to the likelihood of accidents during sports fixtures that require injured pupils to go to hospital best practice dictates that, wherever possible, there should always be **two members of staff accompanying pupils attending sports fixtures** away from school. In reality, due to the number of fixtures taking place at any one time this is not always feasible. In order to ensure that schools are not limited in the number of fixtures that they can agree to whilst at the same time ensuring that safety is not compromised one member of staff accompanying pupils in the minibus to sporting fixtures may be acceptable providing the following is adhered to:

- A robust risk assessment is in place which takes into account:
  - **The distance travelled** e.g. local journey – less than approximately 10 miles / 30 minutes (taking into account local traffic conditions);
  - **The number and age of girls** - generally two members of staff would be expected for all fixtures involving Junior school pupils unless there were 5 or less year 4-6 pupils attending;
  - **Ability to call for help in an emergency** - Staff member must carry a mobile phone and have relevant contact details
  - **Availability of staff to call for assistance in the event of an emergency situation** - ensure that there are staff available who can be called and will attend if requested;
  - **First aid facilities** - ensure that the member of staff accompanying the pupils has some first aid training – minimum a current one-day first aid qualification) and has access to a first kit;
  - **Parents attending the fixture** – the availability of parents to assist at the fixture may be helpful in the event of an emergency but does not take away the need to have a back-up member of staff.

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- The Head (or designated senior member of staff) must be in agreement with the level of supervision and;
- The procedure for allowing only one member of staff to accompany sports fixtures must be outlined in the Educational Visits Policy for the school.

For fixtures out of the locality (e.g. more than approximately 10 miles / 30 minutes travel time from school) then two members of staff must accompany the group.

This section should be read in conjunction with the guidance on '[Staff in Sole Charge of Pupils in a Minibus](#)' section 4

### 3. Supervision Ratios for Residential Trips and Overseas Visits

In addition to the general supervision requirements for lower risk activities (see section 1 above), it is strongly recommended that at least **two** members of staff accompany all **residential trips** (in case a pupil or member of staff is injured or falls ill and needs to stay at base, be closely supervised, accompanied to the doctors or hospital, or even escorted back home), and at least **three** adults accompany **trips abroad** (due to the time factor that would be involved in getting additional staff to the group in the event of an incident). The exception to the need for three adults on overseas visits, would be if it was a very small group (max 10 students) and the activity risks were low, in which case the Head (or designated senior member of staff) may consider two staff to be sufficient, providing a replacement member of staff was on standby and ready to join the trip if required.

Procedures must be in place to provide cover if a member of staff has to return home.

On overseas trips, at least one member of staff should be reasonably **fluent in the appropriate language**.

There will be times where it is more appropriate for the Residential Centre's / Activity Provider's staff to be responsible for the pupils. When and in what circumstances the centre's staff will be responsible for the pupils should be agreed in writing prior to the start of the course. Where it is necessary to share sensitive personal information with activity providers, please be aware of the 'GDPR Guidance on School Trips' (see related documents panel.) The pupils must know who is in charge of them at any given time.

If school staff do not accompany the pupils on any element of the trip, this must be made clear to parents in advance, and the school must be satisfied with the safety precautions that will be in place.

### 4. Supervision Ratios for Outdoor and Adventurous Activities

The supervision ratios for outdoor and adventurous activities must not be less than **1 qualified** adult to 10 pupils, and may need to be higher (e.g. 1:6) depending on the activity and the experience/competence of the pupils. Activity staff, e.g. instructors or group leaders, may be used to calculate the ratios.

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**Remote supervision** may be appropriate for certain activities or elements of a visit; the Party Leader should ensure that pupils understand the ground rules and that parents have agreed to this part of the visit.

## **11. SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY**

The School will endeavour to make every effort to ensure that school journeys and activities are available and accessible to all who wish to participate, irrespective of special educational or medical needs, ethnic origin, sex, religion etc. All young people are encouraged to participate in as wide a range of activities as possible. If a visit is to cater for pupils with special needs, a suitable venue should be selected.

Special attention will be given to appropriate supervision ratios and additional safety measures that may need to be addressed at the planning stage.

The School's ALN co-ordinator, Medical Manager and EVC will check that all reasonably practicable efforts have been made during the course of risk assessment to include disabled pupils in educational visits. The School will also include disabled pupils who wish to take part in educational visits out of school hours. The School will discuss with pupils, parents, group leaders and other supervisors as well as the manager of the venue to be visited/the tour operator to ensure a thorough risk assessment is carried out.

The School will update this Policy from time to time to keep informed as to the most current guidance and legislation surrounding SEN and disability to ensure this Policy is relevant.

## **12. HEALTH AND SAFETY MATTERS**

The School must comply with Health and Safety law.

The leader should collect such personal and medical information as is appropriate to the nature of the visit or journey. The leader will need to inform supervising staff of any known health problems/medications, restrictions, etc and ensure that they are complied with. A First Aid kit should be taken on each School trip.

There must be sufficient adults to ensure the visit can continue, or appropriate measures be put in place, if an adult has to accompany a child to hospital.

When staying in a hotel or other residential accommodation, on arrival pupils and staff should be made familiar with fire and emergency procedures. An Evacuation Co-ordinator is to be designated at the start of the trip and a fire alarm procedure should be undertaken upon arrival.

A school mobile phone must be taken on all educational visits. More than one school mobile may be required in situations where staff supervise groups at different locations. Whilst staff may want to take their own mobile phones for their own personal use, they should avoid giving their own personal number to the pupils except in the event of an emergency. A satellite phone may be required on certain trips (as directed by EVC).

As far as possible staff should only contact pupils using the school mobile phone. This is to ensure that both staff and pupils are protected and that staff don't have access to pupil personal telephone numbers other than for the duration of the trip. In the event where any pupil or staff

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personal telephone numbers are used then it is imperative that these numbers are deleted at the end of the trip. Where lists of telephone numbers are created for an educational visit then these lists should also be destroyed after the trip.

Where staff have used personal phones (e.g. in the event of an emergency), then a member of SLT must always be informed afterwards.

On trips abroad (and residential UK) pupils could usefully be given a card providing key information, e.g. phone contacts, hotel, British Embassy – examples are available on request.

Organisers should ensure that pupils behave sensibly when crossing roads. Authorised crossings should always be used. On any walk, there must be adults at the front and rear of the group.

Regular head counts should always take place, particularly before leaving a venue.

Adopting a sensible approach to H&S means recognising that “no one size fits all”.

### **13. CONTRACTORS**

Contractors for educational visits might be tour operators, expedition providers, outdoor education centres, local farms, civic museums, and national bodies such as the RSPCA, YHA etc. Such contractors should be chosen carefully and contact be made with any relevant representative body e.g. the British Activities Holiday Association (BAHA).

Contractors are responsible for assessing the risks of those parts of the visit appearing in the contract. They must all complete a GDST Declaration Form for each visit.

Assurances should be obtained from the providers that risks have been assessed and that the provider's staff are competent to instruct and lead pupils of the group's age range on the activity. Contractors should also provide details of any independent, inspection-based external verification.

### **14. RISK ASSESSMENTS**

Risk assessments and risk management are legal requirements. For educational visits they involve the careful examination of what could cause harm during the visit and whether enough precautions have been taken or whether more should be done. The School aims to make sure no one gets hurt or becomes ill. The risk assessment should cover explicitly how special educational needs and medical needs are addressed.

In every educational trip we will ensure that the programme of a visit, as set out in the risk assessment and the consent form, will, where is practicable, be adhered to and will include contingency measures i.e. a plan B.

The aim of an assessment of the risks that might be met on a visit should be to prevent the risks or reduce them. Pupils must not be placed in situations, which expose them to an unacceptable level of risk. Safety must always be the prime consideration. If the risks cannot be contained, then the visit must not take place.

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For routine trips there can be a generic risk assessment but an individual site-specific risk assessment is required for a trip which involves a higher than normal risk. Risk assessment is a key part of preparation for a school trip.

The risk assessment process involves identifying the hazards (something with potential to cause harm), assessing the risk, which is the likelihood that harm will be caused by a particular hazard, and then taking steps to control the risk. Activities should not proceed if risks are assessed to be too high. Guidance emphasises that risk assessment is a process not a document and part of the planning.

It suggests that the leader first of all produces a plan and then considers what could go wrong and how that could be avoided. The process is then repeated until a final proposal is produced.

Risk assessment for visits should be considered at 3 distinct levels:

- Generic activity risk assessments, which are likely to apply to the activity wherever and whenever it takes place, e.g. water activities (generic risk of drowning – control measures would include assessing the water confidence/ability of participants, use of buoyancy aids) travel (risk of injury in accidents – control measures would include qualified driver, number of drivers, maximum periods of driving, use of seat belts, vehicle maintenance).
- Visit/site specific risk assessments, which will differ from place to place and group to group. Guidance recommends the group leader should visit the site beforehand to gain first-hand knowledge of the area/route. The knowledge will then inform the risk assessment. An exploratory visit will give the leader greater confidence when taking participants. It will, for example, enable the group leader to concentrate on leading the group rather than finding the way. Leaders are expected to have local intelligence of tides, potential for flooding and plan the itinerary accordingly: local intelligence on safe crossing place of railways, roads, rivers etc.
- If some aspects of the risk assessment turn out in practice to have been faulty (e.g. because it was impossible to implement certain steps, or because other measures would have been preferable), it is essential the risk assessment be modified for future use. The fact that the original risk assessment was not perfect does not mean that it was negligent; it just proves how difficult it is to foresee every eventuality.
- On a trip there needs to be on-going risk assessment. Planned events may change.

## 15. WATER

Many incidents affecting pupils have occurred by or in the sea and special care is needed when pupils enter water. If a swimming activity is planned, the GDST swimming consent form must be completed. The group leader or colleague should have a relevant life saving award, be fully aware of local conditions such as tides and currents, designate a safe bathing area and establish emergency procedures, including what to do if a pupil is in distress. The group should know recall procedures. Pupils should always be in sight of supervisors and one supervisor should stay out of the water for better supervision. Local conditions can be obtained from the local coastguard, lifeguard or tourist information. See the Swimming on Educational Visits Policy (521).

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## 16. VISITS ABROAD (ACCOMMODATION)

When reception is not staffed 24 hours a day security arrangements should be in force to stop unauthorized visits. In the absence of 24 hour staffing of reception, external doors must be made secure against intrusion and windows closed as necessary to prevent intrusion. Internal doors must be lockable but staff must have reasonable access to pupil accommodation at all times.

## 17. EMERGENCIES

Emergencies can occur in many forms, e.g.:

- An injury or medical emergency affecting an individual group member
- A road traffic accident involving the vehicle the group is traveling in
- A lost or missing person
- A fire in the residential accommodation being used by the group
- A terrorist incident in the locality of group

Good planning and preparation can help prevent an emergency occurring, or mitigate the consequences. This includes making appropriate **back up** arrangements in the event of problems arising both during and out of school hours, eg sending a replacement vehicle or additional staff to support the group, sending home/repatriating group members, or contacting parents in an emergency.

### Information To Be Carried By The Pupil

- Each pupil should be provided with a card giving an emergency contact telephone number, and if appropriate, the address and telephone number of the hostel or hotel the group are staying in, in case she gets lost.

### Information To Be Carried By The Party Leader, Accompanying Staff and Emergency Contacts at School Whilst the Visit is in Progress

The **Party Leader** must carry:

- the school's **emergency procedures** with them for use in the event of a serious incident.
- an up-to-date **photograph** of each pupil in the group NB GDPR restrictions require this to be stored in secure electronic form
- Pupil's **consent forms** and **parents contact details** NB GDPR restrictions require this to be stored in secure electronic form.
- **Insurance** policy.

**All staff** accompanying school trips should carry the **GDST Incident and Emergency Management Card and Checklist** with them at all times (available in the 'Related Documents' panel). In the event of a serious incident, this small document will remind staff of the key steps they must take, and will provide them with key contact numbers.

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If the visit takes place out of school hours, the following information should be available to all the **school's emergency contacts** at all times. (Most information should be easily available via EVOLVE)

- (a) The **itinerary** and **daily contact numbers** for the group (Party Leader will need emergency contact number for Head/Deputy and school contact).
- (b) Pupil's **consent forms** NB GDPR restrictions require this to be stored in secure electronic form. (see GDPR info document in the related documents panel)
- (c) **Insurance** policy.
- (d) Contract / booking forms relating to the visit.
- (e) 'Head's approval for the visit .
- (f) Key Trust Office telephone numbers (Chief Executive, Director of Legal, Director of Education, Head of Communications, Head of Health and Safety) and the out of hours contact numbers of the Trust's Chief Executive.

### **Medical Emergency / Serious Accident**

The following procedures should be used in the event of a Medical Emergency / Serious Accident. An emergency is unlikely to occur in circumstances where these procedures can be carried out to the letter, but staff accompanying the party should be so familiar with them that they are able to adapt them to the situation in which they find themselves.

The Party Leader (or staff member in charge of small sub-group if out of contact with the Party Leader) should:

- Establish the nature and extent of the emergency. Secure scene and safety of others. Take steps to prevent further injury to other members of the group and others in the vicinity. If appropriate / possible enlist others to help you
- If anyone is injured, establish the extent and administer first aid / contact the emergency services if appropriate
- Sort out documentation that might be required by the emergency services, eg pupil medical details, insurance, consent forms, EHIC if applicable
- If the casualty is being taken to hospital by the emergency services ensure you know **where** the ambulance/ helicopter/ mountain rescue team are taking the casualty(s). Ideally they should be accompanied by a member of staff, but consider the needs/safety of the remaining group members
- Contact base / school contacts - who will inform key contacts in school , parents, Trust Office, and if appropriate abroad the British Embassy/Consulate. Give full details of the incident, i.e..
  - Date and time of incident (if abroad give local and UK time)
  - Location of incident, a brief description, current situation
  - Name of injured person(s) / those involved in the incident
  - Details of injuries
  - Authorities / emergency services involved
  - Action taken so far.
  - Contact name, telephone number, email for future communication
  - Agree a time / means of next/further communication
- Manage communication by rest of group; explain why you do not want pupils to phone home or use face-book, twitter, Instagram or other social media

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- Ensure that the remainder of the party are adequately supervised throughout the incident and arrange for their early return to base;
- Wherever possible take photographs to record the scene and events
- For serious incidents where the media may be involved:
  - Under no circumstances should the name of any casualty be divulged to the media. Procedures for contact with the media are given below.
  - Responsibility, legal liability should not be discussed or admitted.
  - Try to identify alternative telephone numbers at "home" and "off site base" as other lines will quickly become jammed.
- As soon as practicable, the Party Leader should write down all relevant details while they are still fresh in the memory. Other party staff members might also be asked to do so. A record should be kept of names and addresses of any witnesses. Any associated equipment should be kept in its original condition.
- All accident forms should be completed and insurers should be contacted.

### **Communication with Parents, Trust Office and the Media**

- The Head should arrange to contact parents/carers of those involved. For a serious incident, the Head should contact parents of all party members. It is also the Head's responsibility to act as a link between the group involved, the Chief Executive Officer of the Trust and parents.
- The Head or designated senior staff member at school should alert the Chief Executive Officer of the Trust (or in his/her absence, the Director of Education) and the Head of Communications, giving details as above. They may identify further actions or help required (which might include financial assistance). Alternative and additional telephone lines may need to be identified at an early stage.
- If it is necessary to talk to the media, the Head should agree with the Chief Executive Officer of the Trust who should make the initial statement. A designated person should then act as the ongoing point of contact with the media to whom all involved should direct questions and requests.
- Contact with media - Do's and Don'ts
  - Be clear and concise, avoid conjecture and apportioning blame
  - Express:
    - Sympathy- for those involved and their families
    - Praise- for those undertaking rescue/incident control
    - Promise- full investigation/cooperation with other agencies
  - Do not:
    - Reply to 'why' and 'how' questions
    - name individuals- explain that names will not be released until next of kin have been informed
    - Say 'no comment'- explain above reasons why you cannot comment and if possible state when an update will be provided and by whom

## **18. DUTY OF CARE**

In order for the School to discharge their duty of care we will ensure our records show:

- A structured supervision plan

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- All pupils and adults on the trip knew and understood their particular responsibilities
- Adequate care was being exercised at the time of the accident

Records must include risk assessments, letters to parents, notes of pre-trip staff meetings and guidance to any adult volunteers. In the event of an accident, the supervisor should record carefully and as soon as possible his/her version of events and all action taken to minimise harm and protect pupils.

### Investigation of serious incidents

If there has been a serious incident there will be a formal investigation. The purpose of the investigation will be to:

- Determine the cause of the incident
- Determine whether there are lessons to be learned
- Provide information to bereaved parents
- Exchange information with statutory investigation bodies as required
- Manage media enquiries

A serious incident would include a fatality of a pupil or adult but might also include serious injuries and incidents where no serious injury occurred but where the risk of injury was high.

## 19.TRANSPORT

- The use of **staff cars** is **not** recommended for transporting pupils on school trips / educational visits / sports trips, and staff should **not** transport pupils in their personal cars for **non-work related journeys**, except in an emergency. Where a member of staff's car is used for a work-related purposes, staff must have:
  - A clean driving license,
  - Current comprehensive and business use car insurance (see the guidance on insurance in the **Finance** section of the Hub when a vehicle is being used for school business )
  - An MOT if the vehicle is over 3 years old,
  - Parental consent should be obtained.
  - At least one adult additional to the driver to act as an escort, or if the driver has to be alone with a pupil, ensure this is for the minimum amount of time.
  - Evidence of the above should be retained.
- Use of **parent's cars** is **not** recommended for school trips and educational visits, but where they are used to transport pupils, parents must have clean driving licenses and current comprehensive insurance, an MOT if vehicle over 3 years old and parental consent should be obtained. NB See the guidance on Insurance in the Finance section of the Hub for details of the Trust's insurance policy when a vehicle is being used for an occasional trip or school business use.
- **Pupil's cars** - Schools should normally arrange transport for all pupil participants to all events and activities. Careful judgment is required if sixth form pupils, who have passed their driving test and have their parent's permission, wish to use their own cars for travelling to off-site activities. See separate guidance on 'Sixth Form Drivers'.
- **Trips taking place outside of the normal school day** – Schools usually arrange transport for these activities, but occasionally parents may be asked to make

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arrangements for transporting their daughter to the activity venue, eg the local theatre in evening, the airport, or an 'away match' at the weekend.

## 20. EVALUATION

After residential visits, a brief evaluation should be submitted to the EVC/Deputy Head via Evolve. This should include what went well, what could have been improved and lessons for future trips. This will also include effectiveness of risk assessments. Brief verbal reports on major trips may be delivered at the next staff meeting.

## 21. STAFF TRAINING

The School provides training for staff who lead visits, identifies training needs and uses visit evaluation to inform training needs. Training for First Aid, minibus driving and life-saving is also available to staff.

## 22. GOVERNORS

Governors may, from time to time inspect the procedures and paperwork for a major trip.

## 23. FURTHER READING

All staff who lead or accompany school trips should familiarise themselves with the following guidance: (available on the GDST HUB)

- Planning and Leading Visits and Adventurous Activities - Guidance for Schools and Colleges - RoSPA - 2013
- Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel (OEAP) - National Guidance Documents <https://oeapng.info/guidance-documents/>
- Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel (OEAP) - High Quality Outdoor Learning 2015
- Association for PE (AfPE) – '[Safe Practice in Physical Education, School Sport and Physical Activity](#)' (2016) – each school's PE Dept. should have a copy. Contains detailed guidance regarding adventurous activities such as climbing and water sports
- DfE H&S: Responsibilities and Duties for Schools - Nov 2018 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-and-safety-advice-for-schools/responsibilities-and-duties-for-schools>
- School Trips and Outdoor Learning Activities -Tackling the HS Myths - HSE - June 2011
- The HSE website also has guidance on school trips on its 'Education - Frequently Asked Questions' page <http://www.hse.gov.uk/services/education/faqs.htm>

## GDST REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL TRIPS

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## 1. EVOLVE

The GDST is committed to using [EVOLVE](#) to manage all educational visits and school trips. School visits / off-site activities are defined by the initial five questions asked when undertaking trip-planning using the EVOLVE online trip management software system. These questions determine the level of trip planning, risk assessment and trip management detail that is required. (NB The Evolve question set and procedures should be tailored to follow GDST guidelines). The questions ask whether:

1. The trip activity is off or onsite?
2. If offsite whether it is overseas?
3. Is it a residential activity?
4. Does it include adventurous activities?
5. And will this activity be led by an activity provider or by a member of staff?

On the basis of these answers EVOLVE then determines the level and detail required to safely plan and manage that trip. The more questions you answer yes to, the more rigorous the requirements are. Therefore the amount of guidance you should seek and follow increases similarly.

Subsequently, when entering details of the proposed activities on a trip, a question arises about whether the trip goes to a venue or an activity provider. In terms of a definition a 'venue' is a location such as a museum, art gallery etc. where some activities may be provided but these will be low risk, whereas a 'provider' is a facility where a structured higher risk activity is carried out i.e. a climbing session at an indoor climbing wall.

EVOLVE will also determine the approval chain to be followed and will not allow trip planning to continue until the steps to gaining full trip approval are completed. This approval chain mirrors previously used paper systems and can be set up to provide both an initial outline and then a subsequent final approval.

Due to its link to SIMS, EVOLVE is updated daily and so is able to display the most up to date information, if any paperwork is to be printed off and taken on the trip, it is important that this is printed off just prior to the trip, and not too far in advance, to ensure that it is current.

Evolve sends reminders for tasks, sets out suitable timescales for trip planning, manages the approval process and trip planning cannot be progressed without the inputting of information or approval from various people such as the school nurse, finance dept., curriculum cover organiser etc.

An 'EVOLVE - FAQ' document is available in the '**Related Documents**' section at the bottom of this page.

Previous guidance referred to specific categories of trips:

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A. Lower risk curriculum work in the vicinity of the school e.g. local shopping survey; day trips eg to museums and art galleries;

B. Residential visits in the UK or abroad

C. Adventurous and higher risk activities, which may take place during enrichment activities, on day trips or residential trips, in the UK or abroad, including DoE expeditions.

The A,B and C categories are no longer used as a determinant of how you plan the trip, as this is done by EVOLVE, but they are still useful as a description of trips and show a hierarchy of risk.

## 2. Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge (LOtC)

The LOtC Quality Badge scheme, launched in 2008, is managed by the Council for Learning Outside the Classroom. Its aim is to recognise venues (e.g. museums, art galleries, sacred spaces, nature reserves, science learning centres and farms) who offer good quality learning outside the classroom opportunities and manage risk effectively, and at the same time reduce bureaucracy and paperwork for schools.

Trip leaders are welcome to use the LOtC scheme as part of the selection process for lower risk and non-residential trips, however they should be aware that the award for lower risk providers, eg theatres, art galleries, museums, historic houses, science learning centres, botanic gardens or places of worship, is based on self-evaluation by the applicant, and not impartial third party assessment. The EVOLVE system links into LOTC and provides details of a providers quality badge and public liability insurance.

The LoTC quality badge alone is **not** an acceptable check on a residential centre or an external activity provider (a person or centre that provides higher risk and / or adventurous activities that pupils participate in, e.g. rock climbing). These centres and providers must undergo additional checks and complete the GDST Activity Provider Declaration Form – available at the bottom of this page.

Some schools have reported a reluctance by some LOtC Quality Badge Holders and members of the 'School Travel Forum' (STF) to complete the 'Activity Providers Declaration' form and provide documentation such as risk assessments and insurance certificates for residential visits and trips including higher risk activities, as they consider 'the badge' / membership should give the school all the reassurance they need. However, the GDST Legal and Health & Safety Advisers consider that residential centres, outdoor and adventurous activity providers and tour operators should complete the form and provide the school with additional documentation, such as risk assessments and insurance certificates - the greater the risk the more checks we need to make in order to make a good assessment of the risks and demonstrate due diligence.

The EVOLVE system links into LOtC and provides details of a providers Quality Badge and public liability insurance. Adventurous activity providers who are Quality Badge holders have a site visit as part of their LOtC assessment process, however Quality Badge holders do not have to meet the same standards as AALA Licence holders, and are therefore still required to complete the GDST Activity Providers Declaration form.

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### 3. Requirements for ALL Categories of Trips and Off Site Activities

1. All school trips and educational activities must be logged on '[Evolve](#)' the web-based planning, approval and management system.

**NB: Some activities that pupils participate in, that are not technically 'school trips', eg they occur outside of the school day, have been organised by external 3<sup>rd</sup> parties (that may have been accessed through school) and no GDST or school staff are involved could still be logged on EVOLVE so all key details are readily available to relevant people should an incident happen.**

2. All **trip information, itineraries, registers, contact details**, etc should be uploaded onto Evolve so that they can be accessed at all times by those with relevant permissions. Trip information details and contact information must adhere to GDST [GDPR policy](#). Not only is Evolve a well thought out management system it also provides a resolution to GDPR issues with storing confidential information.

3. **Heads** (or designated senior members of staff) must be aware of all times when pupils are off site. This is most easily done via Evolve. The diary function allows for quick access to see all current, previous and up and coming trips and their progress with approval. They must approve the details and arrangements of the trip through Evolve, or upload onto Evolve a written approval document.

4. **All members of staff, instructors and adult volunteers** that accompany school trips or lead activities must be **suitably qualified, competent** ([more information here](#)), **fit and well** enough to do so and have been DBS checked at the appropriate level. Competence means an appropriate combination of personal qualities, knowledge, skills and experience e.g. organised, practical, positive, calm, experienced at the activities involved in the trip and managing age range of pupils, a good communicator, risk aware, willing and able to take responsibility and make decisions, aware of the potential problems that might arise during the trip and possible solutions, etc.

#### **Accompanying Adults with Medical Conditions/Allergies**

Staff/adult volunteers accompanying the trip should ensure the party leader is aware of any allergies/medical conditions they suffer before they go on the trip in case they need specific assistance in an emergency. The party leader should give their own information to another adult in the party. This could be in the form of a written medical declaration, or the information can be uploaded onto EVOLVE. If the party leader or accompanying adults suffer from any allergies or medical conditions, these must be considered in the trip's [risk assessment](#).

### 5. Party Leaders must:

- be a member of staff employed by the Trust. Whilst Party Leader are normally a member of teaching staff, non-teaching staff may also lead trips;
- have prior experience of being an Assistant Leader on similar visits before leading a school party;
- have adequate experience and be competent for the type of trip and activities being undertaken;

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- have been approved as Trip Leader by the Head (or designated senior members of staff).
- 

From September 2022, all residential and overseas party leaders must complete the GDST Trip Leader course run regularly by Peter Cornall, GDST EVA. Please see the CPD site for the next available course.

Trip leader experience can be logged on EVOLVE so the experience of new trip leaders (and members of staff accompanying the trip) can be easily reviewed

More information on Educational visit staff training, experience and competence is available [here](#).

## 6. Trip Planning, Preparation and Approval

### a. Preliminary Approval

The Party Leader should seek preliminary approval for the trip from the Head (or designated senior members of staff) at a very early stage in the planning process using the EVOLVE system (so a full record is available). Having received the outline plan, the Head (or designated senior members of staff) should review it to ensure they are:

- clear about the purpose of the trip;
- satisfied it is suitable for the age, experience and abilities of the pupils;
- satisfied that the Party Leader has appropriate experience and is competent to undertake the planning and organisation for the type of trip being proposed;
- satisfied that a sufficient number of competent staff are willing and able to accompany the trip. (NB have a back-up plan if the trip is some time in the future and it is conceivable that the staff who were planning to lead/ accompany the trip could leave in the meantime.)

For **residential trips**, they must also confirm that the Head, Deputy or another senior member of staff will be available for the duration of the trip to act as the 'emergency contact'.

### b. Detailed Planning and Preparation

This is crucial to the success of any trip - it is impossible to over-emphasise the importance of this process.

Using EVOLVE makes the trip planning process easier, but sufficient time must be programmed in to complete the pre-trip preparation and get final approval for every type of trip / educational visit. Planning for **residential trips** should ideally start **2 terms** before departure, so that any concerns can be addressed in good time. It is appreciated that details may change (e.g. venue opening times, pupil numbers, supervising staff) between the preliminary planning stage and departure, so schools need to have local arrangements for the authorisation of these, and, where necessary, their communication to parents. Changes to itineraries are easy to upload onto EVOLVE, and changes in participants, both pupils and staff,

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can also be easily made. The links into SIMS allow for the most current information to be held electronically.

The Party Leader must:

- Obtain **large scale map** and information relevant to the area to be visited. This will be helpful for the planning process and might be important if there is a security incident in the vicinity of the venue during the visit;
- 
- Wherever practicable, carry out a **reconnaissance visit** to the locality. Collect information such as:
  - travel time,
  - access and permission,
  - facilities and equipment,
  - staff support,
  - guides or programmes of work,
  - shelter, toilets, food/refreshment options
  - costs,
  - arrangements for emergencies – accidents, fire, security incident
  - contingency arrangements (Plan B options),
  - references from previous users (some are available on Evolve)
  - accommodation, leisure opportunities and recreational facilities (residential visits)
- However, if the Party Leader has previously led a trip to the same venue / location, it may be possible, and appropriate, to update essential information without a reconnaissance visit. If a residential visit is organised by a tour company and the party will be accompanied by a tour company representative, a reconnaissance visit may not be necessary.
- Prepare a **detailed plan** of the visit, which should reflect the age and experience of the pupils and the qualifications and experience of accompanying staff and/or venue staff. The plan should make it clear **what** the pupils will be doing, **when** and **where**, and **which** member of staff will be responsible for them every minute of the day, from leaving school until their return. It is important to build in time for regular [briefings](#) (pupils and adults), and during residential visits, some 'off-duty' time for individual members of staff.
- Complete comprehensive [risk assessments](#) for all aspects of the trip / visit and upload them onto Evolve. The more complex and the higher the level of risk, the greater the detail that should be documented to explain how the risks will be eliminated, controlled or mitigated. Where practical, strive to involve pupils in the risk assessment process.
- Ensure detailed [Emergency Procedures](#) are incorporated into the trip plans. It is important that all members of staff accompanying the trip are familiar with the emergency procedures.
- Examples of potential problems that need to have measures agreed in advance to deal with them:
  - Staff or pupils aren't physically fit enough or properly equipped for the planned activities
  - Unexpected disruptions, e.g. delays with travel, or a security incident - importance of having a 'plan B', and a 'plan C',

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- Late return or incident that affects the school trip requiring communication with school and parents – it is essential to have a communication chain in place so that accurate information can be disseminated quickly to parents (This is very easy to do using the EVOLVE system)
- Inappropriate behaviour, eg [consumption of alcohol](#) – it is important that the school's **Code of Conduct** or Behaviour Code for Trips (see 'Related Documents' panel) covers all relevant circumstances
- Pupil falls ill on a trip and needs to return home – arrangements for this including who will accompany them
- Member of staff falls ill on a trip and needs to return home –arrangements for this including who will replace them?
- Pupil, member of staff or any other person accompanying the group starts to display Coronavirus symptoms whilst on a school trip – arrangements to safely isolate them from the rest of the group, and enable their immediate return home. The Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel have produced a document with advice on [planning and managing outdoor learning and off-site visits during the Covid-19/coronavirus pandemic](#)

### (c) Final Approval

Once full planning and preparations are completed, the Head (or designated senior members of staff) must give final approval to the trip by the 'signing off' process on EVOLVE.

## 7. Consent Forms

Up to date [consent forms](#) signed by parents or guardians must be available for all pupils on the trip / visit. They must be accessible to the Party Leader at all times. (Click on the link above for more detailed info re consent forms)

Please note GDPR restrictions require these to be carried in **secure electronic form** (more info in the GDPR document in the 'related documents' panel at the bottom of this page).

Residential, overseas trips and those involving adventurous activities require specific consent for each single trip or visit. Annual or multi-year consent can be given by parents for lower risk day trips and routine off-site sporting activities.

## 8. Supervision

Consideration of the appropriate adult : pupil ratio must be included in the risk assessment and take into account:

- the nature, duration and location of the visit,
- the activities being undertaken, and
- any special needs of pupils.

Specific guidance on supervision ratios can be found [here](#)

## 9. Children and Parents on the Same Trip

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Parent volunteers can accompany a school trip if their own children are on the trip, however, it is recommended that parents do **not** supervise groups that include their own children due to the potential conflicts of interest that might arise, particularly in an emergency, where a parent may feel the need to safeguard their own child ahead of other pupils.

Staff should **not** be one of the supervising members of staff on a trip if their own child(ren) is a member of the group. This is because of the potential conflicts of interest that might arise, particularly in an emergency, which may have consequences for supervision levels. If a member of staff accompanies a trip which their own child(ren) is participating in, they should **not** be included in the supervisory adult : pupil ratios.

If the only way for a particular trip to go ahead is for one of the supervising members of staff's own child(ren) to attend, the potential risks must be considered in detail by the Head (or designated senior members of staff) before approval for them to accompany the trip is given. A risk assessment should be undertaken which includes:

- Age, gender of child compared to the group - Young children may need close supervision, and may not be able to participate in all group activities;
- Activities the group will be undertaking - Children who are not part of the group may not have appropriate, or the same level of experience of various activities as the group members;
- The effect on supervisory ratios if member of staff needs to leave group due to an incident involving their child, e.g. hospitalisation due to illness or serious injury. (A potential replacement member of staff should be on standby and ready to join trip if required);
- Other possible conflicts of interest,

The Head (or designated senior members of staff) must be sure that whatever the eventualities, there will always be a sufficient number of appropriate adults accompanying the trip, wherever in the world the trip takes place. In addition, other members of staff accompanying the trip, and the parents of pupils on trip must be informed that the member of staff's own child(ren) will also be on the trip.

## 10. Regular Briefings for Pupils, Staff and Adult Helpers

These should include:

### Pupils

- What to do if something goes wrong – gets lost, injured, feels ill etc
- Rendezvous procedure for lost group members
- A system of recall and action in emergencies
- Expected standards of student behaviour
- Groupings for study or supervisory purposes
- Explanation of safety signage found in public buildings (mandatory action, prohibition signs, hazard warnings, escape routes etc.)

### Staff and other adults

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- Careful supervision to cover the whole time away
- Anticipation of hazards; plan B in place
- Regular head counts and roll call of students
- Standards of student behaviour expected
- How much help to give to students in their tasks
- A list of names of people in sub-groups

## 11. Transport arrangements - [click here for information](#).

## 12. Mobile Phones

This section should be read in accordance with the [GDST's Safeguarding Procedures](#) (refer to section A3 'Promoting Safe Practice')

A mobile phone, preferably a school phone, must be taken on all educational visits. Ideally, it should be a smart or android phone that can be used to access EVOLVE. More than one school mobile may be required in situations where staff supervise groups at different locations. Whilst staff may want to take their own mobile phones for their own personal use they should avoid giving their own personal number to the pupils except in the event of an emergency.

As far as possible staff should only contact pupils using the school mobile phone. This is to ensure that both staff and pupils are protected and that staff don't have access to pupil personal telephone numbers other than for the duration of the trip. In the event where any pupil or staff personal telephone numbers are used then it is imperative that these numbers are deleted at the end of the trip. Where lists of telephone numbers are provided for an educational visit then these lists should also be destroyed after the trip.

Where staff have used personal phones e.g. in the event of an emergency, then a member of SLT must always be informed.

Where staff use their own personal mobile phones on educational visits (rather than a school mobile) then the Head (or designated senior members of staff) must be aware of this and approve of this practice. Staff should be aware that no pupil telephone numbers should be stored on their personal phones.

Mobile phones are extremely useful during educational visits and particularly in the event of an accident, emergency or for contacting the emergency services. In addition a mobile phone is very useful for keeping in touch with pupils particularly where remote supervision is occurring.

Staff should also be aware of the [GDST Staff ICT Acceptable Use Agreement](#).

## 13. First Aid and Accident Reporting

A suitable number of appropriately qualified **first aiders**, equipped with travelling **first aid kits**, must accompany the visit. The first aid qualifications they need will be determined by the level of risk of the trip / activity. Minimum requirements are specified in the '[First Aid - Educational Visits, Trips and Sporting Events](#)' section. Guidance on the contents of travelling first aid kits

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can be found in the '[First Aid & Medical Room Equipment and Facilities](#)' section. Trip planning on Evolve will not progress if relevant first aid information is not completed.

Copies of **Accident Report** forms (available in the Related Documents panel) for pupils and staff should be taken on the trip so that all relevant details can be recorded at the time of any accidents and logged onto the Sphera reporting system when the group returns to school. (More information in the [Accident Reporting](#) section).

## 14. Insurance

### Travel Insurance

The Trust has a blanket travel insurance covering all schools. Details of cover are available in the [Finance](#) section of the Hub. Details of insurance must be given to parents for residential trips.

### Personal Accident

In addition to any cover provided by the travel insurance, all pupils, school staff and any authorised persons accompanying the Group are covered world-wide for personal accident resulting in permanent injury. (See [Trust Travel Policy](#) for details)

### Personal Belongings and Equipment

Personal belongings and equipment are covered under the GDST travel insurance policy, however the limit for single items is only up to £300 in value. This might not cover some items taken on trips, such as smart phones and tablets. Parents may wish to consider taking out or using their own travel insurance to provide adequate insurance cover.

## 15. Pupils with Special Needs

The Equality Act 2010 prohibits a school from discriminating against or victimising a pupil on the grounds of a protected characteristic (including but not limited to disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief) in various ways, including the way it gives or does not give access to a benefit, facility or service, which includes school trips.

When planning a trip, staff must ensure that they carefully consider the details of the proposed trip, including whether they have a duty to make any reasonable adjustments to make the trip accessible to all pupils. This includes:

- The preparation of an accessibility plan to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum.
- The provision of auxiliary aids where a disabled person would be at a substantial disadvantage without one.
- Considering each pupil's special needs on a case-by-case basis at the trip planning stage in order to anticipate and address where possible any difficulties.

It is not acceptable to impose blanket restrictions, e.g. pupils with epilepsy cannot go on the trip because there will be swimming sessions, or a pupil in a wheelchair cannot go on a geography field trip because they can't be mobile on rough terrain.

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Key steps are:

- Forward planning
- Consider what is 'reasonable'
- Risk Assess any proposed actions/in-actions
- Communicate with parents at an early stage and manage expectations
- Talk to the GDST Legal team about individual cases at an early stage if you have any concerns

#### **Factors to be taken into consideration when deciding what is 'reasonable'**

- The resources of the school and the availability of financial or other assistance
- The financial and other costs of making the adjustment
- The extent to which taking any particular step would be effective in overcoming the substantial disadvantage suffered by a disabled pupil
- The practicability of the adjustment
- The effect of the disability on the individual
- Health and safety requirements
- The interests of other pupils and prospective pupils

Further guidance is available from the [Equality and Human Rights Commission](#) and in the GDST '[Equal Opportunities \(Education\)](#)' and '[Accessibility](#)' policies in the [Innovation and Learning](#) section of the Hub.

## **16. Staff Drinking Alcohol on School Trips**

There is no specific 'ban', as far as we are able to determine, in the general insurance policies that the GDST brokers for all schools. However, there may be clauses in insurances which may have been arranged at a local level or by external agencies such as World Challenge. Some countries and certain organisations also prohibit the possession and consumption of alcohol, whether by minors or adults.

It should be noted that it is a potential disciplinary offence for a member of staff to be at work (as they are when accompanying a school trip) when affected by drink (even if not 'drunk' in the everyday sense of the word) or indeed by other substances which may affect their judgement and behaviour (other than those medically prescribed and of which the school is aware) because being in such a state potentially puts pupils and colleagues at risk and may also undermine discipline and good order and perhaps bring the school into disrepute.

The Head (or designated senior members of staff) should consider the following factors when determining their approach to allowing staff to drink alcohol whilst on school trips:

- The core responsibility of staff, who are in loco parentis, must take priority over all other considerations.
- Staff must be able to respond in any emergency or unforeseen circumstances, for example during the evening, or where more than one member of staff is needed.
- The example which pupils take from the behaviour of staff
- The nature and age range of the pupils and the context of the trip
- Any particular factors, such as the presence of guests, younger children, etc

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- The possible effect on the school or the GDST's reputation, including how this may be perceived by others.

In practical terms, where there are several members of staff accompanying a trip, it might be acceptable for staff to have a small glass of wine at dinner, providing another member of staff acts as the 'designated driver', and remains 'tee-total', but who this will be depends on factors such as who has first aid qualifications, who can drive the available vehicles, whether there are girls and boys on the trip, etc. However, depending on the circumstances, the Head (or designated senior members of staff) may choose to set down a more stringent set of conditions if she/he considers them necessary.

## 17. Record keeping - How long should paperwork/records relating to school trips be kept?

a. Risk Assessments and General Paperwork - Minimum of one year for use in future planning, unless problems were experienced, in which case retain until relevant pupil(s) reach 25.

b. Permission Slips - Generally, if no untoward incidents, suggest for 1 month after trip. If problems experienced, then retain until relevant pupil(s) reach 25.

## 18. Evaluation of School Trips

An evaluation should be completed after each trip or visit and the information used to help plan future trips. This can be done as an on-line exercise using EVOLVE, or a more comprehensive exercise can be done using a paper document. An example 'Evaluation Form' is available in the 'Related Documents' panel at the bottom of this page.

## Residential and Overseas Visits

In addition to the '[Requirements for All Categories of Trips](#)', residential and overseas visits require additional safeguards to be in place. Where adventurous activities take place on residential visits, further safeguards again are required - see '[Adventurous Activities](#)' section.

The guidance, which follows, is intended to apply to educational trips lasting several nights. Heads (or designated senior members of staff) should use their discretion as to how much of this is relevant to an overnight stay, e.g. on the way to a sports tournament.

### 1. Residential Centres / External Activity Providers / Tour Operators

#### Definitions

- A **venue** is somewhere such as a museum, art gallery or theatre, where pupils watch or view activities with little participation other than low risk activities or workshops. The LoTC quality badge is an acceptable check for a 'venue'.
- An **external activity provider** is a person, organisation or centre that provides higher risk and / or adventurous activities that pupils participate in, e.g. rock climbing, either at an external, natural location or an internal venue such as a climbing wall. The LoTC quality badge alone is not an acceptable check on an external activity provider; additional checks and completion of the ***GDST Activity Provider Declaration Form*** (available in the Related Documents Panel at the bottom of this page) are required.

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## External Activity Providers Declaration Form

During the trip / visit planning stage, trip leaders must seek written assurance that Residential Centres / External Activity Providers / Tour Operators:

- meet their legal requirements,
- have adequate H&S, safeguarding and emergency policies and procedures
- have suitable and sufficient risk assessments, implement control measures and follow safe practices
- have suitably qualified and competent staff
- have suitable and safe vehicles, equipment and accommodation
- have adequate liability insurance
- have any licences they need, eg [AALA](#)

Asking Residential Centres / External Activity Providers / Tour Operators to complete the Activity Providers Declaration form (available in the 'Related Documents' panel) and provide key H&S documents will provide much of this information, but the completed form and supporting documentation should be thoroughly reviewed by the trip leader, and more information requested if necessary, before the booking is confirmed.

Some schools have reported a reluctance by some LOtC Quality Badge Holders and members of the 'School Travel Forum' (STF) to complete the 'Activity Providers Declaration' form and provide documentation such as risk assessments and insurance certificates for residential visits and trips including higher risk activities, as they consider 'the badge' / membership should give the school all the reassurance they need. However, the GDST Legal and Health & Safety Advisers still consider that residential centres, activity providers and tour operators should complete the form and provide the school with additional documentation, such as risk assessments and insurance certificates - the greater the risk the more checks we need to make in order to make a good assessment of the risks and demonstrate due diligence.

The EVOLVE system links into LOtC and provides details of a providers Quality Badge and public liability insurance. Adventurous activity providers who are Quality Badge holders have a site visit as part of their LOtC assessment process, however Quality Badge holders do not have to meet the same standards as AALA Licence holders, and are therefore still required to complete the GDST Activity Providers Declaration form.

### Tour Operators

If a Tour Operator is arranging accommodation and activities, the Party Leader must make the school's requirements and expectations very clear. The arrangements for the trip should include seeking confirmation that all those requirements have been met, and particularly that all aspects of the visit organised by the tour operator meet relevant health and safety standards.

Where the Tour Operator is arranging accommodation with overseas [host families](#), the operator should be asked to confirm that appropriate local checks have been made on the suitability of such accommodation from a child protection perspective. If there is no local

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vetting procedure, the Party Leader should seek further assurances or consider if the trip should take place.

The GDST has a framework agreement with a number of tour operators. The preferred supplier list is available in the [Finance>Procurement Frameworks](#) section of the Hub

### **Information on Overseas Safety and Security Risks**

Knowledge about possible safety and security risks in a location is very useful, both at the early trip planning stages and close to departure date - forewarned is forearmed, and being prepared gives trip leaders an added layer of reassurance.

There are a number of organisations that, for a fee, can provide detailed information about risks that might affect a trip, including extreme weather events, local security threats and events that could disrupt travel plans and visit itineraries, eg air traffic controllers strikes, planned demonstrations and marches in cities. Organisations include:

- [Drum Cussac](#) - offer FREE daily risk alerts, alongside many other services
- [World Aware](#) (previously Red24) – offer a FREE daily news service (example attached) amongst other services
- [Control Risks](#)
- [Risk Advisory Group](#)
- [Anvil](#)

### **Joint Trips with other Schools**

There should be one over all Party Leader. The Head (or designated senior members of staff) should be satisfied with the procedures in place at the partner school if these are to form the basis of the planning of the trip. The responsibility of the staff of each school for the pupils of the other should be agreed and made clear to the pupils and their parents.

### ***Supervision on Residential and Overseas Visits***

Consideration of the appropriate adult : pupil ratio must be included in the risk assessment and take into account:

- the nature, duration and location of the visit,
- the activities being undertaken, and
- any special needs of pupils.

Specific guidance on supervision ratios can be found [here](#)

## **5. Information To and From Parents**

Parents need **detailed information** in order to decide if their daughter should participate in residential and overseas trips, eg costs, travel arrangements, accommodation details, itineraries and specifics about the activities the pupils will be taking part in. The Package Holiday Regulations also require certain information to be given to parents in advance of

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making payment. A template letter indicating the points to include can be found in the 'Related Documents' panel below. If not all information is available at the time of writing, this should be stated and follow up information sent as soon as possible. Communication with parents can be managed through EVOLVE, and letters to parents should be uploaded into each trip's folder. Confirmation of payment, or a signed agreement to pay for the trip, legally signifies consent, providing adequate information has been provided in advance.

A **meeting** should be held with parents in advance of the trip taking place in order to:

- give a full briefing of the trip;
- check medical advice has been understood and explain any vaccination requirements. Pupils with individual health care plans may need their GP to advise on special arrangements or precautions in advance of the trip;
- check passports/European Health Insurance Cards (EHIC) are available, in date, and have sufficient time before they expire
- advise on Visa requirements;
- check [consent forms](#) have been fully completed and signed (separate 'Residential Consent' form required for each trip).
- explain insurance cover (parents should be given a copy of the Policy);
- explain the importance of ensuring emergency contact numbers/details are up to date;
- go through the [emergency procedure](#);
- advise on clothing / equipment needed;
- go through Behaviour Code/**Code of Conduct** (see 'Related Documents' panel);
- explain arrangements if students to be unaccompanied at any time;
- agree pocket money.

A meeting is useful both to reassure parents the pupils are in safe hands and as another check for the Party Leader that planning and preparation has been thorough.

## 6. Accommodation

A range of accommodation is used by schools on residential visits including:

- Accommodation provided as part of a package at a residential education centre
- Hotels and hostels
- Self-catering accommodation
- Tents and bunk houses on camp sites with more or less facilities depending on the location

The accommodation should be:

- Suitable for the age of the pupils and size of the group
- Support the learning objectives of the visit
- If appropriate, be accessible to people with disabilities.

Irrespective of the type of residential experience, there are some general issues that need to be recognised and managed. When selecting accommodation, consider:

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- Its nature, location and the hazards of the immediate surroundings. The internet can provide very useful information if a pre-visit is not feasible.
- Whether or not the sleeping accommodation is exclusively for the group's use, and whether or not the bedrooms are located next to each other, and on the same, or different floors.
- If the group leaders sleeping accommodation provides easy access to the whole group.
- If shower and toilet facilities are not en-suite, what arrangements are necessary for managing the use of shared facilities.
- How secure the residential accommodation is against external intrusion. Better security may be provided by a 24 hour staffed reception and avoiding ground floor rooms, but If the building is shared with other users, can individual rooms be secured?
- Fire safety (see [more information below](#))
- Building hazards, eg
  - Windows – If above ground level, is the opening width restricted?
  - Balconies - Does the structure appear solid? Are the railings high enough? (UK building regulations require 1.1m) Are the pupils who occupy the rooms mature and sensible enough to behave safely?
  - Railings – do they allow or encourage people to climb on them and lean over? Do they have big gaps?
  - Bunk beds – risk of falling off and serious injuries
  - Stone/ceramic tiled floors – risk of slipping and serious injuries
  - Bars and public spaces – how will access managed? Will mini bars in rooms be emptied?
- Will the catering meet requirements, including food intolerances, allergies and lifestyle choices, eg vegetarian.
- What are the dining facilities
- Where will students be able to spend their free time? Can it be supervised?

## Fire Safety

- Fire safety standards should be checked as part of the accommodation selection process. The '[Activity Providers Declaration](#)' form (see 'Related Document' tab) asks for specific information regarding fire safety.
- From a fire rescue perspective it is better not to sleep above the sixth or seventh floor (the limit of external rescue by the fire services) so as to make evacuating the building easier.
- Many fires are started by electrical faults. Be aware of electrical appliances fitted in rooms (e.g. kettles, hairdryers, heaters, fridge) and ensure pupils are briefed about any issues with these and also their own electrical items (e.g. hair appliances, mobile phones, chargers).
- An '[Emergency Evacuation Procedure](#)' for accommodation on residential trips is outlined below - it will need to be adapted to the local circumstances.

## Visit Leader Accommodation Arrival Checklist

- Is the accommodation as expected / booked
- What does the fire alarm sounds like and where is the assembly point?
- Check fire exit routes are signed, clear and working

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- Make an initial assessment of the hazards of the accommodation and the immediate surroundings so you can brief the group about any safety issues
- Assess public areas (inside and outside the accommodation). Decide how these will be managed, boundaries and meeting places
- Check each room for:
  - Breakages, damage or missing items – record and report these
  - Windows and balconies
  - Door security
  - Electrical hazards
  - Fire/smoke detectors
  - Carbon monoxide sources
  - Routes to fire exits
  - Mini bar
- Check toilet and shower areas
  - Breakages, damage or missing items – record and report these
  - Windows
  - Door security
  - Electrical hazards
- Do you have / can you get access to a master key for the pupil's rooms?
- Check the security of the building overnight, from both external intrusion and internal movement

### Recommended Emergency Evacuation Procedures for Residential Trips

1. **Prior to the trip** appoint a member of staff as an **evacuation coordinator**, ie not directly responsible for completing the roll call for a group. In the event of an evacuation they should:
  1. Do an overall head count (as a double check),
  2. Liaise with each of the group leaders to ensure everyone is accounted for,
  3. Help maintain order if girls start to panic and 'mob' the group leader,
  4. Liaise with centre staff, eg if anyone is missing, there is a need to move to another location, or to find out when it is safe to re-enter the building.
2. **Prior to the trip** prepare **emergency packs** that all staff should have and keep by bedside (so it can be taken with them in the event of an evacuation):
  1. Torch – in case emergency lighting is too dim or not working. This could be on a mobile phone, a head torch or a hand torch,
  2. List of all girls in group, and list of girls that each group leader will be checking are present in a roll call,
  3. Floor plan of residential accommodation indicating which room each girl is sleeping in,
  4. List of key codes for all doors to enable them to be opened from the outside, e.g. if someone is stuck inside and can't get out,
3. **Prior to the trip** all staff to be reminded of the **procedure for sweeping bedrooms and bathrooms/WCs** in the event of a night time evacuation:
  1. Identify who is responsible for checking each room/bathroom/WC,
  2. Ensure all staff know procedure for sweeping, including checking under the beds and patting all the way down/fully turning back bedcovers on every bed in the room to ensure that all the beds are empty (in this context safety concerns outweigh safeguarding issues) (NB girls may swap beds/ snuggle deep down under the covers/sleep at the opposite end of the bed).

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4. **Prior to the trip** document a [Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan](#) (PEEP) for anyone in the group that needs one. (Think about sight and hearing impairments as well as mobility impairments).
5. **On day of arrival:**
  1. Ensure everyone knows what the fire alarm sounds like.
  2. Staff and pupils walk all fire exit routes they might need to use – familiarisation exercise,
  3. Staff and pupils familiarise themselves with all the muster points they might need to use,
  4. Review Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) if anyone in the group needs one.
  5. Organise a 'buddy system' so that each girl makes sure her buddy(s) is with her in the event of an evacuation, and inform the person in charge of the roll call if they think someone is missing.
  6. Staff to remind girls to take a coat/blanket and wear shoes for night time evacuations,
  7. Staff to remind girls about fire risks associated with hair straighteners/tongs, etc and to ensure they are unplugged when not in use. Also mobile phone chargers should not be left plugged in overnight.
  8. Staff to check all fire escape routes to ensure they are clearly signed, free of obstructions, that fire doors can be easily opened by children in dim light (think – could the smallest child reach & open the highest locking device?), and that final exit routes are clear (no parked cars, bins or bushes preventing the door opening)
  9. Staff to check emergency lighting works on both internal and external exit routes/ muster points (ask the centre staff to show you recent test records or demonstrate this to you).
6. **Conduct a fire drill** on day of arrival.
7. **At the end of every evening** a member of staff should check that all fire exit routes are clear / unlocked.

## 7. Foreign Exchange Visits

**Hosting Exchange Visits** - Information on DBS requirements for Host Families can be found in the GDST [Safeguarding Procedures](#) document.

**Exchange Trips Outside the UK** - As there is no equivalent to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) outside the UK, schools participating in exchange trips outside the UK should make suitable enquiries about host families. This might include:

- Using a reputable (UK based) agency if one is being used to find host families;
- If a school is finding host families, making sure that they think the host families are suitable;
- Giving pupils local contact numbers in case they need assistance whilst they are on the exchange.

If pupils live with families, but a member of staff is present in the locality, it should be made clear to pupils and host families when the member of staff will be available at an agreed location. It is important to ensure that all pupils know how to contact a member of staff immediately if they have any unease about the family with whom they are staying. Staff

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should be alert to any pupil whose behaviour appears to suggest that they are unhappy or 'out of sorts'.

Information should be given to the host families regarding any special medical needs that individual pupils may have and procedures for action to be taken in the case of illness/accident. Parents should be aware of the arrangements. A protocol should also be established for host families to clarify expectations e.g. number of beds, meals, privacy.

If activities are planned with a foreign school, it is important that the extent of responsibility of the foreign staff is agreed with them in advance and that pupils are aware when the foreign school staff are in charge. The usual expectation is that the staff at the host school will be responsible for the safety of the pupils whilst attending the school. Outside the school day, other than on excursions organised by the host school, the accompanying Trust staff will be responsible.

Whenever a member of staff is advised of the illness or accident involving a pupil s/he should investigate personally immediately and inform the pupil's parents straight away.

## **Outdoor and Adventurous Activities - External Provider Led and School Led**

This section applies to all higher risk activities that take part during school trips and off-site enrichment activities. The requirements are in addition to the requirements for 'All Visits' and 'Residential / Overseas' visits.

[DfES Guidance is available here.](#)

The [Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel](#) (OEAP) and ['Independent Outdoor'](#) are also useful sources of guidance.

### *1. Definition*

Outdoor and adventurous activities are higher risk activities. When they are included in the trip planning process on Evolve you will be required to state whether the activity is run by an 'external activity provider' or is being 'led by school staff'.

Outdoor and Adventurous Activities include:

- Skiing, snowboarding, sledging, tobogganning, snow-mobiling, ski jumping, use of bobsleighs and skeleton-bobs
- Watersports - canoeing, kayaking, white-water rafting, sailing, windsurfing, snorkling, sub-aqua, scuba-diving, jet-skiing, use of powerboats, surfing and stand-up paddleboarding (SUP)
- Climbing involving the use of ropes, rock-climbing, abseiling, mountaineering, caving, potholing, gyhll scrambling, gorge walking, canyoning and coasteering
- High-ropes activities
- Horse riding

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- Aerial activities (other than as a fare-paying passenger on a commercial flight) eg ballooning, bungee jumping, base jumping, gliding, hang-gliding, micro-lighting, paragliding, parachuting, parascending, skydiving
- Motor car and motor cycle sport, go-karting, quad biking
- Expeditions to remote areas, eg mountains and moorlands, both in the UK and abroad.
- Hiking and trekking over 400m above sea level

## *2. Use of Activity Centres and Specialist Sports Providers, eg. Riding Schools, Dry and Indoor Ski Slopes, Water Sports Centres and Climbing Walls*

During the planning stage, trip /activity leaders **must** seek written assurance that Sports / Activity Centres:

- meet their legal requirements,
- have adequate H&S, safeguarding and emergency policies and procedures
- have suitable and sufficient risk assessments, implement control measures and follow safe practices
- have suitably qualified and competent staff
- have suitable and safe vehicles, equipment and accommodation
- have adequate liability insurance
- have any licences they need, e.g. [AALA](#)

Asking Sports / Activity Centres to complete the Activity Providers Declaration form (available in the 'Related Documents' panel) and provide key H&S documents will provide much of this information, but the completed form and supporting documentation should be thoroughly reviewed by the trip leader, and more information requested if necessary, before the booking is confirmed. (More info re the Activity Providers Declaration Form [here](#))

## **AALA**

Activity centres providing caving, climbing, trekking (foot, pony, bicycle or ski) or water sports (other than rowing) and associated activities or young people in England, Wales and Scotland **must** have a current **AALA licence**; for more information see <http://www.hse.gov.uk/aala/> An AALA licence is the highest level of safety accreditation for an activity provider.

The Centre will be responsible for ensuring the safety of the pupils during activities organised and supervised by Centre staff.

## *3. Supervision and Adult : Pupil Ratios*

Specific guidance on supervision ratios can be found [here](#)

## 4. Qualifications of Leaders and Instructors

Activity leaders and instructors, whether school staff or centre / provider staff, must have relevant qualifications approved by the sport's National Governing Body (NGB) within the

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UK. This is also relevant to UK based companies working overseas. Purely overseas companies are not likely to follow UK standards, however, check to see if they comply with their national or international standards, eg PADI for sub-aqua/diving. Please refer to the **Adventurous Activity Training Matrix** (in the 'Related Documents' panel) for relevant NGB qualifications. Wherever possible, qualifications should be checked in advance by the Party Leader. If this is not possible they should be checked in arrival at the venue by the party leader.

Further information about outdoor and adventurous activities are contained in the AfPE's book "Safe Practice in Physical Education and Sport" (2016) ISBN 978-1-905540-54-9. Your PE Department should have a copy.

## 5. Duke of Edinburgh Award

Due to the particular requirements of the DofE programme, there will be different guidelines in place particularly to the supervision of participants in expeditions. If this is the case, DofE safety guidance will take priority, but the Head (or designated senior members of staff) must approve any departure from the Trust's guidance.

## 6. Swimming, Water Sports and Water Based Activities

If pupils are going to (or might) participate in swimming, water sports or water based activities (e.g. boat trips, field work in or very close to water) parents should be given full information about the activities before they commit to the trip, so that they can give informed consent. The [Swimming / Water Sports / Water Based Activities Consent Form](#) must be completed and signed by the parents of each pupil going on the trip, and a detailed risk assessment of the swimming / water sports / water based activities must be undertaken. Relevant safeguards include:

- Knowledge that all participants are confident in water and can swim (confirmation should be obtained from the revised parental consent form, PE staff, or a test arranged before the trip),
- Provision of lifeguard (see [Swimming Activities](#) section),
- Qualifications of swimming / water sports instructors
- Availability of safety and rescue equipment
- Train pupils in water safety and rescue skills.

Parental declaration of competence should not just be used in isolation as proof of swimming capability. If the pupils swimming ability is not well known or the school leader has no knowledge of their water confidence and ability, consideration should be given to carrying out swimming tests.

The requirements for pool supervision and lifeguard qualifications in pools / swimming activities whilst on school trips is the same as when pupils are swimming in the school pool - see the [swimming activities](#) section for detailed information.

## 7. Skiing / Snowboarding

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It is strongly recommended that all members of the skiing party, including pupils, staff and any other adults accompanying the party, wear helmets when they are skiing/snow boarding. In many ski resorts it is compulsory for children of 14 years or less to wear helmets when skiing.

It is recommended that staff organising school ski trips attend a 1-day 'Ski Course Organiser' training course delivered by a Snowsport England coach. This course covers the issues to take into consideration when organising a ski trip, e.g. your choice of tour operator, choice of destination resort, organisation of money, people and ski and snowboard equipment. NB This course is occasionally included in the GDST CPD programme.

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