

EDUCATIONAL VISITS AND OFF-SITE ACTIVITIES POLICY

Legal Status:

- The school complies with the Regulatory Requirements, Part 3, Paragraph 12 of The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) (Amendment) Regulations.
- Health and Safety Department of Education (DfE) advice on legal duties and powers for local authorities, Headteachers, staff and governing bodies (DfE 2014)
- Health and Safety Executive (HSE) School trips and outdoor learning activities tackling the health and safety myths (HSE July 2011)
- The school has regard to guidance and advice from the Outdoor Education Advisory Panel (OEAP 2013)

Applies to:

- the Whole School including Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) who have appendix to this policy entitled 'Visits And Outings For Children In The Early Years Foundation Stage' and guidance for staff conducting risk assessments for EYFS outings;
- out of school care, the breakfast club, the afterschool clubs, the holiday club and all other activities provided by the school, inclusive of those outside of the normal school hours;
- all staff (teaching and support staff), the proprietor and volunteers working in the school.

Related Documents:

- EYFS Appendix for Educational Visits and Off-Site Activities
- Action to be taken by the Group Leader in the event of a serious accident
- Behaviour Management on Outdoor and Off-site Activities
- Behaviour Discipline and Sanctions Policy
- The Mission Statement
- Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHEE) and Citizenship
- Equal Opportunities
- Critical Incident/Crisis Management
- Health and Safety policies
- The Staff Handbook
- Other related policies together with EYFS.

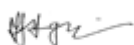
Availability:

This policy is made available to parents, staff and pupils in the following ways: via the School website www.pointers-school.co.uk, and on request, a copy may be obtained from the Office.

Monitoring and Review:

- This policy will be subject to continuous monitoring, refinement and audit by the Headmaster.
- The Proprietor (who is also the Headmaster) will undertake a formal review of this policy for the purpose of monitoring and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged, by no later than two years from the date shown below, or earlier if significant changes to the systems and arrangements take place, or if legislation, regulatory requirements or best practice guidelines so require.

Signed:



Mr

R.J.S. Higgins

Headmaster and Proprietor

Date: August 2017

The Pointer School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. It is our aim that all pupils fulfil their potential.

Learning Outside the Classroom Educational Visits and Off-Site Activities Policy

At The Pointer School, we offer our children a broad and balanced curriculum that promotes their spiritual, moral, cultural, intellectual and physical development, and prepares them for the opportunities and experiences of adult life. We seek to deliver an appropriate curriculum to all children, regardless of social background, race, gender or differences in ability. All children are entitled to the development of knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes. To enrich the curriculum for our children, we also offer a range of educational visits and other activities that add to what they learn in our school.

All visits have clear, relevant and achievable aims and objectives, supporting our practices and policies, and allowing our children and staff to interact less formally than usual, thus improving child/staff relationships. In order to promote safe practice, the school monitors, and where necessary challenges, the educational objectives that have been stated for a visit. Before the school decides to arrange an educational visit, we consider educational objectives and how they are to be achieved.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that trips are planned in an organised and responsible fashion, and that the health, safety, and welfare of pupils and staff are maintained. The school uses recent and relevant guidance published by the 'Outdoor Education Advisory Panel' which has been approved by HSE. We ensure that our school fulfils its responsibilities for visits, including:

- pupils' behaviour
- plans visits to include risk assessments and first aid;
- ensures appropriate supervision including ratios and vetting checks;
- prepares pupils for visits including those with special and medical needs;
- communicates with parents;
- plans transport;
- has insurance in place;
- makes appropriate arrangements for the range and types of visit;
- has emergency procedures, including contact details and permission for emergency medical treatment if a parent cannot be contacted.

The school ensures that it follows both DfE and Health and Safety at Work guidance and regulations (including those issued by the LA and the Headmaster of the School) concerning activities that take place off school premises. Although not a requirement, the school has appointed an Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC).

Parents are informed where their child will be at all times and of any extra safety measures required. Written consent is requested for activities which require a higher level of risk management.

Equal Opportunities and Inclusion

We are an inclusive school. The challenge is to make activities available and accessible to all who wish to participate or are required to take part. This is to be achieved whilst maintaining the safety of all those concerned, the integrity of the activity and the ability to manage the visit or venture. The school recognises that there are significant factors to be managed which may override other considerations. Our risk assessments are within the context of the school's Equality and Diversity Policy.

Special Educational Needs, Disability and Learning Outside the Classroom

Where pupils are identified as having particular special needs this is reflected in a higher staffing ratio, which is never less than that which applies in the school and in most cases is higher. Our three year Accessibility Plan takes into consideration the environment, the curriculum and the provision of information.

We do not discriminate against a disabled pupil either intentionally or unintentionally where such discrimination can be prevented by taking "*reasonable measures*". All our children are included in all off-campus visits. Where their inclusion appears to require special adjustments, a risk assessment is undertaken. This is in two parts: firstly in terms of a whole visit or activity and then secondly in relation to the inclusion of the individual pupil. The risk assessment includes details of any special aids and equipment that the pupil may need and, in particular, details of any such items to be brought from home or obtained prior to the visit. This will usually entail discussion with

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the pupil, parents, Group Leader and other supervisors, the manager of the venue to be visited, the tour operator etc.

Where appropriate, the Pointer School ensures:

- one to one supervision whilst being appropriate in the classroom or during less complex activities outside the classroom, may not be enough during activities that are more complex;
- two to one supervision may be advisable when, for example, a participant has a history of wandering or otherwise leaving the area of supervision;
- the adult assigned to the supervision or care of one particular participant should not be included in the ratio for the group as a whole.

The decision on the ratio and additional requirements to meet the need of the child, will involve discussion with others including the pupils, parents, Group Leader, other supervisors, the manager of the venue to be visited and the tour operator.

Responsibilities and the Health and Safety at Work Legislation

Legislation is enforced by the Health and Safety Executive, which has set out to clarify the position in its Health and Safety: Responsibilities and Powers (2001) document. Overall responsibility is with the Proprietor to ensure the health and safety of:

- teachers, non-teaching staff and other leaders;
- children and young people, both in their establishments and when undertaking off-site visits and ventures;
- visitors to the educational establishments and volunteers involved in approved activity.

Mobile Phones and Cameras

A group leader will have a mobile phone which will be used for educational purposes. Cameras are provided by the school for educational purposes.

Recognising the benefit of learning away from the school

'Well-managed school trips and outdoor activities are great for children. Children won't learn about risk if they're wrapped up in cotton wool.'

In striking the right balance between protecting pupils from risk and allowing them to learn from educational visits we:

- provide learning opportunities for all our pupils;
- focus on real risks when planning educational visits and manage these risks during the off-site activities;
- ensure those running the activity understand their roles, are supported and are competent to lead or take part in them.

What our staff should expect from our school

'Teachers should expect their schools to have procedures that encourage participation, are proportionate to the level of risk and avoid bureaucracy.'

Our school ensures that the precautions proposed are proportionate to the risks involved, and that our paperwork is easy to use. We also take account of assessments and procedures of any other organisations involved, and ensure that communications with others are clear. Our arrangements also ensure that;

- risk assessment focuses attentions on real risks – not risks that are trivial and fanciful;
- proportionate systems are in place – so that trips presenting lower-risk activities are quick and easy to organise, and higher-risk activities (Such as those involving climbing, caving or water-based activities) are properly planned and assessed;
- those planning the trips are properly supported – so that staff can readily check if they have taken sufficient precautions or whether they should do more;
- Staff are given the training they need to keep themselves and children safe and manage the risks effectively.

What our school, pupils and parents should expect from the staff

'Those running school trips need to focus on the risks and the benefits to people – not the paperwork.'

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Our staff running school trips should clearly communicate information about the planned activities to colleagues and pupils (and parents where appropriate).

This should explain what the precautions are and why they are necessary. Those running school trips act responsibly by:

- putting sensible precautions in place, and making sure these work in practice;
- knowing when and how to apply contingency plans where they are necessary;
- heeding advice and warnings from others, for example those with local knowledge or specialist expertise (especially in respect of higher-risk activities).

What does assessing or managing risks mean?

Health and safety law often refers to risk assessment and risk management. These are terms used to describe the process of thinking about the risks of any activities and taking steps to counter them. A written assessment is not required for every activity. Our teachers should assume they only need to carry out a written risk assessment in exceptional circumstances. Where a risk assessment is carried out, the Proprietor must record the significant findings of the assessment.

Some activities, especially those happening away from school such as mountaineering, canoeing sailing, involve higher levels of risk. In these cases an assessment of significant risks should be carried out. Our Headmaster ensures that the person assessing the risks understands the risks and is familiar with the activity that is planned. However, a risk assessment is certainly not needed every time our school takes pupils to a local venue such as the library.

Our school will always take a commonsense and proportionate approach, remembering that in schools the purpose of risk assessment and management is to help children to undertake activities safely, not to prevent activities from taking place. We cannot remove risk altogether and we do not require needless or unhelpful paperwork.

Tackling myths about legal action

We understand that some schools and teachers worry about being prosecuted if an accident occurs. The HSE *policy statement School trips and outdoor learning activities: Tackling the health and safety myths* explains that HSE's main interest is in real risks arising from serious breaches of the law, such as a trip leader taking pupils canoeing but not ensuring they were all wearing buoyancy equipment.

The Statement makes clear that HSE wants to encourage all schools and local authorities to remove wasteful bureaucracy – so that they focus only on real risks and not on paperwork. It also explains what HSE takes into account when deciding whether to prosecute following an accident. This might include the severity of the injury, how far good practice was followed, the seriousness of the breach of the law and whether it is in the public interest to prosecute. More details can be found at <http://www.hse.gov.uk/enforce/enforcepolicy.htm>. Criminal cases relating to accidents in schools are very rare. Sometimes civil proceedings in negligence can be taken against an employer or an individual member of staff. However, legal action for negligence against schools is only likely to be successful if:

- the school has not taken care of a child in a way that a prudent parent would have done;
- as a result, the child has been injured; and
- the injury was a foreseeable consequence.

Risk Assessments

Risk assessment 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 aim is to make sure no one gets hurt or becomes ill. The control measures should be understood by those involved. Risk assessments should explicitly cover how special educational needs and medical needs are to be addressed. The programme of a visit should include details of contingency measures. The Group Leader in consultation with the Education Visits Coordinator (EVC) assesses potential risks of a proposed visit, and concludes the necessary safety measures which need to be put in place to minimise these

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risks. Risk assessment/s will be drawn up before the activity, if relevant adapted from a generic model, agreed with the EVC and signed off by the Headmaster and copies given to all staff involved.

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

- **generic activity risk assessments**, which are likely to apply to the activity wherever and whenever it takes place;
- **visit/site specific risk assessments** which will differ from place to place and group to group; and
- **ongoing risk assessments** that take account of, for example, illness of staff or children, changes of weather, availability of preferred activity.

The risk assessment should take into account the type of visit, location, means of transport, number of children, staff ratios required, competence and first aid experience of participating staff, required level of first aid equipment, age of children, possible weather conditions, participation of children with particular medical requirements, emergency procedures in the case of a child requiring medical treatment, insurance for the visit, appropriateness, insurance cover of any external providers and operators involved in transport – ensuring that all transport providers have the required Public Service Vehicle operators' licence.

Staff/pupil ratios

The ratio of school children to adults varies according to the age of the children, the nature of the activity and the special educational needs. The school will err to the side of caution on this matter. There are no circumstances under which the staffing ratios are less generous than those to be found in school. With very young children, and those with special needs, it may be necessary to have a one to one staffing ratio. There will be times when the following staffing ratio is appropriate:

- Early Years Nursery – 1 adult for every 4 children;
- Early Years Reception – 1 adult for every 5 children;
- Years 1 and Year 2 - 1 adult for every 6 children;
- Years 3 – 6 – 1 adult for every 8 children.

The above staff pupil ratio is certainly not needed every time our school takes pupils to a local venue such as the library and local church. There must always be a minimum of 2 staff with each class.

Local visits (Blackheath) staff pupil ratio:

- Early Years Nursery – 1 adult for every 8 children;
- Early Years Reception – 1 adult for every 10 children;
- Years 1 and Year 2 - 1 adult for every 10 children;
- Years 3 – 6 – 1 adult for every 18 children

The above are examples only and Group Leaders should assess the risks and consider an appropriate safe supervision level for their particular group.

All groups on a visit outside the school grounds will be accompanied by a minimum of two adults and that where groups contain both boys and girls, wherever possible there is an adult of each sex. This is essential on residential visits.

Regular contact must be kept with pupils who are enjoying non-direct supervision e.g. at a theme park or on a visit to a town. Pupils should only be allowed non-direct supervision within a strictly defined area and should be given firm guidelines as to the behaviour expected. They should be aware of where members of staff may be found. Pupils are instructed to remain in groups of at least 3 at all times.

Preparation for an off-site educational activity:

Pupils should, as far as possible, be involved in the planning of the activity, undertake appropriate roles whilst it is in progress and be involved in identifying Health and Safety issues that may arise. They should know the expectations of the Leader and have a full understanding of the parameters covering all aspects of the trip or activity. Where appropriate pupils should be given a check list of what to do in various situations and should be

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given the mobile number of the Leader so that contact can be made should the need arise over transport issues or in the case of an incident.

Duties and Responsibilities of the Proprietor (Employer)

Under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974, the employer in a school must take reasonable steps to ensure that staff and pupils are not exposed to risks to their health and safety. This applies to activities on or off school premises.

Regulations made under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 set out in more detail what actions employers are required to take. For example, the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 require employers to:

- assess the risks to staff and others affected by school activities in order to identify the health and safety measures that are necessary and, in certain circumstances, keep a record of the significant findings of that assessment;
- introduce measures to manage those risks (risk management);
- tell their employees about the risks and measures to be taken to manage the risks;
- ensure that adequate training is given to employees on health and safety matters.

Our School sets out health and safety arrangements in a written health and safety policy.

The Proprietor must be made aware of all off-campus visits. It is for the Proprietor to arrange for the most appropriate method of the communication for this. It is the responsibility of the Proprietor to ensure that:

- the off-campus activity or visit is appropriate and relevant;
- the establishment can be run efficiently in the absence of staff engaged in the activity or visit.

Responsibilities of the Headmaster

This is the key role for ensuring that the management of visits and ventures meets the regulations and guidance offered by the LA, DfE and others, as well as conforming to The Pointer School Health and Safety policy. This management process is in conjunction with the expectations and standards that are to be achieved by making the most of the positive learning opportunities presented. Our delegation of responsibilities is done with a clear rationale, derived from a good knowledge of the people concerned; the visits and activities; the aims and objectives; and the risk assessments they require. We delegate some tasks to the EVC.

Duty as an employee

The law requires employees to:

- take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by what they do at work;
- co-operate with their employers on health and safety matters;
- do their work in accordance with training and instructions;
- inform the employer of any work situation representing a serious and immediate danger, so that remedial action can be taken.

In addition, all staff in our school have a common law duty to act as any prudent parent would do when in charge of pupils. Employees should follow any health and safety procedures put in place by their employer. However if they feel that the procedure is inappropriate (e.g. it is too bureaucratic) they should discuss this with their employer and request that it is reviewed. Usually the headmaster will work with the employer to ensure that the procedures at the school are proportionate, effective and appropriate.

Our Teachers on school-led visits act as employees of the Proprietor, whether the visit takes place within normal working hours or outside those hours, by agreement with the Proprietor. Our Teachers will do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group and act as any prudent and reasonable parent would do in the same circumstances. They will:

- follow the instructions of the Group Leader and help with control and discipline;

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- consider stopping the visit or the activity, notifying the Group Leader, if they think the risk to the health or safety of the pupils in their charge is unacceptable;
- be aware of potential conflicts of interest if their own children are members of the group and discuss beforehand with the Group Leader.

Training

Our Proprietor ensures that staff are given the health and safety training they need for their job. This certainly doesn't mean that all employees have to attend a training course. It may simply mean providing them with basic instructions or information about health and safety in the school. Staff who do work which involves a greater element of risk, such as using woodworking machines, will need more training. There is more information available at <http://www.hse.gov.uk/simple-health-safety/provide.htm>

Responsibility

Responsibility within our school for the approval of visits remains with the Headmaster.

The school EVC will ensure that all necessary actions have been completed before the visit begins. This includes that a pre-trip visit has taken place, risk assessments and appropriate safety measures are in place, suitably competent instruction is available for the activity, the ratio of supervisors to children is appropriate and that arrangements have been made for the medical needs and special educational needs the children. It is good practice for a member of staff leading a group to visit the site beforehand to gain first-hand knowledge of the area and route. This knowledge will then inform the risk assessment and pre-planning.

The EVC oversees:

- that staff have appointed a suitable group leader for each visit;
- all necessary actions have been completed before the visit begins. (This applies even when the head is not going on the visit);
- the risk assessment is complete and that it is safe to make the visit;
- training needs have been met;
- the group leader has experience in supervising and controlling the age groups going on the visit and will organise the group effectively;
- the group leader has relevant skills, qualifications and experience if acting as an instructor, and knows the location of the activity;
- all supervisors on the visit are appropriate people to supervise children and have appropriate clearance;
- parents have signed consent forms;
- arrangements have been made for all the medical needs and special educational needs of all the children;
- the mode of travel is appropriate;
- travel times out and back are known;
- there is adequate and relevant insurance cover;
- they have the address and phone number of the visit's venue and have a contact name;
- that they have the names of all the adults and pupils in the travelling group, and the contact details of parents and the staff's and volunteers' next of kin.

The following functions will be carried out by the office:

- to confirm that the leadership of the visit is appropriate and to check staff qualifications, this to include accompanying staff and volunteers;
- to confirm that adequate risk assessments have been carried out;
- to ensure that liaison with parents and obtaining consent are effective.

The Group Leader

The Group Leader, who is the person with overall responsibility for the administration, programme, supervision and conduct of the venture, is an important part of the health and safety and good practice support system. Our Group Leaders should demonstrate the ability to undertake a comprehensive review of the needs of the venture and in particular be able to risk assess the locations, groups travelling and leader competencies, in order to put good risk management procedures in place, that they can monitor and use. Relevant experience is essential along with accepting the need to:

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- agree specific roles, responsibilities and communications systems;
- agree incident and emergency procedures, the who, where and what of such situations;
- agree what will happen if the practicalities of the day require a major adaptation of the programme (ongoing risk assessment);
- have high expectations of what the children, young people and the venture can achieve.

It is the Group Leader's responsibility to ensure that all accompanying adults have group lists. Group Leaders and accompanying staff must carry these with them at all times. These lists should show:

- Who is in their group
- The name and telephone number of the contact person/s who can be contacted in an emergency
- Full details of pupils names, telephone numbers and any medical issues
- For overseas visits, a copy of all pupil and staff passports should be taken prior to departure and kept with the Group Leader during the visit.

The Group Leader must also ensure that there is a contact person available throughout the period that the group is off-site. In addition, an accurate list of participants with the Group Leader's mobile telephone number must be forwarded to the EVC prior to the visit.

Preliminary Visits and Provider Assurances

All visits should be thoroughly researched to establish the suitability of the venue and to check that facilities and third party provision will meet group expectations. Such information gathering is essential in assessing the requirements for effective supervision of young people. It is a vital dimension of risk management.

Wherever reasonably practicable, it is good practice to carry out a preliminary visit. The EVC will advise on this in each specific case. A pre-visit is usually required for visits where there is a high complexity factor and the visit has not happened previously, or when the visit is adventurous and led by staff. If the visit is led and managed by a provider, then a variety of approaches can reduce the need to pre visit. It is good practice for Visit Leaders to take full advantage of the nationally accredited, provider assurance schemes that are now available, thus reducing bureaucracy.

Points of Contact

For all off-site activities, the school will organise a 'Point of Contact' at the school or with a member of the SLT at the school. This will often be the EVC or the Office if the trip is during school hours. If the visit involves an overnight stay, there must be two contact people. The contact person/s must have:

- Details of how and where the Group Leader may be contacted
- The names of all participants, including adults
- The distribution of pupils and staff if in separate groups or vehicles
- The itinerary
- The names and telephone numbers of any travel company (including coach company) involved
- Access to parental home contacts for all involved (including adults)
- Details of the Designated Safeguarding Officer in the event of an emergency
- A copy of the Risk Assessment and the Emergency Plan.

Collection from a Trip

In order to exercise their duty of care, the Group Leader must ensure the pupils' safe dismissal and departure from their supervision, at the end of a trip or activity.

If arrangements for the safe return home of a pupil breaks down, (e.g. a parent fails to arrive, or late bus fails to arrive at appointed time etc.) the Group Leader must attempt to telephone the pupil's home to make alternative arrangements.

Parents

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The Group Leader will ensure that parents are given sufficient information in writing and are invited to any appropriate sessions, so that they are able to make an informed decision on whether their child should go on the visit. This should include proposals for alternative activities in case, for example, adverse weather conditions prevent the intended activity taking place. Reasonable adjustments will be made for disabled children.

The Group Leader will also tell parents how they can help prepare their child for the visit by, for example:

- reinforcing the school's code of conduct;
- understanding the clothing and footwear that will be required and ensuring that this is provided;
- parents will be informed of the arrangements for sending a pupil home early and will normally be required to meet the costs of such arrangements;

Parental consent to offsite activities

Written consent from parents is not required for pupils to take part in the majority of off-site activities organised by our school, with the exception of Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Children, as most of these activities take place during school hours and are a normal part of a child's education at our school. However, parents should be told where their child will be at all times and of any extra safety measures required.

Written consent is usually only requested for activities that need a higher level of risk management or those that take place outside school hours. We have adapted the DfE "one-off" consent form which we ask parents to sign when a child enrolls at our school. This will cover a child's participation in any of these types of activities throughout their time at the school. These include adventure activities, off-site sporting fixtures outside the school day, residential visits and all off-site activities for nursery schools which take place at any time (including during school holidays or at the weekend). The form is available at:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/adminandfinance/healthandsafety>

Our parents are told in advance of each activity and must be given the opportunity to withdraw their child from any particular school trip or activity covered by the form. Parents contribute to the success of the visit by;

- understanding the objectives of the visit;
- giving written consent to transport arrangements;
- giving written consent to all emergency and other medical or dental treatment necessary for the safety and well-being of the child;
- giving clear information where relevant on their child's ability or inability to swim;
- providing clear information on their child's health and any special needs;
- giving permission for medical attention or medication if required;
- ensuring that there are clear contact arrangements.

Our School has a written policy setting out the behaviour expected of parents on the premises and the procedures that will happen when the school wishes to restrict a parent's access to school premises. A parent who has been banned from entering school premises is trespassing if he or she does so without permission.

Volunteers and other Responsible Adults

Parents may be used as a supplement to the staff but will not be taken into account in the calculation of the minimum number of staff required to supervise the group as set out above. Parents or other responsible adults will only be allowed to accompany a residential educational visit if DBS checks have been made. Parents, other voluntary staff or helpers including non-teaching staff must be fully aware of the visit risk assessment, itinerary, special instructions, emergency procedures and any other relevant information, along with their role, duties and responsibilities.

Non-Pointer School employed adults acting as supervisors must:

- follow the instructions of the Group Leader and employed staff and help with control and discipline;
- speak to the Group Leader or employed staff if concerned about the health or safety of young people at any time during the visit;
- never be in sole charge of the young persons or remote from the support of the Group Leader or other supervisors.

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Vetting and DBS Checks

All employees who work *frequently* or *intensively* with, or have *regular access* to young people or vulnerable adults, must undergo an enhanced DBS check as part of their recruitment process.

For the purposes of this guidance:

- *frequently* is defined as "once a week or more";
- *intensively* is defined as 4 days or more in a month or overnight.

However, it must be clearly understood that a DBS check (or other vetting procedure) in itself, is no guarantee as to the suitability of an adult to work with any given group of young or vulnerable people. The placement of an adult within a situation of professional trust (where young people could be vulnerable to physical or mental exploitation or grooming) should always be on the understanding that an overview based on a common sense risk-benefit assessment process has been considered.

Children and Young People

An essential aspect for the school policy is that all groups are made aware and active in the process of managing the visit or venture as they can be. Procedures, group and supervision strategies must be explained and understood. Individual and group responsibilities need to be clear, as well as the rewards and sanctions for ensuring they are kept to. A code of conduct, negotiated and agreed in an acceptable way, is a key component of educational visits e.g. communication, behaviour, dress, group supervision and 'down time'. The standard of behaviour expected of staff will be no different from behaviour expected within school. It may be necessary to have individual behaviour contracts with some young people, signed by themselves and their parents. Everyone should be as risk aware as is realistic.

Children Accompanying Staff

All staff must be aware of the problems that can arise when their own children accompany them on a particular visit or activity. In these situations a conflict of role may occur. Where our staff do take their own children on a visit or activity the member of staff should not be included in the staffing ratios unless they are supervising at all times a group which does not include their own child.

Information collected and distributed prior to trips and visits

Parents/guardians will be fully informed in writing about the trip or visit well in advance. Where appropriate (particularly in the case of any trip to last longer than one day) Parents/guardians and children will be invited to the school to discuss details with the trip organisers. Care will be taken to ensure that those accompanying the trip are fully informed about the special or medical needs of any pupils participating. Consent forms for emergency medical treatment and emergency contact numbers will be provided. Parents/guardians will always be given the code of conduct and details relating to standards of behaviour expected from children during the visit. Parents/guardians should also be advised that the school reserves the right to exclude a pupil from a visit on behavioural grounds. Trip organisers will ensure that all pupils involved in the excursion have been properly prepared and briefed.

Letters to Parents

As part of the information provided to parents about trips and offsite activities letters will be produced with the following details:

- Dates
- Times of departure and return
- Method of travel (if appropriate)
- Destination with full address and telephone number
- The name of Group Leader
- The aim and purpose of the visit, the activities planned, any hazardous or adventurous activity clearly specified
- The nature of supervision
- Any extra costs
- A request for parental consent

The Educational Visit Information, Medical and Consent Form should be used for residential visits.

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Oversubscription

In the event of a trip or activity becoming over-subscribed, the Group Leader should select pupils names 'out of a hat'. Remaining unsuccessful students should subsequently form a numbered waiting list. For residential trips, priority must be given to pupils who have not yet been on a residential visit.

For residential activities, the Group Leader may select one member of staff to act as their deputy. The Group Leader must then invite all teaching and non-teaching staff to participate, clearly outlining the particular demands of the trip. Once compiled, this list of staff is then passed to SLT. Based on previous participation, ability and experience of staff and operational logistics, SLT will then appoint appropriate staffing.

Insurance

The employer has, as required by law, appropriate insurance in place.

Transport

We only hire taxis, minibuses and coaches which are approved by the local authority, where drivers are DBS checked and each seat has either a seatbelt or a booster seat as is applicable. In advance of the trip pupils will be given clear safety instructions based on the risks associated with the particular type of travel. Children must sit only two to a double seat. Seat belts must be worn and where appropriate booster car seats should be used. All drivers of the school mini-bus must have undertaken an appropriate training course. In cases of long journeys, pupils will be given the opportunity to exercise after reasonable intervals. First-aid material must be carried and be readily available throughout the visit.

Drivers

Those authorised to drive any pupils in the party should normally:

- be at least of the minimum age required by the local authority and its outdoor education adviser in relation to each vehicle (and under 71); and
- have a minimum of two years' driving experience; and
- have acquired some experience in handling the size or type of vehicle that will be used and is MIDAS trained; and
- hold a current driving licence valid in the country of use; and
- never have been disqualified.

Each driver must be personally satisfied that:

- the driver is covered by insurance in respect of liability to passengers and others; and
- the driver has made all necessary disclosures of material facts to the insurers, for example any particular problems relating to health; and
- the vehicle is roadworthy; and
- the driver has not consumed alcoholic liquor within twelve hours before or while in charge of the vehicle;
- the driver carries evidence of insurance.

Safety on School Visits – Criteria for Selecting Tour Operators

Our EVC requires a copy of the tour operator's safety management system. The safety management system must define how the tour operator manages safety for the component parts of the visit and show how they are diligent in checking the safety of hotels and transport. The tour operator must provide details of independent checks made by appropriate external organisations on their safety management system along with certificates of bonding the company to registered bodies, list of staff in charge of our children showing qualifications and competences, motor insurance, legal and public liability insurance. All documents are to be made available to the school and are to be available for parents in the school office, if they wish.

It is the school's policy to travel only with a company or use an activity centre that has an external verified management system. It is likely that supervision will be by a combination of teachers, support staff and parents.

The Pointer School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. It is our aim that all pupils fulfil their potential.

The school uses recognised accommodation by the authorities in the country being visited. The school does not use host families where there is no equivalent to the UK enhanced DBS procedure. The staffing ratio will vary according to:

- The activity concerned;
- pupils' age and sex;
- location;
- efficient use of resources.

There will be sufficient adults in the group to cover an emergency.

Adventurous Activities

Where adventurous activities are involved it is important that those leading and instructing the activities are appropriately qualified and competent. Such activities will usually be undertaken at a licensed and approved centre. Parents/guardians will be informed in writing of any adventurous activities that may be undertaken such as caving, abseiling, high ropes, rock climbing, etc.

First Aid

Most Pointer School employees will as a minimum hold the 'Appointed Person' one day course of emergency first aid. Ideally a 'Full First Aider' who holds the full (3-day) course with a training establishment approved by the Health and Safety Executive will be in attendance. There will always be an EYFS member of staff on a trip who has completed the one day paediatric first aid training. A First Aid Kit should be carried at all times by the group leader. The Group Leader should check the kit is complete.

Critical Incident/Emergency Procedures

The Group Leader and other members of staff have a duty of care to ensure that all pupils are safe and healthy. They also have a common law duty to act as a reasonably prudent parent would. In an emergency there should be no hesitation to act and to take life-saving action if necessary. All necessary steps should be taken in advance of any visit to assess all risks and take necessary precautions. The detailed actions to be taken by the Group Leader in the event of a serious accident/incident forms an appendix to this policy.

Day Trips

A copy of the risk assessment (often generic), including pupil details and Group Leader contact details will be held in the School Office which will act as a contact point. The Group Leader will have a school mobile phone.

Residential Trips

Every group will have a named contact in the UK, and this will normally be the Headmaster or Deputy, with the Bursar as reserve, with whom they will have exchanged telephone numbers and all relevant information about the trip. The School Office and the Bursar's Office should also have a number where the party can be reached while away from home.

Complaints

Where complaints are received these should follow the school's compliant procedure. Where complaints are made by the school concerning provision made on behalf of our school these should be in writing from the Headmaster to the supplier of the service. All complaints are best dealt with as and when they arise.

Accounting for Individual Pupils

The Group Leader will ensure that each pupil who is not under visual supervision is accounted for. This means the Group Leader will know the identity, whereabouts and expected time and place of return of the pupil.

Mobile Phones/Pupils' Property

Mobile phones can be very useful in emergencies. However, there are reasons why their use by pupils should be restricted on educational visits, for example: mobile phones can act as distractions, carrying such phones can expose pupils to the risk of mugging and street violence and homesickness may be made worse by frequent use of mobile phones.

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For each visit, the Group Leader will formulate a clear policy on the use of mobile phones which will be circulated to parents and pupils well in advance of the visit. Such a policy may vary depending on the type of visit, from a total ban on pupils' phones to a system of phones being left with adults during the day, to be used for a restricted time in the evening. The Group Leader and at least one other adult supervisor will carry a fully charged mobile phone at all times and will ensure that an emergency contact at the school has the relevant numbers. Similar rules will apply to all items of personal property including for example, cameras. Parents are requested not to send pupils on visits carrying expensive equipment that may attract thieves or be lost or broken. In any event, pupils will be responsible for all items of personal property taken on the visit.

Child Protection

The Pointer School Child Protection Policy and Procedures (available on the website and on request from the school office) will apply during educational visits. The Group Leader will carry out the duties of the Designated Person or will name an appropriate adult supervisor to do so. Any incident amounting to an allegation or suspicion of abuse which occurs whilst on the educational visit will be dealt with appropriately at the time and will be reported to the Headmaster immediately on return.

Responsibilities of Pupils

The Group Leader will make it clear to pupils that they must:

- not take unnecessary risks;
- follow the instructions of the Group Leader and other supervisors including those at the venue of the visit;
- dress and behave sensibly and responsibly, using safety equipment as instructed;
- be sensitive to local codes and customs;
- look out for anything that might hurt or threaten themselves or anyone in the group and tell the Group Leader or supervisor about it.

Any pupils whose behaviour may be considered to be a danger to themselves or to the group may be stopped from going on the visit. Reasonable adjustments will be made for disabled children.

Illness When Abroad

The European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) can be obtained free of charge. This can be applied for on-line, by phone or by post. See www.ehic.org.uk. This card allows reduced price or free medical treatment whilst visiting a European Union (EU) country, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway or Switzerland.

Evaluation

Upon return to school a review and evaluation should be carried out as soon as possible. A copy of the completed form should be given to the Headmaster within one week of your return to school. Leaders should also ensure that upon completion of a visit or activity a complete file of names, addresses, insurance arrangements, contacts, procedures, etc. is kept for at least three years. This information would be required in the event of any future claim arising from any incident that may occur on the visit.