

EDUCATIONAL VISITS

1. Policy Statement

- 1.1 Sir William Perkins's School provides many opportunities to enrich the curriculum for its students through off-site activities and educational visits, domestic or overseas. These include residential activities, environmental studies, sports, physical and cultural activities, business visits, conferences and adventurous activities.
- 1.2 The value of off-site activities and educational visits is well recognised by the Governing Body and fully supported throughout the School. Safety is recognised as important and careful planning and adherence to statutory procedures is required. Off-site activities and educational visits must be well managed, information communicated, and responsibilities recognised.
- 1.3 This document outlines the specific policies and procedures for Sir William Perkins's School. It supplements and follows the following guidance, regulations and advice:
- [The Outdoors Education Advisers' Panel \[OEAP\]](#)
 - [Health and Safety on Education Visits \[DfE 2018\]](#)
 - [Health and safety: responsibilities and duties for schools - GOV.UK](#) (updated 2022)

Other relevant documents and policies include:

- SWPS Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
 - School Health and Safety documents
 - Positive Mental Health Policy
 - First Aid Policy
 - Administration of Medicines Policy
- 1.4 SWPS is fully committed to ensuring that the application of this policy is non-discriminatory, in line with the Equality Act (2010). Further details are available in the school's Equal Opportunities Policy.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

- 2.1 The Governing Body must:
- a. satisfy itself that the appropriate procedures, risk assessments, and control measures are in place and that the documented guidance notes are being followed
 - b. be the contact point in an emergency for off-site visits that are residential, abroad, or hazardous.
- 2.2 The Head must:
- a. approve all off-site visits that are residential, abroad, or hazardous.
- 2.3 The Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) and Senior Deputy Head are delegated by the Head to approve all off-site activities and educational visits of a perceived low risk, local, daily, or regular nature. In this document the people overseeing all trip activities will be referred to as the EVC. The School remains mindful of any requirements set by the insurers when planning visits.

The EVC will ensure:

- a. the management of all off-site activities meets the regulations and guidance notes and follows the correct procedures, as well as conforming to the School's own health and safety policy.
- b. the trip leader for every visit is approved to lead.
- c. the written risk assessments are monitored to ensure good practice.
- d. assurance is obtained that appropriate safeguarding checks and procedures apply to any staff employed by another organisation and working with our students on another site (See also the School Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy)
- e. they have appropriate training for their role which is updated regularly.
- f. They are familiar with the guidance, regulations and advice set out in paragraph 1.3 of this document.

In addition, the EVC undertakes the following responsibilities and duties:

- f. supporting the trip leader in identifying the purpose for the visit and the selection, training and briefing of appropriate supervising adults and volunteer helpers.
- g. ensuring that Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) disclosures are in place where necessary.
- h. ensuring that SchoolPost is used effectively as the primary means of communication and liaison with parents/carers and for obtaining consent.
- i. providing/arranging training for trip leaders to include all aspects of supervision, ongoing risk assessments (including being prepared to stop an activity that has become too hazardous) and how to deal with an emergency.
- j. ensuring that the organisation(s) to be visited have robust emergency procedures in place and know how to liaise with the relevant people should an emergency occur.
- k. ensuring that records are kept, and reports made of accidents and "near accidents".
- l. ensuring learning from previous experiences is shared and records of successful practice and contacts are made, where staff personnel change.
- m. monitoring and reviewing practice to establish a clear picture of current practice so that successes are recorded, and targets are set for improvement.
- n. being ready to intervene where practice is incorrect or unsatisfactory.

2.4 The Trip Leader must:

- a. be approved to lead the trip by the EVC and be suitably competent and knowledgeable about the School's policies and procedures.
- b. identify the purpose of the visit and plan and prepare for the visit following the published protocols.
- c. check that external activity providers have appropriate safety standards and liability insurance. The Council for Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) awards the LOtC Quality Badge where possible to organisations which meet nationally recognised standards. Where the organisation does not hold the badge, the School will check they are an appropriate organisation to use.

This will include checking:

- o their insurance and travel company Terms and Conditions (Note: these must be provided to parents/carers on invitation to the trip)
- o they meet legal requirements
- o their health and safety and emergency policies
- o their risk assessments and control measures
- o their use of vehicles
- o staff competence
- o safeguarding

- accommodation
 - any sub-contracting arrangements they have
 - that they have a licence where needed
- d. liaise with the bursary to confirm correct financial arrangements are in place according to published protocols
- e. carry out a risk assessment, ensuring that significant risks and their control measures are discussed in advance with the EVC.

This will take account of:

- Generic risks as highlighted in this document and any relevant statutory guidance
 - Event Specific Risks as identified from a pre-visit or thorough prior knowledge or experience of the environment, accommodation (including non-standard accommodation such as tents), the leader's competence, the group and other factors such as transport.
 - On-going risks identified by the professional staff responding to changing circumstances and the success of planned activity and procedures. The participants and staff will be fully briefed on the purpose and the risk assessment control measures.
- f. define the roles and responsibilities of other staff and students and ensure effective supervision of what they do
- g. obtain the Head's or EVC's approval for the visit
- h. obtain relevant information about the students taking part so as to risk assess their suitability for the visit/activity and seek (where reasonably possible) to provide appropriate accommodations to allow all students to participate. Relevant information can be found on the 'Vulnerable Students' list, from CPOMS, and from consultation with relevant pastoral, personalised learning and wellbeing room staff.
- i. consider stopping the visit/activity if the risk to the health and safety of the students is unacceptable and have in place procedures for such an eventuality
- j. ensure all accompanying staff:
- have details of how to contact the School
 - have details of the students' SEND or medical needs
 - are clear about the use of mobile phones, electronic devices and cameras (on trips from a data protection perspective. (See the school's Use of Images and Safeguarding Policies for guidance)
- k. ensure that:
- there is at least one first aider amongst the staff accompanying the visit/activity (this must be the case if it a residential or high risk activity).
 - a first aid kit is carried
 - the staff: student ratio is appropriate for the visit/activity and has been agreed by the EVC
 - they have completed the required RA training (Educare)
 - students and their parents/carers receive appropriate advance information relating to the arrangements for the visit, what to wear, what to bring etc., including any medications
 - students wear seat belts where they are provided
 - an accident/incident form is completed in a timely and efficient manner, in the event of an accident or near miss.

2.5 Parents/carers must:

- a. provide the School with relevant information about their child (e.g. emergency contact number(s), medical needs, SEND details), including to date information about any

- aspect of their child's emotional, physiological and physical health which might be relevant to the visit/activity.
- b. provide their child with any prescribed medication e.g. If the student is an EpiPen holder, they must provide two (in date) EpiPens which must always be with the student.
- c. sign the appropriate consent and indemnity forms. For the most part the centrally held Consent and Indemnity form for each student, signed by parents/carers, will suffice for day trips; if the student is below the age of 13 years of age, consent for photography should be provided by the parent/carer. If 13 or over the student should provide this consent, which may be verbal.
- d. talk through with their child, and agree to, any Code of Conduct provided by the School.

2.6 Students on a trip must:

- a. follow the instructions of the instructions of staff, guides and other adults connected with the trip, including those at the venue of the visit.
- b. not take any unnecessary risks
- c. look out for anything that might hurt or threaten themselves or anyone in the group and inform the group leader or supervisor.
- d. ensure their behaviour is in line with the School Core Values during the trip.
- e. respect the property of other people and to look after their own.
- f. dress appropriately, taking account of local customs or codes, and agree that a member of staff can request a change of clothes if what is being worn is deemed inappropriate
- g. not leave the group at any time on their own, or without the trip leader's consent.
- h. not purchase, use or pass on any item or substance that is illegal either in England or in any country which I am visiting.
- i. not smoke tobacco or vape during the trip.
- j. not drink any alcohol at any point during the trip (even if the student is 18 at the time of departure).
- k. at no time have in their possession anything that might be used as a weapon, including fireworks.
- l. not take part in any lewd/salacious activity or behaviour on the trip.
- m. not take, download or pass on any images/videos of others without their consent, including members of staff.
- n. not share any information about their specific locations on social media in real time.
- o. only use mobile electronic devices (including mobile phones) as agreed with the trip leader, not participate in any behaviour which is likely to negatively impact the enjoyment of other people on the trip.

For residential trips students must also:

- p. not enter accommodation occupied by other guests or areas designated as private or out of bounds.
- q. stay in their own room at night and not leave unless it is to seek help from a member of staff.
- r. not swap accommodation rooms with other students unless instructed by a member of staff.
- s. adhere to the bedtime curfew as stated by the trip leader or other members of staff and ensure that they are silent with lights out from this time onwards.
- t. follow any specific instructions given by trip leaders relating to non-standard accommodation, such as tents.
- u. respect the laws and cultures of the people and the country being visited.

3. Protocols for planning an off-site educational visit

In order to plan an off-site visit/activity, the EVC (and other relevant staff e.g.: Head of Department or Heads of Year) must be involved in discussing plans at an early stage. Routine or local visits (such as visits to churches or games matches) need also to be planned ahead. It may be possible to approve a series of events on a termly basis. No financial commitment must be agreed until all relevant approvals have been achieved. If using a centre, the approved centre list must be consulted to check if the provider is listed. Further advice must be sought if this is not the case. When planning an activity involving caving, climbing, trekking, skiing or water sports it must be checked that the provider holds a licence as required by the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 2004 (for England and Wales).

- 3.1 Parental Consent. Parental consent should be recorded via the relevant SchoolPost communications, along with up-to-date emergency contact details/SEND/medical/dietary requirements. This information must be available to the staff accompanying the trip and held securely.
- 3.2 Off-Site Absence Cover Request. The relevant permissions must be sought from Line Managers and then the relevant Firefly form must be completed to ensure necessary cover arrangements are in place.
- 3.3 Obtaining permission for trips. All requests for off-site activities and educational visits must be approved by the EVC. Requests for residential visits and for those that are either visits abroad or for hazardous pursuits, will need to be submitted to the EVC at least twelve working weeks in advance and certainly before becoming financially committed.

Published protocols and documents available via Firefly must be used by staff to ensure the appropriate approvals are secured before trips are advertised to students. Further guidance and advice to help with the organisation of visits is available from the EVC and the Trips Coordinator.

- 3.5 Risk Assessments [RAs] must be completed for all off-site activities and educational visits and signed off by the EVC and/or the Head. Staff are welcome to seek support from the EVC to complete their RA. External providers may have their own risk assessment documents that can be used to help in this process. For certain activities an Adventurous Activity Licence [AAL] is legally required. Further information on AALs is available from the [HSE](#) where an AAL is evidence the licence number need only be quoted on the RA instead of actually requiring their documents.
- 3.6 A pre-visit is highly recommended to support the risk assessment process and should be carried out whenever possible.
- 3.7 If volunteers are being used for the visit, they will need to be fully briefed and a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check must be carried out if they are used regularly and/or if the visit is residential. Any volunteer without a current DBS will be accompanied by a member of staff at all times. It is at the school's discretion as to whether volunteers are suitable for the purposes of accompanying trips.
- 3.8 The cost of the visit may be charged to the parents/carers by adding it to the fee bill, paying via a designated portal on the School website, or by requiring the money to be transferred directly into the School's bank account. In some cases, parents will be required to pay the provider directly. In each case, the trip leader should liaise with the Bursary at an early stage. Deposits paid are non-refundable unless specifically stated, and any refunds

following subsequent withdrawal of a student from the trip will be dealt with in accordance with the provider's cancellation policy. Where payment presents a problem for parents/carers, they should approach the Head or the Director of Finance and Operations in confidence.

3.9 Parents/carers must be informed of:

- the insurance arrangements and provided with details. A copy of the travel company's Terms and Conditions must also be provided. Copies of the School's insurance documents are available from the Bursary.
- the type of transport used. When private cars are used, the member of staff must check that they are adequately insured for business use and against all third-party claims that might be made against them as a result of accidents arising out of the use of their own vehicles. Staff must check and provide evidence that they are adequately insured to use their vehicle in the course of their work for school and/or volunteering. Specific guidance on staff using their own cars to transport students, and any other individual cases, will be offered in person through consultation with the Bursary or Estates and Facilities Manager. Guidance is also available on use of private vehicles in the School's Health and Safety documentation. Members of staff must also ensure that the 'Limitations of use' section of their certificate covers '*use by the policy holder in person in connection with his business or employment*'. A minibuss permit is required to drive a minibuss.

3.11 Student to staff ratios for school trips are not prescribed in law. Ratios are a risk management issue and should be determined through the process of risk assessment. It is not possible to set out definitive staff/student ratios for a particular age group or activity and those planning trips should decide on appropriate ratios, taking into account the activity to be undertaken, the age and maturity of the students, the type of activities, the site, and the experience and competency of the supervising adults. The supervision ratios should have regard to the guidance summarised in the table below.

In some cases, e.g., for Sixth Form only trips, there may be only one leader on a visit, or on a particular activity during a visit. If this is the case, the Sixth Formers (or any adult helpers) should be competent to manage in the event of the leader being taken ill or injured and should, as a minimum, know what to do to contact the establishment and get support.

There is no absolute requirement for children to be accompanied by staff of the same biological sex, even on residentials, but if this is not to be the case then there should be a sound plan to manage the potential issues involved, including the needs for privacy, safeguarding and pastoral support.

Guidance for ratios

Activity	Ratios	Notes
Local visits - in the local area, close to support at the base	1 adult for every 15 to 20 students	A minimum of one qualified leader is needed for every group or class. They can then be supported by other qualified leaders or responsible adults.
Day visits - more than 60 miles or one hour from base	1 adult for every 15 to 20 students	A minimum of 2 responsible adults should accompany each coach party

Residential visit, hazardous activities, UK or abroad, and visits abroad	1 adult for every 10 students These ratios do not include the centre/residential base staff	As above, however it is recommended that the ratio of qualified leader to responsible adult support is low, at 1:1 or 1:2. The biological sex of leaders should broadly reflect the biological sex of students in the group.
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4. What to do in an emergency

All trip leaders must ensure all staff and students know what to do in an emergency.

The priority will be to:

- ensure all members of the party are safe, and this includes following the instructions of any relevant emergency service personnel
- make initial contact with their School emergency contact person and give them the details;
- work with their tour company representative and/ or the local authorities to manage the implications of the incident;
- keep in contact with their School emergency contact person, who will usually be a member of the Senior Leadership Team and will mobilise the appropriate School and/ or other resources to provide assistance, including, if necessary, contacting the Head. Depending upon the nature of the emergency, the Head may invoke the School's Emergency Plan in an appropriate form (the Emergency Plan document is a separate School Policy).

NB: Parental/carer responsibility in case of an emergency

In the unusual event of an emergency involving a student, such as a serious accident or sudden illness, there is an expectation that the parents/carers should immediately make plans to travel to the location in order to takeover support for their child. Parents/carers will be notified by the team leader if their presence is required and any costs involved are the responsibility of the parent/carer. The reason for this is that the staff caring for the child at that point will be required to resume their responsibilities for the remaining students on the trip.

5. Post trip evaluation

As soon as possible on return from a trip, the Trip Leader should complete the specified feedback forms available via Firefly. Specific feedback about any learning from a trip should be fed back to the EVC.

6. Monitoring and Review

The Governing Body is ultimately responsible for the effective oversight, review and amendment of this policy and understands its legal obligation to do so.

This document will be reviewed and updated annually by the EVC or as events or legislation requires.

Next scheduled review date: January 2026 <i>Last reviewed: January 2025</i>	
Key updates in this version:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• details of some aspects of protocols and guidance updated to reflect current practice - specifically parents/carers providing medication for EpiPen holders.• update to methods of payment• One document link updated and name of staff updated