



EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY & GUIDANCE

PART 1: GENERAL INFORMATION

INTRODUCTION

At Moor Park School, we believe that learning outside the classroom is an essential component of our curriculum. It gives our pupils unique opportunities to develop their resourcefulness and initiative and to spend time together in an informal environment. Each trip is different. Some are directly related to the curriculum, some are designed to promote social awareness, or to enhance physical skills, self-reliance and team-working. Others will extend their knowledge of the world. The common factor is that they all make an essential contribution to your child's development and education in the broadest sense of the word.

RANGE OF TRIPS AND VISITS

We regularly take pupils on day trips to: historic sites, museums, galleries, natural features, farms and Roman remains to support the curriculum in History, Art, Geography, English, Science and Classics. There are regular theatre and concert trips for pupils of all levels.

Year 8 pupils have the opportunity to attend an outdoor activity centre in Wales where they can try canoeing, rock climbing and caving and general team building activities. Most pupils in Year 7 take part in a week-long trip to France where they stay on the edge of a market town, visit places of local interest and experience aspects of French culture. Years 3 to 6 have the opportunity to camp in the school grounds or at local activity centres, spend a few days walking in North Wales or take part in Bush Craft weekends. The History and Classics departments organize trips to Caerleon, Chester and York.

We have a year-round weekend programme of activities for the boarders, including climbing, horse riding, walking, trips to theme parks, visits to the cinema and shopping trips.

We send rugby and hockey teams on tours to parts of the UK, Ireland or Spain. We periodically organize a ski trip, usually to France, which parents are welcome to join as well as their children.

You can find more about the trips, visits and activities that are available to each year group from our web site and the termly calendar. You may also wish to read our policy on sports, games and pastimes, which is in the parents' handbook.

INFORMATION ON PLANNED TRIPS AND ACTIVITIES

Your son's or daughter's school calendar lists the trips and visits that are due to take place over the coming term, together with a list of planned home and away sports fixtures. You will always be notified in advance:

- Sports teams: the team lists are available at least the day prior to the match and are available on the school website and the games notice board. We do expect your son or daughter to notify you if they have been selected for a team. We very much welcome family and friends at all our matches, both home and away.
- Educational trips: if your child is going to be out of school during the school day in order to visit a local museum, theatre, nature reserve or historic site you will always be notified in advance and have the opportunity to withdraw from the trip. Details of the itinerary, clothing requirements, contact details and any additional costs will be sent to you well in advance.
- Residential trips: we send details of residential and overnight trips and activities at least a term in advance to all parents of pupils of the relevant year group or cohort. Parents who opt for these trips are always invited into the school for a full briefing.
- Outings for boarders: details are included in the termly calendar and the House Parents will routinely contact you prior to the trip to ensure that you wish your son or daughter to take part.

CONSENT

When your child enters the school you are asked to sign a consent form that covers all day trips except those involving hazardous outdoor activities. You will always be notified in advance about the trip so that you have the opportunity to withdraw your child if you so wish. For residential trips and those involving particularly hazardous activities we require your specific, individual written consent. For these trips we are unable to take your son or daughter without a completed and signed consent form, which includes details of where you may be contacted in an emergency. This form will be sent to you well in advance and must reach the school at least 3 working days before the start of the trip.

SAFETY

Safety is top priority. We expect you to support the school in ensuring that your son or daughter follows the instructions given either by a member of staff, or by a qualified instructor, and uses the proper equipment. We reserve the right to send any pupil home early at their parents' expense, if they decline to follow reasonable instructions given for their own safety.

PART 2: GUIDANCE FOR STAFF INVOLVED WITH SCHOOL VISITS

INTRODUCTION

We have a large number of trips, out of school activities and visits at Moor Park, which are an important part of our educational ethos. We expect that every member of our staff endorses the educational value of activities outside the classroom. We encourage everyone possible to participate in them, and to help with the arrangements. We always welcome suggestions from staff for new trips.

ROLE OF THE EDUCATION VISITS COORDINATOR

The Head / Deputy Head are responsible for approving all requests for out of school visits ensuring that they are spread through the different age groups, the school year (although there is inevitably a concentration during the last part of the summer term, when exams have finished and the weather is at its best) and the curriculum. The Bursar, who is the school's Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC), works closely with the Head and Deputy by checking that the paperwork is correct, giving guidance on carrying out risk assessments, budgeting for visits, keeping records of previous visits and reports of any accidents or near misses. All new staff have a session on planning school visits as part of their induction training.

ROLE OF THE GROUP LEADER

Every trip or visit, no matter how short, must be planned in advance by the member of staff who is in charge of organising and running it. He or she will always have had experience of accompanying school visits before taking on the role of Group Leader. At Moor Park we arrange for the EVC to hold training sessions with all potential Group Leaders as part of the INSET programme. The sessions cover practical guidance on conducting risk assessments, emergency procedures, the school's insurance cover, budgeting for visits and the circumstances under which a visit might be terminated or curtailed, for instance if weather or sea conditions suddenly deteriorated. All Group Leaders are referred to and have access to the DFE Guidance "The Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits: A Good Practice Guide" and have their own copy of the DFE document "A Handbook for Group Leaders". With the exception of the very shortest visits, such as to Ludlow, we expect all Group Leaders either to hold a valid First Aid certificate themselves, or ensure that one of the other teachers accompanying the visit holds one. A Deputy Leader is nominated for all trips. S/He may not hold the qualifications of the Group Leader, but is nevertheless capable of taking over that role, if necessary.

No one should drive the school minibuses unless s/he has received training and been assessed as a minibus driver (currently via the MiDAS scheme or full PCV test). For any minibus journey that lasts for longer than 1 hour, there should be a second member of staff present. The school will arrange and fund First Aid courses, as well as courses in driving minibuses for all staff who are involved in visits.

PERSONAL LIABILITY AND INSURANCE

The law places the Group Leader “in loco parentis”. The DFE Guidance “The Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits: A Good Practice Guide,” (HASPEV 1998), should be read by all Group Leaders. It explains that their responsibility is to “act as any reasonable parent would do in the same circumstances.” Staff who take part in visits and activities outside school may feel concerned about the possibility of being held personally liable if an accident should occur. However, they can be assured that Moor Park School, as their employer, will always support them in the unlikely event of an accident occurring, provided they have exercised reasonable care and followed the school’s guidelines.

Moor Park School has £10M of Employers’ Liability Insurance and £15M of public liability insurance, as well as a group travel policy that covers most visits inside the UK and overseas. Cover includes cancellation or delay, medical expenses, replacement of passports, personal possessions and money. The policy covers most school visits, including skiing holidays; but does not cover all adventurous activities, such as climbing or scuba diving. Any member of staff organising an adventurous or hazardous activity should therefore check, via the Bursar, whether or not the activity is covered by the school’s policy. An extension usually can be arranged. The Group Leader should ensure that s/he takes a copy of the school’s travel insurance with him/her on all but the shortest of visits.

Where a member of staff transports pupils in his/her car, insurance cover is automatically provided through the school’s “occasional business use” motor policy that ensures that motor insurance claims arising whilst a member of staff is using their own car for school business purposes can be settled without involving their own motor insurer.

PREPARATORY ARRANGEMENTS

The amount of advance preparatory work needed will obviously vary considerably with the type of activity. Very little preparation may be needed for walking with a group of pupils to a local museum, spending an hour there and walking back in time for school lunch. By contrast, a visit lasting a week or more to a country outside the EU, requires considerable research and preparation. Repeat visits and shorter visits will need less planning, and can be arranged at shorter notice, though it is always desirable to give parents as much notice as possible when planning visits for school holidays and half-terms. Group Leaders may draw upon the EVC’s stock of existing background material when planning regular repeat visits to familiar destinations.

The list that follows is designed to cover all the planning that a Group leader needs to undertake for a longer type of visit. It is designed to be as comprehensive as possible but is a guide only. Many items are common to all trips but each trip will have its own individual requirements in addition. Text in italics indicates that the action may not be required (or the timescale may be shortened) for: trips within the school day, theatre and museum visits, sports fixtures, or day visits using school transport.

At Least Twelve Months in Advance

- Obtain advice from the Deputy Head and the EVC on suitable dates, precedents and procedures etc.
- Discuss preliminary plan, including purpose, location, transport, hotels, activities, itinerary, number & age of participants with EVC / Senior Management Team.
- Calculate the staff to pupil ratio, (see below).
- Prepare a draft itinerary.
- Decide mode of transport for all legs of the journey.
- Prepare fully inclusive costs for the visit, including an appropriate contingency for delays and emergencies. (The costs of the accompanying staff must be included).
- Check that the provider of adventurous activities is licensed and the individual instructors possess a recognised qualification from a national body, such as the Adventure Activities Licensing Authority.
- Obtain clear statement from the Centre about their responsibilities for the safety of the pupils before making any commitment. Ask for copies of their risk assessments.
- Prepare the risk assessment(s), (see below).
- *Check the school's insurance cover, (see above) if the visit involves hazardous activities.*
- Find other members of staff who are willing to participate in the trip, bearing in mind the need to have both male and female teaching staff when both sexes participate in a visit. It is desirable to have at least one member of staff who speaks the language of the country to be visited. At Moor Park we are always happy to include volunteers from the Medical Team amongst the supervising staff. We hope that Sports Coaches and Visiting Music Staff will participate in sports and music tours. They are also welcome to help with other visits. Office staff may assist with day trips and theatre visits. We do not usually encourage parents to accompany school visits, although we welcome them at all sports fixtures.
- *If parent volunteers participate: Arrange for any volunteers participating in the trip to obtain an enhanced DBS. (The Bursar's office will make the necessary arrangements).*
- *If a legal requirement for families hosting overseas students is introduced – Arrange for host families to obtain enhanced DBSs. (The Bursar's office will make the necessary arrangements).*
- *Check that the tour company/airline is ATOL/ABTA bonded to provide cover in the event of the bankruptcy of the provider.*
- *Carry out a reconnaissance visit if the location is not one that the school has visited before. (If a reconnaissance visit is impossible, a reference from another school that has visited the site may suffice).*
- *Establish the minimum and maximum numbers for the visit to be viable (bearing in mind that the costs of the accompanying staff will be divided amongst the participants)*
- *Ascertain the medical and visa requirements*
- *Establish when the deposits are required by tour operators/airlines/activity centre etc, and ensure that the size of the deposit requested from parents is sufficient to cover these costs (including the costs of deposits for accompanying staff)*
- *Depending upon the destination: check with the Travel Advice Unit of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office*

- Prepare a written case, to be counter-signed by the EVO, seeking the Head Master's/Mistress' approval.
- *If necessary Attend a First Aid and/or minibus driving course beforehand.*

Staff/Pupil Ratios

At Moor Park recommended staff to pupil ratios for visits and off-site activities are set out below. The actual ratios will be adjusted according to the nature of the visit.

Ratio	Pupils' Year Group
1:8	EYFS & KSI
1:10	Years 3 – 6
1:15/20	Years 7 upwards (with a larger ratio permitted for over 16s)
1:10	All visits abroad

The Risk Assessment

All Group Leaders at Moor Park School are trained in conducting risk assessments on the potential hazards involved in a visit, trip or activity that they are planning. The steps that they should follow are set out in the model risk assessment form that is part of DFE Guidance "The Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits: A Good Practice Guide," (HASPEV 1998) available from the Bursar's office.

- *Identifying the potential hazards of the place being visited.*
- *Listing the groups of people that are especially at risk from the significant hazards.*
- *Listing existing controls or notifying where the information may be found.*
- *Considering how he/she would cope with the hazards which are not currently identified or fully controlled.*
- *Carrying out continual monitoring of hazards throughout the visit.*

Professionally operated licensed activity centres and tour operators specialising in school visits will conduct their own risk assessments. The Group Leader should ask for copies at the planning stage. Provided that he/she is satisfied, it will meet the requirements of Moor Park for the activity part of the visit. Additional risk assessments will probably be needed to ensure complete coverage of all aspects of the visit. Risk assessments carried out by the school for previous visits can generally be updated and re-used, unless there has been a change of circumstances. At Moor Park, the EVC maintains a record of generic risk assessments that cover sports fixtures, theatre and museum visits and most of our regular visits.

After Permission is Granted (At Least Ten Months in Advance)

- Write a preliminary letter to send to parents and guardians of the target age group, outlining the purpose of the trip, the programme and the expected maximum cost. Ask for expressions of interest and/or deposits. Mention that parents will be invited to a briefing meeting within six weeks of departure. Explain any restrictions on numbers. The letter must be cleared by the Headmaster with copies given to the office staff and Medical Room. Brief the pupils about the visit, its dates and purpose
- Check names of all pupils wishing to participate with the School Nurse. Discuss with EVO and School Nurse concerns about special arrangements that may be required for handling any specific medical or SEN issues.
- Keep a record of payments received for cross reference with the Bursary.
- Arrange for the Bursary to pay any required deposits and/or the costs of tickets.
- On exchanges: assign pupils to host families. Encourage an exchange of letters/emails/photographs etc.

At least Three Months in Advance

- Finalise the costs with travel company etc.
- Insist that all coaches are fitted with seat belts. (This may not be possible in every country).
- Work out the cost for parents (including contingency to cover delays etc).
- Inform parents of the medical and visa requirements. Advise parents of non-British passport holders that they are responsible for ascertaining the visa requirements of the country to be visited.
- Arrange for the Bursary to bill parents for the balance of the cost of the trip/Collect the balance directly from the pupils and hand to Bursary..
- Arrange for the Bursary to pay the balance to the airline, hotel, travel company etc.
- Arrange for loan of school mobile with pre-paid SIM card valid for the country to be visited to be available on a specific date.
- Brief and prepare the pupils in advance.
- Ensure that the pupils are given plenty of advance notice if they need special equipment (e.g. for skiing).

Six Weeks in Advance

- Give the Bursary details of requirements for foreign currency/travellers' cheques/pre-paid foreign currency card. Agree collection arrangements. (Group Leaders will normally be required to collect and counter-sign their own travellers' cheques from the bank or airport terminal and will be required to produce their passport details for a pre-paid foreign currency card).
- Arrange meeting with parents to brief them on all aspects of the trip, including:
 - The itinerary, including the meeting and collection points.
 - Details of the activities to be undertaken and the safety / supervision arrangements.
 - Contact details for the hotels/hostels/ names and addresses of the host families.
 - [The number of the school mobile phone issued to the Group Leader.]
 - The money, kit and equipment that the pupils need. The medical and visa requirements.

- *The expected standards of behaviour, and the potential risks of irresponsible behaviour.*
- *Remind parents those pupils who ignore or flout the behaviour code risk being sent home at their parents' expense. Pupils remain subject to school rules throughout the visit.*
- *Arrangements for handling illness and accidents, and arrangements for informing parents in such circumstances.*
- *Arrangements for communicating with parents in the event that the return is delayed.*
- *The need to notify the school in the event of contact with an infectious disease within four weeks of traveling.*
- *The reasons why a completed consent form is essential.*
- *The need for a copy of each pupil's passport.*
- *Send all parents a copy of the consent form with specified return date.*
- *If appropriate, book refreshments / food from Catering Department.*
- *Brief pupils on expectations of standards of behaviour and cultural differences.*
- *Book travelling first aid kit from the Medical Room.*

Two Weeks in Advance

- *Chase parents who have not returned their consent forms. Remind them that their child cannot participate unless the form is received within 3 working days of departure.*
- *Obtain photocopies of each pupil's passport.*
- *Check all tickets for accuracy. Store them in the school safe until collection.*
- *Collect travellers' cheques from bank (if not collecting from airport terminal). Note their serial numbers before storing in safe until collection, with the foreign currency ordered by the Bursary/Store pre-paid foreign currency card in safe. Give copy to Bursary.*
- *Meet with the other members of staff to discuss the itinerary, the risk assessment, the respective roles of the Group Leader and other accompanying staff, and emergency procedures.*
- *Prepare packs for the accompanying staff, EVC and the School Secretary (this will usually be a copy of the Educational Visits Approval form and accompanying paperwork) containing:*
 - *The itinerary.*
 - *The Teacher in Charge's mobile number / school mobile.*
 - *Mobile numbers of all participating staff.*
 - *A list of pupils, together with details of any medical conditions (and copies of the parental consent / contact forms).*
 - *Copies of passports and travel documents.*
 - *The address and contact details of the nearest British Consul.*
 - *Emergency contact numbers for the Head, Deputy and EVC including out of hours.*
 - *Contact details for the School Secretary.*
 - *The name of the driver, the registration number of the minibus, confirmation of insurance etc.*
 - *A copy of the full risk assessment.*
 - *Location of local hospital.*
 - *Copies of the serial numbers of travellers' cheques.*

The Day Prior to Departure/The Day of Departure

- *Collect tickets, travellers' cheques/pre-paid foreign currency card and foreign currency from the safe.*
- *Give trip information packs to designated school recipients and to other staff participants*
- *Give each pupil the names, addresses and phone numbers of their accommodation*
- *Remind pupils about the rendezvous, dress code, standards of behaviour etc.*
- *[Remind pupils of the potential risks of irresponsible behaviour]*
- *Remind pupils to bring passports (and E I I s). Ask to see each passport.*
- *Collect travelling first aid kit(s). Check contents.*
- *Collect packed lunch etc.*
- *Collect School Mobile and charger.*

DURING THE VISIT OR ACTIVITY

Primary responsibility for the safe conduct of the visit rests with Group Leader. He or she has sole responsibility for amending the itinerary in the event of unforeseen delay or sudden deterioration in weather conditions. He or she will liaise with the partner school in the event of difficulties between a pupil and their host family. S/He may delegate part or all of the responsibility for the following to one or more of the accompanying staff:

- *Carrying out a head count on getting on and off each form of transport, entering or leaving a museum, restaurant, activity centre, hotel etc.*
- *Checking that all pupils wear their seat belts.*
- *Checking the fire exits and escape routes at each hotel or hostel. Ensuring that every pupil walks through the emergency escape route at each hotel.*
- *Ensuring that sleeping accommodation is suitable and located together (preferably not on the ground floor).*
- *Setting times for pupils to be in their rooms at night. Conducting checks (using the other staff).*
- *Ask all pupils to write their mobile numbers on a sheet of paper. Give all pupils the number of the school's mobile if they are going to be allowed out in small, unsupervised groups*
- *Setting agreed times and locations for checking pupils when they work or are allowed out unsupervised in small groups.*
- *Enforcing expected standards of behaviour.*
- *Looking after – or reminding pupils to look after – passports and valuables*
- *Storing cash, travellers' cheques and tickets in the hotel safe.*
- *Keeping an account of all expenditure.*
- *Recording all accidents and near misses.*

ILLNESS OR MINOR ACCIDENTS

If a Pupil has a minor accident or becomes ill, the Group leader, or another member of staff will take him/her to the local hospital or clinic. If the trip is outside the UK, s/he will notify the insurers on their helpline to arrange (where possible) for the medical bill to be sent directly to the insurance company for settlement. If the accident is more serious (such as broken leg when skiing), the school's medical insurers may arrange for the pupil, accompanied

by a member of staff to be repatriated to the UK. At Moor Park we expect the Group Leader to phone the pupil's parents (and the school) if their child has suffered an accident or injury that is serious enough to require medical treatment – as opposed to minor cuts and bruises.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

In the event of a serious accident resulting in the death or injury of one or more of the pupils and staff, the Group Leader's first priorities are to ensure the safety of the remainder of the group, to summon the emergency services and to arrange for medical attention for the injured. One of the accompanying members of staff should accompany the injured pupil(s) to hospital. Ensuring that the rest of the group were safe and looked after, and informing the Head Master or on-call member of the SMT of what had happened would be the next tasks for the Group Leader, who would need to give as full, calm and factual account as the circumstances permitted. Where the full facts had not yet emerged, he or she should say so, and ensure that follow-up communications with the Head Master are maintained. He/she would also need to arrange (perhaps using the Deputy Leader or another member of staff) for the school's insurers to be contacted as quickly as possible, together with the British Consul, if the accident happened overseas. A full record should be kept of the incident, the injuries and of the actions taken.

At Moor Park School, depending on the nature of the incident, we may implement our own model communications plan for informing as swiftly as possible both the families of the injured, and the families of those who are unhurt. We recognise that in an era of instant communications, it may not be possible for us to be the first to break the news. Nevertheless, we firmly believe that we have an important duty to speak personally to the parents of any pupil who has suffered some injury or mishap. We will use mass communication methods (SMS, email, messages on our web, local radio) for communicating with those whose children are not affected.

Where possible, communication with the media should be left to the Head Master. The Group Leader should refer the media to the school. If comment is unavoidable, it should be factual, calm and no attempt made to cover gaps in knowledge. Pupils should be discouraged from talking to the media.

DELAYED RETURN

If a visit is delayed, the Group Leader should phone the school office or out of hours school contact who will in turn phone all the parents on their contact numbers to alert them to the delay and the revised time of arrival.

ON RETURN

Each Group Leader is asked to provide the EVC with a report on the visit, reports of accidents

and near misses on his/her return. Personal observations and lessons learned are always valuable. The Group leader should return all school property. S/he should also:

- *Instruct all pupils to delete their records of the school mobile and of any staff mobiles.*
- *Remind all staff to delete any records of pupils' mobile numbers that they may have acquired during the visit.*

Expenditure

The Group Leader is responsible for returning any unused cash or travellers' cheques to the Bursary. The pre-paid foreign currency card should be returned, together with all related transaction vouchers. The Group Leader is also responsible for producing a schedule of all expenditure on the trip. Unused balances will be returned to the parents by way of credits shown on the next school bill.

Report for Governors

The Head reports termly to the Governor Health & Safety Sub-Committee with a synopsis of the school trips and visits that have taken place since the last meeting.
