



Westminster Tutors

TRIPS AND OUTINGS POLICY

1. Purpose

School trips/ visits can be extremely rewarding for the students' appreciation of the school curriculum and can make a valuable contribution to their personal, social and educational development. Visits may also form a compulsory part of an examination course. It is therefore important that all school trips are properly organised and planned, and any reasonable and real risks are identified and minimised. This policy is expected to be utilized with respect to field trips – for regular offsite trips to the local museums and sports centre, please refer to Part 10 of the **Health and Safety Policy**.

This policy document is a summary of acceptable and advisable behaviour in the organisation and management of visits, field-trips and holidays in which students participate and which have been organized by or in conjunction with Westminster Tutors. Special notice is taken of the Health and Safety Executive 'School Trips and Outdoor Learning Activities (June 2011) and the DfE 'Advice on Legal Duties and Powers for Local Authorities, Head Teachers, Staff and Governing Bodies' (February 2014) in compiling this policy.

The policy is made available to all those concerned with college trips, particularly to staff members who will be planning, organising and managing the trips, and parents and guardians who will want reassurance that the school is taking every reasonable and proportionate precaution for the school trip. Indeed parents and guardians will be asked to confirm that they are aware of the policy of the college before giving their consent to the participation of their children in visits.

While parental/ guardian approval is an essential part of the process, it does not absolve the college of all responsibility if things do go wrong. The school still owes a duty of care to the students and the parents/guardians but this must be focused upon real risks and not trying to eliminate all risks, regardless of the likelihood of occurrence. As the Health and Safety Executive notes, school trips and outings are about striking the right balance between protecting pupils from risk and allowing them to learn from school trips, by focusing on real risks (not fanciful or trivial) and ensuring that planning trips are properly supported with proportionate systems in place.

Therefore based upon the principles outlined above, this policy sets out the key requirements for planning and organising such trips, including guidance on risk assessments.

2. Responsibility for the organisation of a college trip

This Section outlines the core responsibilities in organising any offsite trip.

(i) The Principal is responsible for approving trips, ensuring that they comply with this policy, that a full risk assessment has been carried out (along with an emergency contingency plan if needed) and that the staff running the trips are suitably supported and trained.

(ii) While there is no longer any requirement by law to have an Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC), Westminster Tutors nevertheless believes that it is appropriate that there should be an EVC to assist the Principal in the above matters. The EVC will additionally be on hand to give advice regarding school trip safety and direct members of staff to relevant documentation as needed. Currently the EVC is the Director of Studies, Joe Mattei.

(iii) The Party Leader is in charge of all the arrangements concerned with the trip, in consultation with and under the supervision of the Principal. It is their role to plan, cost, publicise and recruit for the trip; to take all reasonable and proportionate measures to find out local conditions and to anticipate difficulties that could arise in the course of each activity planned; to assess the suitability of the transport and accommodation arrangements; to obtain the necessary permissions from the parents/ guardians; and to ensure that the students are prepared and supervised in such a way as to promote good behaviour.

(iv) Auxiliary members of staff and helpers on a trip, including parent-helpers, must accept the leadership of the Party Leader, even when an auxiliary teacher-helper is a senior member of staff, unless exceptional circumstances arise which dictate to the contrary.

(v) The Head Administrator is responsible for reviewing the costings prepared by the Party Leader, billing and collecting money from parents (see below for details of the process).

3. The financial organisation

(i) The Party Leader is responsible, under the supervision of the Principal, for the proper pre-trip budgeting and post-trip accounting. Receipts must be handed over for preservation in the college accounts. Money entrusted to the organizer and helpers for use on the trip must be identifiable from their private finances.

(ii) Unless otherwise authorised by the Principal, the Party Leader, auxiliary staff and helpers are not paid a fee for their work in connection with the trip (that is additional to any usual salary or fee paid to them by the College) but are allowed to claim in full their reasonable expenses.

(iii) A parent or guardian who books a place for a participant is thereby contracting with the college to pay in full for the trip in accordance with the terms stated on the booking form. Unless specifically agreed otherwise, parents and guardians who cancel or fail to use a booking may still be liable to pay cancellation charges up to the full amount.

(iv) In making a booking, the parent or guardian is deemed to have agreed to reimburse the college for any necessary additional expense incurred in the course of the trip on behalf of the particular child for whom the booking is made. Such an expense need not have had the specific prior approval of the parent or guardian if it is reasonably incurred for the welfare or protection of a particular child, or because the child has incurred a debt or penalty, or has failed to satisfy any legal requirement.

(v) A Party Leader who pays or instructs the college to pay money to anyone in connection with a trip has the responsibility to take reasonable precautions to ascertain that such money will be properly used. In particular, it is the responsibility of the Party Leader to check the credentials of travel agents and tour and holiday operators, including their membership of appropriate professional organizations.

(vi) Unless it is stated to the contrary at the time of booking, the charges made for a trip are designed only to cover its costs, including an amount to cover unforeseen contingencies. If at the end of the trip there is a financial surplus, its allocation is left to the discretion of the Principal.

4. Supervision

(i) Teachers have common law and statutory duties to take reasonable care of students' health and safety and to maintain good order and discipline. On college journeys, this responsibility is continuous until the recognised end of the trip (such as the arrival at college or at the point of disembarkation).

(ii) It is the responsibility of the college to ensure that these duties are carried out. The college, by means of the Party Leader, supervised by the Principal, must take reasonable steps to ensure that these duties are also understood and carried out by all those concerned with the management of the trip and the supervision of the students. A key part of this duty is evaluating the competence of the adults supervising the trip along with the need for first aid.

(iii) The proper ratio of students to staff on a trip will vary according to circumstances. The Party Leader must determine that the ratio chosen for a trip will give adequate supervision at all times of the day and night and for every activity that is planned, taking into account the "off-duty" periods allocated to auxiliaries and helpers.

(iv) In planning supervision requirements and also during the trip itself, the Party Leader and helpers will take into consideration the standards of prudence and sensible behaviour reasonably expected from students of the age of the individuals participating. Nevertheless, the Party Leader and helpers, bearing in mind that in practice students in groups sometimes behave irrationally, will aim to anticipate danger, especially if the students are unfamiliar with the territory or local customs.

(v) The level of supervision must reflect the level of risk attached to the activity. For example, trips to remote areas involving hazardous activities will require a higher level of supervision as compared to visits to local, low-risk environments. Therefore any supervision needs to be tailored to a particular trip rather than an assumption of high-risk for all trips.

(vi) It is the Party Leader's responsibility to keep the parents and guardians well-informed about the activities and supervision arrangements, including the conditions under which students will be allowed to spend time unsupervised.

(vii) Having been given the information, it is for the parent or guardian to decide in respect of their own daughter or ward whether the supervision arrangements are acceptable and whether or not to consent to the student's participation.

5. Health and Safety

While the advice document “Health and Safety: Advice on legal duties and powers” (Department of Education: 2014) replaces the “Health and Safety of Pupils on College Visits”(DfEE 1998) and “Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits” (HASPEV 1998), note is still taken these guidelines particularly the guidance on risk assessments as found in paragraphs 37-47 of HASPEV (DfEE: 1998) and the HASPEV 2002 Supplement. This is to ensure best practice before, during and after outdoor activities.

(i) It is the obligation of the parent or guardian who makes a booking to ensure that the student is fit to participate in the activities planned and will be provided with the clothing and equipment considered by the Party Leader to be necessary. In making the booking, the parent or guardian undertakes to satisfy these conditions. If these conditions are not met at the date of travel, the college may refuse to accept the child on the trip.

(ii) The Party Leader has a duty to take reasonable care for the health and safety of those on the trip. The parent or guardian shall ensure that all special circumstances relevant to the mental and physical health of the participant are known to the Party Leader to enable him or her to exercise that duty.

(iii) In the event of an emergency, there should be a clear and known action plan. The Party Leader should assess the situation, safeguard the other, uninjured members of the group, attend the casualty and inform the emergency services. The Party Leader should then contact the Principal with full details of the incident, who will then contact the parent or guardian in the event of an emergency.

(iv) Subject to the previous clause, the Party Leader will be authorized by the parent or guardian to give consent to any medical treatment, including inoculations, surgery and blood transfusions that, in the opinion of a qualified medical practitioner, may be necessary for the participant.

(v) If the participating child needs to take drugs or medicines, it is for the parent or guardian to decide whether to hand them over to the Party Leader with instructions on when and how they are to be administered. Once this responsibility has been given to and accepted by the Party Leader, it is his or her duty to see that the instructions are carried out.

6. Training

(i) Special training is required for supervising certain activities. The list of such activities will vary from time to time according to expert advice, but by way of example, includes:

- mountaineering (requiring mountaineering equipment)
- abseiling
- camping
- caving and pot-holing
- skiing
- riding
- orienteering

swimming
sub-aqua diving/swimming
sailing and boating
canoeing
parachuting
hang-gliding
parascending

It is the duty of the Party Leader, Principal and EVC to ensure that adequate training is provided to the relevant members of staff.

(ii) In other activities, the Party Leader and helpers must take heed of professional and informed local advice on the necessity for specially trained supervisors. The Principal and EVC will provide advice on such matters.

7. Discipline

(i) Participating students are under the discipline of the Party Leader and are expected to know and conform to the usual requirements of the law and acceptable rules of behaviour. The Party Leader shall, as far as possible, explain ambiguities and clarify uncertainties at the beginning of the trip.

(ii) It may be necessary for disciplinary, health or other reason to send a child home before the end of a trip. In such cases, the parent or guardian must co-operate in the procedure and will be financially liable for any additional costs involved. In most cases, they would not be entitled to a refund from the basic cost of the trip.

8. Procedure for Trips or Outings

Well planned off-site visits are of great value for our students and we therefore encourage them. Each trip needs to have a clearly identified purpose with activities relevant to the age and experience of the students and appropriate to the stated aims.

For any college trip involving students of a compulsory college age, including something like a short trip to the theatre after college, the following key things need to be done:

1. A proposal of the field trip needs to be presented to the Principal. This needs to include a summary of the aims and activities of the field trip, a risk assessment, costing, and contact details;
2. Discussion of the details of the field trip including an appraisal of the risk assessment between the Party Leader and the Principal/ EVC;
3. Permission given by the Principal;
4. A Trips Consent Form and Letter detailing key times, travel arrangements and equipment needs to be completed out and sent to parents/ guardians;
5. Permission given by the parents/ guardians.

Please see Annex I for a template Consents Form and Parental/ Guardian Letter.

9. Risk Assessments

A risk assessment is a key requirement of the school trip procedure. Not every trip needs a risk assessment to be completed: therefore each offsite activity requires an individual appraisal. The Party Leader should understand the risks and is familiar with the activity to be undertaken. However it must be stressed that a common sense and proportionate approach should be taken, bearing in mind that risk assessments are meant to help students undertake activities safely and not prevent activities from taking place.

In undertaking a risk assessment, the following should be considered:

- What are the hazards?
- Who might be affected by them?
- What reasonable and proportionate safety measures need to be in place to reduce risks to an acceptable level?

Annex II provides the Risk Assessment form and gives an illustration of a number of common risks and their management strategies.

10. Outings Checklist for Party Leader:

• Read Policy Document
• Relevant staff informed of trip
• Booking arrangements in order
• Travel arrangements in order
• Supervision arrangements in order
• Check any medical conditions of participants with Principal
• Financial arrangements in order
• Documentation for trip to the Principal
• If overnight stay, complete 2 folders of everything in the trips organisation (one to the College Secretary and one to the Principal)
• Discussion of itinerary with Principal
• Mobile phone numbers and other contact details confirmed
• Risk Assessment with Principal
• Copy of checklist information to the Principal
• Permission granted by the Principal
• Permission sought – and granted – by parents/ guardians

VM/ JM January 2018

Annex I

Trip/ Outing Letter and Consent Form

Tutor's Name
Westminster Tutors
86 Old Brompton Road
London, SW7 3LQ

Date

[Recipient Name]
[Street Address]
[City, ST ZIP Code]

Dear [Recipient Name]:

Our class is planning to take a field trip on xxxx. The purpose of this letter is to give you the trip details and a list of supplies that the student is required to bring along. Please indicate your consent by either completing the field trip permission form on the last page of this letter and returning it as soon as possible or sending an email (to info@westminstertutors.co.uk) that express permission has been given.

Location

Site	
Date	[Trip Date]
Check-In Time	
Transportation	
Supervision	

[details of the trip]

The student is required to bring the following:

-
-
-
-
-
-

If you have any questions, feel free to contact me by e-mail or telephone.

Sincerely,

Tutor's Name
info@westminstertutors.co.uk
020 7584 1288

Parental/ Guardian Consent Form

I, _____, hereby give permission for _____
attend the field trip to [_____], on the [date].

Signature of Parent/ Guardian

Date: _____

Means of Transport to venue..... from venue.....

Hazards	Who might be affected?	Safety measures needed	Safety measures in place?
JOURNEY TO VENUE			
DURING ACTIVITY			
JOURNEY FROM VENUE			

What steps will be taken in an emergency?

.....

Group Leader contact number(s)

.....
 .

Contact info of person to contact in emergency

RA completed by

Date