

STAPLE HILL PRIMARY SCHOOL POLICY ON SCHOOL TRIPS

Date Approved by Governing Body: 12 May 2016

STATEMENT

The school regards trips as a valuable part of a pupil's education and acknowledges the voluntary contribution that teachers and other adults make in enabling pupils to experience a rich variety of visits off the school site.

Such trips do, however, often involve a degree of risk, which is inherent when pupils are placed in unfamiliar places or are undertaking new activities. Some risk is accepted, but by following the procedures included within this policy, the degree of risk will be reduced to an acceptable level.

This policy is of direct interest to any and all staff/volunteers who propose or participate in any school trip.

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Managing Medical Needs Policy
- Charging Policy
- Pupil Premium Policy
- Safeguarding Policy (Incorporating Child Protection)

1 - SCHOOL TRIPS - Definition

A school trip is to include **any organised activity where pupils leave the normal school site**. The only exceptions would be where pupils need to move between parts of a split school site, e.g. walk to a detached playing field.

Examples of school trips include:

Swimming - This is a regular outing for pupils in key stage 2. It will usually involve one or more classes going from site to a public swimming pool. This normally involves walking to the pool but transport may be required if a different pool is used..

Inter School Activities - These visits will usually be sport based, e.g. Football or Netball matches, which requires one school to go to the site of another. Depending on the distance this could involve walking or travel in a vehicle.

Cultural Visits - These will usually involve a visit to venues like Theatres, Art Galleries and Museums. Depending on the distance, this could involve walking or travel in a vehicle.

Adventure Activities - These will usually involve attendance at an Activity centre, which offers specialist activities, e.g. canoeing, rock climbing etc. They may, however, be organised by the school, e.g. orienteering. Depending on the distance, this could involve walking or travel in a vehicle.

Foreign Visits - These are trips where the group leave mainland Britain. They can involve adventure activities, be for cultural reasons or to improve language skills. Such trips will usually involve substantial use of transport, which could include use of vehicles, ships or aeroplanes.

Exchange Visits - These are visits, usually abroad, where pupils stay in the homes of volunteers. These visits have recently been highlighted as involving the potential for child abuse. Such trips will again usually involve substantial use of transport, which could include use of vehicles, ships or aeroplanes.

2 - SCHOOL POLICY

The school may undertake any of the above.

2.1 - Charging - The scope of the information included under this heading will depend on the type of trips the school undertakes. Information on charges for school trips is contained in DES Circular 2/89, "Education Reform Act 1988: Charges for School Activities". In summary this indicates that if the trip is:

- **wholly or mainly during school hours** - No charge will be levied on parents. The school can ask for voluntary contributions, provided it is made clear that they are voluntary.
- **a residential visit** - The cost of board, lodgings and associated travel costs can be charged for. This is the case even if the trip is covered by a statutory requirement.
- **an optional extra** - The full costs of such trips can be charged for. These are trips which take place outside of normal school hours, do not form part of the national curriculum, are not part of an examination syllabus and are not covered by the scope of statutory requirements relating to education. Trips during school holiday periods are considered optional extras.

Information regarding the school policy on charging is included in the school prospectus. The policy is reviewed annually by the governors.

2.2 – Approval Process - See Appendix 1, Appendix 2 Appendix 3 and Appendix 4.

2.3 - General Identification of Hazards/Risks - The aim of the risk assessment is to identify the arrangements that will need to be in place to ensure the trip takes place safely. Many of the arrangements will be standard ones and there should be a basic framework to be followed for all trips. This will then be supplemented for those trips involving greater risk. A single assessment can cover regular trips, e.g. for swimming or inter school activities, whilst an individual risk assessment will be required for any residential trip.

The leader of each trip will need to identify all known hazards and potential risks before submitting a trip application form.

The leader must give consideration to categorisation of a trip eg:

High risk - Trips abroad and/or involving adventurous activities,

Medium Risk - Other residential trips

Low Risk - Short duration trips in the local vicinity or regular trips. This would include visits to local shops, park.

This is a useful way of identifying the extent of the planning required and should inform judgements made relating to timescales. For example a High Risk trip, involving outdoor activities in a foreign country, may require a year' preparation, whilst a trip to a local shopping centre may only require a few weeks. **Planning is essential.**

In order to identify a basic risk rating trip leaders must complete the risk assessment proforma (Appendix 2 for high and medium risk trips and Appendix 3 for low risk trips). The aim of this form

is to provide the school's senior management with a brief outline of the trip, which indicates what its aims are and the hazards which need to be addressed.

2.4 - School Approval – Approval will only be given by the Headteacher, Deputy Head or Chair of Governors following satisfactory completion of the set of forms.

2.5 - Communication with Parents - Communication with parents/guardians may start with an initial indication of the trip's aims and how it intends to benefit pupils. It will also need to indicate clearly what the charging policy will be for the trip. An initial letter is required if the cost of the trip is likely to be high and for all residential trips but it is not necessary for low risk local visits. The initial notification should also have a return slip attached, so that parents can indicate how much interest there is, especially where funding will be required from parents, as this will affect the viability of the trip.

2.6 - Risk Assessment Considerations And Standards

Accommodation - Where a trip involves an overnight stay it is important to ensure that the sleeping arrangements are suitable and that accommodation is secure. This is to cover both the risk of unauthorised access into the building and where pupils might be tempted to leave the building, e.g. to sample the night-life. Staff should ideally be accommodated close to the pupils, and pupil dorms/rooms are to be single sex.

It is advisable to obtain, in advance, a layout of the accommodation and the arrangements in place, e.g

- are external doors secured after a certain time?
- is there CCTV in operation?
- are there secure lockers for possessions?
- will pupils be expected to share facilities with others?

It is also advisable to have a walk around the facility on arrival, internally and externally, to check for potential points of entry or egress.

Activities - Any activities or potential activities which may form part of the school trip are to be identified. This must include both the formal activities e.g. abseiling, mountaineering, etc. plus informal ones, e.g. pupils may be allowed to go shopping in a town or swimming. This is essential both to ensure that hazards are identified and risk assessed, and in order to provide parents with a complete picture of what the trip involves.

Disability - Equal opportunities and the Disability Discrimination Act, as applied to school trips, would indicate that pupils with disabilities should generally be offered the same opportunities as other pupils within schools. In particular where outdoor activities are concerned not all venues as yet cater for persons with disabilities. This is something which will need to be considered if a pupil with a disability wishes to attend. Staff must take all reasonable steps to accommodate such a request.

Emergency Arrangements - Even in a well organised and run school trip incidents can occur, e.g. ill health or injury. Schools need to establish emergency arrangements to be implemented. In particular how to contact local emergency services, possible use of interpretation service and how to send pupils home. Equally a system needs to be available whereby parents/guardians can contact someone at the school, should they need to contact their child/ward.

NB: Please ensure that there is a list of all members in the party and contact numbers for each. This is essential both for Insurance & Emergency arrangements.

Insurance - Where school trips are undertaken as part of school activity the same insurance arrangements will apply as for a normal school day. Teachers and volunteers, where no other insurance will operate, will be indemnified under the terms of the Council's Public Liability Policy whilst undertaking their duties. The Council does not provide Personal Accident benefits for pupils either in school or on school trips.

The Council has available, upon request, a "School Journey Insurance", which provides cover for Cancellation, Medical Expenses, Personal Accident, Personal effects and Legal Liability to indemnify each member of the party. Cover is at the discretion of the Governors/Headteacher but it is strongly recommended that this cover, or equivalent, be arranged for all trips abroad or where the trip includes an overnight stay. Details on "School Journey Insurance" are obtainable from the Risk & Insurance Unit of the council.

Personal Needs - This covers the type of clothing/equipment the group and staff will need to take with them, these requirements need to be established as early as possible. Most outdoor activity providers will have equipment available but this will need to be checked. Pupils may require a packed lunch, decent walking shoes, pocket money, passports, etc.

Security - Security is a key consideration for any trip both in terms of personal safety, e.g. arrangements to minimise potential assaults, and in terms of loss of personal property, arrangements to prevent stealing or vandalism.

To address these concerns arrangements need to be implemented to ensure adequate supervision of the group, provision of contact numbers and identification of areas viewed as high risk. See **Accommodation** above for additional considerations.

Supervision - The school must meet the basic requirements for supervision as listed below. This will need to be supplemented where pupils have special medical or educational needs, if the trip involves adventurous activities, if the trip is abroad or if any aspect of the trip may require it.

The minimum levels of supervision are to be worked out by the following:

- **If the group is of mixed sex at least one competent adult of each sex should accompany the group if possible.**
- **A competent leader must be in charge of the group**
- **For Reception age children there must be a minimum of 1 competent adult for every 4 pupils.**
- **For years 1 to 3 there must be a minimum of 1 competent adult for every 6 pupils**
 - **For years 4 to 6 there must be a minimum of 1 competent adult for every 10 pupils**

A competent leader is someone who has been assessed as having the necessary skills, training and/or experience to lead the trip. A competent adult is either a teacher or someone who the school/group leader feels to be competent to take on the supervisory role. The competent adult is to have authority with the pupils and preferably be known by them. For toileting children must be accompanied by a member of the school staff.

NB Any parent/volunteer acting as a competent adult must have undergone a police check if they are to have unobserved access to pupils. (Where a volunteer does not hold a valid police check this can be obtained given 6 – 8 weeks notice)

Tour Operators - Where the trip is booked using a tour operator or outside body the school must ensure that the tour operator is reputable and is bonded with an authorised institution.

Transport - This can involve walking, use of school minibus, hiring of vehicles and drivers, booking places on scheduled flights/ferries etc. or a combination of these.

Vetting - Depending on the trip this may simply involve checking the provider is registered, e.g. under the Adventurous Activity Licensing Activities for certain specific activities, to taking up references or arranging police checks, e.g. trips where pupils will stay with families as part of an exchange.

3 - ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

3.1 – Confirmation of Venues Etc. - This is where the relevant provisions will be finalised. In particular the venue and transport will be booked and both the numbers of pupils to attend and adult supervisors confirmed.

3.2 – Parental Interest - A letter is to be sent to parents/guardians explaining in detail what the trip aims to do and asking them to indicate whether they would be prepared for their child/ward to attend. It must also indicate whether a voluntary contribution is needed and the likely cost. Parents will be asked to complete a permission slip for local visits at the start of each school year. (Appendix 5).

3.3 – Letter to Parents - Parents will be notified as to what they will need to provide, e.g. pocket money, packed lunch etc. Parents will also be asked to notify the school of any particular needs of pupils, this covering diet, medication, plus use of non prescribed medication. (See Appendix 4)

3.4 – Briefing of Pupils - This is essential so that pupils know what to expect and what is expected of them. In particular they will need to be advised what is to happen on each day, which must include where they are to meet, clothing etc. required, what papers they need to bring with them

3.5 - Emergency - Details relating to Emergency provision will be finalised by the Group Leader.

3.6 – Completion of Notification Form - If the trip is to involve a residential stay then the RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL TRIPS NOTIFICATION FORM must be sent in to the Health and Safety Unit of the Personnel Section in advance of the trip.

3.7 – Debrief and Evaluation Where Appropriate - Staff and pupils will be asked to comment on the trip and identify any concerns and also to highlight where things worked positively.

4 - SUMMARY

Some school trips, e.g. involving outdoor pursuits, have a degree of risk associated with them and risk can never be completely removed. This is acknowledged, but most accidents have occurred where risks have not been considered or where inadequate arrangements have been made. This guidance should ensure that trips are organised in a methodical way and thus ensure that school trips continue to be undertaken safely.

5 - POLICY REVIEW - This policy is a working policy and will be subject to regular review in practice. The school will periodically review the process to ensure that it continues to work effectively.

Document History

Date	Notes
November 2008	Ratified by FGB
4 November 2010	Reviewed by Planning, Finance & Buildings Committee
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