



Educational School Visits and Off Site Policy

Person responsible	Bursar
Frequency of Review	2 Years
Date of last review by Governors	Spring 2025
Date of next review	Spring 2027

Introduction

At St Christopher's the Hall, we believe that trips and outdoor experiences not only support a broad and balanced curriculum but provide our pupils with memorable learning opportunities that help develop independence, self-confidence, and responsibility. The guidance contained within this document will provide organisers and leaders with the appropriate health and safety support to meet their responsibilities in organising and delivering educational and recreational visits. The range of activities could include;

- Day or part day visits using transport
- Day or part day visits on foot or using public transport
- After school sporting activities
- Residential trips during school time using licensed providers
- Field studies

Permission for pupils to attend educational visits is covered under our St. Christopher's The Hall Terms and Conditions for School Visits and Off-site PE Activities.

Approval Process

Approval for this policy and for specified residential visits has been sought from the Governors. They have delegated the day to day responsibility of ensuring that all procedures are followed to the Head, Bursar and SLT.

The approval procedure for individual trips is set out in Appendix A of this policy and should be followed by all Leaders.

Appendix B covers residential trips.

Insurance

All approved school trips are covered by the School's insurers. The duty of care under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 extends to pupils and employees participating in off-site visits.

The Leader

The leader has full responsibility for the safe running of the trip, pupil's safety and behaviour and for following this guidance. They must also ensure that all adult participants understand their roles, responsibilities and expectations.

A trip debrief form must be completed upon return to school and saved in the trips folder. Any safeguarding concerns must be reported immediately following the school's safeguarding procedures.

Planning for a visit

All off-site activities must firstly have the approval of the appropriate member of the SLT (who will liaise with the Head if necessary) who must be satisfied with the purpose, planning, risk assessments, first aid arrangements and staffing for the proposed off-site activity. Any concerns about the ethnic or religious impact of a proposed visit should be raised before such a visit is arranged.

Staff should complete the necessary forms in order to gain this approval. (See Appendix)

Assessing Risk

Planning is an essential prerequisite to any trip, including local parks, museums, swimming pools or further afield on residential trips. Plans should be proportionate and sensible, focusing on how to manage genuine risks.

The Headteacher, or designate, should ensure that the member of staff/group leader is competent to do so and has the necessary relevant experience. The Headteacher, or designate, should be satisfied that the visit has been planned effectively and that risks are minimised.

Safety must be the prime consideration and pupils must not be placed in situations which expose them to an unacceptable level of risk.

Risk assessment should be based on the following considerations;

- What are the hazards?
- Who might be affected by them?
- What safety measures need to be in place to reduce the risks to an acceptable level?
- Can the group leader put the safety measures in place?
- What steps will be taken in an emergency?

A school risk assessment form should be completed by the group leader and confirmed by the Head of Phase at least two weeks before the trip unless exceptional circumstances prevent this.

Where appropriate, this should include the external site's own risk assessments.

A regularly used venue should be continuously assessed and monitored for future reference.

Other considerations;

- Type of visit/activity and related level of activity
- Location, route and mode of transport
- Competence, experience and qualifications of supervisory staff
- Ratios of teachers/staff to pupils
- Age, fitness, capabilities of pupils in relation to activity
- Quality and suitability of equipment
- Seasonal conditions, weather and timing
- While on the visit, continue to use dynamic risk assessments for activities
- Emergency procedures, e.g. what to do if a pupil is unable to continue

Site Visit

Where possible, the group leader should visit the site prior to confirming the trip.

He/she should ensure that;

- The venue satisfies the requirements/objectives of the school visit
- Assess potential areas and levels of risk
- Ensure the venue can cater for the needs of the group
- Become as familiar as possible with the area before the trip

- Check insurance details
- Obtain, where possible, references from other schools who have used the site
- Remember to re-assess a regularly used venue and retain an evaluation of the visit

Supervision - Ratios of adults to pupils

All adults included in the ratio will have been DBS checked.

Non DBS checked adults cannot accompany trips. Parents never accompany overnight trips, this is undertaken only by St. Christopher's The Hall staff.

Supervision ratios will be dependent on the age of pupils, the activity being undertaken, the length of the trip, the experience of the adults, and whether the group will be split during the visit.

The DfE guidance for a trip that does not involve hazardous activities is;

One adult for every 4 pupils in Preschool and Reception
One adult for every 6 pupils in Years 1 and 2
One adult for every 6 - 10 pupils in Year 3
One adult for every 10 - 15 pupils in Years 4 - 6
For all residential trips the ratio for Years 4 - 6 is always a minimum of 1 - 10

EYFS outings will always be accompanied by a paediatric First Aider.

The supervising adults must be briefed with full instructions. Children should also be briefed before leaving and should and should be wearing proper clothing for the visit.

Equipment

On each trip the following should be taken;

A first aid kit plus a residential first aid kit if necessary

Critical Incident Card

List of children going on the trip

Emergency contact details

Medical consent forms for residential trips

Details of any children with medical or specific learning difficulties that could have an impact on the trip

Any medication needed by individual children, for example epipens, inhalers.

School mobile phone

Note that if there is more than one vehicle, the above list should be taken on each vehicle.

All hard copies of personal identifiable information, for example class lists, contact names and addresses, taken on the trip will be securely disposed of on return to school.

Communications with parents

A detailed letter to parents must be sent at least two weeks ahead of the planned trip, including;

- curriculum aim of visit
- the number of accompanying adults
- transport arrangements
- address and contact details of the venue
- details of leaving/collection times and places

For residential trips, letters should be sent out at least four weeks ahead of the planned trip and must include all of the above and;

- medical questionnaire and emergency medical treatment consent, to be signed and returned
- dietary information
- clothing and equipment lists
- passport, visa, GHIC card - If needed for an overseas trip

An information meeting must be held when details such as the clothing list, activities schedule and other specific information regarding the residential trip can be sought and given.

Preparing children for the trip

Children must be;

- Reminded of the purpose of the trip
- Reminded of behaviour on transport
- Given clear safety information before departure and at the venue
- Reminded about behaviour and consideration of other users of the venue

Venue and Accommodation

If any trip is to a venue that has not been used before or not for some time, a pre-visit must be arranged and fire drills and procedures checked. Additionally general accommodation should be reviewed, and for residential, the sleeping accommodation, bathrooms, drying facilities, evening relaxation areas, dining and kitchen areas should be checked and hygiene certificates seen. Risk assessments must be carried out and also requested from the licensed provider.

Records must be kept of “near miss” situations and these should be taken into consideration if a similar visit is planned. The 5 major elements of a risk assessment are;

- Identification of hazards
- Who might be affected
- How can risks be reduced to an acceptable level
- Can these measures be implemented
- Contingency plans if all else fails

These variables should be taken into account when undertaking risk assessments

- Age of pupils
- Number of pupils
- Previous experience of pupils and adults
- Time of year and day
- Travel arrangements
- Hazards on the journey and site
- Nature of activity

Toilet and First Aid facilities on site should be identified and the location of hospital facilities

ascertained. Ensure that on each visit the course provider has been met and that all staff who will be in contact with the children are suitably qualified and have DBS checks.

Ensure full confidence in the tutor/course leader at the site, otherwise the group leader should take over him/herself.

On return to school, confirm any verbal arrangements in writing.

Transport

When travelling by coach or minibus seat belts must always be used and this should be checked by the accompanying adults.

Staff accompanying the trip should be spread throughout the coach with at least one adult at the front and back of the coach. In addition, there should be at least one first aider on each vehicle where more than one is being used for a trip.

Where more than one vehicle is being used for a trip, a list of which staff and pupils are travelling on each vehicle must be left with the school office. If, during the trip, there are any changes to the passenger lists, the school must be informed immediately by telephone.

If the visit leader is not happy with a driver or the condition of the vehicle, they must stop the coach and contact the school or coach company and insist on another driver/vehicle.

When using public transport assistance from the operator, TfL, Southeastern Rail etc., should be sought whenever possible.

On residential trips or trips abroad, checks will be made of the safety record of the transport providers confirming that all vehicles have seat belts.

On Arrival at the Site

An easily identifiable place should be given to children for meeting in case they are separated from the main group.

Children should be reminded of any particular safety or general behavioural rules specific to the site and nature of the visit.

The School's behaviour and discipline policies apply at all times.

Regular head counts are an essential part of the off-site activities risk assessment.

On farm visits extra precautions are necessary as farms can be particularly hazardous to pupils.

Before the visit it is important to check that the farm is well managed and has good safety and animal welfare standards.

It must have good and easily accessible washing facilities.

It is important to ensure that the children do not;

- Put their faces against animals or put their fingers in their mouths after handling animals
- Eat until they have washed their hands
- Sample animal foodstuffs

- Drink from taps other than from designated water fountains
- Ride on tractors or play on machinery
- Play in the farm area

The briefing which takes place in school before the visit should contain the above instructions and the children should be told again on arrival at the farm.

Additional Information for trips concerning EYFS

Before taking children on an outing the following procedures must be followed in order to keep the children safe whilst on the trip;

- A risk assessment is carried out to identify any potential hazards for each outing. This includes an assessment of the adult to child ratios necessary for the trip and any medical needs of the children taking part in the visit. Most venues will have their own risk assessments and these will be requested where available.
- As a minimum, 1:4 staffing ratios are maintained whilst on outings. For many types of outings the risk assessment may identify that additional staff are needed to ensure the children's safety.
- Each staff member will be allocated to a small group of children for whom he or she is responsible during the entire trip.
- All staff are informed on the trip of the emergency procedures and must ensure that they have at least one fully charged school mobile telephone, with emergency contact and medical details for the children, and a first aid kit.
- The risk assessment should clarify the equipment and supplies necessary for each outing, such as prescribed medication needed by a child and a copy of the health care plan, provisions, snacks and bottled drinking water, spare clothes, wet wipes, sick bags, a towel and plastic bags.
- There will be at least one member of staff with a current paediatric first aid certificate on each outing.

Information For Residential School Trips And Trips Abroad

Organiser and Responsibilities

The member of staff who is the organiser of the trip is the official trip leader and ensures that there is an appropriate staff/pupil ratio and that all should know and understand their designated duties. If abroad, the group leader should know the whereabouts and telephone number of the nearest British Embassy. A risk assessment must be obtained from the tour operator.

A residential first aid kit should be checked and carried by the adult designated for medical duties. No child should keep their own medicines. A notebook or medicine form should be filled in for all medicines given (name, date, time, dose, name of medicine). This includes travel sickness pills. This information should be given to a doctor in case of an emergency.

Each parent must have signed consent for emergency treatment as part of their child's medical information form. An accident book should also be completed for all first aid (even plasters). In the event of a serious incident, the Centre or activity provider should have all relevant forms. School should be informed immediately. Do not speak to the press or allow the children to do so; take advice from the school first.

Before bedtime on the first evening children should 'walk' the fire exit routes and be reminded to leave slippers and a jumper by their beds for emergencies. Members of staff should be allocated rooms to check in the event of a fire alarm.

Two members of staff should be assigned to be on duty during the evening and night, and the children should be told who those people are and whom to wake up at night. If a child comes for help during the night, they should not be taken into a staff bedroom. If a child needs comfort for more than a few minutes of time, the second member of staff on duty should be woken up. Please be careful of physical contact with children if you are alone. Staff on duty in the evenings should not drink any alcohol and other staff should not drink alcohol when children are present and only in strict moderation.

Staff will be given duty breaks during the day for rest and recuperation, and these will be provisionally scheduled by the Trip Leader in advance of the trip, but could be subject to change during the trip.

Leaders should ensure that emergency contact numbers are with each group and with copies at school, with the Head, and any other school contact.

General Points

- Children should shower or bath every day
- Staff should sit with children at meals and be observant as to the amount they are eating and drinking. Please ensure they drink enough fluids
- Pocket money should be locked away safely and children allowed to draw a daily amount. They should write the withdrawal on their envelopes and indicate the sum remaining.
- Ensure that any bed wetters have a cover on their mattress and (discreetly) check their beds every morning
- Bedrooms should be kept tidy

Children should know the name, address and telephone number of their Centre and what to do in an emergency, for example, losing their group.

In a medical emergency contact emergency services immediately or arrange for medical attention and attend a hospital or doctor as soon as possible. Parents must be contacted immediately if their child experiences medical problems and requires medications not on the First Aid List while they are on the trip. Two members of staff should accompany the injured or sick child, taking all medical details with them and should inform the School immediately.

Procedure If A Child Is Missing Whilst Off The School Premises

Please see the Procedure When a Child Goes Missing Policy.

In case of a major crisis or emergency the leader should follow the Crisis Management Plan.

Guidelines For Parents Accompanying Children On Educational School Trips

All parents accompanying children on school trips must have read and signed the School's Volunteer Policy Agreement and relevant documents.

Simple Procedure Guidelines

Educational School Visits

- Preliminary visit for all new off-site activities
- Verbal approval required from SLT for new visits
- SLT to liaise with Head and inform if necessary
- Booking form, ratios and risk assessment to be completed by the trip leader and approved by SLT. Transport and catering arrangements booked.
- Costings to be given to Bursar
- All paperwork INCLUDING MEDICAL INFORMATION AND PERMISSION SLIP to be completed by parent
- All members of staff on the trip to take a copy of the risk assessments and Critical Incident Card on the trip
- Special attention must be paid to the section 'additional information for trips concerning EYFS' if appropriate
- There should be a briefing from the Trip Leader to staff accompanying the trip
- Trip Debrief form to be completed and saved in the trip folder
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Off-site Fixtures

A risk assessment must be completed for all off-site fixtures, using the guidelines above, and signed off by the Bursar. When travelling by minibus, particular consideration should be given to the distance of the venue from school and the duration of the meeting. Any fixture at a distance of more than 10 miles from school, or lasting more than 4 hours must have at least 2 staff members.

If a parent is to accompany the team to a match they should read and sign the school Volunteer Policy. If they do not hold a current DBS certificate a Barred List check will be required. However, such volunteers, who will not be left unsupervised, must read and sign our Off-Site Agreement (Appendix C).

The member of staff taking the team off-site should also confirm the pupil:staff remaining at school.

This Policy has been prepared in line with the Department of Education guidance 'Health & Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits' (2018).

Links with other policies

Attendance and Child Missing in Education
Crisis Management Plan
Volunteer, Visitor and Work Experience Policy

APPENDIX A

Approval Procedure for Educational School Visits and Workshops

Stage 1 - should be booked the term before

- Complete external booking form - agreed and signed by SLT
- Copy of invoice or confirmation of total cost and due date from venue
- Initial indication of requirements for coaches/travel
- Risk assessment written by the trip leader. At least one member of staff **MUST** have been to the destination. If not, a visit/recce must be carried out
- All costing information to the Bursar to cost the trip.
- Letter to parents - include cost, which will be added to the termly disbursements invoice
- Dates and details to head of phase to add into ISAMS (including hall bookings for workshops)
- Copies of Risk Assessments provided by the venue/travel company (including details of their DBS checking process).

Stage 2: should be send at least two weeks before

- Meeting with all teachers attending the trip - Decide groupings/rooms/medicine form for specific children
- Medical records checked and updated in preparation for the trip.
- Teachers to contact specialist teachers alerting them of the trip and arrange cover for duties.

Teacher packs need to include:

- Risk assessments
- Medical Details
- Emergency Contact Details
- First Aid Kit
- Medication and forms for specific administration
- Travel sickness equipment
- Mobile Phone
- iPad
- Hi-vis jackets - if applicable

Stage 3 After trip/workshop

- Team meeting after the trip/workshop to evaluate the success of the trip and any improvements for future visits.

APPENDIX B

Approval Procedure for Residential School Trips

Stage 1 6 - 8 months before travel - (Trips abroad - 12 months)

- Complete external booking form - agreed and signed by SLT
- Copy of invoice or confirmation of deposits, total costs and due dates from venue
- Initial indication of requirements for coaches/travel
- Risk assessment written by the trip leader. At least one member of staff **MUST** have been to the destination. If not, a visit/recce must be carried out
- All costing information to the Bursar to cost the trip
- Initial letter to parents - dates of deposits and future payments to be included
- Copies of Risk Assessments provided by the venue/travel company (including details of their DBS checking process). Liaise with Bursar regarding travel insurance
- Permission slips and agreement of payment. Deposits to be paid directly to the school. Teachers to check with the Bursar for outstanding deposits. Outstanding payments must be followed up by the class teacher

Stage 2 2 -3 months before travel - (Trips abroad - 6 months)

- Check all payments have been received with the Bursar. Class teachers to send reminders of upcoming/final payments via email
- Letter sent to parents inviting them to an information meeting

Stage 3 1 - 2 months before travel

- Information meeting for parents
- Send out the PowerPoint from the information meeting to parents (Including the code of conduct)
- Medical and emergency contact forms to be given out and returned to the class teacher (include dietary requirements)
- Meeting with all teachers attending the trip. Decide groupings/rooms/medicine form for specific children

Teacher packs need to include:

- Risk assessments
- Medical Details
- Emergency Contact Details
- Rooming/Grouping Lists
- First Aid Kit
- Medication and forms for specific administration
- Travel sickness equipment
- Mobile Phone
- iPad
- Hi-vis jackets - if applicable

Stage 4 After visit

- Team meeting after the residential to evaluate the success of the trip and any improvements for future visits.

APPENDIX C

VOLUNTEER GUIDANCE FOR SCHOOL TRIPS

These guidance notes have been written in conjunction with the school's policy on off-site visits. If you have any questions about a school trip, please see the class teacher. We do appreciate your help on school trips.

- Parents may not always have their own child in their group
- The teacher will give parent helpers a list of children for whom they are responsible
- All children are told they must stay with their group and the group adult at all times
- If the trip involves a coach journey, please help the children in your group put on and fit their seatbelts. Children are not allowed to eat or drink on the coaches. The class teacher has sick bags if needed
- The class teacher is responsible for ALL First Aid and medication
- The class teacher leads the rules, routines and expectations for the day. Please help the teacher by ensuring your group follows all instructions, e.g. when to eat and drink
- If there is a medical or other emergency, let the class teacher know immediately. The class teacher is responsible for contacting the school and associated parents in emergency situations
- If you need to leave your group for any reason, e.g., to take a child to the toilet, please ensure you are with another adult and inform the class teacher
- Parent volunteers are asked to keep the same degree of confidentiality as in school. If you have any queries or problems concerning the trip, please direct these in the first instance to the class teacher or, if you would rather, the Headteacher on return from the trip.
- I agree to an Enhanced DBS/Barred List check and other statutory applicable safeguarding checks on request.

Signed

Date.....

PRINT NAME.....