

Saint Christina's School Trips and Educational Visits Policy

<i>Review Initiated by</i>	<i>Head</i>
<i>Last Review</i>	<i>Spring 2023</i>
<i>Next Review</i>	<i>Spring 2024</i>

Distribution: On the network in the School Policy Library

Safely managed educational visits with a clear purpose are an indispensable part of a broad and balanced curriculum.

1. Overview

- 1.1. Educational visits are an opportunity to extend the learning of all pupils, including an enrichment of their understanding of themselves, others and the world around them. They can be a catalyst for improved personal performance, promote a lifetime interest and in some cases lead to professional fulfilment. Saint Christina's School encourages staff to organise trips and educational visits and the Headteacher is committed to supporting them in these ventures.
- 1.2. Educational visits should be available to all pupils and should be organised accordingly, with particular consideration being given where possible to any pupils with a disability, especially when selecting venues and organising transport.
- 1.3. This policy on Educational visits and trips applies to Saint Christina's School and has been written with reference to the Department for Education best practice on educational visits and trips as set out in the 'Health and Safety: advice for schools' (www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-and-safety-advice-for-schools) and the HSE publication 'School Trips and outdoor learning activities: tackling health and safety myths'.
- 1.4. The principles which underpin a trip are as follows:
 - The trip directly supports an academic area such as languages, History/ Geography where going to a specific location or country is important to fully understand either a specific part of the curriculum or to enhancing key skills in the relevant curriculum.
 - The trip develops and promote one of the major representative sporting areas established within the school (e.g. netball, football etc).
 - The trip directly relates to the development of outdoor pursuits and adds to the educational experience of a child through outdoor activities such as a PGL type trip.
 - The trip promotes the Catholic ethos of the school and has a specific service element.

2. Procedures

2.1 Guidance on staff pupil ratios is as follows:

- 1 adult for every 10-15 pupils (Y4-6)
- 1 adult for every 6 pupils (Y1-3)

- 1 adult for every 4 pupils (R)
- 1 adult for every 3 pupils (N)

2.2 **This ratio is necessarily a guide.** Other factors that will be considered when confirming the details of the trip and final ratio are:

- The mode of transport – when travelling via public transport the ratios should be reduced
- the sex, age and ability of the group
- the nature of the activities
- the experience of the teachers/leaders or competence on specific activities. In the first instance, staff with the requisite subject experience should be asked to assist with the trip, e.g. linguists for language based trips, Games staff for sports tours, etc. Where staff with these skills are not available the trip organiser may seek support from other staff.
- If individuals from outside the school (e.g. sports coaches) are to accompany trips and are expecting to be paid, this must first be cleared with Headteacher and Bursar and must be factored into the costing of the trip and subsequent charge for pupils. They would also need to be appropriately vetted.
- the duration of the journey/visit and the type of accommodation/ whether or not trip is a residential trip
- first aid cover available. There must always be at least one member with a first aid qualification on any trip.
- **The final ratio and justification must be included on the risk assessment.**

2.3 Occasionally adults known to the school (ex-members of staff or spouses of members of staff) may be asked to provide supplementary staff supervision. This must be approved by the Headteacher or his Deputy well in advance of the trip.

2.4 This would not normally apply to residential trips where the focus of staff must be exclusively on the pupils; spouses and children of staff (who are younger than those pupils on the trip) would compromise the school's duty of care to the pupils since staff would understandably look to their own families as their priority. If there is any ambiguity, please ensure you speak to the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher.

2.5 Where a child of a staff member, not attending the school, is of the same age as pupils attending the trip, they may, subject to appropriate discussion and agreement with the Headteacher, attend a trip on the same basis as the pupils (i.e. paying the same cost for the trip as the Saint Christina's pupils and subject to the same expectations on behaviour).

3. Key principles

3.1. For Staff

- 3.1.1 All visits must be planned sufficiently well in advance to allow for effective marketing of the trip and organisation. All appropriate risk assessments must be completed and be signed off in advance of a trip taking place. For an overseas trip risk assessments should be submitted as early as possible and an initial risk assessment (which can be amended later as necessary) must be submitted before the trip is booked with any agencies.
- 3.1.2 The Headteacher is responsible for the approval of all educational visits. The Deputy Headteacher will assist Trip Leaders in areas such as planning and risk assessment.
- 3.1.3 There will be a named and approved Trip Leader (and where appropriate, a named Deputy) on all educational visits. This Trip leader will be specifically competent for the role. Working with the Deputy Headteacher as necessary, the Trip Leader will be responsible for all aspects of the planning, risk assessment and organisation of the visit. The Trip Leader will assume full responsibility during the visit, including ongoing risk assessment.
- 3.1.4 The law expects that a teacher will do that which a parent with care and concern for the safety and welfare of his or her own child, would do.
- 3.1.5 A teacher must ensure that supervision of the pupils throughout the journey or visit is appropriate. Within a residential trip this includes the additional responsibility of overnight supervision, and the need for staff to be sufficiently rested to perform their duties appropriately. Therefore the following should be part of all consideration:
 - 1. Agreed ratios are maintained at all times.
 - 2. Staff may not drink alcohol. Staff must be fit to discharge their duties responsibly at all times.
- 3.1.6 If a pupil falls ill, the pupil will normally remain in their own room and medical attention given in view of others, whether it be in their room or in the corridor or in a medical room. Staff should not be on their own with a pupil under any circumstances. Pupils should not be coming into staff bedrooms to receive treatment.
- 3.1.7 If a pupil falls ill on a trip and requires hospital treatment, a staff member should remain with the pupil until parents have arrived and are able to take responsibility for their child. This applies even if a parent has given consent for an ambulance crew to take their child to hospital.
- 3.1.8 Staff should respect a pupil's privacy in toilets, showers and changing rooms. It may be necessary for staff to monitor pupils use of toilet facilities particularly in public places, for example, in a motorway service station, however it is recommended that staff do not personally use the facility at the same time as pupils.
- 3.1.9 Reasonable steps must be taken to avoid exposing pupils to dangers which are foreseeable and beyond those with which the pupils can reasonably be expected to cope. Trip leaders will prepare a written risk assessment in accordance with stated policy.

- 3.1.10 The need for direct supervision has to be judged by reference to the risks involved in the activity being undertaken. Instructions given to pupils are not always enough. The possibility that they might disobey has to be taken into account together with the risk they may encounter if they disobey.
- 3.1.11 Whoever has responsibility for the visit must make all proper preparations and ensure that the party leaders and helpers have the ability, experience, training and health to undertake the responsibility for the care and welfare of pupils in a different environment.
- 3.1.12 Where the visit is to a residential or outdoor activity centre, the teacher can reasonably allow children to be supervised by the centre's own staff, provided that he/she is satisfied that they are able to do so safely. The member of staff will normally ensure, nevertheless, that they are present at the activity. To assist with the process the Centre's Risk Assessment should be carefully analysed and asked for in advance. Similarly, if teachers have taken reasonable steps to ensure that the premises where children stay are safe, then, in normal circumstances, no more needs to be done with regard to the facilities.
- 3.1.13 Teachers should not participate in a journey or visit which they believe has not being adequately prepared and organised.
- 3.1.14 The school has public liability insurance to protect all participants on school trips and visits.

3.2. For Parents: For the purpose of Trip organisation the school has defined three types of trips that we organise:

- a) **Routine trips with no particularly hazardous activity:** Informed parental consent is obtained for all trips and educational visits. Parents agree through the terms and conditions of joining the school and through the General Consent Form relating to trips that the school may take their son / daughter on routine trips. They are informed that a trip is occurring with times and appropriate details (outline itinerary, cost etc) and have the opportunity to withdraw their son / daughter from the trip should they wish to. Under the agreement between school and parent embodied in the Terms and Conditions and the additional General Consent, not withdrawing a pupil, in line with government advice, entails consent.
- b) **Trips with a hazardous activity (e.g. rock climbing; sea-canoeing):** Where a trip involves a particular activity that adds an element of hazard / risk above the norm, parents are required to give their additional consent to their child being involved. This is achieved in most instances through the return of a slip or electronic response form.
- c) **Residential and Foreign Trips:** Where a trip is residential or to another country parents are given sufficient written and supplementary information about the venture to enable them to make an informed decision and give written or electronic consent together with medical and emergency contact details. Whenever appropriate a briefing meeting with parents will be arranged.

Expectations with regard to behaviour and codes of conduct are explained to parents.

- 3.3. For Pupils:** Pupils are briefed about the aims, expectations and codes of conduct for all trips and educational visits. They will receive ongoing briefings throughout the trip or educational visit - an important element of learning and safety.

Expectations with regard to behaviour and codes of conduct are explained to pupils.

4. Timing of Trips

- 4.1. With the exception of the curriculum linked Residential Trips organised annually for Y3/4 and Y5/6 in May, permission for residential trips to leave before the end of term (or half-term) will only be given if there is a compelling reason to support this, in order to minimise disruption to teaching produced by students and members of staff missing lessons.

5. First Aid kits for Trips

- 5.1 An appropriate First Aid kit will be requested from GD and prepared in advance of the trip.
- 5.2 Each kit contains – Emergency contact details and Medical Information for your Trip. This is private and confidential and if removed from the kit must be shredded after use. If there is risk to the information being accessed by a third party, the contact details and information are available to staff as a PDF document which can be accessed from a secure mobile device.
- 5.3 All medication for pupils **must** be kept by staff and **not** given to the pupil. It is for the member of staff to administer the medication should it be required, not for the pupil to self-medicate. In most cases the medication we provide you with is a backup and the pupil will have their own medication with them. If unsure, please ask for guidance from GD.
- 5.4 All medication and First Aid kits need to be returned to GD either when you return from the trip or the following morning.
- 5.5 Please inform GD if anything has been used from the bags so that it can be replenished. Also any incidents or accidents will need to be reported in the usual way.

The rest of this document is divided up into three sections:

- A. Policy for all trips
- B. Additional policy notes for trips with a residential element
- C. Additional policy notes for trips with a residential element (overseas)

A. POLICY FOR ALL TRIPS

SUPERVISION

Responsibility

The Trip leader is responsible overall for the Trip at all times. However, it is usually a good idea to allocate supervisory responsibility to each accompanying adult for named pupils. Trip leaders should:

- ensure that each adult knows which pupils they are responsible for
- ensure that each pupil knows which adult is responsible for them
- ensure that all adults and pupils are aware of the expected standards of behaviour
- carry a list/register of all Trip members
- ensure that measures are in place in case of emergency (see Emergency Procedures below)

Each accompanying adult should:

- have a reasonable knowledge of (or have been briefed about) the pupils including any special educational needs, medical needs or disabilities
- directly supervise the pupils (except during remote supervision) - particularly important when they are mingling with the public and may not be easily identified
- have a clear understanding of the activity to be undertaken
- have the means to contact the Trip leader/other supervisors if needing help
- anticipate a potential risk by recognising a hazard, by arriving, where necessary, at the point of hazard before the pupils do, and acting promptly where necessary
- monitor the appropriateness of the activity, the physical and mental condition and abilities of the Trip members and the suitability of the prevailing conditions
- understand the emergency procedures and be able to carry them out

Each pupil should:

- know who their supervisor is at any given time and how to contact him or her
- have been given clear instructions
- alert the supervisor if someone is missing or in difficulties
- have a meeting place to return to, or an instruction to remain where they are, if separated
- understand, accept and adhere to the expected standards of behaviour.

Head counts etc: Whatever the length and nature of the visit, regular head counting

of pupils should take place, particularly before leaving any venue. It is good practice for all supervisors to:

- ensure that all pupils are aware of rendezvous points;
- ensure that all pupils know what to do if they become separated from the Trip.

‘Buddy’ system: Some colleagues find it helpful to pair each pupil with a ‘buddy’. Each regularly checks that the other is present and is OK.

Mobile Phones: We do not normally allow children to bring mobile phones on trips and expeditions. Should a decision be made to allow a mobile phone school policy will be that each pupil will be asked to send a text to a school smartphone with their name at the start of a trip. The numbers will be deleted by the member of staff taking the trip when the trip is over.

Remote Supervision: Supervision can be close or remote but is always continuous:

- direct supervision occurs when the Trip remain within sight and contact of the supervisor
- remote supervision occurs when, as part of planned activities, a Trip works away from the supervisor but is subject to stated controls (e.g. during certain Duke of Edinburgh’s Award expeditions). The supervisor is present though not necessarily near or in sight, but his or her whereabouts are known
- down time (or recreational time) - for example during the evenings - may involve close or remote supervision
- it is essential that everyone involved in the visit understands the supervision arrangements and expectations
- even during remote supervision, the supervisors remain responsible for pupils.

When supervision is remote:

- Trips should be sufficiently trained and assessed as competent for the level of activity to be undertaken, including first aid and emergency procedures. Remote supervision will normally be the final stage of a phased development programme
- pupils will be familiar with the environment or similar environments and have details of the rendezvous points and the times of rendezvous
- clear and understandable rules and boundaries must be established with the Trip
- there must be clear lines of communication between the Trip, the supervisor and the school
- the supervisor should monitor the Trip’s progress at appropriate intervals
- the supervisor will be in the expedition or activity area and able to reach the Trip reasonably promptly should the Trip need support in an emergency
- there should be clear arrangements for the abandonment of the activity where it cannot be safely completed.

Rearranging Trips: When Trips are rearranged, split or joined together, there is particular scope for confusion.

It is therefore important that the supervisor:

- clearly takes responsibility for the Trip when their part of the programme begins, particularly making certain that all Trip members are aware of the changeover
- clearly passes on responsibility for the Trip when their part of the programme is concluded, together with any relevant information ensuring that the Trip members know who their next leader is.

Down Time: Trip leaders should ensure that pupils continue to be properly supervised during downtime before, between and after activities, including the evenings on residential visits. A Trip occupied in study or activity is far safer than a Trip left to its own devices in an unfamiliar environment. Too much unstructured free time in a residential programme can allow time for mischief, bullying, homesickness and wandering off from the body of the Trip. It is good practice to ensure that all staff and pupils understand the standards of behaviour that apply at all times, not just during activities

TRAVEL

Trip leaders should ensure that:

- transport by road has seat belts and that the pupils wear them
- there is adequate supervision at all times when travelling. If there is more than one coach carrying pupils, the coaches must travel in tandem as far as possible in the event that a pupil falls ill and requires hospital attention which may mean a member of staff needing to accompany that pupil. This will enable staff to be redistributed to ensure there is appropriate level of supervision of pupils at all times on the coaches.
- pupils are supervised when boarding and leaving
- extra care is taken when leaving a vehicle in a country that drives on the right as some doors may open onto the road side
- standards of behaviour are met, and in particular that drivers are not distracted
- evacuation procedures are clearly understood by everyone, luggage is securely stored and emergency exits are kept clear
- there are adequate rest stops for drivers
- head counts are carried out when the Trip is getting off or onto transport.
- Staff should respect a pupil's privacy in toilets, showers and changing rooms. Guidelines regarding this are included in the main policy statement.

Where a visit occurs in the evening after a full day of school, the member of staff organising it should consider, with the Deputy Headteacher, the best mode of travel for the activity, as the member of staff may be tired and therefore driving a

significant distance following a full day of teaching may not be safe. Therefore, organisers should:

- Consider hiring a coach with its own driver. This is always preferable.
- Where use of a minibus is preferable with regard to keeping trip costs down, for example, it may be appropriate to investigate whether or not another member of the academic or support staff might be able to do the driving safely.
- Where use of a minibus is unavoidable an assessment should be made with the Deputy Headteacher to consider having cover for all or part of the preceding afternoon for resting before driving in the evening.

RISK ASSESSMENT

Written Risk Assessment in advance of the trip: Good trips exercise pupils' sense of adventure, but this must not be achieved by putting pupils at unacceptable physical or psychological risk. Trips cannot be 100% risk free. The point of written risk assessment therefore is to avoid and minimise risk wherever possible. A balanced risk assessment will also take account of the risks and the benefits of the activity e.g. some sports may hold a slight risk of injury, but not participating has even greater health risks in the long term (obesity, diabetes, arthritis etc.).

The risk assessment format to be used is that provided by the school for all trips and can be found on the T drive under risk assessments.

It is a requirement that trip leaders conduct a written risk assessment and provide a copy for the Headteacher at least two weeks before the departure of any Saint Christina's School trip. If you run the same trip regularly, the document should be revisited regularly (at least yearly). If you keep it on computer, updating it is a relatively simple matter. Trips of a residential nature or involving overseas travel should be completed at the time of the initial booking with the travel agency (i.e. several months before the actual departure).

Conducting a written risk assessment is largely a matter of common sense and it is recommended that colleagues use the following five-stage guide; Stages 1-4 should be thought through before recording your risk assessment at Stage 5.

1. Identify the hazards

Look for significant rather than trivial risks and consider in particular the following areas of the trip:

- a) Transport and travel arrangements (see the relevant section above)
- b) Communication of key information between accompanying adults and pupils (and *vice versa*)
- c) Particular medical or pastoral needs of any of the participants on the trip.
- d) Arrangements for physical activities, especially water-based activities, or anything involving equipment or machinery. (see the relevant sections below on coastal visits and swimming)
- e) Any times when remote supervision will be exercised (see the relevant section above)
- f) Unwanted attention from members of the public

g) Local conditions and customs (especially on overseas and outdoor trips)

2. Who might be affected or harmed?

Don't forget to consider:

- a) The nature of your Trip (including pupils with particular medical or pastoral needs and those with a poor disciplinary record)
- b) Colleagues who have little experience of accompanying trips
- c) Your host(s) or members of the public, if there is a chance they might be affected or harmed by the Trip activities.

3. What is the degree of risk?

You need to consider whether the worst outcome of injury is a fatality, a major injury, a minor injury or no injury at all, and how likely it is that this will happen. The degree of risk should be considered as HIGH, MEDIUM, or LOW. Use the chart below to determine this.

For example: A coach or minibus accident would be potentially **fatal**. However, it remains statistically **unlikely** that you will have such an accident on a school trip. So, the degree of risk is **LOW**. Control measures to help to keep the risk LOW would include:

- Using a reputable coach firm (who should have good drivers, and well-maintained coaches)
- Making sure pupils behave properly on the coach, do not distract the driver and wear seatbelts

Below is a guide to help you think through the risk as you complete your risk assessment.

	Likely	Probable	Possible	Unlikely
Fatal	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH	LOW
Major injury (off work/school 3+ days)	HIGH	HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW
Minor injury	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	LOW	LOW
No injury	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW

4. Consider what control measures can be used?

The aim is to make all risks small by either eliminating the hazards or reducing the hazards or adding to the precautions. Some controls which may be considered are:

- Choosing an appropriate transport provider
- Substitution by something less hazardous
- Using personal protective equipment
- Guarding the equipment

- Have a written procedure which is followed
 - Supervision
 - Training
 - Having Information/instruction/signs clearly displayed
5. Record hazards and the degree of risk still existing with the control measures in place. Record the control measures and see that whoever is responsible for further action does what is needed. **If, at this stage, any of the risks remain HIGH, you must come and discuss this in good time before the trip with the Deputy Head or Headteacher.**

Other Preparations

As well as your written risk assessment, you will also need to have done the following before the trip departs:

1. Have an emergency plan (see below) and take all the necessary documentation with you so you can quickly implement your plan if necessary. Sensitive trip information may be contained on an encrypted memory stick or similar. Where this is not feasible (i.e. no access to computers) staff should make the best and most secure provision for this data.
2. Brief pupils and accompanying staff on the risks and how they may be minimised.

On-going Risk Assessment

Risk assessment does not end when the visit begins. Changes to the itinerary, changes to the weather, incidents (whether minor or major), staff illness – all or any of these may bring pupils face to face with unexpected hazards or difficulties and give rise to the need to re-assess risk.

The Trip leader (and other adults with responsibility) conduct ongoing risk assessment while the visit is taking place. This normally consists of judgments and decisions made as the need arises. The standard of judgment required in carrying out ongoing risk assessment is that of a 'reasonably prudent parent'. If in doubt, ask yourself, "would I be happy for my own son/daughter to be involved in this activity?"

Ongoing risk assessment should be informed by the visit or site specific risk assessment prepared before the trip. It would be helpful if any unforeseen problems or risks encountered on the trip were alluded to in the trip report prepared for the Headteacher (or Headteacher) by the Trip leader on return from the trip.

On residential trips, it is good practice to have briefings each night to take stock and assess the circumstances for the next day, and to spend time early the next morning explaining arrangements to the pupils.

Check the local weather forecast

- to inform decisions on appropriate clothing;
- to be aware of whether water activities might be in areas prone to flash floods, high winds etc.;
- to be aware of whether trekking or climbing at altitude might be subject to dramatic changes of weather; potential for fallen trees, avalanches etc.

Seek local knowledge of potential hazards, e.g.

- tides;
- rivers/streams prone to sudden increases in flow;
- difficult terrain;
- crossing points for road, rail or water;
- unstable cliffs.

Plan B

- good forward planning will always include alternative plans in case the itinerary needs to be changed;
- a flexible itinerary can allow activities from later in the visit to be substituted for earlier activities if those are prevented by unexpected circumstances;
- Trip leaders faced with potential difficulties will feel more confident to change the itinerary if a pre-assessed alternative is available;
- regardless of whether alternatives have been pre-assessed, always take time to reassess risks if the itinerary changes. It is worth making a note of any changes you make if you can;
- on arrival at an alternative site or activity that has not previously been risk assessed, we recommend that the Trip leader should risk assess the situation before allowing the pupils to disembark from the transport;
- an unknown location might involve hazards not covered in the original risk assessment or parental consent, for example if the original intention to visit a land-only site has to be changed at short notice to a lake or seaside location. To cope with this, it may be appropriate at the outset to include details of a 'Plan B' in the letter to parents at the outset thus ensuring that consent is extant.

Behaviour problems, illness or injury

- All pupils must be aware of, and signed up to, agreed standards of behaviour before (or at least at the beginning of) the visit
- educational visits can be a good opportunity for school staff to get to know pupils away from the confines of the school. But we should not accept lower standards of behaviour. The different hazards that pupils may be exposed to away from the school will require them to observe standards of behaviour that are at least as high as, or higher than, in the classroom
- if one adult has to give prolonged attention to one Trip member, the Trip leader should reassess the supervisory roles of the other adults to ensure that all members of the Trip know who is responsible for them. Activities may need to be amended until the other adult returns all of his or her attention to the Trip

- Trip leaders should trust their own knowledge of the young people and use their own professional judgement. Ask yourself: “Would I be happy for my own child to be involved in this activity?”
- this may include challenging an activity leader where the Trip leader’s knowledge of the Trip is superior, or intervening to prompt a change of plan.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES FOR TRIPS

Preparation

Careful emergency planning can mitigate the trauma of being caught up in an emergency. It is good practice for the Trip leader to:

- agree an emergency action plan, which includes 24-hour (i.e. constant cover) with the Home Contact. In the event of a serious emergency, the Trip leader should get in touch with the Home Contact as soon as practicably possible. S/he will follow the School’s published Procedure for Use in an Emergency
- ensure that all members of the Trip know what action to take if there is a problem
- hold evening briefings with supervisors to discuss issues for the next day
- spend time early the next morning explaining arrangements to the pupils
- hold, or ensure that other adults in the Trip hold, up-to date competence in first aid and other life saving competence as necessary for the activities
- ensure that the first aid kit is properly stocked and accessible
- ensure that all pupils’ medical needs (e.g. asthma, diabetes, anaphylaxis) are known and that staff are competent to handle them
- be aware that some diseases are more common in some countries and know what preventative action to take and what to do if a Trip member becomes infected
- recognise that many of the health problems of pupils on longer visits are caused by lack of food, of liquid or of sleep
- if appropriate, advise Trip members about the dangers of over-exertion in the heat and of dehydration, which can cause headache, dizziness and nausea
- in warm weather, keep fluid levels high, take extra salt and wear loose, lightweight clothing – preferably made of cotton or other natural fibres – and use suitably factored sun protection creams and sun hats/glasses
- ensure that drivers take adequate rest breaks on long journeys
- ensure that all pupils understand and follow the code of conduct

Emergency procedures framework during the visit

If an emergency occurs on a school visit the Trip leader should maintain or resume control of the Trip overall. The main factors to consider include:

- establish the nature and extent of the emergency as quickly as possible;
- ensure that all the Trip are safe and looked after

- establish the names of any casualties and get immediate medical attention
- ensure that a teacher accompanies casualties to hospital with any relevant medical information, and that the rest of the Trip are adequately supervised at all times and kept together
- notify the police if necessary
- ensure that all Trip members who need to know are aware of the incident
- ensure that all Trip members are following the emergency procedures and the roles allocated to them – revise procedures and re-allocate roles as necessary
- inform the school Home Contact and provider/tour operator (as appropriate). The school contact number should be accessible at all times during the visit
- details of the incident to pass on to the school should include: nature, date and time of incident; location of incident; names of casualties and details of their injuries; names of others involved so that parents can be reassured; action taken so far; action yet to be taken (and by whom)
- school contact and not the Trip leader should notify parents, providing as full a factual account of the incident as possible
- notify insurers, especially if medical assistance is required (this may be done by the school contact)
- notify the British Embassy/Consulate if an emergency occurs abroad
- if possible do not rely solely on mobile phones
- write down accurately and as soon as possible all relevant facts and witness details and preserve any vital evidence
- keep a written account of all events, times and contacts after the incident
- complete an accident report form as soon as possible
- no-one in the Trip should speak to the media. Names of those involved in the incident should not be given to the media as this could cause distress to their families. Refer media enquiries to a designated media contact in the home area
- no-one in the Trip should discuss legal liability with other parties, nor sign anything relating to accident liability
- keep receipts for any expenses incurred – insurers will require these.

B. ADDITIONAL POLICY NOTES FOR TRIPS WITH A RESIDENTIAL ELEMENT

On residential trips, the Trip leader should:

- ensure that all supervisors understand that their supervisory role continues in the evening
- use down-time in the evening or at the beginning of the day to brief the Trip on the planned activities for the day to come
- apply the advice contained in “Remote Supervision” above, adapted as necessary, if it is felt reasonable to allow the Trip some time without close supervision
- occupy the Trip with mildly active, non-academic activities in the evening, e.g. quizzes, team challenges, led-walks.

The Trip leader, or the tour operator, should normally have made an exploratory visit to the venue. They should ensure that:

- the Trip's immediate accommodation is exclusively for the Trip's use
- teachers have sleeping accommodation in close proximity to the pupils' accommodation
- child protection arrangements are in place to protect both pupils and staff
- in the absence of 24 hour staffing of reception, external doors must be made secure against intrusion and windows closed as necessary to prevent intrusion.

If these checks have been delegated to a tour operator, it is up to the Trip leader to make sure they have indeed been completed.

Don't be lulled into a sense of false security by local assurances, such as "no need to lock doors in this part of the country". The presence of the Trip may attract unwelcome attention that is unusual in the locality.

C. ADDITIONAL POLICY NOTES FOR TRIPS WITH A RESIDENTIAL ELEMENT (OVERSEAS)

On overseas trips, it is a good idea to provide participants with a wallet-size card written in the local language showing the name of the school or hotel and an emergency contact number. Staff should know where the nearest British Embassy or Consulate is located and the telephone number. Depending on the age of the pupils, it may be appropriate to ensure that they have this information to hand.

ADDITIONAL POLICY FOR FARM AND COASTAL VISITS

FARMS

Trip Leaders should check the provision at the farm to ensure that:

- eating areas are separate from those where there is any contact with animals;
- there are adequate clean and well-maintained washing facilities;
- there is clear information for visitors on the risks and the precautions to take.

Ensure that:

- there is adequate trained adult supervision wherever children can come into contact with animals and need to wash their hands;
- all children wash their hands thoroughly immediately after touching animals and before any eating or drinking;
- shoes are cleaned and then hands are washed on leaving the farm.

Never let pupils:

- place their faces against the animals;
- put their hands in their own mouths after touching or feeding the animals;
- eat or drink while going round the farm;
- eat or drink until they have washed their hands;
- sample any animal foodstuffs;
- drink from farm taps (other than in designated public facilities);
- touch animal droppings - if they do then wash and dry hands;
- ride on tractors or other machines;
- play in the farm area, or in other areas that are out of bounds such as grain storage tanks, slurry pits etc.

The Chief Medical Officer's revised guidance suggests:

- gradually increase ratios up to one adult for eight children for children between ages five and eight
- higher standards for washing facilities.

COASTAL

The Trip leader will want to bear the following points in mind when assessing the risks of a coastal activity:

- tides, rip tides and sandbanks are potential hazards; timings and exit routes should be checked
- Trip members should be aware of warning signs and flags
- establish a base on the beach to which members of the Trip may return if separated
- look out for hazards such as glass, barbed wire and sewage outflows etc.
- some of a Trip's time on a beach may be recreational. Trip leaders should consider which areas of the terrain are out of bounds, and whether the risk assessment allows swimming in the sea
- cliff tops can be highly dangerous for school Trips even during daylight. The Trip should keep to a safe distance from the cliff edge at all times – a “buffer zone” between the pupils and the hazard. Be aware that cliff falls can mean that cliff paths stop abruptly at the cliff edge
- Trip leaders should not normally allow pupils to ride mountain bikes on any route that is near a sheer drop e.g. coastal path or canal towpath. If the risk assessment indicates that the risk could be managed adequately, then there should be a small known Trip of skilled and experienced riders accompanied by appropriately qualified staff
- the local coastguard, harbour master, lifeguard or tourist information office can provide information and advice on the nature and location of hazards.

SWIMMING IN THE SEA OR OTHER NATURAL WATERS

Swimming and paddling or otherwise entering the waters of river, canal, sea or lake should never be allowed as an impromptu activity. The pleas of children to be

allowed to bathe – because it is hot weather, for example, or after a kayaking exercise - should be resisted where the bathing has not been prepared for. In-water activities should take place only when a proper risk assessment has been completed and proper measures put in to control the risks. The activities should be formal and supervised.

It is good practice that, wherever possible, Trip leaders seek out recognised bathing areas that have official surveillance i.e. qualified lifeguard cover. But, even then, Trip leaders should be aware that pupils might mingle with members of the public and be lost to view. Pupils should always be in sight, properly supervised in line with the guidance and expectations outlined throughout this policy and within reasonable reach of their supervisors.

The Trip leader should:

- be aware that many children who drown are strong swimmers
- ascertain for themselves the level of the pupils' swimming ability
- check the weather
- be aware of the local conditions – such as currents, weeds, rip tides, a shelving, uneven or unstable bottom – using local information from the lifeguard, coastguard, harbourmaster, police or tourist information office;
- beware of rocks, breakwaters and other potential hazards
- look out for warning signs and flags: a red flag means it is unsafe to swim; yellow flags mean that lifeguards are on patrol in the area between the flags; a black and white flag means it is an area used by surfers and not suitable for swimming
- designate a safe area of water for use by the Trip
- brief the Trip about the limits of the swimming area
- avoid crowded beaches where it is harder to see pupils
- be aware of the dangerous effects of sudden immersion in cold water
- be aware of the dangers of paddling especially for young pupils
- ensure that pupils have not eaten (at least half an hour) before swimming
- ensure the activity is suitable for the pupils, especially any with special needs or disabilities
- adopt and explain the signals of distress and recall
- ensure that buoyancy aids, lifejackets etc. are used where appropriate
- carry out regular head counts
- be aware that it is not always possible to tell when someone is in difficulties.

Supervisors should:

- have clear roles – at least one supervisor should always stay out of the water for better surveillance, even where lifeguards are on duty
- take up a best position from which to exercise a constant vigilance
- divide their careful watching between staff who stand in the sea and look landward towards the Trip and staff who stay on land and watch the Trip from that vantage point
- give the children their full, undivided attention

- always follow the advice or directions of a lifeguard
- never swim themselves unless it is to help a child in distress
- not join in any of the children's games
- ensure that no child is allowed to wade out or swim further than his or her waist height
- nevertheless, be aware that it is possible to drown in one's own depth, and to act immediately when a child appears to be in difficulties
- ensure that children leave the water immediately if they get too cold, especially if toes and fingers look blue or feel numb - could suggest the onset of hypothermia
- recognise that a child in difficulty is unlikely to wave or shout – all of their energies will be in trying to keep afloat.

Colleagues will find trip letters and exemplar risk assessments on the school network on the T drive under Trips and Expeditions.

Thank you for taking the time and trouble to organise and run trips for our pupils. We are keen to keep the administrative burden associated with running trips to the minimum. We also seek to provide as much support as is reasonably possible in order to ensure that trips are beneficial and successful for all who take part.

We ask that any colleague involved in leading a Saint Christina's School Trip should have read this policy booklet before the start of the trip and should take it with them on the trip as a reference guide.

If any colleague has a question regarding a school trip, s/he must feel free to come and ask the Deputy Headteacher (or the Headteacher).

Other material that may be useful to read in conjunction with the Trips and Educational Visits Policy, though dated, could include:

- *Group Safety at Water Margins, National Guidance (OEAP 2022) – full guidance document is on the T drive in the Trips folder*
- *Health and Safety on Educational Visits (DfE 2018): [Health and safety on educational visits](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-and-safety-on-educational-visits) - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)*