

Educational Visits Policy

Stamford Welland Academy

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STAMFORD WELLAND ACADEMY

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I. EDUCATIONAL VISIT AND LEARNING OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM POLICY

I.1.1 Definitions of 'Educational Visit' and 'Group Leader'

An '**Educational Visit**' is any trip, activity etc which requires one or more of the School's students to step foot outside the school gates. An educational visit may be during or after the normal school day, recreational or part of the school's curriculum plan. There is a separate procedure for Sporting Fixtures please see SWA Sporting fixtures Procedures

I.1.2 Introduction

Stamford Welland Academy recognises the importance of educational visits and the stimulus they can provide for all those students and staff who partake in them.

The scope of this policy covers a very wide range of potential activities, whether a short trip to a local museum or travelling long distances for a specific activity at a specially selected location. The same principles will also be applied to those types of visits that are purely for enjoyment and enhancement of life experiences, such as swimming and sporting activities.

The benefits conveyed to students visiting venues and gaining firsthand experience and / or partaking in activities is absolutely invaluable in their educational and personal development.

The Academy also recognises that the selection of appropriate venues that can enhance the experience and enjoyment without compromising the health and safety of those who are involved, are crucial to the success of the visit.

Equally crucial in the success of educational visits is the need to involve parents and to gain their support and enthusiasm.

The purpose of this policy is to therefore ensure that all educational visits, irrespective of their nature and duration, are well planned and co-ordinated and take into account the health and safety issues that may foreseeable arise during any visit.

Only competent persons and organisations will therefore be selected for the purpose of planning and organising any visits and all and any venues visited will be carefully assessed beforehand.

I.2 The Objectives of this Policy

- To ensure that visits are worthwhile and educationally valid
- To not exclude any student with special needs, whether educational, physical or medical
- To ensure adequate provisions and arrangements have been included for all students with special needs during educational visits
- To co-ordinate all educational visits through our appointed Educational Visits Coordinator
- To ensure that a suitable group leader is appointed for each type of visit , irrespective of the nature and duration.(Detailed at the end of this policy)



- To provide a procedure for approval, including consideration of the implication of staffing, cover cost and adequate risk assessment of health and safety thus ensuring that all visits have prior approval before going ahead

1.2.1 Worthwhile/Educationally Valid Visit / Activity

A worthwhile educationally valid visit or activity outside the classroom should meet one or more of the criteria below:-

- It is part of the pupils Academic /Vocational Course.
- Students experience other cultures and traditions.
- It promotes and teaches about healthy living.
- Allows the student to represent the Academy at a local, national or international level.
- Link up with local community
- Promotes teamwork
- Provides opportunities to develop cultural capital
- Forms part of the expected experiences from the Pupil Premium Charter
- Provides students with opportunities to complete '41 things'

The Academy is committed to incorporating educational visits and visitors into its schemes for learning, providing that they will enhance students' relevant understanding and enrich experiences and life chances, and that their inclusion is practicable, considering the constraints of staffing, cost and time. **Visits help to develop a student's investigative skills and vocational experience. Longer visits in particular encourage greater independence.**

Educational visits should be available to all of the students concerned, and should be organised accordingly, with particular consideration being given, especially when selecting venues and organising transport, to any pupils who have some sensory impairment or physical disability. Careful consideration should also be given when planning a visit or activity to other cultures and traditions, the promotion of healthy eating/living and ensure that we work and link with our local community. Just as all other elements in course programmes, educational visits should have clear, relevant and achievable aims and objectives which should be communicated clearly in the trip application.

1.2.2 Fair Access and Safety

- Trip should be available to all students
- Financial Assistance should be incorporated into plans and provided on eligible application
- Disability measures/sensory impairment

- Decision on place allocation, if a limited number, – should be decided by lottery not on the basis of first come first served.

A major consideration in the organisation of any visit must be the safety of the participants, and in this, as in all other respects, both the Peterborough City Council guidelines and the School policy must be complied with. The minimum adult-to-pupil ratio is dependent on the nature of the visit and the age of the pupils - staff must therefore check that they comply with all school and Peterborough City Council requirements and regulations. The organiser must be satisfied that the venue is a suitable one, with all that this entails, and, where applicable, that any officials from the venue who will be involved in the visit, are qualified and dependable.

1.3 Monitoring and Review

It is the responsibility of the academy's governing body to monitor the effectiveness of this policy. The governing body does this by:

- requiring the Principal / Assistant Principal responsible for visits/ learning outside the classroom activities to report to governors on an annual basis on the effectiveness of this policy;
- taking into serious consideration any complaints regarding educational visits from parents, staff or pupils;
- Reviewing this policy every three years.

Signed: _____ Chair of Governors

2. EDUCATIONAL VISIT AND LEARNING OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM PROCEDURES

2.1 Relevance of Good and Responsible Planning and Execution

2.1.1 Legal Responsibilities

Common Law dictates that:

- The Academy's Governing Body have a duty 'to take reasonable care to avoid acts or omissions likely to cause foreseeable injury (physical or mental)'. This duty is owed to members of staff, students and others, for example parent volunteers, who may be involved
- Members of staff accompanying students on a visit have ultimate responsibility for safety and are deemed to be acting 'in loco parentis'. In these circumstances staff are held to the same standard of care as would be a reasonable parent. Occasionally, this duty can be temporarily entrusted to others, e.g. an instructor at an activity centre where activities are controlled by those instructors / experts

Criminal Law dictates that duties are owed under:

- The Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 (HSWA)

Employers (i.e. the Academy Trust/ Local Governing Body) must ensure that, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of its employees and those persons not in their employment who may be affected by it, i.e. students, parents, visitors, volunteers etc

- The Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (MHSWR)

This act sets out the following requirements:

- employers should carry out risk assessments and introduce arrangements for planning, organising, controlling, monitoring and reviewing the management of health and safety. The risk assessments must identify possible risks to staff and students and ensure that appropriate control measures are taken to protect their health and safety
- where employers implement preventative and protective measures they should be based on the following principles:
 - i) avoiding risks
 - ii) evaluating risks which cannot be avoided
 - iii) combating risk at source
 - iv) adapting the work to the individual
 - v) adapting to technical progress
 - vi) replacing the dangerous by non-dangerous or less dangerous
 - vii) developing a coherent overall prevention policy
 - viii) giving collective protective measures priority over individual protective measures
 - ix) giving appropriate instructions to employees
- provide access to competent advice
- employers should devise emergency procedures, especially for off-site (educational) visits and particularly for those involving water and remote locations



- employees should be provided with information on the risks identified by the assessment and the preventative and protective measures implemented
- employers shall in entrusting tasks to employees, take into account their capabilities as regards health and safety
- The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR)

If participants in educational visits, either staff employees, students or volunteers die, or are severely injured (i.e. necessitates a hospital admission for more than 24 hours), the incident should be reported to the enforcing authority (HSE) by telephone and followed up on Form F2508 within 10 days

All accidents and incidents (near misses), no matter how minor, should be recorded in an accident book. In the case of educational visits the Group Leader should maintain their own records and ensure that the incident is put down on record via the 'Debriefing Form'

2.2 The Responsible Person

Whilst the Governing Body ultimately holds the legal responsibility, in their capacity as employers, they are able to delegate the responsibility for ensuring that the health and safety responsibilities of educational visits are complied with to a 'Responsible Person'. This role is usually held by the Principal or a delegated member of the Senior Leadership Team.

2.2.1 The Main Responsibilities of the 'Responsible Person'

Responsibilities are to:

- Maintain appropriate insurance cover
- Ensure that visits have a specific and stated objective
- Ensure that the Group Leader's plans comply with Stamford Welland Academy Educational Visit Policy
- Ensure that training needs have been addressed
- Allocate time and resources for staff training
- Ensure that Group Leaders are assessed as competent

The above issues are addressed by the "Responsible Person" when the educational visit's Proposal Form is presented at the initial planning stage.

2.2.2 Further Responsibilities of the 'Responsible Person' / Educational Visits Coordinator

It is also possible for the Principal and his/her delegated "Responsible Person" to delegate of some of his / her duties to an Educational Visits Coordinator. The further responsibilities are to:

- Co-ordinate and oversee all issues and controls relating to educational visits
- Liaise with the appropriate parties during the planning and organisation processes, including the LA
- Establish and maintain feasible and operational systems and procedures
- Ensure that the established systems and procedures are complied with
- Ensure that all visits obtain prior and timely approval
- Ensure that accreditation of external providers is carried out



- Ensure that DBS Checks are carried out for all volunteers
- Ensure that all visits have contingency plans in place
- Ensure that all visits have emergency procedures in place
- Ensure that risk assessments are adequate
- Ensure that parents are informed and that their consent has been requested
- Maintain records of visits
- Obtain post visit feedback
- Ensure accidents and incidents are reported

2.3 Responsibilities

2.3.1 Responsibilities of Group Leaders

The Group Leader has overall responsibility for the supervision and conduct of the visit, including direct responsibility for the students' health, safety and welfare.

In addition to the above responsibilities the Group Leader must also ensure that the following points are complied with for every educational visit:

- Plan the proposed visit taking into account the health and safety risks that may arise before, during and after the visit
- Conduct a thorough investigation of all relevant costs and the means that these costs are to be covered. The established student contribution amounts must be sufficient to cover all costs. This information is to be available at the time of the approval submission in order to facilitate an informed decision
- Investigate alternative funding sources in the event that individual students are unable to meet the required contributions
- Appoint, where considered appropriate, any competent deputy or deputies in support of any visit
- Ensure that they have received SLT approval for their planned visit. Applications for approval must be submitted in a timely manner in accordance with LA guidelines (8 week notice is required for residential, activity, adventure etc trips since these require LA approval; 6 week notice is required for all other trips)
- Be suitably competent to control, lead and instruct the students on the visit
- Be aware of Child Protection issues and notify the Educational Visits Coordinator of any volunteers who require DBS checks
- Ensure adequate First Aid provision for the visit
- Ensure that as much relevant information is obtained on any proposed visit, venue and location to enable an appropriate risk assessment to be carried out. This may include an exploratory visit beforehand
- Complete and submit a Journey and a Location & Activity Risk Assessment to the Educational Visits Coordinator for reference and if necessary, further investigation
- Ensure that the needs of all those included on the visit are assessed and provided for
- Ensure that the risk assessment(s) also determine the appropriate level of supervision, first aiders and any other specifically trained and/or experienced personnel
- Ensure that copies of the risk assessments accompany the staff whilst on the visit
- Ensure that all equipment and materials required for the visit are adequate and arrangements are made to store safely and correctly

- Ensure that parents are provided with all necessary information of the educational visit and any equipment etc they need to provide and the standards of conduct expected of their child(ren)
- Where appropriate, invite parents to any briefing sessions. This should take account of any difficulties that parents may have if English is their second language
- Ensure that all participating students have received parental consent
- Ensure that all participating students have submitted a Medical Questionnaire and at least one emergency contact number. Emergency contact numbers for all staff and students must be left in Reception and notified to the Educational Visits Coordinator prior to departure
- Ensure that all participating students (and occasionally, attending adults e.g. other members of staff or staff family members) have paid their established contribution sums **in full** prior to departure. Payments must be in accordance with School Fund guidelines: only cash payments will be acceptable in the last week prior to the trip's departure
- Brief all group members, including students and parents, on the main elements of the visit, emergency procedures, the standards expected and the roles and responsibilities of all prior to commencing the visit
- Consider stopping the educational visit at any point if they consider that the health and safety of participants is in jeopardy
- Ensure that the visit is covered by the School's insurance, including non-teaching supervisors, luggage and equipment, accident and medical cover and cancellation cover
- Finalise all details and arrangements with the Educational Visits Coordinator

2.3.2 Responsibilities of Others

2.3.2.1 Supervisors

All supervisors have a responsibility to ensure the Health and Safety of students in their care. They must:

- Support the Group Leader in all requirements and follow instructions
- Look out for the health and safety of themselves and those around them and for whom they also have appointed responsibility
- Assist in the general control and discipline requirements
- Inform the Group Leader of any concerns, observed or otherwise
- Not to force pupils or students to partake in any activities during the visit that they may not wish to do
- Consider stopping the visit or activity (by notifying the Group Leader, if possible) if they consider the risk to the Health and Safety of any group member is unacceptable
- Not to supply alcohol, tobacco or other intoxicating substances to those in their care nor consume these in such quantity as to reduce them incapable of carrying out their duties.

2.3.2.2 Parents

Parents should be able to make an informed decision on whether their child should go on the visit. The Group Leader should ensure that parents are provided with sufficient information in writing and / or are invited to any briefing sessions.

Parents must:

- Provide emergency contact details prior to the educational visit
- Sign and return a consent form
- Submit full payment for the required contribution in advance of the departure date
- Provide any relevant information known to them regarding the (current) health of their child
- To disclose any specific details of concerns for their child(ren) that may be appropriate to the nature of the visit and any activities planned

2.3.2.3 Students

Any student whose behaviour may be considered to be a danger to themselves or to the group may be prevented from participating / taken home early.

The Group Leader must make it clear to the students that they must:

- Dress and behave sensibly and strive to meet the expectations placed upon them
- Follow the instructions given to them by any accompanying adults and venue staff
- Not take any unnecessary risks or place their fellow pupils and students at unnecessary risk
- Report to any supervising adult any concerns they may have during the visit and in particular if and when they are asked to partake in any activities
- If abroad, be sensitive to local codes and customs
- Not to smoke or drink alcohol unless they meet the age requirement in that particular country and only in moderation.

2.4 Competence of the Group Leader and Supervisors

A person who possesses sufficient technical knowledge, experience and skills to be able to carry out the specific task and prevent danger or injury arising during the course of the work, or as a result of the work is deemed to have competence.

Group Leaders and Supervisors of all visits must be verified as having competence for the task. This may take the form of an official qualification or an endorsement by someone with a higher level of expertise in the area of competence being verified.

It is essential that “The Responsible Person” deliberate the competencies of the Group Leaders and Supervisors when considering whether to approve the trip.

If a Group Leader and / or a Supervisor is deemed to lack sufficient competence, “The Responsible Person” must consider whether or not to provide / arrange for training to be provided ahead of the visit.

2.5 Planning for an Educational Visit to be carried out by the Group Leader

Trip planning should follow the guidance published in Meridian Trust document 'A 'How to' Guide to Leading a Trip' (**Appendix 1**)

2.6 Emergency Procedures

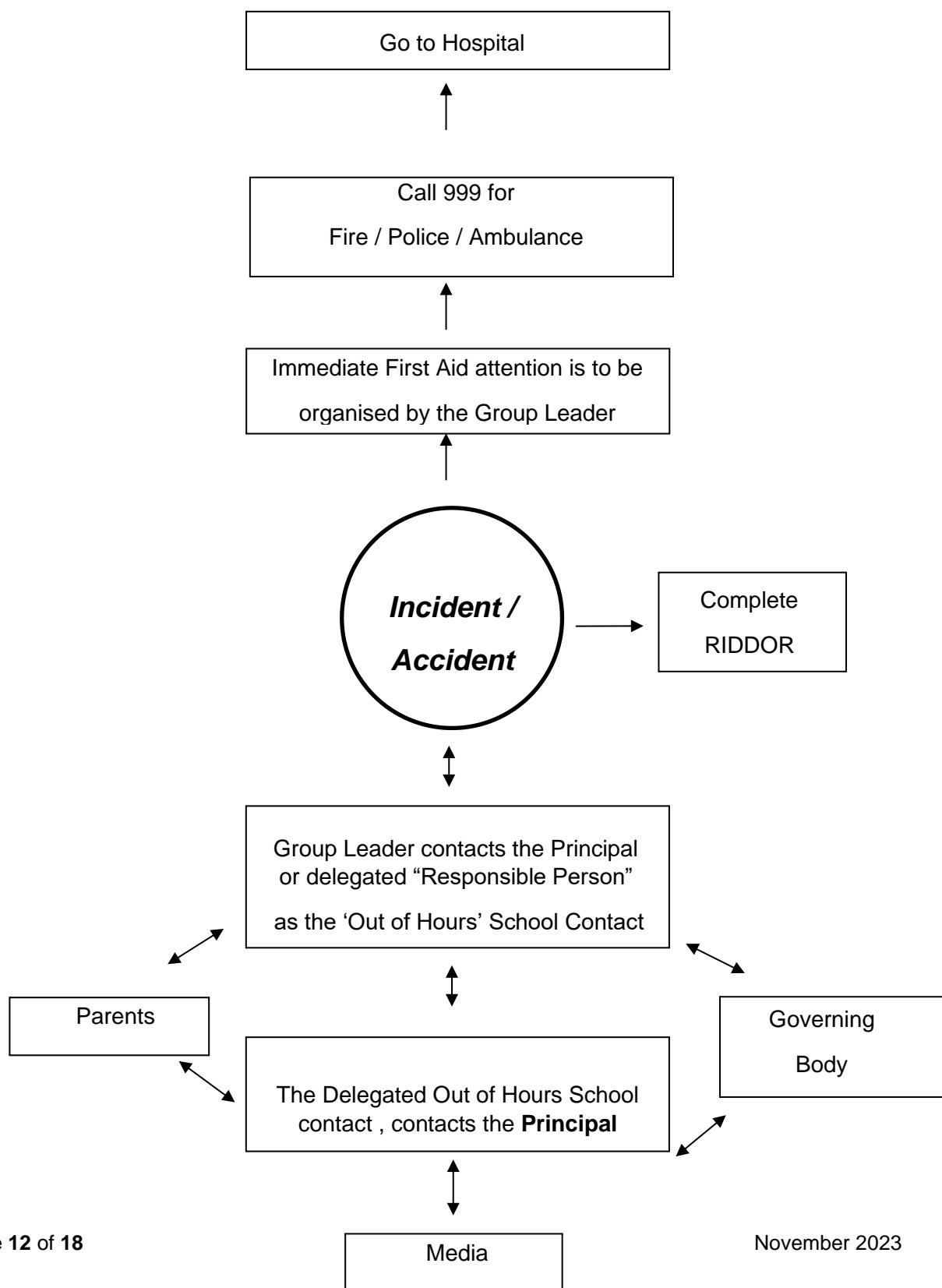
The EVC must prepare and maintain a written 'emergency plan' providing all contact details and procedures for:

- The 'Out of Hours' Contact
- Media Contact
- Contacting Parents
- Contacting the SLT / Governing Body
- RIDDOR procedure



The following flow chart represents Stamford Welland Academy's emergency procedures plan of action:

SWA Educational Visits Emergency Procedure Plan of Action





2.6.1 'Out of Hours' School Contact

The Group Leader must take an emergency number for a member of school staff with them on the trip. Merely relying on the main school telephone number will not be sufficient since the main switch board closes at 4.30 pm.

The EVC will notify the Group Leader of his / her mobile telephone number and this will become the principal 'Out of Hours' contact number.

In the event of extended visits, a second contact number will be provided in order to ensure that a member of school staff can be reached '24/7'.

The 'Out of Hours' contact will act as an initial point of contact between the Group Leader and the Academy.

2.6.2 Media Contact

The Headteacher will be the only member of staff to make contact with the national media. Local media arrangements will be handled by either the Headteacher and / or the delegated "Responsible Person".

Group Leaders and other members of staff may only make media contact with the express approval of the Headteacher.

2.7 Accommodation

The following points must be checked and fully in place before any accommodation is booked:

- All UK accommodation must be covered by a Fire Certificate
- Overseas accommodation must comply with the Health and Safety regulations applicable to the particular country
- Appropriate security arrangements are in place for students, staff and their possessions
- Separate male and female accommodation and washing facilities
- Staff accommodation should be close at hand

The Group Leader should re-check that all of the above are still in place one or two days before departure. If necessary, the educational visit should be cancelled / postponed if any of the above have altered in the meantime.

The Group Leader should also enquire whether any other schools / organisations are using the accommodation at the same time. The other users should be contacted in order ensure that behaviour expectations and student arrangements match those of the School.

Parents need to have full details of accommodation arrangements.

2.8 External Providers

- Approval to use an External Provider must be obtained from Principal / delegated "Responsible Person"
- External providers are responsible for assessing the risk of those parts of the visit they are contracted to provide though must be double checked by the group leader R. A. process
- Financial agreements are to be made between the 'provider' and Stamford Welland Academy – not the students' parents
- Air transport providers must possess an Air Travel Organisers Licence (ATOL)



- Tour operators must be approved by one or more of the following bonding agencies:
 - Association of British Travel Agents (ABTA)
 - Federation of Tour Operator Trust (FTOT)
 - Association of Independent Tour Operators trust (AITOT)
 - Passenger Shipping Association (PSA)
 - Confederation of Passenger Transport (CPT)
 - Yacht Charter Association (YCA)
 - Association of Bonded Travel Organisers Trust (ABTOT)

2.9 Insurance

Stamford Welland Academy has Public Liability cover for all 'approved' activities, both on and off site. Limited Personal Accident cover is provided to staff and supervisors of 'approved' visits. The Finance Office will be able to provide complete details of cover limitations.

Group Leaders may consider obtaining additional travel insurance, including 'loss of deposits', for larger, more expensive educational visits. The additional premium should be included in the visit's costings calculations.

2.10 Only do something if it has been planned

Swimming, paddling and other 'in-water activities' should never be permitted as an impromptu activity. 'In-water activities', and indeed any other activities, should only take place when a specific Risk Assessment has been completed and qualified supervision is available.

2.11 During the Visit

2.11.1 Briefing Students

Ensure that participating students understand what the visit will entail and what is expected of them; including behaviour expectations.

The Group Leader should run through all instructions with the entire group.

Students must be informed about potential dangers in advance and also as and when they become apparent. They should understand how they should act to ensure their own safety and that of others.

2.11.2 Briefing Supervisors

Supervisors must understand their roles and responsibilities at all times. Ideally, individual instructions should be given in writing.

It is essential that supervising staff know when they are 'on duty' and when they have 'down time'. This is particularly important on extended residential visits, where supervisors will be required to maintain sufficient cover (not less than two supervisors) throughout the evenings and nights.

The Group Leader may find it useful to produce (and obtain prior agreement of) a rota for alcohol consumption and 'personal space' activities and entertainments. It is highly recommended that all staff remain sober on the first and final nights of a visit.

2.11.3 Types of Supervision

There are two types of supervision for visits:

- **Close supervision** when group members are always within sight and contact of their supervisors
- **Remote supervision** when group members are working away from the supervisor(s), but are subject to predetermined controls and checks

Both of the above types will have been considered during the Detailed Planning stage and the appropriate choices included in the Risk Assessments.

Parents must be informed if students are to be supervised remotely whilst on adventure activities.

2.12 After the Visit

2.12.1 Evaluation

- ★ **Educational Visit Debriefing Form**

The EVC will ask the Group Leader to complete the above form on Evolve following an educational visit.

2.12.2 Reporting Incidents and Accidents

All incidents, accidents and near-misses must be reported in writing to the EVC as soon as possible and in any event within 24 hours, using the School's 'Accident Report Form'.

The EVC will then forward the information to the School's Health & Safety Coordinator who will decide whether an accident should be reported to the Health and Safety Executive.

The Principal /Bursar will determine whether the School's insurers need to be informed.

2.13 Visits Abroad

Although immensely rewarding, such educational visits require a great deal of comprehensive planning (and patience!) by the Group Leader.

2.13.1 Overseas Risk Assessments

Risk Assessments may be somewhat difficult to produce since pre-visits are not always possible. However, the following may assist the Group Leader to prepare the required RAs:

- Google Earth may provide a bird's eye view of locations and their surroundings
- The provider
- The Foreign & Commonwealth Office
- Other schools who have used the provider / visited the location
- National travel offices in the UK for the destination country
- Embassies / consulates
- The Suzy Lamplugh Trust

2.13.2 Preparing Students

Additional factors to consider include:

- Language – possibly provide each student with a sheet containing simple common phrases
- Culture – body language, dress codes, rules of behaviour, local and national customs, attitudes to gender
- Drug / alcohol usage – some countries have lower / higher age limits
- Food and drink – is the water safe to drink? Are cooking standards sufficient / appropriate?
- Money – conversion rates, local currencies, how to carry safely
- Telephone dialling codes for the UK
- Emergency procedures

2.13.3 Preparing Parents

Information to parents should be as detailed as possible. At least one briefing meeting with minutes is recommended. It may also be useful to invite the tour operator to provide a short presentation at the meeting.

Detailed information will enable the parents to make an informed decision as to whether they wish their child to participate in the visit.

2.13.4 Vaccinations

The Group Leader must establish what vaccinations are required and the appropriate lead-in times. This information is available from the Department of Health and must be conveyed to the students and their parents in sufficient time to enable the arrangements to be made and completed.

The Group Leader should request written confirmation from each participating student's parents that the relevant vaccinations have been completed.

2.13.5 Insurance

Comprehensive travel insurance must be in place by the time the deposit is paid.

2.13.6 Language

It is advisable that at least one of the adult members of the group should be able to speak and read the language of the visited country. The ability to hold a basic conversation and know what to say in an emergency would be an advantage to other adult members.

2.13.7 Visas / Passports

Visa and passport requirements should be ascertained as part of the planning process and communicated to parents / group members. The Group Leader should ensure that all requirements have been fulfilled at an early stage in the planning process.

For students whose national or immigration status or entitlement to a UK passport is in doubt, it is advisable to consult the Home Office's Immigration & Nationality Directorate concerning requirements to ensure re-entry.

If possible a group passport may be obtained. However, consideration must be given to special / different visa needs for any students who are not nationals of any EU member state. Such students may need a separate passport and are likely to have to use separate passport controls at points of entry.

2.13.8 Emergency Medical Facilities

For educational visits within the European Community, all participating European National adults and students must obtain a EHIC card. The cards must be lodged with the Group Leader well in advance of departure.

The School should consider allocating a contingency fund for the Group Leader's use in the event of an emergency.

2.13.9 Paperwork which must accompany the Group Leader on the visit

The Group Leader should ensure that the following items are taken on the visit:

- Travel tickets}
- Passports} Photocopies of these should be carried by another adult
- Visas}
- A copy of the contract with the centre / hotel
- EHIC cards and Medical Questionnaires
- Emergency contact details for all staff and students
- The 'Out of Hours' school contact number(s)
- Insurance details
- Name, address and telephone number of the group's accommodation
- Instructions for emergency replacement of lost / stolen Travellers Cheques / cash & credit cards with retained serial numbers

2.13.10 Information to be retained by the EVC

- A detailed itinerary
- A list of all participating staff and students
- Contact numbers and address for all members of the group whilst away
- Contact details for all of the next of kin (name, address and phone number)
- Copies of the consent forms
- Copies of the travel documents, insurance policies, medical papers, passports and visas
- Details of the centre / hotel
- A copy of the contract with the centre / hotel

2.13.11 During the visit

Consider the following:

- Providing each group member with a note in the relevant language for use if they get lost. The note should briefly explain that the holder is taking part in a school trip and ask that they be reunited with the group at the accommodation or to take them to a police station
- Ensuring that all group members carry a small amount of local currency with them at all times
- Methods of quick and easy identification of the group when in a crowd e.g. school uniform, common clothing colours

- Security procedures

2.13.12 Emergencies

The Group Leader should:

- Ensure all group members know what to do
- Know where the nearest British Embassy or Consulate is located and the telephone numbers
- Know what diseases are prevalent to the local area, what the symptoms are and what action should be taken should a member of the group be infected
- Ensure that participating students and staff pack suitable protective clothing and equipment (hats / gloves / sun cream with a high spf)

2.13.13 Ski Trips

In addition to all of the points identified in this section, Group Leaders organising ski trips must remember that this is an 'Adventurous Activity' and therefore should remain compliant with LA guidelines. Skiing, snowboarding and all other related activities should only take place under the direction of an appropriately qualified and competent instructor.

Ski trips require appropriate insurance cover.

The minimum national qualification for staff intending to **organise** a ski trip (but not instruct or supervise on snow) is the Ski Course Organiser Certificate, administered by the English Ski Council.

2.13.14 Foreign Exchange Visits

Any Group Leaders considering organising such an educational visit are strongly recommended to check current legislation and guidelines regarding safeguarding checks before finalising any arrangements.

2.14 How this procedure will be used within the School

In order to adhere to current legislation and effectively safeguard our students and staff this policy will be used in the following ways:

- ★ **Copies of all relevant documents will be held on the Resources section of Evolve**
- ★ **A staff briefing will be held each September, at the start of the new academic year, to remind current staff and inform new staff of the required guidelines and procedures.**