



# 16a - St Augustine's Priory- Risk Assessment Policy

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We are an all-through, inclusive Catholic girls' school with boys in the Nursery. As a girls' school we are committed to preparing girls for life long effectiveness and success. As part of their journey, girls will learn of intellectual risk-taking and emotional strength, reflection and self-knowledge, persuasiveness and team building as well as a cultural curiosity for an enriched enjoyment of life.

In our stunning 13 acres of grounds, girls have a physical freedom unique in central London. We aim to instil in them the emotional freedom to grow intellectually and spiritually and to understand the truth about themselves, others and our complex world. We will give them the courage to be ambitious and compassionate and we will provide a secure, happy and nurturing community in which to explore all of the above.

To this end we seek, develop and retain the best teachers who value well-being and the individual progress of each girl as much as they are relentless in their pursuit of academic excellence. Their goal is life-long success for each girl and they set the pace of energy and dynamism within which the girls flourish.

## 1 Policy statement

1.1 This is the risk assessment policy of St Augustine's Priory. It applies to all pupils at the school including those in EYFS.

## 2 Responsibilities

The Governors have overall responsibility for safeguarding and promoting pupil welfare and well-being at the School.

At an operational level, the Head will;

- ensure that all staff are aware of, and adhere to, the School's policies and procedures on pupil health, safety and welfare;
- ensure that key staff have clearly established roles and responsibilities;
- ensure that staff are appropriately trained to deal with pupil welfare issues;
- ensure that where concerns about a pupil's welfare are identified, the risks are appropriately managed;



- consult with staff, pupils, parents and others, where appropriate, to find practical solutions to welfare issues;
  - ensure that standards of pupil welfare at the School are regularly monitored both at an individual level and globally to identify trends and issues of concern and to improve systems to manage these.
- 3 Those named in paragraph 4.4 are responsible for carrying out risk assessments in relation to the specific matters of pupil health, safety and welfare covered in those policies.
- 4 Pupil welfare
- 4.1 The School recognises its responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils in its care. This responsibility encompasses the following principles:
- 4.1.1 To support pupils' physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing (as well as their social and economic wellbeing);
  - 4.1.2 To protect pupils from harm and neglect;
  - 4.1.3 To recognise that corporal punishment can never be justified;
  - 4.1.4 To provide pupils with appropriate education, training and recreation;
  - 4.1.5 To encourage pupils to contribute to society;
  - 4.1.6 To ensure that pupils are provided with a safe and healthy environment (and to improve the physical environment of the School in order to improve its provision for disabled pupils);
  - 4.1.7 To manage welfare concerns effectively.
- 4.2 The School addresses its commitment to these principles through:
- 4.2.1 Prevention - ensuring that all reasonable measures are taken to minimise the risks of harm to pupils and their welfare by:
    - (a) Ensuring through training that all staff are aware of and committed to this policy and the values set out;
    - (b) Establishing a positive, supportive and secure environment in which pupils can learn and develop;
    - (c) Including in the curriculum, activities and opportunities for PSHEE which equip pupils with skills to enable them to protect their own welfare and that of others;



- (d) Providing medical and pastoral support that is accessible and available to all pupils.

4.2.2 Protection - ensuring all appropriate actions are taken to address concerns about the welfare of a pupil, whether of a safeguarding nature or otherwise. This includes:

- (a) Sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know and involving pupils and their parents appropriately;
- (b) Monitoring pupils known or thought to be at risk of harm and formulating and/or contributing to support packages for those pupils.

4.3 The School recognises that pupil welfare and well-being can be adversely affected by many matters whether in or away from school, including abuse, bullying, behavioural and health issues.

4.4 The School has developed this policy and the policies in the table below, which set out full details of its procedures to safeguard and promote pupil health, safety and welfare in accordance with its duties under Part 3 of the ISSRs.

| Policy                        | Responsibility        |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Safeguarding/Child Protection | Deputy Head (Seniors) |
| Anti-bullying                 | Deputy Head (Seniors) |
| Behaviour                     | Deputy Head (Seniors) |
| Health and Safety Policy      | Bursar                |
| First Aid Policy              | Bursar                |
| Supervision                   | Bursar                |

## 5 Risk assessment

- 5.1 Risk assessment is aimed at promoting children's welfare. Where a concern about a pupil's welfare is identified, the risks to that pupil's welfare will be assessed, appropriate action will be taken to reduce the risks identified, and this will be recorded and then regularly monitored and reviewed.
- 5.2 The format of risk assessment as to pupil welfare may vary and may be included as part of the School's overall response to a welfare issue or using a risk assessment form. Regardless of the form used, the School's approach will be systematic with a view to promoting pupil welfare and will run through the stages identified in 4.1.
- 5.3 The information obtained through this process and the action agreed will then be shared, as appropriate, with other staff, parents and third parties in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of a particular pupil or of pupils generally.
- 5.4 Risk assessments are completed as follows:

| Action                    | Drawn up by               | Checked by            |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| School Event              | Member of staff in charge | Deputy Head or Bursar |
| Prospective Parents Event | Registrar                 | Head                  |
| School Trip or Outing     | Member of staff in charge | Deputy Head           |
| Health and Safety issue   | Member of staff in charge | Bursar                |

## 6 Safeguarding/Child Protection

- 6.1 With regards to safeguarding risks, and in accordance with current statutory guidance, including Keeping Children Safe in Education (2014) and Working Together to Safeguard Children (2013) and Part 3 of the ISSRs, the School has systems in place to identify pupils who may be in need of extra help, or those who are suffering, or are likely to suffer significant harm, and will take appropriate action to address and mitigate those risks by working in conjunction with social care, the Police, health services and other services, where necessary.
- 6.2 Full details of the School's safeguarding procedures are set out in the Child Protection policy.

## 7 Anti-Bullying

- 7.1 The School has a written Anti-bullying Policy which covers the School's

approach to the management of bullying and cyber bullying.

## 8 Behaviour

- 8.1 The School has a written Behaviour Policy which sets out how it promotes good behaviour amongst pupils and the sanctions to be adopted in the event of pupil misbehaviour.
- 8.2 This policy contains further information about the School's performance of its duties under the Equality Act 2010 (and reasonable adjustments made to pupils with educational needs/disabilities), support systems for pupils and liaison between parents and other agencies.

## 9 Health and safety

- 9.1 In accordance with its obligations under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and with Part 3 of the ISSRs, the School has a duty to ensure the health, safety and welfare of employees and the health and safety of pupils and others affected by the School's operations, so far as is reasonably practicable.
- 9.2 The School will do so by taking a sensible, proportionate and holistic approach to management of health and safety issues in accordance with the School's obligations and its health and safety policies set out at 3.4.

## Appendix 1 Guidance on risk assessment

There is no prescribed format for this record but any record produced should be simple and focused on control measures and the steps the School proposes to take to manage the risk. At St Augustine's this may take the form of a Pupil Action Plan.

A risk assessment in the pupil welfare context is a careful examination of what could cause harm to pupil welfare and appropriate control measures, so that you can weigh up whether the School has taken adequate precautions or should do more to prevent harm.

The purpose of a risk assessment is not to create huge amounts of paperwork, but rather to identify sensible measures to control real risks- those that are most likely to occur and/or will cause the most harm if they do.

When thinking about your risk assessment in this context, remember:

- a welfare issue is anything that may harm a pupil, to include cyber-bullying or abuse;
- the risk is the chance that a pupil could be harmed, together with an indication of how serious the harm could be if they are.

### Step 1: Identify the issue

First you need to work out how pupils could be harmed. This will generally be set out in the concern raised about a pupil's welfare.

### Step 2: Decide who might be harmed and how

Identify individual pupils or groups who might be harmed and how they might be harmed by the concern raised.

### Step 3: Evaluate the risks and decide on precautions

Decide what to do about the risks.

Compare what you currently do with what is required by law, DfE guidance or is accepted good practice. If there is a difference, list what needs to be done to protect the pupil's welfare.

### Step 4: Record your findings and implement them

Make a written record of your significant findings- the issue, how pupil(s) might be harmed and what arrangements the School has in place to control those risks.

### Step 5: Review your risk assessment and update if necessary

Review what you are doing for the pupils identified and across the school generally and monitor the efficacy of the measures you have put in place on a regular basis, or as required

## **St Augustine's Priory - Off-site Visits Policy**

### **Responsibilities of the Governors**

- The Governors under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 have a duty to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable:
- the health, safety and welfare of staff
- the health and safety of students
- the health and safety of its visitors, e.g. parents and volunteers who are involved in their activities.

The duty is owed when activities take place on and off site. It is therefore incumbent on the Proprietor to ensure that clear and sufficient arrangements for educational visits are in place.

Governors should be consulted and give their approval to visits overseas, those involving travel by air or by sea and those involving at least one night's absence. Such visits will be made known to Governors as part of the Risk Matrix present to Governors annually, usually in the Lent Term. They should be satisfied that the EVC/group leader shows how the plans comply with regulations and guidelines; including the school's health and safety policy document and that the EVC/group leader reports back after the visit.

The following information ought to be conveyed to governors when their approval is sought:

- the nature/purpose/length of the visit
- the number and ages of the students
- the number of staff and volunteers who will be present
- the experience of the volunteers
- the name and relevant experience of the party leader.

Governors should satisfy themselves that a sufficient number of staff will remain to run the school effectively when educational visits take place during term time.

Written procedures for approval of educational visits should be in place. Approval could be given by the full governing body by the Chair on its behalf or through the Health and Safety sub-committee.

### **Responsibilities of the Headteacher**

The Headteacher is responsible for the internal organisation, management and discipline in school and for consulting their employers to ensure that satisfactory arrangements are made for educational visits. The Headteacher delegates many of these responsibilities delegated to the Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC). The Headteacher must ensure this delegation is reasonable and the person concerned should have received appropriate training, information and support to enable them to carry out their duties competently. It should be ensured that:

- all preparatory work, including travel arrangements and risk assessments, are completed
- The bursary have overseen the financial planning for the trip, including initial costings before they are presented to parents
- adequate child protection measures are in place
- the group leader has sufficient experience and time to organise the visit
- training needs have been considered by a competent person where necessary
- any necessary approval has been given to ensure adult: student ratios are appropriate as per the Health and Safety Policy.
- first aid facilities are adequate and in the correct ratios as per the Health and Safety Policy.
- arrangements are in place for those with special educational and/or medical needs
- appropriate insurance cover is in place
- all consent forms have been signed
- the group leader/supervisor and nominated persons have a list of all the students and adults on the visit, the contact details of each of them and a copy of the procedure to be followed in an emergency
- the address, telephone number and name of contact person at the venue are obtained
- a contingency plan is in place which caters for any changes in the itinerary or for any delays.
- a member of senior staff has been allocated as emergency contact for the visit. The Headteacher and EVC will also keep copies of all information regarding the visit for the duration of the visit.

### **The Educational Visits Co-ordinator**

The Headteacher shall designate a member of staff to act as the School's Educational Off-site Visits Co-ordinator (EVC), and the member of staff so designated shall be responsible for overseeing all matters relating to the arranging and organising of off-site visits, except for any matters specifically designated to another member of staff.

The EVC will have received sufficient training or have sufficient experience and resources to enable him/her to carry out his/her functions capably. Among other things, the functions of the EVC are to:

- support the Headteacher and governors in their decision-making roles
- assign competent people to lead or supervise a visit
- make sure that the appropriate child protection checks have been made
- approve one day off-site visits
- work with the group leader to obtain the consent or refusal of parents
- organise emergency arrangements
- keep records of individual visits (including reports of accidents and 'near-accidents')
- Review risk assessments

### **Group leaders**

If you are the group leader of an educational visit, you will have overall responsibility for the



group at all times. Before a visit, either the group should:

- obtain approval for the visit as required by the 'Approval of Off-Site Visit' form
- undertake or secure a risk assessment of the proposed visit, including appropriate contingency and emergency arrangements ('Plan B')
- decide what the staffing, supervision and training needs are in conjunction with the Deputy Head Seniors
- ensure that the visit is insured adequately, in accordance with school arrangements
- inform parents and obtain parental and medical consent
- prepare students for the visit
- conduct an exploratory visit where appropriate.

During a visit, the group leader must ensure that:

- she/he takes general charge of the visit and activities and considers the risks involved in any decisions to follow the normal course of the visit, or in implementing any alternatives
- accompanying adults fully understand their supervision responsibilities
- staff maintain a safe and appropriate professional distance with pupils
- on residential visits that adults only enter pupil's room in the company of another adult (one of whom is female) when absolutely necessary.
- staff never share a room with a child while on a residential visit except in exceptional circumstances (illness for example) and with the agreement of the School Contact and the parents
- that accompanying adults and staff adhere to the School's Code of Conduct
- regular head counts are carried out
- supervision is on-going during downtime before, between and after activities
- the accommodation is safe and secure
- there is proper supervision and basic safety during travel
- on-going risk assessments are undertaken
- everyone understands/agrees the emergency procedures
- following the visit report back on the trip and provide the necessary details on the Off-Site Visit' form.
- they have seen the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead to review any pupil concerns in anticipation of the visit
- they have met with the school's Health Officer to establish the medical needs of all pupils on the visit.

As group leader of an educational visit, you will have overall responsibility for the group at all times.

### **Responsibilities of staff/adults and volunteers accompanying off-site visits:**

Employees also have duties under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. They must:

- take reasonable care of their own, and others', health and safety
- cooperate with the Group Leader on health and safety matters
- carry out activities in accordance with training and instructions and as directed by

- the group leader
- report hazards and defects observed
- maintain a safe and appropriate professional distance with pupils
- ensure that on residential visits that adults only enter pupil's room in the company of another adult (one of whom is female) when absolutely necessary.
- never share a room with a child while on a residential visit except in exceptional circumstances (illness for example) and with the agreement of the School Contact and the parents
- adhere to the School's Code of Conduct

## **Volunteers**

If a higher-than-usual staff to pupil ratio is needed on a particular visit, then adult volunteers (typically the parents of current or former pupils, or adult former pupils) may be used once appropriate safety checks have been completed. The Group Leader is responsible for selecting such volunteers, who should be well-known to the School and, if practicable, to pupils in the visiting group. The role of these volunteers should be made clear; they must be told who they are responsible to. Only volunteers that have been subject to a satisfactory DBS check may on occasions be in sole charge of pupils if they have relevant and appropriate training for the level of supervision that is required. It should also be ensured that the insurance arrangements for the visit cover volunteers. A volunteer must not be left alone with a pupil except in an emergency. Any volunteers accompanying a group on a visit must be told of any pupils in the group who have special medical or educational needs.

For all those involved in the planning, supervision and accompanying of off-site visits the concept of 'in loco parentis' (literally meaning 'in place of parents') dominates the legal responsibilities of members of staff in their relationship with students in their care. Consequently, those accompanying or supervising students on educational visits may, throughout, do what is reasonable to safeguard or promote the interests of the students.

They are therefore expected to exercise at least the same degree of care as that which would be taken by a reasonable parent in the same circumstances. This standard of care can vary according to the type of activity, the age and maturity of the students and the changing conditions.

## **Responsibilities of pupils:**

The group leader should make it clear to pupils that they must:

- not take unnecessary risks;
- follow the instructions of the leader and other supervisors including those at the venue of the visit;
- dress and behave sensibly and responsibly;
- if abroad be sensitive to local codes and customs;
- look out for anything that might hurt or threaten themselves or anyone in the group and tell the group leader or supervisor about it.

Any pupils whose behaviour may be considered to be a danger to themselves or to the group may be prevented from going on the visit. In the unlikely event that a pupil's behaviour is detrimental to their own safety or the safety of others in the group or as a

result of failure to follow the agreed code of conduct, they will be sent home. The extra cost incurred will be paid by parents of that pupil.

### **Steps involved in planning off-site visits**

The School will take all reasonable steps to ensure that pupils, accompanying members of staff and other accompanying adults (if any) are safe while on an off-site visit.

To this end, no off-site visit may proceed unless it has been submitted for approval, and approved, in accordance with the procedure set out below. No off-site visit may proceed unless it has been subject to appropriate risk assessment and approved in the correct manner by the EVC on behalf of the Headteacher as outlined below.

The Group Leader must take copies of the relevant risk assessments, and any relevant related material, with him or her during the visit so that such assessments and any related material may be referred to if appropriate.

### **Planning, Approval and Review**

No off-site visit may proceed unless it has been submitted for approval using form from the VLE. The 'Request for Off-Site Visit Form' should be submitted for initial approval (that is, approval by the Headteacher and the EVC). For visits abroad, permission in principle should be given two years in advance initially by the governing body. For overnight visits, permission in principle should be sought one year in advance. Day visits should ideally be approved at least six working weeks in advance and preferably in the term preceding the visit. The form should be submitted for subsequent approvals as follows:

- To the Bursar for financial approval (Step 2) before permission is sought from parents. (Step 3)
- The Risk Assessment (Step 4) should be passed to the Health Centre Staff not less than ten working days before the visit in the case of day visits. In the case of visits abroad, overnight visits and those visits involving hazardous activities this should be completed as soon as possible and subject to on-going review prior to the visit.
- The Risk Assessment (Step 4), signed by the Health Centre staff should be passed to EVC not less than five working days before the visit in the case of day visits. In the case of visits abroad, overnight visits and those visits involving hazardous activities this should be completed as soon as possible and subject to on-going review prior to the visit.

### **Destination and Date**

If the destination of a proposed off-site visit is outside the UK, the Group Leader should find out whether there is any official advice (e.g. from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office) as to the safety or suitability of the place or places to be visited.

The Group Leader should also check the proposed date or dates early on in the planning process, so as to avoid any clash with, for example, public examinations or known staff absences.

## Reconnaissance

The Group Leader should reconnoitre the destination in person. This is particularly important in the case of overseas and overnight visits. If not possible, one member of staff accompanying the visit must be familiar with the visit.

In a reconnaissance, the main points on which the Group Leader should satisfy himself or herself are as follows:

- when using external companies on overseas and overnight visits references from two other schools must be used
- the location and standard of accommodation for pupils and staff (if applicable);
- that all doors and windows can be securely locked
- that pupils will not sleep on the ground floor where possible
- when in accommodation with communal balconies great care must be taken in relation to safeguarding
- whether the destination is appropriate to the purpose of the visit;
- whether the destination can meet the needs (and number) of the visiting group;
- the basic layout of the destination and its immediate surroundings (access, WCs, emergency exits, coach parking etc.);
- that suitable safeguarding procedures are in place in relation to safer recruitment when employees of external companies will work closely with students in supporting them throughout the trip
- the risk assessments carried out by any external provider.
- that staff and pupils will be roomed in the same areas of their accommodation, ideally in the same sections of the same floor.
- If the visit includes caving, climbing, trekking, skiing or watersports, the group leader must check that the provider holds the correct licence as required by the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 2004 (for England, Scotland and Wales).

## Transport

The Group Leader should select the most appropriate and safest form of transport.

If a coach is hired, the Group Leader must ensure that it is fitted with seat belts, and that the company being used is reputable. This should be done by checking with previous users, or by using a company that has been recommended or already given satisfactory service to the School. This may require additional checks in countries where seatbelts are not required by law.

When travelling by coach, the following rules should be observed:

- the group should wait for the coach in a safe place;
- pupils and staff should stay in their seats with seat-belts fastened;
- the aisle must be kept clear;
- the driver must not be distracted;
- pupils must not lean out of the windows;

- if the First Aid pack is not accessible during the journey (e.g. in a distant luggage compartment), that a small First Aid kit is kept with the group.

The Group Leader should set out comparable rules if the group is using other means of transport, and inform pupils accordingly.

### **Public Transport**

If your visit involves use of public transport, it is important to have a contingency plan in case of delays.

### **Use of Staff Vehicles**

If staff vehicles are to be used to transport pupils, this must be specifically stated when requesting parental permission. It should be agreed with the Headteacher and EVC when the initial trip is proposed. The use of staff vehicles is only in the event of exceptional circumstances and once the member of staff concerned has liaised with the Bursar and their own insurance company about the required level of insurance. There should always be two members of staff in the car.

### **Use of the School Minibus**

Full details on the use of the minibus are available in the School Minibus Policy available from the Bursar.

### **Costing and Financial Approval**

The Group Leader must identify the basic costs involved in a proposed off-site visit as part of the approval process. These costs form the basis for financial approval of a proposed visit, which is the second step in the approval process.

The Bursar will determine the following:

- whether any additional insurance is needed (e.g. for a skiing trip);
- the payment arrangements for pupils' parents (e.g. whether a deposit will be requested, whether payment of the balance is to be in one lump sum or spread etc.);
- the amount to be charged out to pupils' parents.

### **Informing parents and gaining parental consent**

Parents must be fully informed (in writing) about the proposed visit before they are asked for their consent to enable them to make informed decisions regarding their daughter's participation. This means that parents should be given some information of the risks involved in the visit as well as the measures in place to minimise these risks. In addition, as individuals have the right to access 'recorded information held by any public body', under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, this information should be prepared with public access in mind. Written information should normally include:

### **For day visits:**

- the date and purpose of the visit
- the departure and return times
- the collection point(s)
- the travel arrangements (and name of any travel company)
- the number of students in the group and what the supervision arrangements are
- (including times of remote supervision)
- the names of the group leader and the other members of staff and adults who will be present
- information about activities, the risks they present and how they will be managed
- (including information about 'Plan B')
- the standards of behaviour expected (e.g. in relation to alcohol, behaviour, smoking, discipline, and items which may not be taken on the trip).
- what clothing/equipment/money should be taken by each student
- a code of conduct
- the cost and what it covers.

#### **For residential and overseas visits:**

- the date and purpose of the visit
- the departure and return times
- the collection point(s)
- the travel arrangements (and name of any travel company)
- the number of students in the group and what the supervision arrangements are (including times of remote supervision)
- accommodation information (including security and supervision arrangements on site)
- what the provision for special educational or medical needs are where required
- what the procedures are for students who fall ill
- information about host families (on exchange visits)
- the names of the group leader and the other members of staff and adults who will be present
- the staff contact at home, in the last letter to parents
- a code of conduct
- information about activities, the risks they present and how they will be managed (including information about 'Plan B')
- the standards of behaviour expected (e.g. in relation to alcohol, behaviour, smoking, discipline, and items which may not be taken on the trip). Parents should always be asked to sign a code of conduct form and be informed of the consequences if these standards are not met (e.g. withdrawal from activities and asking parents to collect their child early in extreme cases, including where this might incur additional costs)
- what the insurance arrangements are for lost luggage, accidents, cancellations, medical cover, as well as any exclusions from policies and whether parents need to purchase additional cover
- the inoculations necessary
- what clothing/equipment/money should be taken by each student
- information about host families (on exchange visits)
- the cost and what it covers.

Parents should be invited to attend meetings before residential visits, overseas travel or adventure activities.

Signed permission slips must be obtained from parents/carers for all off-site visits. For residential and overseas visits 'Residential Visit Parental Consent Form - Medical & Emergency Information must also be completed.

## **Risk Assessment**

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 require employers to assess the risks of activities, introduce measure to control those risks and inform their employees of these measures. Employers must ensure that those carrying out risk assessments are competent to do so.

A "risk assessment" is simply a careful, methodical analysis of how an individual could be harmed while engaged either in:

- a particular activity (e.g. canoeing, ice skating), or
- while in a particular situation (in a theatre, cinema or museum).

A risk assessment sets about this task by identifying the following:

- hazard (i.e. an object or action with the potential to cause harm);
- risk (i.e. how likely is hazard ABC to cause actual harm? How bad would the harm be?)
- whether a risk can be reduced to a reasonable level by putting in place "control measures".

The five steps to risk assessment involve the following:

- identifying the hazards
- decide who might be harmed and how
- consider what safety measures need to be implemented to reduce the risks to an acceptable level
- record the findings
- review the assessment at intervals.

When assessing the risks of educational visits, the following should be considered:

- a) The type of activity
- b) The age/competence/fitness/usual standard of behaviour of the students
- c) Any special educational/medical needs of students
- d) Adult to student ratios
- e) The competence/experience/qualifications of the adults
- f) Modes of transport, journey routes and location(s) of visits
- g) Emergency procedures
- h) current levels of security risk in the local area

## **Generic risk assessments**

Generic risk assessments are provided to consider the risks inherent in the activities to be undertaken and will involve an examination of issues outlined in a–g above, identifying the precautions necessary to ensure that risks to health are minimised. The School has a number of “generic” risk assessments – that is, risk assessments that have already been carefully prepared, and deal with a particular activity (e.g. walking along a road, across country or on hills) or particular surroundings or situation (e.g. visits to theatres, farms or castles). Most off-site visits will be covered by one or more of these generic risk assessments, and the ones most likely to apply are set out in the risk management section of the visit approval form. There is also a “specific” risk assessment form that can be used if a visit involves an activity or situation not covered in the generic assessments. Further advice and guidance on carrying out risk assessments may be obtained from the Bursar Operations.

### **Visit/site specific risk assessments**

These consider the risks associated with the particular visit/site, which might include:

- the medical needs of students, have enough medication and contingency plans if an adult has to accompany a student to hospital
- behaviour of students, control measures including a code of rules
- weather conditions, control measures include obtaining local information about tides, potential for flooding and the likelihood of sudden weather changes.
- current affairs, where relevant

The assessment should always have a pre-assessed ‘Plan B’ for contingencies. It is good practice for an exploratory visit to form part of the visit/site specific risk assessment, which will assist with preplanning.

If this is not possible information/advice could be sought from others involved in previous visits or from reliable local guides. Consider involving students in the planning of the visit and risk assessments so that they are better prepared and will therefore make more informed decisions and be less at risk.

### **On-going/dynamic risk assessments**

On-going/dynamic risk assessments involve a reassessment of the risks while the visit is taking place and as the need arises. Risks may need to be reassessed in the light of changing weather, new safety warnings, illnesses, behavioural problems or emergencies. Dynamic risk assessment is an integral part of the group leader’s duties and there should be written evidence of on-going risk assessment throughout the trip.

### **Guidance and Advice**

Apart from the preliminary considerations set out in the Visit Approval Form (such as whether the proposed visit has educational value and whether it will fit in with other School fixtures) advice and guidance on the completion of risk assessments may be obtained from the EVC, the Bursar, and on health- or medical-related matters from the School Health Officer.



## Organisation and Management

Once an off-site visit has been approved (i.e. after Step 1 approval), the Group Leader should brief all of those taking part. It may make sense for there to be separate briefings for staff/accompanying adults, and pupils, since the former will probably need some details (e.g. medical information) that would not be given to pupils.

Staff to pupil ratios are as follows for visits to museums, historic sites and for local walks. Supervision should be based on an assessment of the numbers and expertise of adult supervisors necessary, taking into account the nature and hazards of the trip, the number/age/gender aptitudes/special needs of the students/the competence/experience of the adults, as well as the time of the year. A female member of staff should accompany all visits.

- for pupils aged six to eight: one member of staff to every six pupils;
- for pupils aged nine to eleven: one member of staff for every 10 to 15 pupils;
- for pupils aged twelve and over: one member of staff for every 15 to 20 pupils.
- There must be enough members of staff to cope with an emergency.

## Foreign language exchanges

Staff should be aware of the implications of organising a trip where they book two or more aspects of the trip themselves. Currently foreign exchanges are not considered to be 'regulated activity'.

There is nevertheless public concern about potential dangers of students staying with families in a foreign country. In seeking to minimise these risks, educational establishments should consider the following:

- select a partner school carefully and establish a close line of communication. A good start is to consider schools in a district which has twinned with yours
- agree a clear 'modus operandi' in respect of timing and frequency of visits
- that due care and attention is giving to safeguarding particularly in relation to safer recruitment procedures
- ensure that all costings are accurate, with support from the bursary from the outset
- all accompanying staff, adults and students must be fully briefed
- provide students at both ends of the exchange with literature and maps
- the exchange of telephone calls/emails/letters between families on both sides will help build up confidence
- inform hosting families in writing of any special dietary requirements and that guests should not be taken on hazardous activities (e.g. skiing) without prior consent
- contact with host colleagues in the link school should be maintained throughout the exchange
- ensure that emergency procedures are in place

After the exchange has taken place, it should be evaluated, with input from students, staff and host families. Feedback should be given to the partner school to assist in the planning of future visits.

## Remote Supervision

For older pupils (i.e. pupils in Form III and above), where the purpose of a visit is to encourage independence and investigative skills, some of the time may be spent unsupervised. In such cases the Group Leader must make sure that pupils' parents have given approval for part of the visit to be supervised at a distance. Factors for the Group Leader to take into account include the following:

- the purpose and character of the visit;
- the age and competence of the pupils;
- whether any of the pupils have special educational or medical needs;
- the experience, competence and stamina of accompanying members of staff;
- the type of accommodation being used (if applicable);
- any special requirements of the place being visited.

The Group Leader must, at all times, have a complete list of all group members, and there should be head-counts from time to time, particularly when the group is leaving a particular location. If a group is to separate during a visit, a rendezvous must be given out to all group members, and pupils told what to do if they get lost.

The Group Leader must, when organising an off-site visit, refer to the School Health Officer to find out whether any pupils in the group have special medical or educational needs. If any pupils have special medical needs, then any appropriate medication should be carried with the First Aid kit, and the Group Leader should establish with the School Health Officer whether an extra member of staff, with appropriate training, will be needed.

An accompanying member of staff should not be left alone with a pupil, except in case of emergency. This is not only for the protection of pupils, but for the protection of staff as well.

## First Aid

The group leader should in consultation with the School Health Officer assess what level of first aid is needed. On any kind of visit the group leader should have a good working knowledge of first aid and ensure that a First Aider equipped with an adequate first-aid box accompanies the trip. For adventurous activities, visits abroad or residential visits it is sensible for at least one of the group's teachers to be a fully-trained first-aider. All adults in the group should know how to contact the emergency services.

The minimum First Aid kit for an off-site visit is as follows:

- A suitably stocked First Aid pack, which should be kept accessible at all times, and
- Appropriate medication for any pupils with special medical needs (e.g. diabetes, asthma).

The Group Leader must designate an appropriate accompanying member of staff who is a qualified first aider to be in charge of First Aid.

When deciding what size or type of First Aid kit to take, the Group Leader should take into

account the following:

- the number of pupils in the group, and their ages;
- the character of the visit and any associated activities;
- likely injuries and the supplies needed to deal with them;
- the distance to the nearest hospital.

### **Mobile Phones**

It is essential that a school mobile phone is carried throughout the visit and the number is noted on the risk assessment. This phone number should be given to all members of the party so they can easily contact the group leader should the need arise. A school mobile can be borrowed by arrangement with the Receptionists, and the group leader should ensure it is fully charged in advance of the visit.

Where there are difficulties with school mobiles (reception/network coverage) staff should use their common sense and if necessary use their own phone. This information should be recorded in the dynamic risk assessment and the information passed onto a member of the SLT at the earliest opportunity.

### **Contingency Plans for Unexpected Late Returns**

The group leader must plan in advance how to deal with unexpected delays, deciding how best to inform the school and parents. A school contact should be designated for each visit. In the case of a visit abroad, a telephone tree is appropriate. A member of staff must be designated to wait with girls until all are collected after a visit.

### **Communication with Third Parties**

In the event of a serious accident on an off-site visit, or other significant and unforeseen event, the Group Leader must inform the SLT emergency contact member of staff, who will in turn contact the Headteacher of such an accident or event with the least possible delay.

No member of staff other than the Headteacher may communicate with the media, or any representative of the media, with regard to any matter relating to an off-site visit.

### **Contact in Case of Emergency**

The EVC will designate a member of SLT as the School contact in case of emergency or, if no member of staff is so designated, will act as the contact themselves.

The Group Leader must provide the contact with a full list of members of the group, both members of staff and volunteers (if any), and pupils.

The list in the preceding paragraph should include appropriate contacts for each member of the group. For pupils, this will usually be a parent/guardian or other family member. Such contacts would be informed of an emergency, delayed return etc. by the School Contact.

### **Standing Procedures in Case of Emergency**

If there is an emergency, the Group Leader (or, as appropriate, the member of staff or other accompanying adult nearest the scene of the emergency) should proceed as follows:

- find out the nature and extent of the emergency as quickly as possible;
- contact the emergency services if necessary (i.e. if this has not been done already by those in charge of the place being visited);
- assemble the group, make a headcount, and make sure that members of the group are safe;
- find out if any members of the group have been hurt, arrange for them to be given First Aid, and get medical attention for them as soon as possible;
- if any members of the group are missing, find out when and where they were last seen, and inform the emergency services or other relevant authority (or both) as soon as practicable;
- if the place in which the group is assembled (e.g. a hotel, museum etc.) has its own emergency procedure (e.g. assemble in a particular room or area), then this should usually be followed;
- make sure that a member of staff or volunteer accompanies any pupil who goes to hospital;
- inform (as appropriate) the other members of staff and any accompanying members of staff of the emergency (location, any injured or missing group members, current situation, next steps).

The Group Leader should inform the School contact of the emergency, and give the names of any injured or missing members of the group so that parents can be informed accordingly. The School contact should also be given the names of other members of the group who are not injured, and are accounted for, so that their parents can be reassured.

The Group Leader should record relevant details of the emergency (when and how it occurred, who was affected by it, what remedial action was taken and by whom) at the time. Once the group has returned to School, the Group Leader should make a full report, in writing, in the “post-visit report” section of the visit approval form. In the event of a serious emergency, the EVC will forward this report to the Headteacher.

Members of staff, volunteers (if any) and pupils should not speak to the media, or any media representative, and any media enquiries should be referred to the Headteacher.

### **Review of Off-site Visits; Retention of Records**

The visit approval form provides for visits to be reviewed (in the “post-visit report” section – Step 6) once they have been completed, and the Group Leader is responsible for doing this. The main purpose of such a review is to identify any lessons to be learned from a particular visit, and whether any consequential changes to existing procedures may need to be made. The “post-visit report” is to be made on a “nil returns” basis (i.e. if there is nothing to report, the section should be annotated accordingly and signed off).

Completed visit approval forms are to be retained by the School for not less than seven years, together with such other material or documentation as the EVC may determine.

Any confidential information provided by the School to the group leader remains their responsibility. On the completion of the 'Post Visit Report' it is the responsibility of the Group Leader to ensure all copies of this information are accounted for and destroyed using the confidential shredding bins.

**Example Off-Site Visits Risk Assessment**

|                                      |                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Educational visit to:</b>         | <b>Date(s):</b>                      |  |
| <b>Name of leader(s):</b>            | <b>Ages/year group(s) of pupils:</b> | <b>No of pupils:</b>   |
| <b>Staff accompanying the visit:</b> |                                      | <b>First Aider:</b>  |
| <b>School Mobile(s):</b>             |                                      | <p><b>School Office: 020 8997 2022</b><br/> <b>In the event of an emergency please ask to speak to the Deputy Head (EVC). If urgent and the EVC is not available please asked to be put through to another member of SLT.</b></p> <p><b>SLT Contact if out of hours:</b></p> <p><b>Name:</b></p> <p><b>Number:</b></p> |

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <p><b>In addition to complying with the procedures laid out in the Off-Sites Visit Policy the following school generic risk assessments will also be followed for this visit:</b></p> <p><b>Generic Risk Assessment : All Travel</b></p> <p><b>Generic Risk Assessment : All Educational Visits</b></p> <p><b>Generic Risk Assessment : Travel by coach – reputable firm employed as recommended by the school, wearing of seatbelts,</b></p> | <p><b>Other site specific risk assessments followed for this visit (please attach) :</b></p> |
|---|--|

**Example Off-Site Visits Risk Assessment**

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <p>careful supervision boarding/alighting coach, regular headcount, register prior to departure.</p> <p><b>Generic Risk Assessment Visits to theatres</b> – seats booked in advance, block booked, adults sitting at both ends of row, location of fire exits, arrangements for visiting the toilets (age appropriate – teacher supervision/buddy system), how to respond if approached by stranger, rendezvous times/meeting points if appropriate.</p> |  |
|--|--|

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <p><b><u>Management of Health Concerns</u></b><br/>                 Please see a member of the School Health Centre staff to ensure you are familiar with the medical needs of the group you are taking with you. She will also provide you with pupils’ medical information, or schoolbase generated essential &amp; medical information report. This <b><u>must</u></b> be returned to the Health Centre on your return. You should also collect a first aid kit and any individual emergency medication with care plans, if appropriate.</p> | <p><b>Measures Appropriate to this Group of Pupils:</b></p><br><br><br><br><br><br><p>Health Centre Staff<br/>                 Signed: <span style="float: right;">Date:</span></p> |
|---|---|

|                 |                      |                        |                        |                        |                          |                       |
|-----------------|----------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>SEVERITY</b> | <b>1. Negligible</b> | <b>2. Minor Injury</b> | <b>3. Major Injury</b> | <b>4. Single Death</b> | <b>5. Multiple Death</b> | <b>6. MD Off-site</b> |
|-----------------|----------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|

**Example Off-Site Visits Risk Assessment**

|                           |                      |                    |                      |                           |                    |                   |
|---------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Probable Frequency</b> | <b>1. Improbably</b> | <b>2. Probable</b> | <b>3. Occasional</b> | <b>4. Fairly Frequent</b> | <b>5. Frequent</b> | <b>6. Certain</b> |
|---------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|

**Risk score of 9 or above – further immediate assessment needed**

Assess the risk specific to your trip using the dynamic risk assessment template below:

| <b>Date</b> | <b>Time</b> | <b>Action</b> | <b>Potential Risks</b> | <b>Action taken to minimise risk</b> | <b>Severity x Probable Frequency</b> | <b>Risk Score</b> | <b>Further Assessment</b> | <b>Yes / No</b> |
|-------------|-------------|---------------|------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|-----------------|
|             |             |               |                        |                                      |                                      |                   |                           |                 |
|             |             |               |                        |                                      |                                      |                   |                           |                 |
|             |             |               |                        |                                      |                                      |                   |                           |                 |
|             |             |               |                        |                                      |                                      |                   |                           |                 |
|             |             |               |                        |                                      |                                      |                   |                           |                 |
|             |             |               |                        |                                      |                                      |                   |                           |                 |
|             |             |               |                        |                                      |                                      |                   |                           |                 |
|             |             |               |                        |                                      |                                      |                   |                           |                 |
|             |             |               |                        |                                      |                                      |                   |                           |                 |

**STEP 4: PLAN B – DEALING WITH PROBLEMS**

|                             |  |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Potential Problem/Emergency | Dealing with potential problem/emergency |
|-----------------------------|--|



**Example Off-Site Visits Risk Assessment**

|  |  |
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|--|--|

**Signature of Group Leader:** ..... **Date:** .....

**STEP 5: FINAL APPROVAL BY THE EDUCATIONAL VISITS COORDINATOR.**

**PLEASE MAKE AN APPOINTMENT TO SEE THE EVC WITH YOUR COMPLETED RISK ASSESSMENT FOR FINAL APPROVAL AT LEAST ONE WEEK BEFORE THE INTENDED DATE OF DEPARTURE.**

|     |  |      |
|-----|--|------|
|     | I have checked the arrangements for this off-site visit and am content for the visit to proceed. |      |
| EVC | Signed   | Date |

**STEP 5: POST-VISIT REPORT**

**Example Off-Site Visits Risk Assessment**

|  |   |
|--|---|
|  | <p>If there were any significant changes to this visit as planned (see (26) above), the Group Leader should summarise below (a) the changes that occurred; (b) what decisions were made in response to such changes, and (c) the on-going risk assessment procedures put in place to manage and control any risks arising from such changes.</p> <p>Signed _____ Date _____</p> |
|  | <p>If there were any other aspects of this visit that, in the opinion of the Group Leader, warrant further consideration, these should be summarised below (if none, write n/a).</p> <p>I confirm I have returned all documents with personal pupil data to the EVC coordinator (and/or the Health Centre if originating from there).</p> <p>Signed _____ Date _____</p>        |