



ST EDMUND'S COLLEGE  
& PREP SCHOOL

# **Health and Safety Policy**

## **for**

# **Off-Site Activities and Visits**

Frequency of review: Every 3 years  
Policy last reviewed: Trinity 2019  
Next review date: Trinity 2022

*Rooted in Christ and Catholic tradition and under the guidance of its patron, St Edmund's aims to realise the God-given potential, in body, mind and spirit, of all members of its community through service and leadership.*

*Avita Pro Fide!*

*St Edmund's is committed to ensuring the welfare and protection of children in their care and this commitment is a fundamental part of the role of every employee.*

## **Introduction**

Educational visits form an important part of life at St. Edmund's College and St. Edmund's Prep School. They are of significant educational value to students and add to the all round education they receive at St Edmund's. With thorough planning and organisation educational visits can be very rewarding for both students and staff involved. Educational visits can form an important part of all the curriculum in all departments.

The national guidance should be referred to in conjunction with this policy.

## **The objectives of this policy are to:**

- Outline the legal requirements and responsibilities for visits
- Provide a planning framework for visits
- Cover Health and Safety issues that might occur
- Cover all types of visits offered by St Edmund's
- Provide a working document for staff to use as a reference
- Make the planning of visits as efficient as possible

## **Responsibilities**

The Head has overall responsibility for educational visits. No visit can take place without their permission.

### **EVC**

- Ensure that visits comply with 'St. Edmund's Health and Safety Policy Document for off-site visits'
- Ensure that all visits follow the set procedures that are in place
- Assess suitability of visit
- Ensure all visits have contingency plans in place
- Ensure all visits have emergency plans in place
- Ensure risk assessments have been completed and appropriate safety measures are in place
- Ensure parents are informed and that they have given consent
- Keep a record of all St Edmund's visits
- Ensure accidents and incidents are reported
- Ensure all the necessary paperwork is passed onto the Head for final approval
- Update staff on any new guidelines
- Provide guidance for staff on organising a visit
- Provide staff training where necessary
- Ensure adequate insurance cover is in place
- Review systems and, on occasion, monitor practice

### **Deputy Head (Pastoral)**

- Ensure the Group Leader has experience in supervising the age groups going on the visit and will organise the group effectively
- Ratio of supervisors to students is appropriate
- Check calendar

### **Senior Deputy Head (Academic)**

- Checks staffing for trips taken in school time

### **Group Leader**

- One teacher should have overall responsibility for the visit
- Be responsible for the health and safety of the group
- Have approval from the Head to carry out the visit
- Follow guidelines outlined by the St Edmund's Health and Safety Policy for off-site activities
- For residential trips appoint a deputy group leader
- Ensure all supervisors know their role on the visit
- Be able to control and lead the students of the relevant age range
- Ensure adequate first aid will be provided
- Be aware of the child protection issues, ensuring all supervisors have been DBS checked

- Ensure adequate first-aid provision for the visit
- Complete all planning and preparation for the visit including briefing group members and parents
- For residential trips a meeting with parents must be held
- Ensure that generic and visit specific risk assessments are in place, signed by the group leader and a copy carried on the visit
- Ensure the ratio of supervisors: students is appropriate for the needs of the group and activities involved
- Have enough information on pupils proposed for the visit to assess their suitability or be satisfied that suitability has been assessed and confirmed
- Consider stopping the visit at any time if the risk to Health and Safety of participants is unacceptable
- Ensure that the St Edmund's and group supervisors have school/group/home contact details
- Ensure that the appropriate paperwork (risk assessments/insurance/contact details/list of students/evaluation) have been left at St Edmund's
- Ensure that group supervisors have details of pupils' special educational or medical needs
- Ensure accreditation of external providers is carried out
- Carry out an inspection visit where deemed necessary
- Ensure that parents' have given written consent for visits
- Ensure that non-teaching supervisors are covered by school insurance
- Report all accidents and incidents that occur on visits to EVC

### **Teachers**

- Follow the instructions of the group leader
- Inform the group leader if they consider the risk to Health and Safety of any group member is unacceptable
- Attend any briefing before the trip
- Carry the necessary paperwork/first aid kit as guided by the group leader
- Inform the group leader of any special medical needs or circumstances that may affect their performance

### **Adult Volunteers (non-teaching adults)**

- Be clear about their role
- Do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group
- Not to be left in sole charge of pupils except where it has been previously agreed as part of the risk assessment
- Follow the instructions of the group leader

## **Staffing on Educational Visits**

- If the partner or children of a member of staff would like to join an educational visit a formal request should be made to the Headmaster
- As part of the request, documentation should be submitted with regards to the cost involved in taking a partner/children on the visit
- If approval is granted, any person over the age of 16, who is not a pupil or employed by the College, will be considered a volunteer and will be subject to the regulatory checks and must receive a Child Protection Briefing.
- Where a member of staff's children are on a visit, including those who are pupils of the College, only one of the carers can count as part of the staff: student ratio for the visit. If only one carer is on the visit, they cannot count as part of that ratio

### **Pupils**

Group leader must make it clear to pupils that they must:

- Not take unnecessary risks
- Follow the instructions of the leader and other supervisors including those at any venues during 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
- For residential visits sign the St Edmund's code of conduct

Any student whose behaviour may be considered to be a danger to themselves or to the group may be stopped from further participation in the visit.

### **Parents**

- Parents should make an informed decision on whether their child should go on a visit
- The group leader should ensure that parents are given sufficient information in writing and in good time
- Sign the St Edmund's consent form for day visits as well as the code of conduct for residential visits
- If a student misbehaves on a visit, the parents will pay the cost of sending that pupil and accompanying supervisor (where necessary) home early
- Provide the group leader with the necessary medical, dietary and contact details

## **Overview of Planning Process**

### **Before the visit:**

- A pink Educational Visits form must be completed with the trip proposal, dates and staffing and given to the Deputy Head (Pastoral) who gives outline approval
- Where teaching time is affected, approval is also required from the Senior Deputy Head (Academic)
- Gain approval from Heads of Department for members of staff to be released to help on visits
- Submit all necessary paperwork (see below) to EVC to be checked prior to giving paperwork to the Head for approval
- Final approval given by the Head

### **Detailed planning to include:**

- Venue suitability for group/activity
- Group Leader and supervisors
- Pre-visit: where/when necessary
- Information to parents
- Consent forms collected
- Parents' meeting for all residential trips
- Briefing staff team
- Briefing pupils
- Risk assessments
- First Aid
- Transport arrangements
- Funding/costing/budget details
- Emergency procedures
- School contact
- Media contact
- Accommodation
- Visa requirements
- External providers
- Insurance
- Medical/dietary requirements of students
- Swimming supervision
- Coastal visits
- River visits
- Farm visits
- Remote supervision
- Paperwork to accompanying staff

### **During the visit:**

- Briefing pupils and supervisors
- Supervision of visit

### **After the visit:**

- Evaluation to be completed and given to EVC
- Report any accidents or incidents to EVC

## **1. Outline Approval**

A proposal for the visit must be submitted to the Deputy Head (Pastoral) outlining the visit's aims, students the visit is aimed at and a basic outline of what students will do on the trip. Dates of the visit and staff required must be given to the Deputy Head (Pastoral) and, if teaching time is missed, to the Senior Deputy Head (Academic) for approval. Heads of Department must agree to members of staff participating in the visit.

## **2. Detailed planning**

### **Venue suitability for group/activity**

The group leader should ensure that the visit is of educational value, that the venue and activity is suitable for the students involved. Ensure licences/accreditation are in place where appropriate.

### **Group Leader and supervisors**

All adults, including volunteers, accompanying residential trips need to have DBS clearance

Staff Ratio numbers will depend on:

- sex, age and ability of group
- pupils with special educational or medical needs
- nature of activities
- experience of adults in off-site supervision
- duration and nature of the journey
- type of any accommodation
- competence of staff, both general and on specific activities
- requirements of the organisation/location to be visited
- competence and behaviour of pupils
- first aid cover

St Edmund's will need to ensure that there are a sufficient number of staff to cover emergencies, for example a student having to go home early or a student having to go to hospital.

However the above are examples only and an appropriate safe supervision level for a particular group will be assessed carefully in all planning and risk assessments. Where it is considered that a higher adult:pupil ratio is required and it is not feasible to use school staff alone, parents and/or volunteers maybe used to supplement the supervision ratio. These will be carefully selected and if possible, will be well known to St Edmund's and the pupil group.

The parents and/or volunteers' responsibilities will have been discussed with them prior to the education visit. In particular, they will be made aware of any pupils who may require closer supervision.

## **Ratios**

A general guide for visits to local historical sites and museums under normal circumstances might be:

- 1 adult for every 3 pupils in the Nursery
- 1 adult for every 4 pupils in Reception
- 1 adult for every 6 pupils in years 1 to 3
- 1 adult for every 10-15 pupils in school years 4-6
- 1 adult for every 15-20 pupils in year 7 onwards

A minimum for residential trips should be 1 adult to every 10 pupils

For residential trips abroad the ratio should be 1 adult to every 10 pupils but at least two of the adults should be teachers. There should be enough adults in the group to cover an emergency. Mixed gender groups should have at least one male teacher and one female teacher. All adults, including volunteers, accompanying residential trips need to have DBS clearance.

## **Pre-visit: where/when necessary**

An inspection visit should be made by any group leader who is intending to lead a group abroad or on a residential visit or who is to instruct or lead the group in an outdoor activity such as trekking in a location that is not familiar to them.

During an inspection visit the group leader wherever possible should:

- Ensure at first hand the venue is suitable to meet the aims and objectives of the school visit
- Obtain names and addresses of other schools which have used the venue to seek references
- Obtain advice from the manager/tour company
- Assess potential areas and levels of risk
- Ensure that the venue can cater for the needs of the staff and pupils in the group
- Become familiar with the area before taking a group of young people there
- Take photographs where appropriate for the parents' briefing meeting

If an inspection visit is not possible, then the group leader will need to consider how to complete an adequate risk assessment of the risks. A minimum measure would be to obtain specific information by letter from the venue, from other schools who have recently visited it, from tour companies and local organisations such as tourist boards.

## **Information to parents**

Parents should be informed by letter or at a parents meeting as to what the visit involves. This should include:

- Dates of the trip
- Cost of the trip
- The objectives of the visit
- Location and times of where the students will be collected and returned
- Mode of travel
- Details of accommodation
- Details of activities planned
- Standards of behaviour expected
- Details of insurance
- Kit required
- Money to be taken
- On exchange visits, details of host families
- Emergency Contact details of group leader and home contact

Parents should give consent for their child to participate in the visit.

For all residential trips a meeting should be held with parents at least one week prior to departure. This is also an ideal opportunity to collect passports, European Health Insurance cards, pocket money and any other necessary documentation.

Group leaders should not need to communicate with parents during the visit but the home contact might need to do so in the event of an accident or emergency.

Group leaders may wish to report back to parents after the visit, for example on the good behaviour of the students involved. Group leaders should also inform parents on return of any accidents or incidents involving their child.

Parents are asked to complete a generic consent form for Boarding and Day trips. For all residential visits parents must complete the consent form for residential visits.

## **Briefing students**

It is vital that students are given clear expectations before departing on a visit. The group leader should ensure students understand the following:

- Aims and objectives of the visit
- Language (if travelling abroad): basic common phrases
- Culture and customs
- Why safety precautions are in place
- What standard of behaviour is expected from students
- Who is responsible for the group

- What not to bring back either within the UK or from abroad such as drugs, knives etc
- Consequences if caught shoplifting
- Rendezvous procedures
- What to do if separated from the group
- How to use phones abroad
- Emergency procedures
- Food and drink
- Identity cards (these can be made by Linda in reception)
- A knowledge of out of bounds areas or activities

### **Briefing the staff team**

For day visits all adult supervisors must understand their roles and responsibilities at all times. It may be helpful to put this in writing.

For all residential visits a staff meeting must be held with all necessary information and paperwork communicated and issued.

### **Alcohol on Educational Visits**

For pupils, the College rules on alcohol apply. However, this will be over-ridden if the law of the land is stricter (eg America), in which case the law of the land must be obeyed. If Rhetoric students are involved in a trip and drinking is to be allowed, in accordance with the College policy, then this must be made clear in the documentation presented to the EVC and the appropriate permissions obtained.

Staff on Educational Visits must recognise that they are always “on call” and may be required to deal with a situation or emergency. The Group Leader of a visit should always ensure that there are sufficient staff to deal with any eventuality, as though they were on duty, and therefore not drinking alcohol. Those other staff who are not required to be on duty, may drink if they wish, but only in moderation, so that they are able to assist if called upon in case of emergency.

Staff are reminded that “Being under the influence of non-prescribed drugs or alcohol whilst at work, on duty or at any time whilst having responsibility for the supervision and care of children (including any time whilst on school trips)” is given as an example of gross misconduct in the College staff handbook.

### **Risk assessments**

A risk assessment for a visit need not be complex but it should be comprehensive. A formal assessment of the risks that might be met on a visit should have the aim of preventing the risks or reducing them. Pupils must not be placed in situations which expose them to an unacceptable level of risk. Safety must always be the prime consideration. If the risks cannot be contained then the visit must not take place.

There are three levels of risk assessment:

1. **Generic Risk Assessments:** normally prepared by a 'lead agency' or employer. These are applicable to the activity wherever and whenever it takes place. If staff are using generic risk assessments you must ensure they are read thoroughly and adjusted to meet the needs of your group and activity where necessary. Staff are required to sign on the blue form that they have read all risk assessments. It is essential not to become complacent about generic risk assessments. A re-assessment at regular intervals is recommended.
2. **Event Specific Risk Assessments:** prepared by the Group Leader, and will differ from place to place and from group to group.
3. **On-going Risk Assessments:** are made while undertaking the visit; judgements and decisions are made as the need arises, and are not normally recorded until after the visit.

The risk assessment should be based on the following:

- What are the hazards?
- Who might be harmed by them?
- Evaluate the risk level (low, medium, high)
- Identify controls that are in place
- Reassess the level of residual risk (is it acceptable?)
- Implement additional controls where necessary

When assessing the risks, a Group Leader should take the following factors into consideration:

- The type of visit/activity and the level at which it is being undertaken
- The location, routes and modes of transport
- The competence, experience and qualifications of supervisory staff
- The ratios of teachers and supervisory staff to pupils
- The group members' age, competence, fitness and temperament and the suitability of the activity
- The special educational or medical needs of pupils
- The quality and suitability of available equipment
- Seasonal conditions, weather and timing
- Emergency procedures
- How to cope when a pupil becomes unable or unwilling to continue
- The need to monitor the risks throughout the activity

It is good practice for all Group Leaders and supervisors to carry a copy of risk assessments on the visit.

If the activity will depend on good weather then it is a good idea to have a contingency plan and ensure a risk assessment is in place for this before the visit commences and should form part of the paperwork passed onto the EVC.

## **First Aid**

First aid provision should always be considered when planning a visit. The group leader should assess what level of first aid might be needed. On any visit, there should be a member of staff who has a good working knowledge of first aid, there should be a first aid kit adequate for the activities on every visit and a member of staff who is familiar with this kit.

For adventurous activities, visits abroad and residential visits there should be one member of staff who has received first aid training. For day visits there should be a nominated member of staff who is responsible for first aid.

The minimum first aid provision for a visit is:

- A suitably stocked first-aid box
- A person appointed to be in charge of first-aid arrangements

The appointed member of staff will need to be responsible for ensuring all students who take regular medication do so and record this.

Authorisation from parents must be gained to administer first aid to students.

The group leader should make contact with the infirmary well in advance of the visit to discuss particular children and order the necessary first aid kits.

## **Transport arrangements**

When selecting the mode of transport for a visit, the group leader should consider the following factors:

- Passenger safety
- Competence and training of the driver to drive the proposed vehicle and whether the driver holds the appropriate valid licence
- Number of driving hours required for the journey and length of the driver's day
- Number of drivers needed
- Type of journey (short or long distance/ motorway or cross-country)
- Traffic conditions
- Contingency funds and arrangements in case of breakdown/emergency
- Appropriate insurance cover
- Weather
- Suitable breaks for long journeys
- Supervision

The driver is responsible for the vehicle during the visit. All seats must face forward and seat constraints must comply with legal requirements. All students must wear seat belts.

## **Supervision on transport**

The level of supervision necessary should be considered as part of the risk assessment for the journey. The driver should not normally be responsible for supervision during the journey. Driver supervision may be sufficient if a small number of older children are being taken on a short journey.

When planning supervision on transport, the group leader should consider the following factors:

- Level of supervision that will be necessary on double decker coaches (one supervisor on each deck should be appropriate in normal circumstances)
- In terms of seating on a coach, staff should be distributed amongst the students on the coach
- Safety when crossing roads as part of the journey
- Safety on buses, trains, ferries and boats- the group leader should make clear to students any restrictions
- Students should be made aware of what to do in an emergency
- Safety of students whilst waiting at pick-up and drop-off points and when getting on or off transport, particularly when using UK vehicles abroad
- Safety while on rests during the journey
- Safety of the group in the event of accident or breakdown
- Head counts by a member of staff should always be carried out when the group is getting off or onto transport
- Responsibility for checking that seat belts are fastened
- Travel sickness tablets should only be administered with previous authorisation from the parents

#### **Private car**

- Vehicle is roadworthy
- Car is fitted with functioning seat belts and students are wearing these at all times
- The car is insured with 'Business use' and a copy of the insurance is available for inspection

#### **School owned or hired minibus**

- The driver is responsible for vehicle during the visit
- The driver has appropriate licence (D-1 and passed Hertfordshire test)
- The driver has read and complies with the St. Edmund's Minibus Drivers' Handbook
- There is adequate supervision of the participants
- The driver as appropriate rest periods

#### **Coach company**

- Booked through the St Edmund's coach driver
- Where possible use 'Golden Boy'
- If not using Golden Boy ensure that the operator has appropriate insurance
- Ensure that coaches have seat belts fitted

## **Funding/costing/budget details**

The group leader should ensure that parents have early written information about the costs of the visits. Parents should be given enough time to prepare financially for the visit.

There should be no accounts set up in a staff member's name.

Group leaders must set up an account with the Bursar into which all money for the visit is paid. A full list of students should be given to the accounts department along with information on the payment schedule for the parents and the tour company as well as any invoices. Group leaders should check with the Bursar that there are no school fee 'debtors; participating.

If you require cash from your visit account please give to the Accounts department at least one week's notice

The costs of visits should be added to the students' bill. Any receipts before, during and after the visit should be presented to the Bursar.

External providers should not contract with the parents instead of St Edmund's. Group leaders are advised to collect students' pocket money and allocate a staff supervisor as 'banker' for the trip whose responsibility it is to distribute pocket money to the students.

When planning a visit, the group leader should add a small amount to the basic price per student in order to have a contingency fund in case of an emergency to cover any extra costs that may arise. Any money remaining over at the end of the visit must be refunded to the students on that particular visit.

## **Emergency procedures**

### **See also St Edmund's Contingency Plan**

The group leader is in charge of students during a visit. They have a common law duty to act as a reasonably prudent parent would. Staff should not hesitate to take life-saving action in an extreme situation.

Emergency procedures are an essential part of planning a visit. All visit leaders are to prepare a written 'emergency plan' giving all contact details and procedures for:

- School or home contact
- Media contact
- Contacting parents
- Contacting senior management

If an accident happens, the priorities are:

- Assess the situation
- Safeguard the uninjured members of the group
- Attend to the casualty
- Inform the emergency services
- Notify insurers
- Notify tour operator
- Inform the home contact

- Home contact to inform parents
- Home contact to inform senior management team if deemed necessary
- Report written up about the incident. Try and keep a record of all event, times and contacts after the incidents

### **School contact**

Prior to a visit, the group leader should identify a senior member of staff as the SLT Emergency contact. A second contact number may be necessary with some visits, depending on type of visit and number of students. The school contact would need to consider:

- Ensuring that the group leader is in control of the emergency and establish if any assistance is required from the school base
- Contacting parents: details of parents' contacts need to be with the home contact at all times as well as visit plans and contact numbers of staff on visit
- School contact to act as a link between the group and parents
- Parents should be kept as well informed as possible
- If a serious accident, the home contact should liaise with the designated media contact

### **Media contact**

St Edmund's media contact is the Head. In the UK this person should take on the role of dealing with the media in the case of a serious accident. When taking visits abroad, agreement with the Head should be made as to what should happen if a serious accident occurred whilst abroad. Please refer to the St Edmund's contingency plan.

### **Accommodation**

- Ensure UK accommodation is covered by a fire certificate
- If abroad ensure accommodation complies with Health and Safety regulations of the country
- Ensure appropriate security arrangements are in place for possessions and pupils/staff
- Locks on doors should work in the group's rooms but appropriate access should be available to teachers at all times
- Ensure separate male and female accommodation and washing facilities
- Staff accommodation should be close at hand and students should be aware of where this is
- Ensure the whole group are aware of the layout of the accommodation, its fire precautions/exits
- Balconies should be stable, windows secure, and electrical connections safe
- Adequate lighting- advisable to bring a torch
- Adequate space for storage
- Fire alarm must be audible throughout the accommodation
- After arrival at any accommodation it is advisable to carry out a fire drill as soon as possible
- Parents need to have full details of accommodation arrangements

## **Visa requirements**

Students who are not British nationals will normally need a visa to travel to another EU member state unless visa exception has been secured for them. The British Council will supply the Group Leader with a List of Travellers' Form which will allow students participating in school visits to travel within the European Union without the need for a visa.

Home Office: 020 7035 4848

British Council: 0161 957 7755

The Head will need to sign and verify the List of Travellers Form.

Group Leaders should allow adequate time for forms to be completed properly.

Where a List of Travellers' Form cannot be used the Group Leader should check with both the Embassy and the UK Border Agency as to the visas required.

## **External providers**

Before using a tour operator group leaders should ensure it is reputable. Group leaders should ask for references from previous school groups.

If using a tour operator ensure they are approved by a bonding agency:

- Association of British Travel Agents (ABTA)
- Federation of Tour Operators Trust (FTOT)
- Association of Independent Tour Operators Trust (ATOL)
- Passenger Shipping Association (PSA)
- Confederation of Passenger Transport (CPT)
- Yacht Charter Association (YCA)
- The Association of Bonded Travel Organisers Trust (ABTOT)
- Learning outside the classroom (LoTC)

If using air transport ensure that there is an Air Travel Organisers Licence (ATOL) in place

External providers are responsible for assessing the risk of those parts of the visit they are contracted to provide.

Some contractors may offer pre-visits to overseas or other sites for group leaders. This can enable the group leader to gain a direct experience of the venue and environment and assist their appraisal of the contractor's risk assessment. It gives group leaders a chance to work with the tour operator before taking a group of students.

A provider's standards questionnaire should be sent all companies in good time prior to the visit.

## **Insurance**

St. Edmund's has Public Liability cover for all 'approved' activities on-site and off-site.

St Edmund's has an insurance policy that covers some educational visits both in the UK and abroad. This does not cover children of staff who are not participating in the full itinerary of the visit or accompanying parents. Staff must check with the Bursar as to which visits are covered.

Some parents may cancel their child's place on a visit. The group leader should forward any cancellations to the insurer/operator as soon as possible, in writing, if a replacement is not available. Delay in notification may incur cancellation charges.

Additional cover may be necessary for students with medical conditions. The group leader should check this with the insurance company before departure. The group leader should ascertain the details of the insurance policy held by the tour operator and pass this on to parents.

The group leader should write to the parents to tell them which responsibilities St Edmund's accepts and the scope of any insurance cover St Edmund's is to arrange. It is advisable to make copies of the insurance schedule available to parents as early as possible in the booking process.

Insurance policies are legal documents. They will impose conditions, limit the cover, and exclude certain people or activities. Insurance companies/travel firms can advise on particular types of insurance. However, the following are examples of cover which may be appropriate to many types of school visit:

- employers liability;
- public liability;
- personal accident cover for teachers, other adults, and pupils;
- costs of medical treatment;
- specialised risk activities (often excluded from standard policies) and the costs of evacuation for medical reasons when abroad;
- damage to or loss of hired equipment (check the wording of the hire agreement);
- programmed and non-programmed activities;
- transport and accommodation expenses in case of emergency;
- compensation against cancellation or delay;

Group leaders are advised to check that all members of the group are adequately covered and parents are informed of the insurance cover.

A copy of the College insurance policy and contact number must go on every residential visit

### **Medical/dietary/special needs requirements of students**

Group leaders must ensure they are aware of any medical, dietary or special needs requirements of any member of their party. This information should be given to all accompanying members of staff on the trip.

If group leaders are unsure about any student they should contact the infirmary or parents for more information.

Group leaders should be aware of:

- Details of medical conditions
- Emergency contact details
- Written details of any medication required (including instructions on dosage/times) and parental permission to administer
- Parental permission if the pupils needs to administer their own medication or agreement for a volunteer teacher to administer
- Information on any allergies/phobias
- Information on any special dietary requirements

This information should be sought in good time so, if necessary, planning for particular students can take place.

St Edmund's will already be familiar with the nature of a pupil's special educational needs. Any limitations or problems the pupil may have should be taken into account at the planning stage and when carrying out the risk assessment. Off-site visits may pose additional difficulties for a pupil with SEN and the behaviour of some pupils may prove challenging. The following factors should be taken into consideration:

- is the pupil capable of taking part in and benefiting from the activity?
- can the activity be adapted to enable the pupil to participate at a suitable level?
- will additional/different resources be necessary?
- is the pupil able to understand and follow instructions?
- will additional supervision be necessary?

It may be helpful to the pupil if one of the supervisors already knows them well and appreciates their needs fully. The group leader should discuss the visit with the parents of pupils with SEN to ensure that suitable arrangements have been put in place to ensure their safety.

### **Remote supervision**

The aim of visits for older pupils may be to encourage independence and investigative skills, and some of the time on visits such as trips abroad and fieldwork may be unsupervised. The group leader should establish during the planning stage of the visit whether the students are competent in remote supervision and should ensure parents have agreed this part of the visit. The group leader remains responsible for pupils even when not in direct contact with them.

Parents should be informed, before the visit, whether any form of remote supervision will take place.

### **Preparing students for remote supervision:**

As a minimum, students should have the following:

- Telephone numbers and emergency contacts if lost (ID Card)
- Money
- Maps and plans and any other information for them to act effectively

- Location of local telephones and the appropriate coins
- A knowledge of how to summon help
- Knowledge of out of bounds areas or activities
- A meet up point (where possible a base area where a member of staff will always be)

### **Swimming supervision**

Swimming, paddling and other 'in-water' activities should never be allowed as an impromptu activity. They should only take place when a specific risk assessment has been written and qualified supervision is available.

Swimming and paddling in the sea should only be allowed in recognised bathing areas and have official surveillance, preferably lifeguard cover. Students should always be in sight of their supervisors. One supervisor should always stay out of the water for better surveillance.

The group leader or another supervisor should hold a relevant life saving award, especially where lifeguard cover may not be available.

Staff should be aware of:

- The level of swimming ability in the group
- Local conditions
- Designate a safe area of water for use by the group
- Ensure that students have not eaten (at least 30mins before swimming)
- Adopt and explain the signals of distress and recall

### **Swimming pools**

When using public swimming pools, the following ratios should be adopted:

1 adult to 12 students (in years 4-6)

1 adult to 20 students (in years 7 onwards)

For pupils in year 3 and below the ratio should be higher

Group leaders should monitor the risks of regular swimming activities and adjust supervision levels for their individual groups as necessary

If considering using a swimming pool not used before, it is advisable to check the following:

- Is there constant pool supervision by a sufficient number of qualified lifeguards?
- Where there is no lifeguard, the group leaders or designated supervisor should stay at poolside at a raised location and should have a relevant life saving award and be accompanied by an appropriate number of supervisors
- Is the water temperature appropriate?
- Is the water clear?
- Does the deep end allow for safe diving?
- Are there signs indicating the depth?
- Is there a poolside telephone?
- Are there a resuscitator and other pieces of first aid and rescue equipment, and is there somebody trained to use them?

- Is there a changing room for each sex?
- Have the pupils been instructed on how to behave in and around the water?

#### **Paperwork/items to remember for visits:**

- Travel tickets, passports, visas, European health insurance cards
- A photocopy of the above should also be with another member of staff
- Consent forms
- Contact details for home contact/tour company
- Contact details for parents (names, addresses, telephone numbers): at least two contacts for residential trips
- Insurance policy and contact number
- Location of local hospital medical service
- For some visits you may require passport photos of the students
- Contingency fund
- ID cards for students
- Mobile phone
- A copy of all student information and contact details for all accompanying members of staff
- Group leader to ensure they have contact details, medical history and photocopies of staff members' passports and European health insurance cards

#### **Information to be retained by home contact:**

- Itinerary and contact phone number/address of group
- List of group members and contact details for next of kin
- Copy of insurance cover
- Contact number for tour operator
- Copies of travel documents (passports etc)

#### **4. Evaluation of visits**

An evaluation should take place after all visits. The group leader should write down any key issues that need to be thought about before taking another visit to the same venue. For all residential visits a formal evaluation should be written. All incidents/accidents should be reported. Any issues with particular students should be reported to the appropriate people. These evaluations should be returned to the EVC within 48 hours of returning.

A report should be written for the St Edmund's website and newsletter. The group leader or designated member of staff may like to produce a display of photos.

If the group were particularly well behaved the group leader may wish to write a letter to parents.

## **Notes on types of visit**

### **1. Day visits**

This type of visit is usually in support of the curriculum. It will be necessary to seek approval for such visits and carry the necessary planning including risk assessment. Parental consent will be required for those returning after 4.30pm and adventurous activities. A letter should be sent out for all visits.

### **2. Sports fixtures**

Where possible all fixtures should be in the school calendar. All 'away' fixtures count as off-site activities and should have a risk assessment accompanying all fixtures. A list of students involved in the fixture should be posted on the common room notice board with times, dates and venues as well as a contact telephone number.

Games staff should be aware of any students with special medical needs and carry a suitably stocked first aid kit and a mobile phone.

A qualified teacher should accompany all away teams and one teacher cannot be responsible for more than 20 students. Where the College is aware of particular special or medical need of a student travelling to an Away fixture, this ratio should be reviewed.

### **3. Adventure activities**

When planning to use adventure activity facilities, offered by a commercial company or by a local authority, the group leader should check:

- Do they hold an LoTC certificate? If no they should complete a providers' form.
- Whether the provider is legally required to hold a licence for the activities it offers, and if so, that the provider actually holds a licence
- A licensed provider does not necessarily have to hold a licence for all its activities. Many of the activities will be covered by health and safety legislation alone. However the following activities undertaken by students under 18 need a licence:
  - Caving
  - Climbing
  - Trekking (going on foot, horse, pony, cycle, skis, skates or sledges over moorland, or on ground over 600m above sea level when it would take 30 minutes to reach an accessible road or refuge)
  - Watersports

The group leader and supervisors retain ultimate responsibility for students at all times during adventure activities, even when the group is under instruction by a member of the provider's staff. The provider is responsible for the safe running of the activity. Clear handover and handback procedures should be in place. Everybody, including the students, must have an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the school staff and provider's staff. The group leader should have sufficient information on what the activity involves before it

takes place. They should approach the instructor at an appropriate stage if they are concerned about the students taking unnecessary risks.

The group leader should ensure that the provider is aware of any special medical needs that members of the group may have. Not all bodies are required to hold a license. The providers' standards questionnaire should be sent to companies/centres in good time prior to the trip.

### **In-house provision**

Staff must hold NGB qualifications. The equipment used must be suitable and maintained to a high standard.

All activities must be covered by generic/specific risk assessments. Clear management of safety systems must be in place. Appropriate provision for first aid is made. Every student is suited to the activity and is properly prepared and equipped.

### **4. Duke of Edinburgh** (see also section under Remote supervision on p.21)

#### **Duke of Edinburgh Award/Adventurous activities**

The College uses A to Z Expeditions for the Walking expeditions and Herts Young Mariners Base for the Canoeing expeditions. These companies both hold AALA licences.

The training given by these companies to the students must be sound and thorough. The instructor should have the appropriate qualifications or experience to provide training in the activity, the group leader should be satisfied that the students have acquired the necessary skills and have the necessary experience, confidence, physical ability and judgement to be left without direct supervision.

The withdrawal of direct supervision should be a gradual four stage process:

- Accompanying the group
- Shadowing the group
- Checking regularly at agreed locations
- Checking occasionally at agreed locations

Pupils should be familiar with all equipment used or taken and without direct supervision and, in addition to training; an initial element of adult supervision may be required. The condition and suitability of any equipment, particularly safety equipment, taken or used during these activities should be assessed separately.

The group should have some training in first aid and carry a first aid with which they are familiar.

**Ratios:** Due to the expeditions being run by external companies, the same ratios as other Residential visits do not apply. The Senior Deputy

Headmaster/DofE Manager will be responsible for looking at the groups and assigning relevant and experienced staff to the specific expeditions.

## **5. Coastal visits**

The group leader should 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
- Ensure group members are aware of warning signs and flags
- Establish a base on the beach to which members of the group may return if separated
- Look out for hazards such as glass, barbed wire and sewage outflows
- If students have recreational time, the group leader should consider areas of the terrain and sea that are out of bounds
- If walking along cliffs, the group should stick to the path at all times
- If planning to mountain bike along coastal paths, the group leader needs to consider whether it is safe or legal
- The local coastguard or tourist information office will be able to provide information and advice on the nature and location of hazards

## **6. River visits**

Taking students on a river visit needs to be carefully planned. The risks assessed should include those arising from the hazards with being in rivers which can include water levels, current, obstacles in the water as well as infections such as leptospirosis that can be contracted by humans.

Once on the river visit, the Group Leader should be aware of the following:

- Be aware of the local conditions- such as currents, weeds, a shelving, uneven or unstable bottom
- To place staff in suitable positions along the bank
- Set out clear boundaries for where the work will take place
- Ensure all students are wearing suitable clothing and footwear to carry out the work
- To be prepared to adjust the original plan if the flow of water or other circumstances change during the visit
- Ensure that any students with cuts or abrasions are covered up with waterproof dressings
- Any cuts or abrasions that occur during the visit should be cleaned out thoroughly and covered where appropriate
- Advise all students to shower after the visit
- A letter should be sent to parents prior to the visit advising them as to what to do if their child returns with flu-like symptoms

## **7. Farm visits**

Taking students to a farm needs to be carefully planned. The risks to be assessed should include those arising from the misuse of farm machinery and the hazards associated with *E coli*, food poisoning and other infections.

An inspection visit is strongly recommended and the group leader should ensure the farm is well-managed, has a good reputation for safety standards and animal welfare, and maintains good washing facilities and clean grounds and public areas.

Basic safety rules to enforce should include. Never let students do the following:

- Place faces against the animals or put their hands in their own mouths after feeding the animals
- Eat until they have washed their hands
- Sample any animal food
- Drink from the farm taps
- Ride on tractors or other machines
- Play in the farm area

## **8. Residential visits**

Refer to section in 'Detailed Planning'.

## **9. Visits abroad**

Refer to section in 'Detailed Planning'.

## **10. Foreign exchanges**

- Parents/Guardians should be made fully aware of what checks are carried out on the home stay families prior to the visit
- All students should be issued with a survival card with relevant phone numbers to be used in an emergency
- The companies we use for Home Stay undertake whatever checks are available on those individuals from their country of origin
- When other students are staying with our families, DBS checks should be carried out on these families

## **11. Ski trips**

Ski group leaders are reminded that there is strictly to be only skiing and snowboarding under the direction of an appropriately qualified and competent instructor.

The minimum qualification for ski group leaders to hold is the Ski Course Organiser Certificate. (This does not allow you to instruct skiing)

## **12. Overseas expedition**

Staff who intend to organise overseas expeditions especially to remotes part of the world, are strongly advised to attend the 'Overseas Expeditions and Fieldwork' organised at the Royal Geographical Society as well as attending a wilderness first aid course. It is strongly recommended that the expedition is approved by a recognised authority. For example: Young Explorers' Trust or the MoD if a CCF activity.

## **13. CCF**

Risk assessments are carried out by the Military of Defence. The CCF should follow normal St Edmund's procedures for all visits. The only exception is that a parents' meeting should be held at the start of the academic year outlining what is involved in the CCF, on day visits as well as residential visits. This one meeting means that a separate meeting does not need to take place before every residential visit.

## **14. Off-site activities during P7**

A number of activities take place off-site during P7 activities. Staff are expected to complete a risk assessment before the activity begins. Staff should ensure that parents have completed the generic consent form to cover students for these activities. Staff should leave a list of students and staff involved on the common room notice board along with an emergency contact number of somebody on the trip and the number of the venue they are going to.

## **15. Boarding visits**

A wide variety of trips are on offer in boarding. It is important that all members of staff accompanying these trips read the risk assessment and ensure it is followed. A generic risk assessment for shopping trips and public places has been put together and for more specific activities risk assessments are to be given these to the members of staff on duty. There are also instructions regarding supervision of students.

On every boarding visit, a group leader should be allocated who will be responsible for the following:

Before students and staff depart coach, the group leader should ensure:

- All student's mobile phone numbers are collected in
- Names of students who are walking around together are collected
- All students are in groups of three or more
- Staff contact numbers given to each other
- All students have an ID card
- Boarding mobile is switched on
- Brief students on risks and general behaviour during the day
- All students know check-in times and check-in points
- All students know when/from where coach leaves
- All students know where the base area
- Allocate a schedule and base area for staff

- Make sure staff have relevant information (risk assessments/lists of students etc) and brief staff as to expectations

**Ratios for boarding visits:**

- 1 adult for every 8 students in Elements and Rudiments
- 1 adult for every 15-20 pupils in Grammar upwards

**Remote Supervision: Check-in times**

Within an enclosed area:

Elements and Rudiments:	Every hour
Grammar, Syntax and Poetry:	Every two hours
New Rhetoric:	Every two hours
Existing Rhetoric:	At the end of the trip

In a town/city:

Elements and Rudiments:	Must be with a member of at all times
Grammar, Syntax and Poetry:	Every hour
New Rhetoric:	Every hour
Existing Rhetoric:	At the end of the trip

Staff should be particularly aware of international students and where necessary show these students around new towns/cities. If deemed necessary a member of staff can take the initiative to use direct supervision with older students.

