

MORE HOUSE SCHOOL

POLICY

SCHOOL OUTINGS AND RESIDENTIAL TRIPS

Rationale:

Learning outside the classroom environment is an essential part of our curriculum. Trips and visits include day trips to historic sites, museums, galleries, natural features, farms, drama productions, field trips, adventure activities, concerts, sports teams, ski trips and other forms of off-site activities such as the Duke of Edinburgh's Award programme, the World Challenge programme, other residential trips and outdoor pursuits.

School trips have clear benefits for pupils as they serve to provide a reinforcement of theory through practical investigations of the subject, and offer educational, personal and social development experiences that cannot be accessed within school. Successful visits and outdoor learning activities happen in many schools each year. Misunderstandings about the application of health and safety law sometimes discourage teachers from organising such trips. These misunderstandings can stem from frustrations about paperwork and fears of prosecution if the trip goes wrong. Nevertheless, the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) fully supports schools arranging a wide range of out of school activities.

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is More House School's intent to follow and maintain a robust system for outings which operates effectively, safely and appropriately that enables:

- learning to progress through enjoyable 'off-school' premises activities;
- all educational visits to be planned within an educational, and health and safety context;
- clearly defined educational outcomes, which are announced in advance;
- clear communication between staff and parents;
- a written process to be in place for the application and approval of educational visits, and an outline of the levels of approval required for different types of educational visit;
- lessons learnt from the activity to inform upon the planning and management of trips.

Broad Guidelines:

Parents are expected to support the school in ensuring that pupils follow instructions given by those in charge of the trip. Those in charge of the trip may send home early any pupil who declines to follow reasonable instructions. The procedure and planning for school trips at More House School, applies the following guidelines:

- **Key responsibilities:**

At all times responsibility remains with the leader of the visit. There are instances when the staff from other organisations will 'lead' some or all of the activities on an educational visit – a tour guide, for example, or an outdoor education instructor. It is important that teaching staff realise that, whilst they may not be actively leading proceedings, they are still the person who has ultimate responsibility for the health and safety of students and fellow More House School staff present. It is their duty to remain close by and to intervene if there is any activity taking place which they feel may put pupils in danger. If

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staff ratios allow, then ideally two members of the school's staff must be left with each group.

- **Ratios:**

More House School will apply an initial staff/pupil 1:10 ratio for outings. However, the senior management team (SMT) at More House School will consider appropriate staff/pupil ratios based on the age of children in the party, the size of the group, and the nature and location of the activity. Dependent on the type of outing, at least one teacher or experienced member of the school's staff will be required on each trip with accompanying classroom assistants. On residential trips the staff must be divided equally between activities, but taking into account the nature and location of the activities.

- **Communication with Parents:**

Once the trip is approved, parents must be provided with comprehensive written details regarding the organisation of all school trips. A letter outlining all aspects of the trip should be sent to the parents of participating students. For residential trips, the Trip Leader may also hold an information evening for parents at least two weeks before departure.

- Parents will receive information about the trip's details, including costs, equipment their child will need for the trip, itinerary, and any required documentation (e.g., passports, medical forms).
- Where applicable, parents should be invited to any briefing sessions. These sessions should be considerate of any challenges parents might face, such as disabilities or language barriers (e.g., if English is not their first language).
- All group members, including students and parents, should be briefed on the key elements of the trip, including expectations for conduct, and the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved, prior to the trip's start.

- **Consent:**

We require individual consent from parents/guardians for all school trips where students will be taken off the school site. However, for some exceptional, regular outings parents will be offered a blanket consent form covering the multiple outings.

- **Transportation:**

Where a school minibus is used, the driver must have the appropriate qualifications. Other than for short journeys (e.g. under one hour's duration) a second qualified driver should be present. Where appropriate and cost effective, coaches are to be used to transport students at distance. The leader of the trip is to reassure themselves that the coach looks in a reasonable state and check the time that has elapsed since the driver's last trip. Therefore, where possible, only approved coach companies are to be used. Where there is a small number of students attending a nearby venue, it is appropriate to use one of the school's cars. School vehicles must always be used in preference to personal vehicles, which can only be used on school business with the permission of the Chief Operating Officer and where appropriate insurance is in place.

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- **Other information/documentation required:**

Whilst very important, the risk-assessment is not the only documentation required for an educational visit. If something goes wrong on the day, the school is going to have to ensure that there is as much information as possible to hand to deal with the immediate consequences and, if necessary, to cope with any aftermath. It is therefore of prime importance that as much information and documentation as possible is easily available in the event of an emergency, a copy of which must be available in the school office.

- **Medical risk assessments:**

These should be reviewed by the surgery staff and any concerns passed to the Chief Operating Officer who will consult with SMT for final sanction.

Required in school.

A digital folder containing:

- Parental consent – written parental consent must have been received for all students participating in the educational visit. It may sound harsh, but if consent is not received, then a child should not be allowed to take part.
- Details of students on the visit, including names, addresses and up to date parental contacts (*residential trips only*) and medical details.
- Details of adults on the visit, names, addresses, next of kin and mobile telephone numbers (*residential trips only*).
- Before the residential trip departs the member of staff leading the trip must meet with SMT to finalise the details of the trip. This must include the allocation of rooms for the pupils in conjunction with discussion with a member of the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) team, and a completed risk-assessment.
- The leader of a residential trip should complete the School's form to confirm they are medically fit to lead the excursion.

Required by adults on the trip.

- Compliance at all times with all aspects of the school's *Code of Conduct for Staff, Governors, Volunteers and Visiting Professionals* and the specific Code of Conduct written for all staff involved in school outings/residential trips. And the *Safe Use of Technology policy*.

A digital folder containing:

- School information – details of the school name and contact number. An out-of-hours contact number should also be provided. Note: the person who is the out-of-hours contact should keep copies of the list of students and adults on the visit and their emergency contact details.
- Details of all students and adults on the trip – emergency services would need access to these in the case of an accident.
- On residential trips at least one member of staff on the trip must be first-aid qualified and be responsible for the students' medical conditions.

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- Medical forms with up to date information about the pupil's medical conditions and medication giving consent for staff to administer it on the trip.
- First-Aid Kit containing Emergency Medications for pupils and copies of individual health care plans where applicable.
- Educational visit insurance details, including any emergency telephone numbers.
- School mobile telephone – for contact with students and for staff back at school to contact the group leader if required. This is preferable to relying on personal mobile telephones, the contact details of which should never be shared with children. In addition no photographs or other recordings of pupils may be taken on personal electronic equipment; school cameras or electronic equipment should be used in line with the *Safe Use of Technology policy*.
- On residential trips there will be a written daily observations log kept of all incidents, major or minor, events, points of interest during the trip and disciplinary notes.
- A register must be taken at certain points of the day, such as the start and finish of any major activity. This is to be done as well as regular head counts.

Required by children on the trip

- Schedule of visit – written details of destinations and estimated timescales. This should include details of assembly points, and what to do in case of an emergency.
- Contact details – the school mobile telephone number and the number of the main school switchboard.
- Code of conduct – detailed behaviour expectations and health and safety guidance. The contents of this document should have been gone through verbally with students before the visit and again following arrival at the destination. For residential trips the student and parents will be asked to sign a Code of Conduct contract.
- Pupils' own emergency medications (e.g. adrenaline-pen, reliever-inhaler).

Management responsibilities:

The responsibilities of senior management for implementing and administering the safety of school outings will include:

- drafting educational visit guidance and procedures, including those for risk assessment, and obtaining approval of these from the leadership team;
- ensuring that all staff are aware of the guidance and procedures in place;
- providing additional guidance to staff as required;
- reviewing all applications for educational visits and ensuring that they contain sufficient information and evidence of risk assessment;
- keeping records of all educational visits which take place and ensuring levels of approval;
- monitoring and recording any accidents or mishaps which occur on visits, together with records of what action was taken;
- acting as out-of-hours school contact for residential or other trips which go beyond the school day.

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Conclusion:

By applying consistent and rigorous management methods, school outings will be made appropriate in a way that complies with Health and Safety requirements and follows recognised best-practice.

The following School policies and documents form an important continuation of this policy:

- Health & Safety Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Disability Policy
- Code of Conduct for Staff, Governors, Volunteers and Visiting Professionals
- Safe Use of Technology Policy (*including the Online Safety Policy, Acceptable use of Mobile Devices policy and the Acceptable use of IT Policy*).

Legal Requirements & Education Standards,

References:

A: Handbook for the Inspection of Schools - The Regulatory Requirements, Part 3 (www.isi.net)

B: Reference Guide to the key standards in each type of social care service inspected by Ofsted (www.ofsted.gov.uk)

C: "Health and Safety at Work" Section H of the ISBA Model Staff Handbook,

D: "Health and Safety and Welfare at Work" Chapter N of the ISBA Bursar's Guide

E: "Insurance" Chapter K of the Bursar's Guide by HSBC Insurance Brokers Ltd

F: "Good Practice in Adventure Activities within the Education Sector" Adventure Activities Licensing Authority (AALA) (www.aals.org.uk)

G: Health & Safety on Educational Excursions, Scottish Government (www.scotland.gov.uk)

H: Health & Safety Executive, School trips and outdoor learning activities home page (www.hse.gov.uk)

I: "Taking Students Offsite" ATL (www.atl.org.uk)

J: Institute for Outdoor Learning guidance (www.outdoor-learning.org)