



THLCIC School Trips and Visits Policy

Introduction

Treasure House encourages school trips, especially since our students have often spent long periods without education or social contact. We believe that educational trips or visits have enormous potential for enriching the school curriculum and, in some cases, it is an essential requirement of examination courses. Our aim is to make our trips enjoyable experiences for both students and staff, while ensuring that everyone is safe and the visit is successful. It is therefore very important that all trips and visits are properly planned and organised and that all staff involved with school trips and visits take all reasonable steps to ensure that risks are minimised. This policy has been written with regard to the Health and Safety Executive 'School trips and outdoor learning activities', June 2011 and the Department for Education 'Advice on Legal Duties and Powers For Local Authorities, Head Teachers, Staff and Governing Bodies.' Essentially this new document summarises the existing health and safety law relevant to schools and how it affects governing bodies, head teachers and other staff.

Definition

For the purpose of this policy, a school trip or visit is defined as any occasion when a student or group of students are away from Treasure House undertaking a school activity and under the supervision of a member of staff. In order to avoid unnecessary repetition, the word 'trip' will largely be used throughout this policy but where this occurs, please understand 'trip and/or visit', as appropriate.

This policy pays attention to the following guidance:

- children should be able to experience a wide range of activities. Health and Safety measures should help them to do this safely, not stop them;
- it is important that children learn to understand and manage the risks that are a normal part of life;
- common sense should be used in assessing and managing the risks of any activity. Health and safety procedures should always be proportionate to the risks of an activity;
- staff should be given the training they need so they can keep themselves and the children safe and manage risks effectively.

The person responsible for managing all aspects of trips at Treasure House is Helen Webb and Naomi Long Srirotriam in her absence.

The directors **must** therefore be notified of all occasions when a student or group of students leave the school premises accompanied by members of staff. This forms a key part of the duty of care we owe to students. Visits may range from trips to local shops, museums, galleries and

Treasure House (London) CIC

theatres, trips to educational conferences and possible residential trips such as weekends away. All teachers should discuss the proposed trip with one of the directors before arranging it.

The Directors **must** give permission before any trip can take place. This is especially the case when trips likely to have a significant impact on the day to day running of Treasure House. **Teachers must not spend any money or inform students or parents that a trip or visit is going ahead until it has been formally approved.**

Planning and Preparation

The Timing of Trips and Visits

It is essential to the smooth running of the rest of the school that school trips are properly planned and arranged to ensure minimal disruption to all, both those on the trip and those left behind.

Teachers are strongly encouraged to plan their pattern of trips and visits for the coming academic year as early as they can. This allows clashes to be kept to a minimum. Trips and visits planned well in advance must be included in the termly school calendar. Events listed in the school calendar take priority over non-calendared events. The earlier a trip is planned, the more likely it is to be approved. If two events clash then the Directors will resolve the matter.

Students must miss lessons as rarely as possible. While it is often easy to justify a trip from the benefit to one's own subject, lessons missed in other subjects need to be considered. Obviously, there will be times when it is impossible to avoid taking students out during lesson time, but full consideration must be made of alternative times before making such a decision.

Staff organising a trip must consult as widely as possible with colleagues who might be affected and think carefully about the possible impact of a trip

Informing Other People

It is essential that all people concerned with the trip are fully informed at appropriate times. Once the planning has been completed and the trip has been approved, the full details of the trip must be prepared. The Directors will provide letters with permission slips for students to take home.

Communicating with parents

Parents must be informed in writing about all trips. It is acceptable for this permission to be gained through an 'opt-out' system rather than by asking parents to complete a consent form and send it back. For example, a phrase along the lines of '*It will be assumed that you are happy for your son/daughter to go on the trip unless we hear otherwise*' is acceptable. However, where a trip leaves very early or returns very late and involves travelling lengthy distances specific signed permission must be obtained from parents. An alternative option planned for any student whose parents decline permission to go on a trip.

Treasure House (London) CIC

If a trip involves overnight accommodation, parents must be given full details of the type of accommodation provided and the security arrangements, which are in place to ensure the safety of their child. They must be fully informed as to the nature of the trip. Parents must acknowledge that their child is fit enough to go on the trip, outline any health problems and authorise the leader of the party to act on their behalf in an emergency. They must also provide a contact number for the duration of the trip.

The trip leader **must** ensure that he/she is in possession of all parental consent forms and all contact number details throughout the trip. The office manager/Directors can help with the production of contact numbers if consulted in due time.

The Directors act as the school contact for the trip.

The Cost of School Trips

Staff must think carefully about the cost of a school trip. Many of our parents have financial constraints and it never be assumed that all parents can afford to pay for a trip. Costs should be kept to a minimum and parents must be given the chance to decline a trip on financial grounds. In such a case provision must be made for the student who cannot go on a trip. Wherever possible, Treasure House will finance school trips, however, we may ask for a voluntary contribution.

The Directors take responsibility for all financial arrangements in connection with the trip.

Supervision, including ratios and vetting checks (for example, CRB checks for volunteers on overnight stays)

There are no exact ratios for school trips. The Directors will ensure that the staffing for a trip is 'reasonable'. This will depend on the gender mix, ability and behaviour of the students involved. For many of our students trips will be anxiety provoking. Staff must take these students into consideration when planning trips. The competence of the adults supervising a trip must also be considered, together with the need for first aid cover.

Treasure House advises the following ratios for general activities such as visits to local historical sites and museums or for local walks, in normal circumstances:

- at least two adults to accompany up to 6 students.

However, it is stressed that these are only examples. The Directors will assess the risks and consider an appropriate safe supervision level for their particular trip.

Trips to remote areas or those which involve more hazardous activities will clearly require a higher level of supervision. It is also the case that many institutions which are open for visits by school parties have their own staffing guidelines which need to be adhered to. Staff taking trips must always check with the locations they are visiting about such matters.

Treasure House (London) CIC

When trip leaders are considering the staffing for their trips they must always bear in mind the consequences of staff absences on those left behind. Directors will endeavour to ensure that the minimum disruption is caused to the teaching and learning of students left behind on site.

If a school trip is taking place which involves several members of staff, each person going on the trip must ensure that the relevant paperwork has been completed.

Risk Assessments

A risk assessment is a careful examination of what, in your work, could cause harm to people, so that you can weigh up whether you have taken enough precautions or should do more to prevent harm.

It is not a legal requirement to complete a risk assessment for every activity or trip. Some activities, especially those happening away from school, such as mountaineering, canoeing and sailing, involve higher levels of risk. In these cases an assessment of significant risks should be carried out. The Directors must ensure they understand the risks and are familiar with the activity planned. The Directors will take a common sense and proportionate approach, remembering that in schools the purpose of risk assessment and management is to help children to undertake activities safely, not to prevent activities from taking place.

The risk assessment must be based on the following considerations:

- What are the hazards?
- Who might be affected by them?
- What safety measures need to be in place to reduce risks to an acceptable level?
- Can the trip leader put the safety measures in place?
- What steps will be taken in an emergency?

While every trip will have its own particular risks that must be assessed, research has shown that the following are the most commonly found dangers, so are worthy of particular consideration when doing a risk assessment for any trip away from school.

For trips that will involve outdoor or adventurous activities or indeed residential trips, staff are reminded to request copies of risk assessments from the service provider well in advance of the trip and to make reference to these in their own risk assessments.

Hazard	Risk	Control measures
Separation from the party	Getting lost	Regular head count, small groups. Must stay with an adult.
Leaving party member behind	Risk of assault or abduction	Check numbers before every departure.
Road crossing	Being hit by vehicle	All groups to line up parallel with kerb and cross as one. Ensure good sight line. Staff to arrive first at kerbside.
Road traffic	Falling off path into traffic	Keep buffer zone between group and kerb.

Treasure House (London) CIC

Sea/lakes	Drowning	Adults always on waterside. Group maximum of 6. Adults trained.
Sand	Damage to eyes	Students briefed and strong action at first sign of throwing.
Sun	Sunburn	Hat, sun block, parental letter, supervised use.
Heat	Heat stroke or dehydration	Pre-visit and establish access to shaded area. Plentiful supply of liquids.
Trains	Falling into the path of a vehicle	Keep buffer zone between group and train.

Bus Transport

It is worth making a special point about bus journeys. Most school trips will involve transportation by some type of bus, either a school minibus, hired minibus or hired coach. It is extremely important that staff and students use such transportation safely. **Everyone must wear seat belts at all times.** It is good practice for staff to remind all students of the need for good behaviour before all minibus and bus journeys. Separate guidelines follow in this booklet about the use of school minibuses but staff must remember that the journey is an integral part of a school trip and appropriate risk assessments must be carried out.

The Wearing of Seatbelts in Vehicles

In order to ensure that all journeys by Treasure House students are undertaken in the safest possible manner, it is the school's policy that **seatbelts must be worn at all times by all staff and students in cars (including taxis), minibuses and coaches.** All teachers and students are made aware of this and are asked to adhere to the policy strictly. We will do everything we reasonably can to enforce this policy.

We ask parents to help us to reinforce this message about the use of seatbelts to students, so that we can continue to ensure the safety of all students when they travel in vehicles.

Reconnaissance Visits

If possible an exploratory visit should be made by a teacher before any trip is undertaken. A key factor in reducing risk is knowledge of the place to be visited. Whilst such visits may not always be practical, staff should make every effort to consider such an undertaking.

A teacher who is to lead a group on a residential visit or on an outdoor activity should make a special effort to carry out a reconnaissance visit. If this is not possible then a minimum measure would be to obtain specific information by letter from the venue and from reputable organisations who can provide such information.

It is important to remember that places such as outdoor pursuits centres, leisure centres, museums, theatres, etc., have to carry out their own risk assessments for the facilities they

Treasure House (London) CIC

provide. If copies of these are obtained by members of staff then this will reduce the burden of the risk assessment process.

Factors to Consider in Planning a Trip

The following list is not exhaustive, but it tries to summarise what needs to be done during the planning and organisation of a trip. The list also gives further ideas about areas for risk assessment.

- Facilities/equipment the group will need to take
- Facilities/equipment provided at the venue
- Staff training needs
- Designating someone to record the visit and carry accident forms, etc
- Transport arrangements, including meeting arrangements for trips which leave before the start of morning school and collection arrangements for trips which return after the end of normal school
- Insurance arrangements
- Communication arrangements
- Supervision ratio
- Contingency plans for enforced changes of plans or late return
- Information to parents
- Information to school
- Preparing students
- Arrangements for sending students home early
- Emergency arrangements

Emergency Procedures

Teachers in charge of students have a duty of care to make sure that the students are safe and healthy. They also have a common law duty to act as a reasonably prudent parent would. Teachers should not hesitate to act in an emergency and to take lifesaving action in an extreme situation.

Emergency procedures are an essential part of planning a school visit. If an emergency happens the priorities are to:

- Assess the situation
- Safeguard the uninjured members of the group
- Attend the casualty
- Inform the emergency services and everyone who needs to know of the incident

Guidance on Emergency Procedures

A copy of the following guidelines must be taken by all party leaders.

- Establish nature and extent of the emergency.
- Make sure that all other members of the party are accounted for and safe.

Treasure House (London) CIC

- If there are injuries, establish their extent and administer first aid (if you have been trained or feel capable – but be aware of consequences that might follow were you to give incorrect treatment).
- Call relevant emergency services.
- Advise other adults of the incident and that emergency procedures are in operation.
- Ensure that an adult from the party accompanies casualties to hospital.
- Ensure that the remainder of the party are adequately supervised throughout and arrange for their early return to base.
- Arrange for one adult to remain at the incident site to liaise with emergency services until the incident is over and all children are accounted for.
- Control access to telephones until contact is made with the Directors and until they have had time to contact those directly involved. Pass full details of the incident (name, nature, date and time of incident, location of incident, details of injuries, names and telephone numbers of those involved, action taken so far).
- Telephone numbers for future communication identify alternate telephone numbers in case telephone lines become jammed).
- The school will arrange to contact the parents of those involved. In serious incidents the parents of all party members should be informed.

Media:

- A designated person should act as the point of contact with the media to whom all involved should direct questions.
- Under no circumstances should the name of any casualty be divulged to the media.
- The Party Leader should write down as soon as practicable all relevant details. A record should be made of any witnesses. Any associated equipment should be kept in its original condition.
- Legal liability should not be discussed or admitted.
- All accident forms should be completed and insurers and HSE or Local Authority inspectors should be contacted.
- Inform parents of any delays that will be necessitated.
- **NB.** Copies of DCSF guidelines are kept by the Directors.

After the Trip

The trip leader must inform the Directors that the party has returned safely and ensure that all the students are safely collected from school by a responsible adult, such as a parent or guardian.

If any difficulties or incidents occur on a school trip, the Directors must be informed as soon as possible after the trip returns to Treasure House so that appropriate follow up action can be taken quickly.

Additional Guidelines

Residential Trips Involving Mixed Parties

Staff organising such trips should try to ensure that a male and female member of staff accompanies the party. If this is not possible the spouse of a member of Staff who is willing to accompany the party is acceptable, but this should be discussed in advance with the Directors. If this is not possible then the matter should be discussed in good time with the Directors.

Treasure House (London) CIC

All adults involved in residential trips require a

DBS enhanced disclosure before accompanying pupils. This will have been processed on appointment for teachers. Volunteers and other adults will need to have a disclosure application processed in good time before departure. This must be done at least **three months** before the date of departure.

Under normal circumstances, it is the expectation that a member of the teaching staff will be the driver of any minibus used for a school trip. However, it is recognised that there may be occasions when this is not possible. In such circumstances staff are asked to contact the Second Deputy Head, who can assist in making alternative arrangements.

TRANSPORT OF CHILDREN IN A CAR/MINI-BUS BY A MEMBER OF STAFF

It is an acknowledged practice that teachers, from time to time, transport students in their cars to various external events. However, before doing so staff must seek permission from the Directors, together with written permission from the child's parents. Teachers should refer closely to the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy to ensure that they are not putting themselves or the student at risk of harm or of allegations of risk of harm to a student.

Before a member of staff uses his/her car for transport of children in connection with a school activity for the first time then such action should be discussed with the teacher's insurers. Clarification **must** be sought that the cover is wide enough to embrace the use of the vehicle in connection with the teacher's/employer's business. Should the answer be in the negative then **in no circumstances** must the vehicle be used to transport children on behalf of the school and the matter should immediately be referred to the Director of Finance.

This policy was last reviewed in July 2015 and will be reviewed every three years or as changes in legislation dictate.

Signed
Helen Webb
Director

Signed
Naomi Long-Srikrotriam
Director