



WILSON'S SCHOOL

SCHOOL VISITS POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Date Approved by Governors: December 2018

School Visits Policy and Procedures

EVC means Educational Visits Co-ordinator.

POLICY

1. Wilson's School recognises the value of school visits in:
 - a) promoting personal and social development
 - b) enhancing and enriching the curriculum taught in lessons
 - c) providing opportunities for pupils to undergo a variety of experiences not available in the classroom or school context.
2. Every school visit must be preceded by careful preparation. The purpose and aims of the visit should be fully understood by all concerned. Risks must be identified when planning visits and sensible precautions put in place to manage these. The procedure must be followed in relation to all school visits, even regular visits that take place on an annual basis.
3. All pupils must have equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from any activity specifically required by the curriculum. No pupil may be prevented from taking part in such visits on grounds of race, gender, disability, religious affiliation or parental means.

The school's [Charging and Remissions Policy](#) will be followed in relation to school visits.

The provisions of the Pupil Premium Strategy and the 16-19 Bursary Scheme apply. Discretion in relation to these schemes has been delegated to the Head.

4. **Before applying for permission** to run a visit, the Group Leader must:
 - be mindful of the timescales for approval particularly for residential, adventurous or visits abroad. The Governors meet once per term and usually at least two terms' notice is required. Dates of Governing Body meetings are in the school calendar.
 - assess the cost of the visit and the accessibility of the experiences offered by the visit to all pupils in the school community.
 - check that the proposed provider has appropriate accreditations including recognition by a suitable body (e.g. ABTA, STF, LOtC, etc.) and seek further assurances and information from a provider if it is being used for the first time e.g. references from other schools.
 - have the necessary experience to be considered a competent Group Leader of the proposed visit (NB usually a member of staff will have participated as a member of staff on at least one school visit at Wilson's School similar in nature prior to taking on the role of Group Leader).
 - be a member of staff of the school or a Commissioned Officer of the Combined Cadet Force.
 - consider the year group/s involved, the proposed time of year and the likely impact on lessons, coursework, controlled assessments, exam preparation/revision, internal and public examinations and other curriculum visits applicable for that year group.

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- consider whether there are any conflicting events (for staff or pupils) in the school calendar.
- avoid/reduce the impact of the proposed visit on lessons.
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- review whether the proposed staffing levels are appropriate given the age and maturity of the pupils and nature of the visit (this is a matter of risk assessment in each case and can be discussed with the EVC).
- ensure that visits have an appropriate mix of skills and experience among the accompanying staff members. The Head's approval is required for the named members of staff proposed to accompany residential visits.
- assess the impact the visit will have on staff absence and hence the levels of cover. Blue Cover forms must be submitted as far in advance as possible for all staff members who will be involved with the visit (unless the visit takes place outside the school day or on a unique timetable day when the staffing is determined by SLT).
- seek express approval from the Head for any proposed adults or children accompanying the visit who are not on the staff of the school or a pupil at the school. If approved, all adults must be successfully vetted (including a DBS check at their cost) as part of the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures prior to the visit taking place and will need to be assigned a clear role on the visit. (NB usually the only adults and children on school visits will be school staff and pupils and the Head will only deviate from this in circumstances where there is a strong rationale with which he agrees). The Head's decision in such matters is final.

The EVC can be approached at any time for an informal discussion about plans for a visit and to help assess the issues and factors outlined above. It is strongly recommended that such a discussion takes place prior to detailed investigation if it is likely that the cost per pupil of a visit will exceed £500.

Legal Responsibilities

5. The standard of care required of members of staff is that which can reasonably be expected from a prudent parent with care and concern for the welfare and safety of their own child, bearing in mind responsibility for a group of pupils. Teachers organising and taking part in school visits off-site accept responsibility for the care and welfare of pupils and they act in loco parentis.

The legal liability of an individual member of staff or the Head for an injury which is sustained by a pupil on a school visit depends on whether or not the injury to the pupil is a direct and foreseeable result of some proven negligence or failure to fulfil the duty of care on the part of the staff member or Head. Most claims for negligence are brought against the employer (who has public liability insurance) and not individual members of staff. Teachers will only become personally liable if they ignore clear, direct, instructions about serious risks, fail to follow procedure without proper reason and, or depart from common sense. Teachers who try to act responsibly will be on the right side of the law.

6. This duty includes the process of thinking about the risks of the intended activities and the steps that need to be taken to counter them. A common

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sense and proportionate approach is expected. A template visit risk assessment is available (T Drive) and this should be used as the starting point for risk assessment on all visits. Group Leaders must review the document and consider whether or not amendments or additions to the assessment need to be made when considering the nature of the visit and those pupils that are to participate. Any amendments or additions must be recorded.

Procedures

The detailed procedures are set out at the end of this policy document. The basic procedures are:

- a) Obtain internal approval of EVC and Head. If appropriate to the visit Governor approval must also be obtained (Form 1)
- b) If there is a cost to the visit, prepare the budget in conjunction with the Finance Office (Form 2)
- c) Prepare letter to parents and obtain EVC's approval (Form 3)
- d) Prepare risk assessment (Form 4)
- e) Prepare Final Visit Pack (Form 5)
- f) Make sure all pupil medications are taken on visit
- g) Take Emergency Guidance Sheet (Form 6) and some Accident Report Forms.
- h) Provide feedback/evaluation after the visit.

What is an Adventurous Visit / Activity?

A list of adventurous activities can be found [here](#)

School Representative Fixtures

7. Off-site school representative fixtures and events (including sport, chess and debating) and off site lessons (for example cross country running and sports sessions at a local sports centre) are covered by a blanket parental permission form completed as part of the new Year 7 induction materials. The Pastoral Secretary will keep a record of any pupils for whom permission has not been given.
8. The procedures do not need to be followed in relation to these events unless they involve an overnight stay, adventurous activity or visit abroad. If in doubt about whether an event needs to be conducted in accordance with the- procedures, please consult the EVC.
9. Even if a fixture or event does not need to be conducted in accordance with the procedures, the process of thinking about the risks of the activity and the steps that need to be taken to counter them must always be followed, even if a separate written risk assessment is not required for every activity. In addition, it is good practice to inform parents that the event(s) are taking place regardless of whether they are within the regular school day. It is also good practice as a member of staff in charge to ensure ready access to emergency contact and medical information for the pupils involved.

Combined Cadet Force Off-Site Visits

10. The school's CCF arranges and runs various visits throughout the year. There are regular camps and there also various weekend or day visits

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organised by both the Army and RAF sections. It is recognised that the MoD operate stringent procedures and controls in relation to all CCF visits and activities, especially in relation to the assessment and control of risks. Therefore the- procedures apply as follows in relation to CCF visits:

- a) the Group Leader must be a commissioned officer of the CCF or a Cadet Force Adult Volunteer, with a record on WESTMINSTER.
- b) Dates of camps and visits must be set in line with the principles in point 4 above and with internal school approval.
- c) a list of names of pupils and emergency contact details for their parents/carers must be provided to the EVC along with information as to the emergency home contact(s) prior to the date of the visit, in case of emergency.

Planning

11. To assist in the planning of school visits a range of documents containing advice and guidance is included in the School Visits folder on the staff shared T Drive ([T:\1.5 SHB School Visits](#)). The EVC is available to offer advice and can access further expert advice from the Outdoor Education Adviser at London Borough of Sutton if appropriate.
12. In particular, Group Leaders are highly recommended to consider the policy they wish to adopt with regard to mobile phones and other electronic devices during their visit. There is a guidance document on the use of mobile phones in the School Visits folder that can be used to assist. The policy to be adopted should be communicated clearly to pupils and parents in advance of the visit and reminders during the visit may also be necessary.
13. A clear management structure must be in place before the visit takes place. The Group Leader must ensure that all participating adults have clearly assigned tasks and there must be a nominated deputy who understands the nature of the deputy role is to take on leadership of the visit if the Group Leader is unavailable for any reason.
14. If the school minibus(es) is to be used for the visit, the Group Leader must ensure a booking has been made well in advance, that the proposed drivers are on the Approved Driver List and that the content of the Minibus Policy and Procedures are complied with.

Insurance

15. Wilson's School insurance policy includes Off Site Activities insurance for school visits. The policy provides cover for children, staff and authorised adults in the event of injury or loss whilst on an authorised visit of the school involving travel outside the designated school boundaries. The cover is for accidental bodily injury and includes personal accident, medical and repatriation expenses, personal property cover, cover for cost of delays, some cover for cancellation and personal liability.
16. Group Leaders using a travel company to organise a visit should not include the travel company's insurance as part of the package.. If necessary,

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please seek further guidance from the EVC.

17. Group Leaders must report all accidents involving pupils or staff that occur during a school visit, in the usual way. The Group Leader must take some Accident Report Forms on the visit.

Discipline and Sanctions

18. The school's Code of Conduct applies throughout school visits and any misbehaviour during a visit will be dealt with in accordance with all school rules and policies. Any act of indiscipline which would usually involve referral to the Head of Year or a member of the Senior Leadership Team must be reported to the School Emergency Contact at the time, so that the parents can be informed. All incidences of indiscipline should be reported on return from the school visit to the relevant Head of Year, as this may impact on future visit decisions.
19. The Head, in consultation with the Group Leader, may exclude pupils from a visit where the parents are not prepared to accept the conditions laid down for the visit or where prior knowledge of the behaviour or health of a particular pupil leads to the conclusion that the pupil might be a danger to himself, to other pupils or to the adults in the group.

Consumption of alcohol on school visits

20. Pupils may not, under any circumstances, consume alcohol at any time on a school visit, regardless of whether they are 18 or over.
21. For visits which take place during normal school hours (approximately 8am-5pm) members of staff must not consume alcohol. This reflects normal expectations of teachers in schools while directly responsible for the care and control of children.
22. Subject at all times to paragraph 23 below, when a school visit extends significantly beyond the school day or is a Residential Visit, at the discretion of, and only with the express permission of, the Group Leader, members of staff may consume a moderate amount of alcohol during the evening. Staff should use their professional discretion with regard to the consumption of alcohol always mindful that they should present a suitable role model for the pupils in their care.
23. On any visit there must be at least one member of staff at all times, nominated by the Group Leader, who must remain completely free from the influence of alcohol.

Accounting

24. The Group Leader is responsible for all record-keeping for the school visit. The Finance Office will be responsible for all banking and issuing of cheques and will keep their own records which will be separate from those of the Group Leader. Invoices must be passed to the Finance Office.

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25. The Group Leader must notify the Finance Office at least two weeks in advance of the visit of the amount and currency of any float required.
26. All monies received and paid out in connection with a visit should be handled through Wilson's School. Under no circumstances should a Group Leader use his or her personal bank account for school visit transactions without prior discussion and agreement of the Finance Office. All visit money is to be deposited in the Finance Office at least one week before any payments to travel companies need to be made. Cheques/cash may be issued once the money paid in has cleared the bank.
27. Receipts must be obtained for all expenditure in relation to and during a school visit. It may not be possible to obtain receipts for certain types of expenditure, e.g. money paid out as a tip for a coach driver. In cases where no receipt is obtained, the records should make clear what the expenditure is for. Where a float has been given in advance of a visit, the Group Leader must submit all receipts and the balance of the money to the Finance Office within a school week of their return.
28. At the end of the visit, records showing all income and expenditure (and any surplus/deficit) for the visit will be prepared by the Finance Office. In the event that the visit is in surplus, refunds will be made to parents where the amount is in excess of £20 per pupil.
29. Financial records relating to school visits must be kept for seven years for audit purposes. Such records should be handed over to the Finance Office for safekeeping once all the accounting for the visit is complete.
30. For all trips involving foreign currency, where possible, a "cash passport" should be used, which needs to be purchased and administered by the Group Leader in conjunction with the Finance Office.

Retention of Records for School Visits

31. Subject to the provisions below, records created by the school to obtain approval to run a school visit must be retained for 10 years after the date of completion of the visit. Duplicates need not be kept.
32. Parental permission slips for school visits where there has been no major incident need to be retained until the conclusion of the visit and can then be securely destroyed.
33. Parental permission slips for all pupils involved in a school visit where there has been a major incident need to be retained for a period of 25 years after the date of birth of the pupil(s) involved in the major incident.

PROCEDURES

STEP BY STEP PROCEDURE:

The EVC is Caitlin Lowe, Director of School Administration.

- 1 The Evolve system is used by the school to ensure that visit planning meets best practice, and record keeping of visits is thorough. This means that all residential, adventurous and visits abroad are scrutinised by the Outdoor Education Adviser at the London Borough of Sutton. Authorisation for all school visits is sought by completing **Form 1: Initial Application for a School Visit** and submitting it to the EVC. The EVC may discuss your proposals with you in more detail and when s/he is happy will present the proposed visit to the Head for approval in principle, and where required to the Governors.
- 2 Where the visit involves a charge to pupils the **Form 2: Budget** for the visit must be completed by the Group Leader and be agreed by a member of the Finance Office. This is to ensure that the amount of contribution requested from pupils is sufficient to cover the total costs of the visit. The Finance Office is happy to assist with and advise on preparation of the budget.
Authorisation is required by the Governors' Education and Policy Committee for **Residential Visits, Visits Abroad** and [Adventurous Visits](#).
Authorisation is required from the Head for all other visits.
- 3 If authorised, a copy of Form 1 signed by the EVC and the Head will be provided to you to show that your proposal is approved in principle. In the case of Residential Visits, Visits Abroad and Adventurous Visits, the Form 1 will show the date on which your proposal will be presented to the Education and Policy Committee for authorisation. The EVC will contact you after this date to confirm whether or not your proposal gained authorisation.

Once approval in principle (from the Head / Governors as appropriate) has been confirmed you can proceed with the steps under the procedure for your visit. If any of the following change you **must** let the EVC know as soon as possible so that s/he can consider whether the proposed visit needs to go back to the Head/Governors for reconsideration:

- a) cost per pupil
 - b) dates
 - c) participating members of staff/adults
 - d) supervision ratios
 - e) significant changes to the itinerary/plans
 - f) the content of the risk assessment
- 4 **DO NOT** enter into any financial commitments or communicate with parents in relation to the visit until you have authorisation from the Head, and (if required) the Governors, and the Budget has been approved by Finance. In such cases, members of staff may be held personally liable for the costs incurred.

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- 5 **Letter to parents.** The letter must include details of the nature of the proposed visit and if appropriate the charge per pupil (see **Form 3 for a template** from which to build the letter). The letter must give sufficient detail about the itinerary for the visit to enable parents to give informed consent. This is particularly important if any form of adventurous activity is planned. The letter must be approved by the EVC before it is sent out to parents. If there is a cost to the visit, liaison with the Finance Office is required before the letter is sent in order to ensure the visit is set up for payment via the ParentPay system and the timing of due dates for payments are planned to ensure travel company due dates can be met. A copy of the final letter to parents must be provided to the EVC.

The EVC has access to a list of pupils whose attendance on a school visit might require further consideration and Group Leaders are asked to check their list of participating or proposed participating pupils with the EVC prior to commitments being made.

- 6 **Risk Assessment** (see **Form 4 for a template to be used as a starting point**) must be carried out by the Group Leader for all visits and a copy of the written document must be provided to the EVC for consideration. The visit cannot take place if this is not done. **Pupil Medications and First Aid** – In plenty of time prior to the departure date contact the school's Primary First Aider to arrange for medications and associated paperwork held by the school for any pupils participating in the visit to be packed ready to be taken. The Group Leader should ensure that they understand the medical needs of all pupils participating in the visit and (if appropriate) have, or another adult participating in the visit has, appropriate training to be able to manage those medications. The Group Leader must consider the provision of and availability of First Aid cover as part of the risk assessment for the visit.
- 7 **Form 5: Final Visit Pack** - At least one working week before the date of departure, the Group Leader must prepare a final visit pack before the visit may take place. The pack must include:
- names of pupils and members of staff attending the visit
 - emergency contact details for all pupils and members of staff
 - copy of final risk assessment
 - name and contact detail of the emergency home contact(s) who must be members of SLT, ALT or a Director of Key Stage / Co-Curricular

The purpose of the pack is to ensure that the Group Leader and the emergency home contacts have access to all information and paperwork to deal with incidents (whether routine or emergencies). Once prepared, copies must be made for the Group Leader, each emergency home contact and a spare for the Visits Box File kept in the Main School Office. For a day visit taking place between 8am and 4pm on a normal school day, then a copy for the Group Leader and one for the Visits Box File is sufficient as all emergency home contacts will have access to this throughout the duration of the visit.

- 8 The Group Leader must ensure they take a copy of the **Accident/Emergency Guidance sheet (Form 6)** with them so that they can refer to it in an emergency situation.

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- 9 **Post Visit Evaluation** – the Group Leader must provide feedback about how the visit went, whether he/she would do anything differently and the effectiveness of the Risk Assessment, to help inform future visit plans.

All forms and templates can be found in the School Visits Folder of the T Drive T:\1.5 SHB School Visits

FORM 1 - INITIAL APPLICATION FOR A SCHOOL VISIT

FORM 2 - SCHOOL VISIT BUDGET

FORM 3 - CONTENT OF LETTERS TO PARENTS/CARERS

FORM 4 - SCHOOL VISIT RISK ASSESSMENT FORM

FORM 5 - FINAL SCHOOL VISIT PACK

FORM 6 - ACCIDENT / EMERGENCY PROCEDURES