ARTS EDUCATIONAL SCHOOLS
Educational Visits Policy

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POLICY ON EDUCATIONAL VISITS – Day School and Sixth Form

STATEMENT OF INTENT

As a school, we encourage our staff to organise a large number of appropriate trips and visits in order to enrich the pupils' experience of the school curriculum. We aim to take advantage of the wide range of world-class theatrical, dance, artistic, musical and cultural events that are available in London as well as providing international trips for pupils. We also want to be able to take advantage of local centres of excellence, such as Kew Gardens, and the diversity of learning opportunities that they offer.

However, with any school visit, there are associated risks and an inherent need to plan and assess those risks to the highest standard. This enables the leaders of trips to identify, predict, communicate and significantly reduce the possibilities of accidents or other unfortunate occurrences that could befall the pupils or members of staff participating in a visit.

The aim of this policy is to establish a comprehensive set of recommendations and guidelines for staff, parents and pupils to follow in order to minimise the opportunities for any accidents to occur and to maximise the enjoyment of all those attending.

1. THE FRAMEWORK INFORMING THIS POLICY

This policy is written in accordance with the principles set out in *Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits* (HASPEV DfEE 1998) https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-and-safety-on-educational-visits/health-and-safety-on-educational-visits

The duty of care

Teachers in charge of pupils during a visit have a duty of care to make sure that the pupils are safe and healthy. They also have a common law duty to act as a reasonably prudent parent would. These duties apply to all school visits and they extend to all adults in charge of pupils in such circumstances.

1.1 The Coordinator of Educational Visits (CEV)

The Deputy Headteacher (Operations) acts as the Coordinator of Educational Visits (CEV) on behalf of the Headteacher. Their role is to:

- Consider and approve proposals for trips;
- Ensure that appropriate documentation exists, including risk assessments;
- Ensure the plans and documentation submitted by staff meet the school's policy;
- Support trip leaders by giving advice, etc.;
- Organise emergency planning, including emergency contacts for each visit;
- Coordinate the evaluation and monitoring of trips;
- Review policies and systems annually, especially in light of any incidents; and
- Work with the group leader to obtain the consent or refusal of parents and to provide full details of the visit beforehand so that parents can consent or refuse consent on a fully informed basis.

The CEV and Headteacher will meet weekly to review trips.

1.2 The competence of trip leaders

The school is responsible for assessing the competence of staff to lead school trips and provide information, support and training. The school must be satisfied that staff roles and responsibilities correspond with their respective experience and competence to undertake them. All adult supervisors should fully understand their roles and responsibilities at all times.

2. THE PROCESS OF PLANNING AN EDUCATIONAL VISIT

2.1 Authorisation/essential planning information

- The visit should be educationally justifiable, with a clearly defined educational purpose related to the objectives of a department or the overall ethos of the school. The overall aims for the visit should be clearly stated.
- Any school trip must be individually sanctioned by the CEV, to whom a request should be forwarded using the correct form (see appendix A). No visits should be booked until permission has been granted. Wherever possible, such requests must be made before the deadline for submissions for the following term's calendar.
- Overseas trips must be sanctioned by the CEV and by the Headteacher. Particular attention should be paid to the experience and competence of the teacher leading the trip. Where possible, the trip leader should use the external expertise of a third party to make the booking with (for example, a school travel specialist).
- No group letter should be sent to parents without the approval of the CEV.
- All trips should be as economically competitive as possible. For a residential visit, it would be expected that at least two travel organisations would have been contacted for a range of quotes. Contractors should be chosen with care. They are responsible for assessing the risks of those parts of the visit appearing in the contract. Assurances should be obtained from the providers that risks have been assessed and that the provider's staff are competent to instruct and lead pupils of the group's age on the activity. It is good practice to seek details of their safety management systems. Contractors should also provide details of any independent, inspection-based external verification. Staff should forward to the Director of Operations in order to ascertain whether or not their insurance covers the school's pupils and staff before a booking is made.
- Any money for school trips should be paid into the ArtsEd approved account which is confirmed by the Financial Director. Organisers should make sure that all arrangements for finance are clear. Pupil payments for trips should not be in cash.
- Bookings with travel firms should only be made with those firms that are fully bonded and conform with the *Package Holidays Regulations* (1992) https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukdsi/2018/9780111168479/contents
- Insurance cover is provided by the school's insurers. Any queries should be directed to the Finance Director or the Facilities Manager. A copy of the document covering the basics of the current insurance is available on the school network.

2.2 Exclusion from a school trip or visit

The school reserves the right not to allow certain pupils to join a visit on the grounds of their history of inappropriate behaviour or on the grounds of potential danger to themselves or others. If a pupil is excluded from school they cannot be allowed to participate in a school visit. They or their parents are liable for any financial loss resulting; for example, in the case of non-returnable deposits or cancellation fees.

2.3 The importance of making a preliminary visit

Whenever possible, there should be a preliminary visit by the leader or, at the very least, very careful research into the venue and its facilities. Other schools may be consulted. Site-specific risk

assessments (see page 5 below) must be carried out for certain visits and time must be allocated to this.

2.4 Communicating to parents and pupils about the visit

- Once the visit/trip has been approved and planned, parents need preliminary information before deciding whether their children should take part. This should include the purpose of the visit, dates and times, which pupils it is aimed at, destination, method of travel, accommodation, the provisional programme, estimated cost/payment arrangements, supervision of the party, details of insurance cover, mention of any special hazards (e.g. swimming), the method of organisation (e.g. by teacher or travel agent), and documentation details (passports and visas). It should be made clear whether deposits are returnable. Parents should be asked for a substantial deposit well in advance.

- Parents' written permission should be obtained with medical consent, i.e. authority to take immediate action in medical emergencies, including anaesthetics and blood transfusions. Parents should be asked to disclose any relevant medical information. Organisers should know who the asthma sufferers are, as well as diabetics etc., and may be asked to carry medication. It is vital that we know about chronic medical conditions and severe allergies (including EpiPens and how and when they are to be used). Similarly, parents should be asked if there are any special dietary or religious requirements. All of this information is contained in the *Consent Form* that accompanies the initial letter discussing the educational visit. This form must be completed in full and returned, signed by a parent, usually to the organiser of the visit.

- The *Consent Form* must be received at least seven days in advance for a residential trip. Failure by the parent to fully complete the *Consent Form* will result in the pupil not being allowed to participate in the visit.

- If a parent does not return the *Consent Form* within the seven-day deadline, they will still be liable for any expenses due for the trip; for example, workshop fees, coach travel, theatre tickets, etc.

- In the event of illness on the day of an educational visit, parents should inform the School in the usual way. The organiser of the visit should then be informed that the pupil will not be attending. In such circumstances, parents are still liable for any expenses due for the trip, as incurred by the school – such as coach travel, entrance and admission fees, etc. These will usually be disbursed in the usual way.

2.5 Carrying out a risk assessment

The assessment and management of risk are legal requirements of any school trip and must be carried out carefully and thoroughly. For educational visits, they involve the careful examination of what could cause harm during the visit and whether enough precautions have been taken or whether more should be done to minimise the chances of injury to a pupil or member of staff.

A formal assessment of the risks that might be encountered on a visit should have the aim of eliminating the risks or significantly reducing them. Pupils must not be placed in situations that 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.

The making of a risk assessment involves identifying the hazards (things with potential to cause harm), assessing the risk – which is the likelihood that harm could be caused by a particular hazard – and then taking steps to control the risk related to each hazard. Activities should not proceed if risks are assessed as being too high.

Guidance emphasises that risk assessment is a process – as opposed to merely being a document – and part of the planning. It suggests that the leader first of all produces a plan and then considers what could go wrong before considering ways of avoiding the possibility of things going wrong. The process is then repeated until a final proposal is produced.

Risk assessments for visits should be considered at different levels:

- A *generic activity risk assessment* is likely to apply to a particular activity, wherever and whenever it takes place. This includes the risk of a ballet class or a visit to Rocks Lane (for sport). These risk assessments are usually written up by specific members of staff with expertise in the relevant area (i.e. the Head of Dance) or external providers (such as the owners of Rocks Lane).

- *Visit/site-specific risk assessments* differ from place to place and group to group. Guidance recommends that the group leader visit the site beforehand in order to gain firsthand knowledge of the area/route. This knowledge then informs the risk assessment. An exploratory visit should give the leader greater confidence when taking participants to the site. It should, for example, enable the group leader to concentrate more on leading the group than finding the way. Leaders are expected to have local intelligence – for example, such things as tube routes, safe places to cross roads, and negotiating the London streets and pavements to get to a theatrical performance.

A risk assessment is not a document that is written in school and is then considered as being done. Rather, it is a document that accompanies a set of professional staff and a visit organiser, who are continually appraising and reappraising it in their heads and judging whether or not the levels of risk are in fact more or less considerable. Their strategies for managing their group may change in light of these reassessments. The visit leader should consult with his/her other staff and discuss whether or not it is still appropriate for an activity to take place as planned. Staff must be able to recognise changed or changing conditions, be aware of the associated implications of these, and be able to adapt the activity so as to control the associated risks. On some trips, the need for a ‘plan B’ to provide alternative activities of educational value – if the main objective cannot be delivered – is a priority in planning for a trip.

After an educational visit has ended, the visit leader is expected to provide an evaluation of the visit. They will need to comment on aspects of their initial risk assessment. If some aspects of the risk assessment turn out in practice to have been faulty (e.g. because it was impossible to implement certain steps, or because other measures would have been preferable), it is essential that the risk assessment be modified for future use. The fact that the original risk assessment was not perfect does not necessarily mean that it was negligent; it just proves how difficult it is to foresee every eventuality.

The risk assessment must be presented to the Deputy Headteacher at least 24 hours before a day/part-day visit takes place and at least 10 days before a residential trip happens. This will enable those staff concerned to ascertain whether or not the appropriate assessment has taken place for the visit to continue.

For international trips, the risk assessment must be approved by the trustees before the trip can take place.

2.6 Residential educational visits

A meeting should be organised for parents and pupils attending a residential visit. The purpose should be for all concerned to meet the group leader and the other staff accompanying the visit. The leader should then go through a detailed itinerary and highlight the departure arrangements, the Health and Safety procedures, emergency contact information, pocket money, food and drink that may be needed, the expectations regarding the behaviour of pupils, which of the school rules still apply, and any requirements for specialist kit/equipment, as well as the arrangements for meeting after the visit is over. A detailed letter should also be given out at the briefing to cover this information and for the benefit of those parents who were unable to attend the meeting.

Consideration should be given as to whether or not to use a behaviour agreement (either for the group or a particular individual). This should not normally be necessary; if in doubt, the leader should consult the CEV.

2.7 Additional information for day trips and residential visits

- ETAs for return should be as accurate as possible. Considerable anxieties can be caused if a trip is seriously behind schedule and parents are unaware of any delay. In the event of any delay, every effort should be made to notify parents, either directly or by contacting the school. (Mobile phones now assist greatly in this respect.)
- If a pupil asks to travel home under their own arrangements, permission should be sought from the Trip Leader. An email from a parent is usually appropriate to enable this to happen. Considerations should be made according to the age of the pupil and the time that the educational visit ends, as well as whether or not the pupil concerned would be travelling alone.
- All pupils are required to return to school to be collected by parents, unless the school has written permission from parents. This is to ensure there is no delay in the return time to school.
- On a return outside school hours, two adults must wait until every pupil has been collected.

2.8 What are the appropriate staff–pupil ratios for school visits?

A school party should normally be composed of pupils and staff; other adults (e.g. spouses/partners of staff) may also be included to establish the appropriate adult/pupil ratio, but may not be left alone with children for substantial periods. Adults for whom an *Enhanced Disclosure* by the Criminal Records Bureau (DBS) has not been made (with the appropriate outcome) should not have unsupervised access to children.

One person should be assigned to deal with matters of first aid. On a residential trip, one teacher should be responsible for money.

It is not possible to be precise about the appropriate ratio of adults to pupils. In assessing staffing ratios, the following factors are significant:

- The sex, age and ability of the pupils;
- Whether or not there are pupils with special educational or medical needs;
- The experience of staff in off-site supervision;
- The duration and nature of the journey;
- The type of any accommodation;
- The competence of staff, both generally and in relation to specific activities;
- The requirements of the organisation/location to be visited;
- The maturity and levels of discipline of the relevant pupils; and

- The general capabilities of the pupils.

The following ratios, however, are a sensible guide:

- One adult to 15 pupils for day visits, with a minimum of two adults, ideally of both sexes, if a mixed party;
- One adult for every 10 pupils for a residential trip, with a minimum of two adults (ideally of both sexes).

Recommended or required ratios should not be seen as automatically safe. They are minimum levels of supervision. The correct level of supervision is not just a matter of applying a simple calculation, but must be based on risk assessments.

3. ISSUES THAT MIGHT BE ENCOUNTERED DURING THE EDUCATIONAL VISIT ITSELF

3.1 The behaviour of pupils

Before the trip, pupils should know the code of behaviour expected for the trip.
Parents should have already been informed of expectations (see above). Organisers should lay down explicit ground rules so that pupils know how they are expected to behave well. On any school expedition, they are subject to school discipline and the laws of the land. They should be reminded that they are representing the school. A clear code of rules should, as far as is practicable, be agreed with participants.

- Normal school rules apply to trips (with the exception of dress on day visits outside school time, e.g. to the theatre or on holiday visits). Smoking is forbidden, as is the buying or drinking of alcohol for all pupils.
- Pupils need to be made aware of any dangers, and the need to obey instructions, be punctual and avoid noisy or inconsiderate behaviour at all times, not least in public places. It is important to stress the importance of behaviour on coaches, trains, aircraft and ferries. Pupils also need to be reminded of the need to be responsible for their own property. Pupils should be told of emergency procedures (for example, what to do if they are separated from the party or in the case of an accident).
- If staying in a hotel, teachers must ensure pupils know what the rules are on bedtimes, as well as the rules governing separate sleeping areas and the general conduct of male and female pupils, courtesy to other guests and general conduct. Organisers should take definite steps to ensure that all pupils are back at the hotel (and in bed) by the time decreed.
- Bullying in any form is unacceptable and should be dealt with promptly (see the school's Anti-Bullying Policy).
- The school reserves the right to send home any pupil involved in a serious breach of school rules. (In the case of an overseas trip, this would present serious difficulties but may still be necessary. The tour leader would liaise with the CEV/Headteacher at school.) A pupil may need to be segregated from the rest of the party.
- The CEV should be informed of any major incident as soon as possible. A written report should be submitted later.

3.2 How staff should effectively supervise the free time that pupils have

Staff should ensure that individuals on excursions and trips are not allowed to go off on their own. The law requires staff to exercise adequate supervision. While detailed regulations would be inappropriate and much will depend on the age of the pupil and local circumstances, the following are offered as general rules:

- Where pupils are allowed ‘free time’ in groups, pupils should always be placed in small groups of no less than three and told to stay together. They should inform the party leader where they are going and their time of return. It is important to set clear, definite times for any rendezvous and insist that they are carefully adhered to. They should be told where and how a member of staff could be contacted at all times in the event of an emergency. Pupils should not be allowed ‘free time’ for prolonged periods without regular checks or ‘reporting in’. At bedtime, a careful check should be made to ensure that all pupils are present. Staff should always know, at any time, where any member of the party should be.
- Where necessary, it may be important to provide all members of the party with street maps and the telephone number of the hotel, in case they get lost. Staff should ensure that all pupils carry this information with them.
- Trip organisers should consider dividing pupils into sub-groups for oversight/checking by a particular member of staff. 10–12 pupils per staff member should be the norm.

3.3 Common sense guidelines on the effective management of the trip

- The party leader, teachers and other accompanying adults act *in loco parentis*, and so need to be aware of potential hazards and exercise proper control over and appropriate care for the group in their charge. For example, children near a potential hazard (e.g. a lake or a busy road) should be watched at all times.
- It is the responsibility of the party leader to brief all the staff attending the trip of their expectations of them. Jobs and duties should be allocated, and pupils apportioned amongst the staff. The identified risks should be discussed amongst staff, and then amongst pupils before the trip takes place.
- All staff should have a copy of the risk assessment and the list of emergency contact details.
- Staff should be available by mobile phone in case they need to be contacted in the event of an emergency by the CEV, Headteacher or a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).
- A head count of pupils should be taken at a number of points during the visit. This is especially the case when the group embarks or disembarks from a train or tube, or when the group leaves a venue.
- Organisers should ensure that pupils behave sensibly when crossing roads. Authorised crossings should always be used. On any walk, there must be adults at the front and rear of the group.
- It is good practice in larger groups to allocate supervisory responsibility to each adult for specific named children. Each adult should know which children they are responsible for and each child should know which adult is responsible for them.
- Pupils with known behavioural or attention difficulties should be monitored by a number of staff and organised into different study/work groups (not placed in a group together).
- The group leader should establish rendezvous points and tell pupils what to do if they become separated.
- On residential trips, male and female accommodation and washing/changing facilities must always be separate and out of bounds to the opposite sex. Under no circumstances may adult staff enter the accommodation of the opposite sex unaccompanied.

3.4 Health and safety matters on the trip

- A first-aid kit (collected from the School Office) should be taken on each school trip. Where there are hazards involved in the trip (swimming, rock climbing, etc.), one adult member of the party should be suitably qualified in first aid. In addition, it is the responsibility of the party leader to ascertain the availability of local first aid and rescue facilities. Staff should not give treatment beyond elementary first aid, except in an emergency.
- Staff should collect the school mobile phone from the School Office and make sure all pupils have saved the number.

- There must be sufficient adults to ensure the visit can continue, or appropriate measures must be put in place, if an adult has to accompany a child to hospital.
- When staying in a hotel or other residential accommodation, pupils and staff should, on arrival, be made familiar with fire and emergency procedures.

4. WHAT SHOULD BE DONE IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY ON AN EDUCATIONAL VISIT

The majority of educational visits at ArtsEd are daily ones, involving trips to museums, galleries or the theatre. Most of these visits run to plan, but there are times when minor difficulties can occur (for example, due to delays on the tube or delays due to bad weather). In such circumstances, pupils are usually able to contact their parents via mobile phone to inform them that there might be a delay to the pick-up time. If a pupil does not have a mobile phone, one of the teachers accompanying the visit could contact the parent on behalf of the pupil via iSAMS.

Some problems that directly involve pupils require prompt and efficient action. For example, a pupil may sustain an injury that is not life threatening. First aid may be needed or the pupil may need hospital attention. In this situation, communication is key. The teacher in charge will need to:

- Organise first-aid treatment;
- Call for help if necessary;
- See that the remainder of the group are safe and supervised;
- Phone the school contact to report the incident; and
- Follow procedures for informing parents.

The level of seriousness increases if:

- The injury to the pupil is very serious or life-threatening;
- There is a fatality;
- A pupil goes missing; or
- There is an accident involving all or part of the group.

If an accident occurs, the response should involve:

- An assessment of the situation;
- Action to safeguard the rest of the group;
- Attention for the casualty;
- Summoning help from the emergency services;
- Using the available resources to control the incident area and the pupils who were involved in or who witnessed the incident;
- Informing the school (in out-of-office hours, the trip leader will inform the member of the SLT who is on call at that time);
- Informing the police if it is a reportable accident that has resulted in serious injury;
- Informing parents if their child has to go to hospital for treatment (but in serious cases, see below);
- Informing the parents or carers of pupils who have been involved (but this is likely to be undertaken from school);
- Arranging support and counselling for pupils and staff where necessary; and
- Arranging for interviews and the accurate recording of statements from all those involved.

In any cases of accident or emergency, necessary arrangements must be made quickly and efficiently by the leader while other teachers supervise the children. As soon as possible, the leader

or deputy leader should telephone the school emergency contact. Staff should not talk to the press, if possible. If anything is said to the press, it should be confined to statements of fact rather than speculation. Certainly at first, children should not be allowed to phone home. Parents should be informed quickly about incident details rather than through the media or participants (though this will probably depend on police guidance).

In any emergency, the overriding consideration is that the children's health and safety should be paramount. All participants (staff and pupils) and parents must know the procedures. All must have the necessary contact numbers. There is an arrangement whereby the Headteacher or members of the SLT at the school can be contacted 24 hours a day during the visit. The CEV is the usual point of contact and there is also a back-up contact. Organisers of day and evening trips also have emergency contact provision.

Where a trip is due to last 24 hours or more, the CEV or another member of the SLT is 'on call' and also prepared to join the trip in the event of a major problem.

After an incident has taken place

If there has been a serious incident, there will be a formal investigation. The purpose of the investigation will be to:

- Determine the cause of the incident;
- Determine whether there are lessons to be learned;
- Provide information to bereaved parents;
- Exchange information with statutory investigatory bodies as required; and
- Manage media enquiries.

A serious incident would include fatality of a pupil or adult, but might also include serious injuries and incidents where no serious injury occurred but where the risk of injury was high.

5. FURTHER READING AND ADDITIONAL PAPERWORK

The most important document is the *Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits' Good Practice Guide* (DCSF, 1998). A copy is available on the shared area of the school network.

The supplementary documents are *Standards for LEAs in Overseeing Educational Visits* (2002), *Standards for Adventure* (2002), *A Handbook for Group Leaders* (2002), *Group Safety at Water Margins* (2003) and *Generic Risks and their Management*; these documents are available on the DCSF website (www.teachernet.gov.uk/visits).

Form EV1: Permission to Undertake a School Visit
Form RA1: Risk Assessment Form
Form EC1: Emergency Contact Form

Letter to external providers (for high-risk activities such as field trips)

APPENDIX 1

Trip Form

Trip/event request form

Name of Trip/Event:

Trip/event Details	
Date of the activity	
Time	
Who is leading the activity?	
Who is participating in the activity? (Clarify whole year or which group)	
Rationale for the activity (State the educational/developmental impact on the participants)	
What is the impact of this activity? (Which classes are disrupted)	

Trip/activity approved	Yes/No/Partially
Actions to be completed by lead teacher:	• Email to staff impacted by the trip • Email to parents and participants • Risk assessment • Book travel as required • Book packed lunch/inform canteen of impact
Trip/activity not approved	
Action/explanation	

Signed by teacher:
Date:
Signed by CEV:
Date:

School Trip Check List

✉ Before a trip is arranged the staff member should:

- ☐ Get confirmation with line manager
- ☐ Contact CEV for approval and provisional booking for input into calendar
- ☐ Contact organisation to ensure all tickets available for dates requested and reserved
- ☐ Confirm with CEV
- ☐ Book trip
- ☐ Book travel is relevant

✉ Once trip has been booked:

- ☐ Send invoice(s) to school office
- ☐ Write letter for parents/carers
- ☐ Send letter to CEV to check
- ☐ After confirmation, letter to be sent to parents/carers
- ☐ Inform students of email out to parents/carers and information of trip
- ☐ Confirm number of staff that need to attend and send staff information
- ☐ Identify a staff member who will be available as a backup in case a teacher in unable to attend

✉ Week before the trip:

- ☐ Risk Assessment must be written on Blue Lemon (adapt the template accordingly), and a copy emailed to CPW (at least a week before trip)
- ☐ School mobile phone needs to be booked through the school office and charged
- ☐ Number of mobile phone to be shared with parents and students
- ☐ Map – directions should be sent to students if travelling independently
- ☐ Set cover for your lessons and send to MM
- ☐ Meeting held with students/email prior, to outline conduct and expectations on the trip and any questions
- ☐ Emergency contact information and medical/send information can be found through the isams app/laptop. Meet with CBR for training on this
- ☐ If trip has potential for social media content contact marketing
- ☐ Inform PAD Leader of trip and put them as your emergency contact

✉ If trip happens during the school day:

- ☐ Canteen to be informed of impact to lunch – e.g., if packed lunch is needed
- ☐ Email all staff if impact on timetabled lessons

✉ Day of trip:

- ☐ Ensure all risks are accounted for
- ☐ Lead member of staff has all documentation required including mobile phone
- ☐ If required, collect marketing phone for taking pictures, social media

✉ After trip has taken place:

- ☐ Return mobile phone(s) to school office
- ☐ Send Office the list of attending students with the amount to be disbursed for the trip
- ☐ Newsletter: allocate student to write up article and send to CEV
- ☐ Organise a debrief meeting with CEV to conclude the trip