

	Radnor House Prep School
	<p>Educational Visits and Off Site Activities Policy</p> <p>Published: September 2023</p> <p>Reviewed: August 2024</p> <p>Next review: August 2025</p>

Applies to:

- The whole school, along with all activities provided by the school, including those outside of the normal school hours;
- All staff (teaching and support), the Governors and volunteers working in the school.

In our school, the term ‘staff’, in the context of safeguarding, is inclusive of all staff and is also inclusive of students on placement, contractors, agency staff, volunteers and the Proprietor.

Related Documents:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Health, Safety, Risk Assessment and Welfare Policy

Availability:

- This policy is made available to parents, staff and pupils in the following ways: via the school website, within the Parent Portal, and on request a copy may be obtained from the school office.

Monitoring and Review:

- This policy is subject to continuous monitoring, refinement and audit by the Head.
- The Head undertakes a formal annual review of this policy.

Radnor House Prep is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. It is our aim that all pupils fulfil their potential. In our school the term ‘staff’, in the context of safeguarding, is inclusive of all staff and is also inclusive of students on placement, contractors, agency staff, volunteers and proprietor.

Introduction

It is one of the stated aims of Radnor House Prep to give all pupils every opportunity to experience trips and visits outside of the school environment.

In striking the right balance between protecting pupils from risk and allowing them to learn from educational visits, we:

- provide learning opportunities for all our pupils;
- focus on real risks when planning educational visits and manage these risks during the off-site activities; and
- ensure those running the activity understand their roles, are supported and are competent to lead or take part.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that trips are planned in an organised and responsible fashion, and that the health, safety and welfare of pupils and staff are maintained. We ensure that Radnor House Prep fulfils its responsibilities for visits,

including pupils' behaviour.

Consent to take part in activities and medical consent is obtained from parents as appropriate for the type of visit or activity, and all parents are given enough information to be fully informed about any trips or visits.

An Educational Visits and Off-site Activities Handbook is maintained, which details all the key procedures relating to the running of the school's educational visits. This is made available to all staff.

The school ensures that it follows both DfE and Health and Safety at Work guidance and regulations, including those issued by the Richmond upon Thames Local Authority.

Information and documents relating to educational visits are appropriately stored and retained, in line with data protection and document retention requirements, to support incident management and potential investigations / court proceedings after serious incidents and accidents.

2. Equal Opportunities and Inclusion

We are an inclusive school. The challenge is to make activities available and accessible to all who wish to participate or are required to take part. This is to be achieved whilst maintaining the safety of all those concerned, the integrity of the activity and the ability to manage the visit or venture. Radnor House Prep recognises that there are significant factors to be managed that may override other considerations. Our risk assessments are within the context of the school's Single Equalities Policy.

3. Expectations

Our school ensures that the precautions proposed are proportionate to the risks involved, and that our paperwork is easy to use. We also take account of assessments and procedures of any other organisations involved, and ensure that communications with others are clear. Our arrangements also ensure that:

- risk assessment focuses attentions on real risks – not risks that are trivial and fanciful;
- proportionate systems are in place – so that trips presenting lower-risk activities are quick and easy to organise, and higher-risk activities (such as those involving climbing, caving or water-based activities) are properly planned and assessed;
- those planning the trips are properly supported – so that staff can readily check if they have taken sufficient precautions or whether they should do more;
- staff are given the training they need to keep themselves and pupils safe and manage the risks effectively.

Our staff running school trips should clearly communicate information about the planned activities to colleagues and pupils (and parents where appropriate). We explain what the precautions are and why they are necessary. Those running school trips act responsibly by:

- putting sensible precautions in place, and making sure these work in practice;
- knowing when and how to apply contingency plans where they are necessary;
- heeding advice and warnings from others, for example those with local knowledge or specialist expertise (especially in respect of higher-risk activities).

The Head will not allow pupils to participate in an educational visit (including residential visits) if their behaviour at school indicates that the pupil's presence on the activity will be prejudicial to good order and/or safety. Any serious offences whilst on an educational visit will result in the parents having to collect the pupil from the venue, at their own expense.

4. Training

Visits and activities are planned and led by competent members of school or establishment staff, with appropriate qualifications and experience as required by the activities.

Appropriate technical expertise is sought in relation to the planning and management of more hazardous or adventurous activities, including the verification of activity leader qualifications, safe activity management, risk assessments, etc. Please see the Educational Visits Handbook for a list of adventure activities, as agreed by Local Authority outdoor education advisors.

The school ensures that members of staff are given the health and safety training they need for their job. This does not necessarily mean that all employees have to attend a training course. It may simply mean providing them with basic instructions or information about health and safety in the school.

It is the school's policy to actively seek external tour operators, companies or activity centres that are nationally accredited by the OEAP Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) Quality Badge. This is an easily recognisable and trusted national award for all types of providers of LOtC throughout the UK. It covers both learning provision and safety. The Quality Badge has been designed

to reduce the 'red tape' involved in planning educational visits by providing a single accreditation demonstrating that a provider meets national standards. OEAP therefore requests its members to advise schools and other establishments that it is unnecessary to require providers to supply information which has already been assessed by the Quality Badge accreditation process. Where an external operator does not have the OEAP accreditation, rigorous checks will be made to ascertain and risk assess the accreditation held by the provider and ensure that all national standards are met.

5. Duties and Responsibilities

Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, the employer in a school must take reasonable steps to ensure that staff and pupils are not exposed to risks to their health and safety. This applies to activities on or off school premises. Our school sets out health and safety arrangements in the Health, Safety, Risk Assessment and Welfare Policy.

The Head must be made aware of all off-campus visits. It is the responsibility of the Head to ensure that:

- the off-campus activity or visit is appropriate and relevant;
- the establishment may be run efficiently in the absence of staff engaged in the activity or visit.

This is the key role for ensuring that the management of visits and ventures meets the regulations and guidance offered by the Local Authority, the DfE and others, as well as conforming to the Radnor House Prep Health, Safety, Risk Assessment and Welfare Policy.

Trip applications are submitted by completing a trip application form. After initial approval by the Deputy Head, staff can make initial bookings and start an Evolve form to include all further information required about their educational visit. Once all information has been completed, and a final check done, it is presented to the Senior Deputy Head for final approval.

The Head (and in her absence, the Deputy), acting on behalf of the Board of Governors, is able to finally approve the organisation of such activities. Approval systems are clearly evidenced, and involve the Governors as appropriate.

The management of overall visit and activity planning, risk assessment and the visit approval process is carried out by the Deputy Head, who has the appropriate training and experience to take on the role. They have attended a training course and update every three years.

The Trip Leader is the person with overall responsibility for the administration, programme, supervision and conduct of the venture, and is an important part of the health and safety and good practice support system. The Trip Leaders should demonstrate the ability to undertake a comprehensive review of the needs of the venture and in particular be able to risk assess the locations, groups travelling and leader competencies, in order to put good risk management procedures in place that they can monitor and use. For further information regarding the role of the Trip Leader, please see the Educational Visit and Offsite Activities Handbook.

Our teachers on school-led visits act as employees of Governance, whether the visit takes place within normal working hours or outside those hours, by agreement with the Head. Our teachers will do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group. They will:

- follow the instructions of the Trip Leader and help with control and discipline;
- consider stopping the visit or the activity, notifying the Trip Leader, if they think the risk to the health or safety of the pupils in their charge is unacceptable;
- be aware of potential conflicts of interest if their own children are members of the group and discuss beforehand with the Trip Leader.

Parents will be given sufficient information in writing so that they are able to make an informed decision on whether their pupil should go on the visit. For longer trips, particularly those overseas, it is essential to hold a Parents Information Evening a few weeks before departure. This allows information to be shared, questions to be asked and answered, and reassurance to be given where appropriate. The publication of an information booklet for parents and pupils is also strongly advised.

Parents will be given full details of what a visit or activity entails, and be asked to give consent for their child taking part in the trip and agree to any payments when applicable. Where costs are not paid, they will be added to the next school bill. Parents are given the opportunity to withdraw the pupil from any trip or activity, but they should be made aware of any financial costs that will be incurred (see section 9, Costs of Trips).

Parent volunteers and other responsible adults may be used as a supplement to the staff. However, if their child is taking part on the trip, they will not be taken into account in the calculation of the minimum number of staff required to supervise the group as set out above. They can never lead a trip. Parents or other responsible adults will only be allowed to accompany a residential educational visit if Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks have been made.

An essential aspect for the school policy is that all groups are made aware of, and as active in, the process of managing the visit

or venture as they can be. Procedures, group and supervision strategies must be explained and understood. Individual and group responsibilities need to be clear, as well as the rewards and sanctions for ensuring they are kept to.

Pupils should, as far as possible, be involved in the planning of the activity, undertake appropriate roles while it is in progress and be involved in identifying health and safety issues that may arise. They should know the expectations of the Trip Leader and have a full understanding of the parameters covering all aspects of the trip or activity. All pupils know the behavioural expectations upon them under the school's Behaviour Policy, which apply both when at school and away on visits and trips. This can be found on the school website.

6. Staffing Ratios

There are no exact ratios for school trips. The Trip Leader must ensure that the staffing for a trip is 'reasonable'. This depends on the age, gender mix, ability and behaviour of the pupils involved. It also depends on the type of activity undertaken, the nature of the journey and the type of accommodation if the trip is overnight. The competence of the adults supervising a trip must also be considered, together with the need for first aid cover. If applicable, the Trip Leader must check with the venue if they have a specific staff to pupil ratio policy.

For residential/overnight trips, wherever possible, there will be a minimum of two adults of opposite sexes if the group is a mixed party.

The Trip Leader must 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 clearly require a higher level of supervision

7. Risk Assessment

Radnor House Prep will always take a common sense and proportionate approach, remembering that in schools the purpose of risk assessment and management is to help pupils to undertake activities safely, not to prevent activities from taking place. We cannot remove risk altogether and we do not require needless or unhelpful paperwork.

Risk assessment and risk management are legal requirements. 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. The risk assessment form (STAGED) for non-routine educational visits should explicitly cover how special educational needs and medical needs are to be addressed if applicable. The Trip Leader in consultation with the Deputy Head assesses potential risks of a proposed visit and concludes the necessary safety measures that need to be put in place to minimise these risks. Copies of the risk assessment form will be available to all staff involved.

8. Timing of Trips

It is essential to the smooth running of the rest of the school that trips are properly planned and arranged to ensure minimal disruption to all, both those on the trip and those left behind. Pupils should miss lessons as rarely as possible. Obviously, there will be times when it is impossible to avoid taking pupils out during lesson time, but full consideration must be made of alternative times before making such a decision.

Staff organising a trip should consult as widely as possible with colleagues who might be affected and think carefully about the possible impact of a trip. For example, as far as possible, trips should not be organised on busy games afternoons, and residential trips should preferably take place during school holidays or weekends to avoid a loss of teaching time.

9. Cost of trips

Staff must think carefully about the cost of a school trip. Costs should be kept to a minimum and parents must be given the chance to decline a trip on financial grounds. Cover provision must be made, if necessary, for any pupil who is unable to go on the trip for financial or other reasons.

In deciding on the overall budgeted cost, the Trip Leader should build in a contingency fund to cover any potential increase due to higher transport costs, changes in exchange rates (if part of the cost is charged in local currency) or other possible surcharges for fuel, taxes, etc. The Trip Leader must take responsibility for all financial arrangements and details of payment must be discussed and agreed with the Finance Department before any letters are sent out.

Payment for trips – the Supplementary Charges Policy is on the school website, and gives full information for parents regarding deposits and payments for trips, as follows:

- for trips where a deposit and instalments are payable (e.g. ski trip, other residential trip) – deposits and subsequent payments are non-refundable and will be retained by the school in the event that a pupil does not attend the trip. If full payment has not been received before the trip takes place, the pupil will not be able to attend but the parent will still be liable for any costs incurred by the school.

- for all other trips – if full payment has not been received before the trip takes place, the pupil will not be able to attend but the parent will still be liable for any costs incurred by the school.

This information regarding deposits and payment for trips is featured clearly on the consent forms and/or the parent letter.

10. First Aid Provision

As part of the risk assessment for all trips, consideration is given to the level of staff training required for first aid. For all foreign trips, residential trips and adventurous activities trips, appropriate first aid provision, including suitably qualified first aiders, is essential.

11. Points of Contact

For all off-site activities, the first point of contact at the school during school hours is the school reception. If the trip involves an overnight stay or is during the holidays, there must be a minimum of one member of the Senior Leadership Team as a point of contact.

12. Trip Evaluation Form

Upon return to school, all trip leaders will complete a Trip Evaluation Form. This will ensure that improvements in accommodation, travel, activities for similar trips, the educational value of the trip, value for money and any perceived hazards are identified and rectified before a similar trip is proposed or approved.

13. General Information

The school's Safeguarding Policy and Procedures will apply during educational visits. The Trip Leader will carry out the duties of the Designated Safeguarding Lead or will name an appropriate adult supervisor to do so. Any incident amounting to an allegation or suspicion of abuse that occurs whilst on the educational visit will be dealt with appropriately at the time and will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible.

Critical Incident/Emergency Procedures: Appropriate emergency and serious incident procedures are in place to manage accidents, incidents and safeguarding issues, and can be easily accessed by all those who need it in an emergency situation. All staff and volunteers involved with visits receive appropriate training and briefings on dealing with emergencies. The detailed actions to be taken by the Trip Leader in the event of a serious accident/incident form Appendix A to this policy.

Complaints: Where complaints are received, these should follow the school's Complaints Procedure. Where complaints are made by the school concerning provision made on behalf of the school, these should be in writing from the Head to the supplier of the service. All complaints are best dealt with as and when they arise.

Mobile Phones/Pupils' Property: For each visit, the Trip Leader will formulate a clear policy on the use of mobile phones that will be circulated to parents and pupils in advance of the visit. Such a policy may vary depending on the type of visit, from a total ban on pupils' phones to a system of phones being left with adults during the day, to be used for a restricted time in the evening. Similar rules will apply to all items of personal property including, for example, cameras. Parents are requested not to send pupils on visits carrying expensive equipment that may attract thieves or be lost or broken. In any event, pupils will be responsible for all items of personal property taken on a visit.

Parents are responsible for providing their child with a health insurance card. If parents have a UK European Health Insurance Card (EHIC), it will be valid until the expiry date on the card. Once it expires, they will need to apply for a Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC) to replace it. The GHIC lets you get state healthcare in Europe at a reduced cost or sometimes for free. GHIC and EHIC do not replace travel insurance. The school cannot apply on the parents'/pupil's behalf. This can be applied for on-line, by phone or by post. See <https://www.gov.uk/global-health-insurance-card>.

.Appendix A – Legal Matters

The school complies with:

- The Regulatory Requirements, Part 3, Paragraph 11 of the Education (Independent School Standards (England) (Amendment) Regulations.
- Health and Safety Department of Education (DfE) advice on legal duties and powers for local authorities, Heads, staff and governing bodies (DfE June 2013)
- Health and Safety Executive (HSE) School trips and outdoor learning activities tackling the health and safety

myths (HSE July 2011)

- The school has regard to guidance and advice from the Outdoor Education Advisory Panel (OEAP 2013)