



## OFF-SITE VISITS POLICY WHOLE SCHOOL

### 1. Purpose

- 1.1 Kent College recognises the educational benefit derived from learning outside the classroom. This policy covers all off-site visits and activities undertaken across the whole school. This policy and the accompanying guidelines are designed to ensure that Kent College pupils continue to enjoy these opportunities and that staff feel comfortable in leading them and understand the extent of their responsibilities.
- 1.2 This policy has been rewritten following publication of DfE's *Health and safety: advice on legal duties and powers* (February 2014) which contains the following:

'The Government is determined to reduce the burdens on schools. We want to simplify health and safety requirements and explain them better. The Government is making it easier for schools to take pupils on trips, removing paperwork and taking steps to reduce teachers' fears of legal action. Teachers should be confident that they know best how to look after pupils and keep them safe.'

### 2. Aims

- To ensure the Health and Safety of pupils whilst participating in a school organized trip.
- To provide an enriched curriculum and learning experience for all pupils.
- To give pupils a chance to develop socially in a residential setting, either curriculum or leisure related.
- To ensure that parents have full knowledge of activities to be undertaken.
- To ensure that the adult:pupil ratios are correct and that all accompanying adults understand the extent of their responsibilities.
- To provide a wider range of experiences for our pupils than could be provided on the school site alone.
- To promote the independence of our pupils as learners, and enable them to grow and develop in new learning environments.

### 3. Training

- 3.1 It is the Head's responsibility to ensure that all staff are appropriately trained in conducting off-site visits in accordance with this policy.

## **4. Planning**

- 4.1 All off-site visits must be planned in advance and have permission from a member of the Senior Leadership Team. This permission must be obtained before parents are informed of the trip. Wherever possible, care should be taken to avoid school trips clashing with other planned activities. In the Senior School, staff are requested to complete a 'yellow form' for this purpose. It is accepted that, at times, parents may have to choose between competing visits (for example, during the school holidays).
- 4.2 All off-site visits must be appropriately risk assessed. Regular activities, such as sports fixtures with local schools, may be covered in whole-school or departmental 'generic' risk assessments provided that there is the opportunity for such risk assessments to be regularly reviewed and revised.
- 4.3 All off-site visits must have their overall costs assessed. These costs include, but are not limited to, transport (including the use of school minibuses), food, accommodation, additional insurance and entrance fees. Wherever possible, food should be provided by the school (e.g. packed lunches). A decision must be made as to whether to charge parents or absorb the costs into departmental budgets. The bursary is able to advise over costs and charges.

## **5. Parental Consent**

- 5.1 Parents must always be informed in advance of any off-site activity involving their children, including the location, timing, associated costs and any extra safety measures required.
- 5.2 Specific written consent is required in the following circumstances:
  - Any off-site activity involving Early Years.
  - Activities outside the 'normal school day'. This should be interpreted as any activity where pupils are unable to arrive at or leave school using the bus network (including the 'late bus') or, for pupils who are too young to catch the bus, where parents will need to make additional transport arrangements. This also includes any 'non-compulsory' weekend activities (therefore does NOT include: boarding activities, Saturday morning sports fixtures, Open Morning or Sports Day).
  - Any adventure activity (defined as caving, climbing, trekking, skiing or water sports).
  - Any residential activity.
  - Any overseas trip.
  - Any activity incurring a cost of £50 or more.
  - Any trip where pupils are unaccompanied by staff (Sixth Form only – see Staffing).
- 5.3 Written consent includes consent given from a parent's or guardian's registered email address or via a Firefly online permission form.
- 5.4 In all circumstances parents must be given the opportunity to withdraw their child from the trip and, where a trip occurs during the teaching day, alternate on-site arrangements of similar academic value must be available. The school reserves the right to charge parents for trips should they withdraw their child after a published deadline date.

5.5 Where attendance on a trip is not mandatory, the school reserves the right to refuse a place to any pupil where there are fees in arrears.

## 6. Staffing

6.1 The minimum staffing ratios are given in the table below. For the Prep School any trip will require a minimum of two adults. Throughout this policy, adults assuming responsibility for pupils includes any school employee aged 18 or over. Non-employees, such as parents or teachers' partners, may be used provided that they are appropriately vetted by HR and the Head has been informed.

6.2 Employees or volunteers under the age of 18 and Kent College pupils aged 18 or over cannot be included in the staffing ratios.

6.3 Sixth Form may attend day trips unaccompanied by staff provided that this has been agreed in advance with the Head of Sixth Form and parents have given written consent.

### 6.4 *Adult:Pupil Ratios*

Early Years	1:3
Years 1 – 3	1:6
Years 4 – 6	1:10
Years 7 – 11	1:18
Residential – UK	1:10
Day - abroad	1:10
Residential– abroad	1:8

6.5 These ratios may be tightened for adventure activities. A full risk assessment must be completed and an appropriate adult:pupil ratio determined.

6.6 At least one accompanying adult must be first aid trained (one day certificate). Where a pupil is known to carry an 'epi-pen', for example due to a nut allergy, at least one first aider must be trained in its safe application. For higher risk activities, such as adventure, residential, overseas or whole-school activities, the minimum number of first aiders and their level of qualification should be separately risk-assessed.

6.7 There must always be at least two adults on any residential or overseas trip.

## 7. Emergency Contact

7.1 For every off-site visit, someone must be designated as the Emergency Contact. The Emergency Contact will normally be:

- For activities which occur during the school day – the school receptionist
- For sporting activities – the Director of Sport
- For boarding activities – the relevant housemistress
- For all other activities – a member of the Executive Team.

- 7.2 The Emergency Contact must have access to the list of pupils and adults on the trip, the contact details of parents and guardians, the contact details of any adults on the trip, any relevant medical information, the risk assessment and the trip itinerary.
- 7.3 The Emergency Contact will liaise with the trip leader and relevant parents in the case of any unexpected incident or significant delay to the trip. Parents must know how to reach the Emergency Contact.

## **8. Evaluation**

- 8.1 Off-site activities should be routinely evaluated and any concerns reported to the Head so that this policy and its associated procedures may be revised where necessary.

## **RELEVANT DOCUMENTS**

Off-Site Activities Procedure  
Request for Activities and Visits Form ('yellow form')  
Letter to Parents  
Schools Visits Check List  
Off-Site Activity Risk Assessment  
Nut Policy  
Medical and First Aid Policy  
Check List – In the Event of Serious Incident While a Group is Off Site.

Health and safety: advice on legal duties and powers (For local authorities, school leaders, school staff and governing bodies): February 2014

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-and-safety-advice-for-schools>

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