



## OFF-SITE VISITS POLICY WHOLE SCHOOL

**This Policy applies to the Whole School, including Boarding**

### 1. Purpose

- 1.1 Kent College recognises the educational benefit derived from learning outside the classroom. This policy is applicable to all those involved in the organisation of educational visits for non EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage) pupils. There is a separate policy for educational visits for EYFS pupils. This policy and the accompanying guidelines and procedures 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 The policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including but not limited to:
  - DfE (2018) Health & Safety on Educational Visits
  - HSE (2011) School trips and outdoor learning activities

### 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.
- 3.2 All new staff will receive training on planning and running school visits as part of their induction.
- 3.3 All offsite visits will have a nominated Group Leader responsible for the organisation and running of the visit. The Group Leader will ensure that all staff allocated to the trip have received the appropriate training.

### 4. Planning

- 4.1 Decisions regarding off-site visits are made by the Planning Team. This team meets twice weekly to monitor the school calendar and authorise events. It is made up of: the Bursar, the Deputy Heads, the Estates Manager and the School Office Manager.
- 4.2 All off-site visits must be planned in advance by the Group Leader and have permission firstly from their direct line manager and then from the Planning Team. This permission must be obtained before parents are informed of the trip. The School Visits Checklist should be used to assist in the planning of the trip.
- 4.3 Staff are requested to complete an online request via Evolve (planning software). Timings are considered by reference to the school calendar, impact on staff/pupil absence and other factors including costs. If no problems are apparent the Planning Team will give Outline Approval, with the request being returned to the Group Leader to add further information, including Risk Assessments (see below). Communications will only be sent home and the event added provisionally to the School Calendar once Outline Approval has been given. Once all information has been added, the Planning Team will give Final Approval.
- 4.4 Wherever possible, care should be taken to avoid school trips clashing with other planned activities. It is accepted that, at times, parents may have to choose between competing visits (for example, during the school holidays).
- 4.3 Other considerations when planning off site visits include:
  - Checking tour company/airline is ATOL/ABTA bonded to ensure cover in the event of bankruptcy of the provider;
  - Undertaking a reconnaissance visit to the location if the school has not visited before, or obtain a reference from another school if a visit is not possible;
  - Establishing minimum and maximum numbers for the trip to be viable;
  - Establishing visa and medical requirements, particularly considering impact on overseas boarders;
  - Compliance with latest travel advice from Foreign and Commonwealth Office.
- 4.4 All off-site visits must be appropriately risk assessed, using the latest proformas available from the Estates Manager or on Evolve, and submitted directly to the Estates Manager with sufficient notice – no later than three weeks before the event. Risk assessments for residential visits should be completed at least 4 weeks

in advance. Risk assessments should then be uploaded to Evolve in the PDF format which has been returned to the organiser from the Estates Manager. 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.

- 4.5 The Group Leader should obtain copies of risk assessments from professionally operated licensed activity centres and tour operators. These should be submitted with the school risk assessment to form part of the overall assessment of the trip.
- 4.6 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 and a contingency for delays and emergencies. 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.
- 4.7 The Group Leader must liaise with the Bursar to determine the insurance position of the trip. In particular when planning trips relating to hazardous or adventurous activities a review must be undertaken to arrange for an extension of the policy if necessary. If an extension cannot be arranged then the activity must not go ahead. The Group Leader should ensure that a copy of the school travel insurance policy is taken on the trip.

## **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 visit that requires collection from a different venue
  - 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 an Evolve consent form. The completed consent form will include details of how to contact a parent in the event of an emergency. Consent must be received at least three days before the start of the trip.
- 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, alternative 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. Parents should be informed in initial communications that costs are non-refundable once places are confirmed with a travel agent. Acceptance of this should be added to the consent form.

- 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.
- 5.6 Parents are expected to support The School in ensuring that pupils follow instructions given by those in charge of the trip. Those in charge of the trip may send home early any pupil who declines to follow reasonable instructions. Any issues of poor behaviour will be documented and dealt with in accordance with the Rewards and Consequences (Behaviour) Policy.

## 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 statutory checks have been completed 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 minimum*

Early Years – day/residential	1:3
Years 1 – 3 – day/residential	1:6
Years 4 – 6 –day/residential	1:10
Years 7 – 11 -day	1:20
Senior School residential – UK	1:15
Senior School Day - abroad	1:12
Senior School Residential– abroad	1:10

- 6.5 These ratios may be tightened for adventure activities. A full risk assessment must be completed and an appropriate adult:pupil ratio determined. This should take into consideration:
  - The nature and location of activities to be undertaken;
  - The age and ability of the group;
  - Students with special educational and/or medical needs;
  - Whether it is a day visit or overnight stay;
  - Whether it is a mixed or single-gender group;
  - The experience of supervisory staff in providing off-site supervision;
  - The duration and nature of the journey;
  - The type of any accommodation;

- The competence of supervisory staff, both general and in relation to specific learning activities;
- The requirements of the organisation/ location to be visited;
- The competence and behaviour of the pupils;
- The likely weather conditions and time of year;
- The duration and location of planned activities; and
- First aid cover.

Further considerations also include whether the students require close (direct) supervision for the duration of the visit, in which case the staff to pupil ratio will be greater.

Alternatively, if students are not required to be directly in line of vision for the duration of the trip, then less supervision will be required. However, trip leaders will still need to remain in the area in which the activity is taking place at all times.

- 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. In the event of a pupil or trip leader needing to vacate the trip early, the appropriate ratios will still need to be maintained. For example, a trip leader may need to accompany a pupil to hospital or attend a personal emergency. This should be taken into consideration when planning any visit
- 6.8 The Group Leader has overall responsibility for the trip and for the staff accompanying the trip. All staff must follow the staff code of conduct and remain responsible for the pupils in their charge at all times.
- 6.9 The Group Leader should take one of the allocated trip mobile phones with them. The number for this phone should be shared with the pupils and parents.
- 6.9 The Group leader must contact the relevant Student Manager or Head of Sixth Form before the trip. This is to ascertain whether any pupil attending the trip has pastoral needs which need monitoring during the trip, and to ensure continuity of care.
- 6.10 Staff may choose to consume alcoholic beverages whilst on residential trips whilst in the UK or abroad, but must remain with the legal alcohol limit in England, Wales and Northern Ireland for driving, which is 80 milligrams of alcohol per 100 millilitres of blood or 35 micrograms of alcohol per 100 millilitres of breath.
- Please note, staff must not consume any alcohol at all if driving on a school trip.
- 6.11. The Group Leader should be mindful that staff absence can impact on learning and aim to keep the impact to a minimum, utilising non-teaching staff if viable. They should consult with the Deputy Head Academic regarding final decisions regarding staffing.

6.12 All staff attending the visit should individually complete a staff absence form and ensure all cover is in place for the duration of their time away from site.

## **7. Emergency Contact**

7.1 For every off-site visit, someone must be designated as the Emergency Contact. The Emergency Contact must be specifically named on the risk assessment and will normally be:

- For activities which occur during the school day – The Whole School Administrator
- For sporting activities – the Director of Sport
- For boarding activities – the relevant House Parent
- 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. The Group Leader should ensure that this information is provided to the Emergency Contact in advance of the trip by ensuring that the key information is available on Evolve for the Emergency Contact to access. This information can be accessed by using the Visit Manager function in Evolve.

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.

7.4 In the event of an illness or minor accident to a pupil whilst on the trip, the Group Leader or another member of staff will accompany the pupil to the local hospital or clinic. If the trip is outside the UK, the Group Leader will notify the school's insurers on their helpline and follow guidance from the insurers.

7.5 The Group Leader will telephone the pupil's parents if their child has suffered an accident, injury or illness that is serious enough to require medical treatment.

7.6 The Group Leader is responsible for ensuring that contemporaneous accident reports and near misses are completed and that these are shared with the school nurse and the emergency contact.

7.7 In the event of a serious incident resulting in the death or serious injury of one or more of the pupils or staff, the Group Leader's first priority is to summon emergency services. Thereafter, the Emergency Contact will be telephoned and the school's emergency plan procedures followed. The Head should always be contacted in these circumstances. Staff should not engage with the Media, and any communications should be handled by the Head in the first instance or alternatively the Director of External Relations.

## **8. Evaluation**

8.1 The Group Leader should provide a summary of the trip and submit to Exec, within two weeks of return. Off-site activities should be routinely evaluated and any concerns relating to pupils or staff, reported to the Head so that this policy and its associated procedures may be revised where necessary.

- 8.2 All accident or incident reports should be reviewed by the school nurse and the Health and Safety Officer as well as included in reports to the Health & Safety Committee.
- 8.3 The Head should provide Governors with an annual overview of off site visits undertaken by the School. The Deputy Head Academic and the Head of Prep have overall responsibility for the oversight of school trips and the Bursary Assistant maintains a register of residential trips.

## 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  
Staff code of conduct  
Behaviour 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>

Reviewed by Exec: October 2018  
Approved by Education Committee:  
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