



EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY

This Policy Applies to Holmwood House School and Early Years Settings

Reviewed July 2025
Next Review July 2026

Associated Policies –

First Aid
Health and Safety
Risk Assessment
Safeguarding,
Critical Incidents
Curriculum
Behaviour

The policy also draws on the ROSPA guidance, "Planning and Leading Visits and Adventurous Activities", which may be consulted for further information:

<http://www.rospa.com/rospaweb/docs/advice-services/school-college-safety/school-visits-guide.pdf>

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This policy has due regard to the DfE Guidance, *Health and Safety Advice on Legal Duties and Powers for Local Authorities, Head Teachers, Staff and Governing Bodies*. It also draws on the previous guidance *Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits* (HASPEV).

At Holmwood House School, we believe that learning outside the classroom is an essential component of our curriculum for all of its pupils including the very youngest. It gives our pupils unique opportunities to develop their resourcefulness and initiative and to spend time together in an informed environment. Each trip is different and they provide opportunities which cannot be provided on site. Some are directly related to the curriculum, some are designed to promote social awareness, or to enhance physical skills, self-reliance and team working. Others will extend their knowledge of the world. The common factor is that they all make an essential contribution to our pupils' development and education in the broadest sense of the word.

OUR TRIPS AND VISITS

We regularly take pupils on day trips to historic sites, museums, field centres, galleries, and natural features to support the curriculum in History, Art, Geography, English, Science and languages. We run trips to various locations every year. A list of anticipated school trips is available on the school website. We have sent biennially rugby, hockey and netball teams on tours, recently to Ireland, Italy, Holland, Germany and Malta, alternating with a cultural trip, e.g. Rome, Pompeii. These trips are generally open to pupils in Years 6, 7 and 8. All visits for EYFS children are to local destinations, with nursery off-site visits being solely to the main school site.

INFORMATION ON PLANNED TRIPS AND MAIN ACTIVITIES

The school calendar lists the trips and visits that are due to take place over the coming term, together with a list of planned home and away sports fixtures. You will always be notified in advance:

- If your child has been selected for a sports team, he/she will be given a list of fixtures. We very much welcome family and friends at all our matches, both home and away.
- If your child is going to be out of school during the school day in order to visit a local museum, theatre, nature reserve or historic site, we will always seek your permission.
- We send details of planned trips and activities well in advance to all parents of pupils of the relevant year group. In the case of some residential or overseas trips, parents may be invited into the school for a briefing.
- We aim to produce a two year residential trips scheme to help with forward planning both in school and at home.

1. Basic Principles

Responsibility

- The Headteacher bears ultimate responsibility in ensuring staff meet the arrangements and follow the guidelines in this policy; the Head will hold the role of nominated contact in the event of an emergency, the EVC will be the second nominated contact in the event of the Headteacher being unavailable.
- The Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) is responsible for the review of this policy and ensuring that staff are aware of its contents. The role of the EVC includes training and support of all staff who are involved in taking and leading visits.
- Teachers who plan a day or residential visit are designated as the group leader and, as such, have responsibility to make sure the visit is properly organised.
- Teachers will generally have had experience of accompanying school visits before taking on the role of Group Leader.

- A Deputy Leader is nominated for all trips.
- The group leader is responsible for completing a full risk assessment of the trip. This must be approved by the EVC in collaboration with the Headteacher before the trip can go ahead.
- Holmwood House's *Behaviour Policy* applies to all pupils on off-site visits. The group leader is responsible for good behaviour on all visits.
- The group leader (designated by the Headteacher) will be responsible for coordinating and delegating tasks to all staff participating in the visit and sharing with them the details of the risk assessment.
- Staff accompanying children on visits will have appropriately designated responsibilities and a clear itinerary of events.
- The group leader will complete a visit evaluation form after the visit, reporting back to the EVC any problems/issues and particular successes. This evaluation must include an assessment of the effectiveness of the Risk Assessment, in order to inform future visits.

Health and safety

- Safety is the prime consideration when planning or carrying out a school trip; all appropriate health & safety and child protection procedures must be followed.
- All risks will be assessed and reported prior to the event and any possible measures towards safety and welfare undertaken,
- Staffing will adhere to recommended supervisor: child ratios (see *Educational Visits Procedure Checklist* for details). The group leader in conjunction with the EVC will consider whether the nature of the activities requires the normal ratios to be exceeded.
- Generally, the staffing of every off-site visit will include an adult who has an appropriate first aid qualification. This is occasionally waived in cases where a staff member is transporting four children in their own vehicle between two sites. In the case of an off-site visit involving pupils in Year R-Year 8, at least one accompanying adult will hold a current full paediatric first aid qualification. In the nursery all staff hold a valid and current paediatric first aid certificate.
- Appropriate first aid provision will be available at all stages of the trip. A fully stocked first aid kit will always be taken on outings along with any special medication or equipment required.
- Teachers, assistants and volunteers accompanying school trips will be suitably record checked and appropriately trained in procedures.
- We generally do not invite parents or other non-Holmwood volunteers to accompany our educational visits, unless these are centre staff at the location being visited at which point they are never left unsupervised with our pupils.
- All transport arrangements and venues will be checked for suitability and safety beforehand.
- Risk assessments will be completed by the Trip Leader/senior member of staff at the nursery and approved by the EVC for all aspects of the trip prior to the trip leaving. At an age appropriate level, pupils should be involved in the assessment and management of the risks for the trips in which they are involved.
- Records of all Educational Visits Risk Assessments are available from the EVC for any member of staff to support their planning.
- A completed trip register together with all parent contact numbers will be taken on all outings undertaken by the nursery. In the main school a copy of relevant parent contact numbers will be taken on residential trips.
- Staff across both sites will always take a fully-charged mobile phone with them as a means of emergency contact.
- Safety is the top priority for us. We expect you to support the school in ensuring that your son or daughter follows the instructions given either by a member of staff, or by a

qualified instructor, and uses the proper equipment. We reserve the right to send any pupil home early at their parents' expense, if they decline to follow reasonable instructions given for their own safety, or do not follow the school's behaviour code.

Educational Value

- For curricular visits, a clear aim and objective must be identified by the group leader and clearly communicated to the other accompanying adults and, as appropriate, the pupils.
- Visits are not taken in isolation. Pupils are well prepared for the visit and, subsequently, put the experience to good effect as a stimulus for work in class.
- When planning the consideration should be made to ensure that all pupils are able to participate in the trip, in accordance with the Equal Opportunities Policy

Parents and information

- At the start of each academic year, or on a child's registration at the school, parents are asked to sign a consent form for their child to participate in off-site activities such as visits to local sports amenities, churches and for sports fixtures against other schools. Such events do not then require further parental consent, but are otherwise regulated by this policy. However, parents are entitled to information about where their children are during the school day. Therefore, information about an off-site visit should be available to parents, for example in the school calendar, on the website, in a newsletter or in a specific information letter about the trip.
- The exceptions to the procedure for parental consent, above, are when;
 - o The trip is planned to extend beyond the normal start or end of the school day
 - o The trip involves an overnight stay, overseas travel or any additional level of risk management
 - o An additional charge is made to parents in relation to the cost of the trip
- Parents will be notified of the details of such school visits in advance and permission for any school trip must be received from parents/guardians in writing prior to the visit date. For trips which require a higher level of risk management, parents must be told where the children will be and of any extra safety measures required.
- Parents are made aware that their children will participate in regular off-site activities such as visits to local sports amenities, churches (e.g. carol service) and for sports fixtures against other schools. Such events do not then require further parental consent but are otherwise regulated by this policy.
- Parents will be notified of the details of all other school visits in advance and permission for any school trip must be received from parents/guardians in writing prior to the visit date. In practice, written parental permission is not a legal requirement (except in EYFS) for trips which occur entirely within the school day and do not require a higher level of risk management. However, on all occasions, parents must be told where the children will be and of any extra safety measures required.
- Parents of EYFS children will always be asked for their written consent for any trip.
- Parents will be told specifically if a day visit involves a start before the commencement of a normal school day or a return to school after the end of the normal school day.
- Parents will be required to notify the trip leader of their child's special or medical needs, dietary requirements and of any other considerations affecting the welfare and safety of the child and of staff and other pupils.
- For residential visits and trips overseas the school will hold an information meeting for parents and pupils as part of the planning process. An information meeting may be held for other visits as appropriate.
- Pupils' emergency contact details, medical information and any other relevant information will be collected prior to the visit. This information will be taken on the visit.

- Costs for visits will be calculated in advance. Parents will be notified of the cost of the trip well in advance where this is not absorbed by the school. All trips must be paid for prior to departure. Holmwood House School will not make profit on any curricular-based visits.

2. Procedures for Organising an Educational Visit

General Information

Early planning is essential for any visit. Plans for residential visits and overseas trips are formulated well in advance. All off-site visits and activities must be approved by the Headteacher, who is kept fully informed throughout the planning stages. Residential visits and trips overseas are authorised by the Education Director who must be kept informed of progress in planning to facilitate continued approval. Activities of an outdoor pursuit or adventure nature must be within the ability of the children participating and the accompanying staff. The following is a set of guidelines which must be followed. It is designed to be as comprehensive as possible.

Preliminary Planning

An outline plan is presented to the Headteacher for approval prior to more detailed plans being made, even when this is an annual trip. Once outline permission has been granted and any particular conditions set, one or more meetings of the proposed staff involved will be held to formalise the administration and organisation of the visit. Once the Headteacher has approved the trip, the trip leader must then speak to the EVC in order to confirm dates into the main school diary. After this has been done the Educational Visits administration support will assign the trip pack so that the organisation can proceed. The Risk assessment is discussed and specific duties, and the names of the pupils for whom each person is responsible, are identified if necessary. Discussions will take place with the EVC about any other school events or trips which may be occurring at a similar time in order to establish a balance.

Once the trip is approved, parents will normally be informed and provided with as much information as is appropriate. Greater detail will be expected for trips overseas or involving overnight stays. Preparing for such trips will include an information meeting for parents.

The provision of information to parents will normally include the following, as appropriate:

- Information about accommodation
- Itinerary
- Emergency Contacts/Medical Forms
- Staffing/Grouping Details
- Personal Items/luggage and passport/visa requirements
- Insurance Details
- Finance Arrangements
- Spending Money
- Information about the coach company and any other transport arrangements

Next steps

- The 'Guidelines for School Trips' document should be read.
- A draft itinerary should be produced and approval sought where necessary, i.e. where it is desired pupils go off in small groups with remote supervision.
- Fully inclusive costs for visit should be worked out, including an appropriate contingency for delays and emergencies.
- Providers of adventurous activities should be checked to ensure they are licensed and that the individual instructors possess a recognised qualification from a national body,

such as the Adventure Activities Licensing Authority. Copies of documents supporting this should be uploaded to the trip pack.

- A clear statement should be obtained from any centre used about their responsibilities for the safety of the pupils before making any commitment. Ask for copies of their risk assessments.
- Check the school's insurance cover, especially if the visit involves hazardous activities or trips abroad. This should be done in liaison with the SBM.
- A request for travel booking should be made to transport@holmwood.house.
- The trip costs should be approved by Finance who will advise on how the money is to be paid by parents.
- Write a letter to send to parents of the target group, outlining the purpose of the trip, the programme and the cost. Ask for an acceptance/consent form to be completed, together with a non-returnable deposit.
- Staffing should be discussed with the EVC and should include at least one first-aider and a deputy trip leader in case the trip leader should become incapacitated during the trip.
- Details of any packed meals or snacks should be filled in on the trip pack. The form should then be forwarded to the Wellbeing Team who will fill in the relevant medical details and forward the form to the catering manager. This should be done at least 7 days before the trip departs.
- Any monies required for the trip (e.g. pocket money) should be requested from finance well in advance of the trip taking place.
- Prepare the risk assessment(s) using the relevant risk assessment forms. There is a generic risk assessment form and also a more specific risk assessment form to be filled in.
- Discuss with the EVC concerns about special arrangements that may be required for handling any specific medical or SEN issues.
- Produce an information letter or booklet for parents outlining contact details, hotels/hostels/families names, money, kit and equipment, medical requirements/info, expectations of behaviour/consequences (see Group Leader Information Pack for more details)

Additional points you may need to action

- Carry out a reconnaissance visit (if applicable).
- Organise a parent briefing meeting to cover the information regarding the trip (residential trips).
- Ascertain the medical and visa requirements (all trips abroad).
- Photocopy passport and GHIC details of all participants, including staff (all trips abroad).
- Depending upon the destination: check with the Travel Advice Unit of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (trips abroad).

Insurance

The Group leader and/or EVC will liaise with the School Commercial Manager to check that insurance cover for all children and adults involved in visits is appropriate. Extra insurance cover may be needed for residential visits, trips abroad and any activities of a hazardous nature. If insurance cover is not provided by the commercial centre or Tour Company, it is arranged by the Commercial Manager and added to the cost of the visit. All parties are provided with precise details of the insurance policy, so that there is no doubt about the cover and, in particular, what eventualities fall outside such cover. In the event the Headteacher and Commercial Manager are unsure if a trip is covered by normal school insurance provision, they should contact the Finance Department at Bellevue Education to establish if this is the case.

Personal Liability and Insurance

The law places the Group Leader “in loco parentis”. The DfE Guidance “The Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits: A Good Practice Guide,” (www.teachernet.gov.uk), should be read by all Group Leaders. It explains that their responsibility is to “act as any reasonable parent would do in the same circumstances.” Staff who take part in visits and activities outside school may feel concerned about the possibility of being held personally liable if an accident should occur. However, they can be assured that Holmwood House School, as their employer, will always stand behind them in the unlikely event of an accident occurring, provided they have exercised reasonable care and followed the school’s guidelines.

Holmwood House School has Employers’ Liability Insurance and public liability insurance, as well as a group travel policy that covers most visits inside the UK and overseas. Cover includes cancellation or delay, medical expenses, replacement of passports, personal possessions and money. The policy covers most school visits, including skiing holidays; but does not cover all adventurous activities, such as climbing or scuba diving. Any member of staff organising an adventurous or hazardous activity should therefore check, with the Commercial Manager, whether or not the activity is covered by the school’s policy. The Group Leader should ensure that he/she takes a copy of the school’s travel insurance with him/her on all but the shortest of visits.

Preliminary Visit

Except in the case of repeated visits, an exploratory visit by the group leader or another designated member of the accompanying staff is usually made. In the case of repeat visits, the group leader should contact the venue(s) to establish that there have been no significant changes to the premises or arrangements, which may affect the organisation of the visit. The group leader should also consult the risk assessment and its evaluation from the previous visit to ascertain what lessons, if any, can be learnt to improve risk management.

A preliminary visit should establish at first hand:

- that the venue is suitable
- that the venue can cater for the needs of pupils and staff
- an assessment of potential areas and levels of risk, completing Risk Assessment with details being given to the head teacher. This will incorporate any risk assessment provided by the venue/tour operator
- familiarity with the area before taking the children
- information concerning venue staff qualifications, if not already known
- suitable checking of staff at the venue to ensure that they are suitable to work with children.
- Reconnaissance of the venue is to assist in planning, for example in relation to specific risks, parking, toilets, venue for a packed lunch, management of access to the souvenir shop etc.

In certain circumstances, for example when all the activities are run by the centre’s own staff, to whom the risks and area are well known, a preliminary visit is not always necessary. Nevertheless, a visit may be needed to establish such matters as a safe place for a picnic lunch, the safe use of toilet facilities, distances to walk from car parks, etc.

If it is not possible to make a preliminary visit, every endeavour must be made to acquire information about the accommodation and the area, before the visit.

If a preliminary visit has not taken place, as a matter of priority when the party arrives, a member of staff inspects the facilities and accommodation and any areas where there might be dangers or potential hazards. Where necessary, risk assessments are then reassessed.

Staffing

Pupil to staff ratios for school trips are not prescribed in law. Those planning trips, on the basis of risk assessment, should decide the ratios, taking into account the activity to be undertaken and the age and maturity of the pupils. Responsibility lies with the Head to judge whether appropriate factors have been taken into account and ratios calculated accordingly. The group leader will liaise with the Head/EVC to ensure that the adult:pupil ratios for the visit are appropriate (although there are no statutory ratios, except for EYFS). These will take account of:

- Appropriate legislation, including statutory ratios for EYFS
- The ages, gender and ability of the children involved
- The number of pupils involved
- Pupils' special or medical needs
- Pupils' previous experiences of being away from school/home and of the activities involved
- The degree of responsibility and discipline shown by the group
- The type of visit and whether the nature of the activity and/or the pupils involved require the ratio to be exceeded.
- The level of risk
- The location and travel arrangements
- The session time and day
- The experience, training and quality of the staff and other adults available (e.g. if swimming is involved should one of the adults in attendance be a qualified lifesaver?).
- Requirements of the organisation or location to be visited
- The availability of a qualified First Aider
- The past experience of organising visits of the same or similar nature

If the pupils have special educational needs, there should be a higher staff/adult to pupil ratio as an extremely high level of care and wider safety margins are necessary.

The list above is based on the ROSPA guidance "Planning and Leading Visits and Adventurous Activities"

Adult:child ratios for excursions

Normal minimum guidelines, as a starting point to take into consideration the bulleted list above are in the table below.

EYFS minimum requirements and basic guidelines for other age groups

Ages	Ratios	Notes
Children under 2	1 adult:3 children	refer to EYFS framework for associated qualifications requirements
2 to 3 year olds	1 adult:4 children	
3 to 4 year olds	1 adult:6-8 children	refer to EYFS framework for associated qualifications requirements This is the minimum requirement if the children are not with a qualified teacher. Nevertheless, given the age of the children, it is likely that a risk assessment would determine a stronger ratio for an off-site visit.
Reception	1 adult:6-8 children	
Year 1	1 adult:6-8 children	This is good practise rather than a statutory requirement
Years 2-3	1 adult:8-10 children	
Years 4-6	1 adult:10-15 children	
Year 7 and above	1 adult:15-20 children	

Trips abroad	1 adult:8 children	Unless a stronger ratio is determined by the age groups above
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In normal circumstances, all adults accompanying a visit will have enhanced DBS clearance. If an adult does not have such clearance, his or her participation must be approved by the Headteacher following a risk assessment. In such situations, the group leader must make necessary arrangements so that the adult does not have any unsupervised access to the children. In all trips involving an overnight stay all adults must have enhanced DBS clearance. An overnight stay is defined as extending into the hours between 2am and 6am. Any adult on a trip with EYFS children who does not have enhanced clearance must not be unsupervised with the children and must not engage in personal care.

For visits which involve children working with staff at another venue or organisation, the group leader must obtain written confirmation from the organisation that it has undertaken all appropriate checks on its staff and that they are appropriately qualified and suitable to work with children. The centre may make a statement to this effect in its publicity materials.

When planning an activity involving caving, climbing, trekking, skiing or water sports, the group leader must check that the provider holds a licence as required by the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 2004 (for England, Scotland and Wales).

On trips involving both boys and girls, the staff must include both men and women. The Headteacher has the discretion to waive this requirement in the case of the youngest pupils, depending on the nature of the trip. Staffing must be appropriate, in terms of ratios and qualifications, to cope with any child on the trip with special or individual medical needs.

The group leader should liaise with the Headteacher/EVC to discuss cover arrangements back at school as necessary for all adults involved in the visit; classes to be covered in the absence of staff, work set, duties needing cover etc.

Financial Arrangements

Records of all payments by individual pupils are kept by the leader and School Commercial Manager. At the School Commercial Manager's discretion, residential visit payments may be made in stages. All payments should be made by cheque or bank transfer. Payment by the school in advance for trip costs will be made by the School Commercial Manager. For payments and other sundry expenses during the visit, including, if appropriate, issuing of pocket money, the group leader should make appropriate arrangements with the School Commercial Manager. Similarly the group leader should liaise with the School Commercial Manager when foreign currency is required. The group leader must ensure maximum security for money, passports and other valuable documents before and throughout the visit.

Calculating Costs

Factors to be taken into account in calculating the cost of the trip include:

- travel, transport and parking
- entrance fees for staff and pupils
- hire of equipment (for activities)
- insurance
- preliminary visits
- extra staffing and supply cover at school
- meals
- materials
- rewards, incentives, prizes for pupils' work, conduct etc.

- spending money
- contingency fund

The group leader is responsible for returning any unused cash to the Finance Department. The group leader is also responsible for producing a schedule of all expenditure on the trip. Unused balances will be returned to the parents by way of credits shown on the next school bill.

Further Liaison with Parents

(In some cases it may be more appropriate to combine this stage with the provision of information, noted to parents, above)

Except for routine off-site activities with a low level of risk, such as walking to the church for a carol service rehearsal, or a weekly trip to local sports facilities, it is imperative that parents are given full and complete written details regarding the organisation and administration of a visit. This will normally include:

- activities and venues
- specialist equipment and/or clothing necessary for activities
- packed meal requirements
- teachers/leaders, their experience and expertise when required
- total costs and methods for payment
- insurance cover, including medical cover and exemptions
- passport requirements, if any

A signed parental medical consent form must be obtained for each participating pupil, agreeing to emergency treatment and medication to be given if needed and for staff to act in loco parentis.

Pupil Behaviour and Supervision

The group leader has responsibility for the good conduct of pupils on the trip. All accompanying adults have a duty of care. Teachers should be briefed that they are in loco parentis at all times on the visit and thus are legally responsible for the well-being and safety of the children and also for their behaviour, which should be impeccable at all times.

Except for older secondary school pupils, with the specific authority of the head, children should never be on their own, but always remain in a group, and must be supervised by an adult at all times. Groups and their leaders should be decided in advance and well publicised.

On residential visits, close supervision of the pupils in the hostel, centre or hotel during the night must be maintained. Adults' rooms must be located in close proximity to the children's rooms. Staff should be allocated "on call" responsibilities on a rota basis and those adults should refrain from the consumption of alcohol in order to be able to perform their duties properly in the case of an emergency.

Homestays and host families

The school may make arrangements for children to stay with host families, either in the UK or abroad, for example, as part of an exchange visit or sports tour. Such activities can benefit learning across a range of subjects. In particular, foreign visits can enrich the languages curriculum and provide exciting opportunities for pupils to develop their confidence and expertise in the use of other languages. In such circumstances, the school must be mindful of its duty to safeguard children and promote their welfare. The school must consider how best

to minimise the risk of harm to children involved in such a homestay arrangement. KCSIE 2025 notes that, where a school organises for children to stay in homestays, the adults taking responsibility for hosting the children will be in regulated activity and the school has a responsibility, as provider, to undertake DBS checks with barred list information. This applies both to the school's own pupils for whom it arranges homestays and also to visiting pupils on an exchange, for example, hosted by the school's own parents. If the homestay is organised by the child's parents, this would be a private arrangement and the school is not the regulated activity provider, so does not need to conduct DBS checks. The school is free to make its own assessment as to whether other persons over 16 living in the household where the child is being hosted should be checked.

It is not possible for the school to obtain criminality information from the DBS about adults who provide homestays abroad. In these circumstances, the school must liaise with the partner school abroad to establish a shared understanding of, and agreement to the arrangements in place for the visit. The staff responsible must use professional judgement to satisfy themselves that arrangements are sufficient to safeguard effectively every child involved. The school is free to decide whether it is necessary to contact the relevant foreign embassy or High Commission of the country in question to discuss what checks may be possible in respect of those providing homestay outside of the UK.

For further information, refer to Annex D and E of KCSIE 2025.

Risk Assessments

The school's arrangements for risk assessments on off-site visits are as follows:

For the peace of mind of all staff involved, and that of the school management, trips and visits will only be approved after an assessment of the risks involved has been carried out.

Risk assessment is the normal day to day activity which we undertake without conscious effort, such as crossing roads, driving etc. The risk assessment forms enable the group leader to apply the same thought processes to the trip being planned. What is required is an understanding of the potential risks involved and the actions required to minimise those risks. Completing the forms will better enable the school to safeguard the children, thus giving the group leader peace of mind. If you, as group leader, feel unsure about anything, please ask. Training is provided to staff who organise visits, both at induction and subsequently, often initially in a "mentoring" capacity, to enable them to prepare effective risk assessments for the trips they organise.

All Group Leaders must complete a Holmwood House risk assessment form which is part of the Trip Pack obtained from the EVC.

The group leader will prepare written risk assessments for individual visits and activities. The given proforma, and the bank of risk assessments for repeated activities (travelling by public transport, crossing the road, escorting children along a footpath at a roadside, etc.) are available in the Trip Pack and should help group leaders to consider the 'risk factor and plan contingency measures to prevent or deal with such eventualities. (Where necessary, staff training will be provided). Staff should also refer to the school's risk assessment policy.

Professionally-operated licensed activity centres and tour operators specialising in school visits will conduct their own risk assessments. The Group Leader should ask for copies at the planning stage. These copies should be included in the trip pack along with the Holmwood House risk assessments. Provided that he/she is satisfied it will meet the requirements of Holmwood House School for the activity part of the visit, additional risk assessments will probably be needed to ensure complete coverage of all aspects of the visit. Risk assessments

carried out by the school for previous visits can generally be updated and re-used, unless there has been a change of circumstances. At Holmwood House School, the EVC maintains a dossier of generic risk assessments that cover sports fixtures, theatre and museum visits, EYFS visits and most of our regular visits.

Final authorisation for each visit will be made by the Headteacher and only then if he is satisfied that an adequate risk assessment has been carried out.

In order that the safety of pupils and staff can be as thorough as possible, the following time scales must be adhered to.

At least 1 week prior to the trip; Risk Assessments, including those from the place to be visited, handed to EVC with a completed Trip Pack, list of pupils involved, details of any particular requirements for pupils with special or medical needs, parental consent forms and all letters sent to parents. This will form part of the information file detailed under "information and final arrangements" below.

In the event of consent forms not being returned by the specified time, the pupil will not be allowed to travel.

At least 2 full days before the trip; The risk assessments and forms noted above, having been checked and signed by the EVC should be copied for the staff on the trip and the school office, as well as to other onsite staff that may need them. In the case of residential trips a meeting will be convened with the Head, in order to sign off the completion of all the checks. The meeting will include attendance by all members of staff participating in the trip.

In the case of residential visits and trips taking place outside term time, these should also be copied to the nominated contact at school (if this is not the Headteacher). Staff on the trip (excluding the Leader who should be in possession of them all) need only the consent forms of the children in their care for the trip.

It is the responsibility of the group leader to check that all the consent forms and medical details for each child have been successfully collected by the deadline. It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to give final consent to the trip going ahead after reading the Risk Assessment.

If there are any worries or uncertainties, the group leader should always ask the Headteacher, EVC or Commercial Manager for help.

For EYFS visits a full risk assessment and outing plan will be carried out for each outing and this will be displayed for parents to access. This plan will include details of:

- The name of the designated person in charge - the outing leader
- The name of the place where the visit will take place
- The estimated time of departure and arrival
- The number of children, age range of children, the ratio of staff to children, children's individual needs and the group size
- The equipment needed for the trip i.e. first aid kit, mobile phone, coats, rucksack etc
- Nursery Mobile number
- Method of transportation and travel arrangements (including the route)
- Emergency procedures
- Links to the child's learning and development needs.

Information and final arrangements

Final details of the visit, including the final version of the risk assessment, must be submitted

to the Headteacher and EVC for approval one week before the visit. This information will be retained for future reference. The group leader holds the same information for the duration of the visit and checks immediately prior to departure for any late changes, for example due to pupil illness or absence. Such changes are noted and an amended copy submitted to the EVC/Headteacher. As a minimum, the information should include details of:

- itinerary
- contact points
- pupils' and staff emergency contacts
- contact information for staff while on the trip
- copies of Parental Medical Consent Forms
- specific information about any children with individual special or medical needs, including their medical plans as appropriate
- copies of any insurance documents, contracts, etc
- emergency procedures, including the school's critical incident policy
- risk assessments

Final steps

- All pupils going on the trip **MUST** be briefed in conjunction with the guidelines in the trip pack.
- All staff **MUST** be briefed in conjunction with the guidelines in the trip pack and in particular be aware of health and safety/operational issues surrounding pupils participating.
- All staff must refresh their knowledge of Appendix 26 (Actions in the Event of an Emergency on a Trip) and be ready to follow them should an emergency take place.
- Both the trip leader and EVC must sign the trip pack to confirm that all preparatory steps have been completed.
- Arrangements should be made with the EVC/Headteacher regarding communication with parents in the event that the return is delayed.
- If necessary, wristbands with the school contact number/trip leader's phone number on should be prepared for pupils to wear for the duration of the trip.
- Ensure that all necessary equipment is made ready to take.
- The EVC will ensure copies of the trip pack are distributed to each member of staff accompanying the trip as well as to the necessary staff in school.

Special Educational Needs & Disability

The Headteacher and EVC will ensure that all reasonably practicable efforts have been made during the course of risk assessment to include disabled pupils in educational visits. This will usually entail discussion with the pupil, parents, group leader and other supervisors, the manager of the venue to be visited, the tour operator etc. For further information please refer to the Equal Opportunities and SEND policies.

Ongoing Risk Assessments and Reassessments

The group leader, or other adults with responsibility, should reassess risks while the visit is taking place. Ongoing risk assessments normally consist of judgements and decisions made as the need arises. They should be informed by the site specific risk assessments and take account of local expertise on: e.g. tides, potential for flooding etc. They are not usually recorded until after the visit and should be reviewed to inform future planning. Examples of the need for ongoing risk assessment:

- Changing weather, tiredness or illness within the group, behaviour, issues with other groups at the same venue etc. Control measures may include deciding to change to

the pre-assessed plan B or swapping activities on the itinerary so that the activity can be carried out on a different day

- Emergencies. Control measures would include establishing the nature and extent of the emergency as quickly as possible; ensuring that all the group are safe and looked after; establishing whether anyone has been hurt and getting immediate medical attention for them; ensuring that all group members who need to know are aware of the incident and that all group members are following the emergency procedures; ensuring that if a teacher accompanies casualties to hospital, the rest of the group are adequately supervised at all times and kept together; and informing the emergency contact in the school
- Group leaders are always in charge. They should trust their own knowledge of pupils and use their own professional judgement. This may include challenging an activity leader where the group leader's knowledge of the group is superior, or intervening to prompt a change of plan, including stopping an activity if it has become too hazardous

3. On Departure and During the Visit

Primary responsibility for the safe conduct of the visit rests with the Group Leader. He or she has sole responsibility for amending the itinerary in the event of unforeseen delay or sudden deterioration in weather conditions. If on an exchange, he/she will liaise with the partner school in the event of difficulties between a pupil and their host family. He/she may delegate part or all of the responsibility for the following to one or more of the accompanying staff:

- Carrying out a head count on getting on and off each form of transport, entering or leaving a museum, restaurant, activity centre, hotel etc.
- Checking that all pupils wear their seat belts.
- Checking the fire exits and escape routes at each hotel or hostel. Ensuring that every pupil walks through the emergency escape route at each hotel.
- Ensuring that sleeping accommodation is suitable and located together (preferably not on the ground floor).
- Setting times for pupils to be in their rooms at night. Conducting checks (using the other staff).
- Setting agreed times and locations for checking pupils when they work or are allowed out unsupervised in small groups.
- Enforcing expected standards of behaviour.
- Storing cash, passports, travellers' cheques and tickets in the hotel safe.
- Keeping an account of all expenditures.
- Recording all accidents, incidents, or examples of particularly poor behavior and passing these onto the EVC or Headteacher upon return.

Communication

The group leader must take a working mobile phone (usually a school mobile phone) and must ensure that the school has all the necessary contact information for each stage of the trip.

In advance of the trip, pupils should be given clear safety instructions based upon the nature of the activities and the associated risks.

For trips returning outside of normal school hours, the group leader should contact the school office to keep parents informed as to the expected time of arrival back at school. It is the responsibility of the group leader to make the necessary contact.

First Aid

All accompanying adults must be familiar with the school's first aid and medication policy, a copy of which should be included in the group leader's information file.

On departure the group leader must collect the First Aid kit(s) for school visits from the surgery/school nurse. This must be returned to the surgery/school nurse after the visit together with details of any items used.

The group leader must also ensure that any special medical equipment or medication to meet individual pupil needs, such as inhalers, Epi-pens, etc, are taken on the trip. Where specialist knowledge or training is required for the administration of medication, the staffing of the trip must ensure that this expertise is available.

The regulations for the reporting of accidents (RIDDOR) apply to educational visits and can be found in the school's first aid and medication policy. Other accidents which may occur, but which fall short of the threshold for RIDDOR reporting, must be reported and recorded in accordance with the school's normal procedures.

When the trip involves the use of a venue which provides first aid facilities, the group leader must ensure that all adults are aware of the arrangements and the location of first aid points. In the event of a minor incident

- organise first aid treatment so that a member of staff stays with the pupil
- call for help if necessary
- if the trip is outside the UK, he/she will notify the insurers on their helpline to arrange (where possible) for the medical bill to be sent directly to the insurance company for settlement. If the accident is more serious (such as a broken leg), the school's medical insurers may arrange for the pupil, accompanied by a member of staff, to be repatriated to the UK.
- see that the remainder of the group is safe
- telephone the nominated school contact number
- at Holmwood House School, we expect the group leader to phone a pupil's parents if their child has suffered an accident or injury that is serious enough to require medical treatment – as opposed to minor cuts and bruises. Whilst a judgment needs to be made by the group leader, it may be advisable to seek the Headteacher's guidance before making such a call; it may be decided that he makes the call instead, depending on the circumstances.
- staff must maintain written records of any incidents and pass these on to the EVC and Headteacher upon the return to school.
- staff must maintain written records of any medication given and ensure that this information is communicated to the parent upon the trip's return.
- staff should contact the EVC or Headteacher if necessary during the trip.

Transport

It is the school's policy that only coaches with seat belts are booked. Vehicles used should comply with the current requirements on seat belts. All seats should be forward facing and seat restraints should comply with legal requirements. Occasionally a trip may be organised to a country where legislation does not require coaches to be fitted with seatbelts and such a coach may not be available. In such circumstances the group leader must endeavour to book a coach fitted with seat belts and must do everything possible to ensure the safety of staff and pupils. Parents must be made aware of such circumstances.

Supervision on Transport

- At least two members of staff should supervise the pupils getting on and off the

coach – one on the coach and one by the steps.

- A roll call must be taken at regular intervals, including each occasion when pupils embark and disembark.
- Pupils should not sit on the first two seats facing the front window or next to the emergency exit.
- Staff should sit at intervals spaced through the coach to ensure proper supervision
- All pupils must be settled before setting off and must wear their seat belts throughout the journey, unless told to remove them in an emergency.
- The group leader should delegate an adult to check for lost property and litter when the group leaves the coach.
- At least one qualified teacher should be on each coach or minibus and have a mobile phone with them.
- All staff members shall inform parents in advance of any visits or outings involving the transportation of children away from the nursery.
- The arrangements for transporting children will always be carefully planned and where necessary additional people will be recruited to ensure the safety of the children. This is particularly important where children with disabilities are concerned
- All vehicles used in transporting children are properly licensed, inspected and maintained. Regular checks are made to the school minibus e.g. to tyres, lights, etc. and a log-book of maintenance, repairs and services is maintained
- All vehicles used are fitted to the supplier's instructions with sufficient numbers of safety restraints appropriate to the age/weight of the children carried in the vehicle.
- When we use a mini bus, we will check that the driver is over 21 years of age and holds a P.V.C. driving license. This entitles the driver to transport up to 16 passengers
- When children are being transported, there will always be at least one adult in the vehicle, excluding the driver, where feasible.

When planning a trip or outing using vehicles, records of vehicles and drivers including licenses, MOT certificates and business use insurance are checked. If a vehicle is used for outings the following procedures will be followed:

- Ensure seat belts, child seats and booster seats are used
- Ensure the maximum seating is not exceeded
- All children will be accompanied by a registered member of staff
- No child will be left in a vehicle unattended
- Extra care will be taken when getting into or out of a vehicle
- The vehicle will be equipped with a fire extinguisher and emergency kit containing a warning triangle, torch, blankets, wheel changing equipment etc.

In the event of a child being lost, the Lost Child Procedure will be followed:

- Any incidents or accidents will be recorded in writing
- For EYFS pupils, Ofsted will be contacted and informed of any incidents.

Other Transport:

Holmwood House School's policy is to discourage staff from transporting pupils in their private cars and never to allow them to be transported in cars belonging to parent helpers (unless the parents make a private arrangement that does not involve the school).

- If school staff use their own cars to transport children they must have appropriate car insurance, "occasional business use" cover. Staff concerned must liaise with the Commercial Manager to establish whether such transportation is covered by the school's or their own insurance. If the latter, documentary proof must be provided

to the Commercial Manager. On each occurrence, other than in exceptional circumstances, e.g. medical, Health & Safety, specific written permission must be obtained from parents. Other than in exceptional circumstances, a teacher should never use his or her own car to transport a single pupil. Any staff use of their own cars must be consistent with the safeguarding policy and, in particular, the staff code of conduct.

- If parents are transporting children, their cars should be fully insured; relevant legislation relating to pupils sitting in the front and the use of booster seats must be followed. Seatbelts must be worn. Specific written permission must be obtained from parents and documentary proof of insurance must be provided to the bursar. Only children for whom parental consent has been obtained may travel in another parent's car.
- Parents should be fully informed of the time and place to collect the children.
- A staff mobile phone should be taken to the event in case of emergency.
- It is the responsibility of the group leader to look after pupils not collected after a visit. The pupils must not be left unsupervised and appropriate efforts should be made to contact parents if no information has been received about their late arrival. Reference should be made to the school's policy for the failure of a parent to collect a child.
- For transport by other means (train, ferry, aeroplane etc.) detailed risk assessments must be included in the overall risk assessment for the trip.
- Further information and a link to the DfE guidance on requirements for driving minibuses can be found in the health and safety policy

Emergencies

Despite the best planning and organisation, emergencies that require immediate response by the leaders sometimes occur. Whilst still controlling and supervising the rest of the group, leaders should contact the appropriate emergency/rescue service immediately. The Headteacher and Educational Visits Coordinator should be contacted as soon as possible.

Emergency Procedures

Note: All trip leaders will have a copy of Appendix 26 - 'Actions in the event of an emergency on a school trip' and Appendix 26a - 'Terrorism on School Trips'.

All staff should carry their card detailing the key procedures to be followed in the event of emergency upon their person for the duration of the visit.

In the event of a serious accident resulting in the death or injury of one or more of the pupils and staff, the group leader's first priority would be to summon the emergency services, and to arrange for medical attention for the injured. If an accident or other emergency occurs, the group leader or supervisor should do the following (given in no specific order):

1. Assess the situation.
2. Safeguard the uninjured members of the group.
3. If there are injuries, establish immediately the names of the injured people and the extent of their injuries.
4. Attend to the casualty/ies, liaising with the group's trained first aider.
5. Inform the emergency services, and everyone who needs to know, about the accident.
6. Follow the school's first aid and medication policy as appropriate including, when possible, the procedures for recording the accident and contacting parents.
7. Notify the police if necessary.
8. Share the problem; advise all other group staff that the accident/emergency procedure is in operation. Make sure every member of the group is accounted for.
9. Ensure that the injured are accompanied to hospital, preferably by an adult whom they

know.

10. Ensure that the rest of the group understands what has happened, is adequately supervised and kept together.
11. Inform Headteacher and Educational Visits Coordinator and pass on all the details, including names of casualties, their injuries, action taken and names of others involved. If abroad, contact the British Embassy/Consulate, if advisable.
12. Notify insurers, especially if medical assistance is required.
13. Notify the tour operator.
14. Ascertain telephone number for future calls.
15. As soon as possible, write down accurately relevant facts and witness details.
16. Preserve any vital evidence.
17. Keep a written account of subsequent events, times and contacts after the incident.
18. Complete accident forms.
19. No-one in the group should speak to the media. All media enquiries should be politely referred to the Headteacher, unless the Headteacher is one of the casualties in which case media enquiries should be referred to Gregg Davies, Schools Director.
20. No-one in the group should discuss legal liabilities with other parties.
21. As soon as possible, liaise with the school's appointed lead first aider to fulfil the school's legal requirements in relation to reporting of accidents (RIDDOR).
22. Refer also to the Critical Incident Policy, which should be included in the documentation taken on the trip.
23. In the event that a child needs hospital attention one adult will accompany them.

At the end of the trip

- Parents should be fully informed of the time and place to collect the children. Staff should remain with the group until all pupils have been collected by parents.
- All equipment should be returned to the relevant areas.

4. After the Visit

After the visit the group leader must complete a visit evaluation form, which is submitted to the Headteacher and Educational Visits Coordinator. The views of other adults accompanying the visit should be taken into account. This should identify any area for improvement, including the guidance on organising trips, and should also highlight the successes of the trip.

The risk assessment for the visit should be reviewed to enable any necessary improvements to be made for future visits. Where relevant, the experience of the trip should be used to improve the school's bank of generic risk assessments.

It is expected that the majority of trips are organised to stimulate and motivate pupils in aspects of the curriculum. Follow-up classwork should therefore be undertaken.

It may also be appropriate to organise an assembly or a meeting for parents after the trip enabling the pupils to share their experiences and their follow-up work and for photography and video footage to be displayed.

Appendix A

Final Residential Trip Meeting with Headteacher

Purpose: To confirm readiness, ensure compliance, and clarify any outstanding details before departure.

Agenda (Approx. 45–60 mins)

Welcome & Purpose of Meeting (5 mins)

- Overview of trip aims and key logistics
- Confirm final staff list and roles

Itinerary & Timings Review (10 mins)

- Daily schedule
- Travel arrangements
- Emergency alternatives (e.g. wet weather plans)

Pupil Management & Grouping (10 mins)

- Group lists and supervision ratios
- Behaviour expectations and sanctions
- Night-time routines and wake-up plans

Safeguarding & Medical Needs (10 mins)

- Safeguarding responsibilities
- Medical needs (meds, allergies, dietary)
- First aid provision and location of kits

Risk Assessments & Emergency Procedures (10 mins)

- Location of risk assessments (shared drive, printouts)
- Fire drills, evacuation routes, lockdown procedure (if relevant)
- Incident/accident reporting and communication plan

Communication & Contact Plans (5 mins)

- Parent updates (email/text/blog/app?)
- Emergency contact chain (including SLT)
- Phone signal/Wi-Fi availability at site

Logistics & Final Checks (5 mins)

- Transport checks (e.g. coach company confirmed, loading arrangements)
- Accommodation confirmed
- Staff to bring...? (e.g. ID, DBS copies, chargers)

Q&A and Final Sign-Off (5 mins)

- Clarify any uncertainties
- Headteacher sign-off and any final instructions

Checklist of Questions for the Meeting

Pupils & Grouping

Are all pupil lists confirmed, including room and group allocations?

Have behaviour expectations been communicated to pupils and parents?

Are there any pupils with additional needs or safeguarding plans we need to consider?

Medical & First Aid

Are we clear as to any medical needs and conditions of all people on the trip? Including allergies and food needs?

Where relevant have these been discussed with travel providers / accommodation?

Are all medications labelled, signed in, and logged?

Who is administering medications and keeping records?

Are we confident in who our designated first aiders are and when they're on duty?

Safeguarding

Who is the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) for the trip?

What is the reporting procedure for a concern while away?

Are all staff clear on sleeping arrangements and privacy protocols?

Risk & Emergency Planning

Have we reviewed all activity and travel risk assessments?

What's our plan for illness, injury, or poor behaviour?

Who is the on-call contact at school/Trust in case of emergency?

END