

Trips and educational visits policy

Introduction

This policy applies to all trips and activities off College premises at all times of the year. The policy and the associated permission forms and trips approval procedures are based on the key guidance documents in this area –

‘Health and Safety – Department for Education advice on legal duties and powers for local authorities, Head teachers, staff and governing bodies’

and

‘Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits – a good practice guide’ (DfEE, 1998) and the three supplements to the document (DfES 2002)

All trips must comply with the guidance in these document and the three supplements. Copies are available from the Vice Principal, Pastoral.

Responsibilities

The Vice Principal, Pastoral is responsible for:

- formulation of trips policy
- development of standardised procedures to be followed when staff members are seeking approval for trips and activities
- advising the Head of Activities Dept. and teachers on the development of a trips and activities programme suitable for their students to include consideration of
 - types of trips and activities e.g. cultural, outdoor education
 - duration of trips i.e. day, overnight etc.
 - impact on teaching and other activities
 - cost of trips and activities to students
 - educational value
 - budget arrangements
 - staffing
- checking and approval of proposals for trips and activities
- ensuring involvement of teaching staff in trips and activities in line with their contractual obligations.

The Trip Leader is responsible for:

- the detailed planning of the trip including itineraries, risk assessments and budgeting
- communication with parents before and during the trip
- behaviour of students in line with the College Regulations
- ensuring that the needs of students with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities and medical issues are met
- deployment of staff
- getting approval for the trip and the arrangement from the Vice Principal, Pastoral.

Approval of day trips

Submit the ‘Day Trips Approval form’, fully completed with associated risk assessment, to the Vice Principal, Pastoral, a minimum of 3 days before the trip.

Approval of overnight or overseas trips

For such trips, pre-approval is necessary. This is to avoid staff members planning trips that are unlikely to be approved. For any trips that have not run before, see the Vice Principal, Pastoral to discuss arrangements for the trip as detailed in the 'Trips Pre-approval form'. Once pre-approval has been given, then proceed to plan the trip in line with the guidance in this policy and the documents noted above. Submit the completed 'Overnight/Overseas Trips Approval' form to the Vice Principal, Pastoral a minimum of two weeks prior to the trip departure date.

Parental approval

As part of the Joining Documents, parents provide approval for day trips and activities. If this approval is withheld then students must not participate in such trips and activities. The Head of activities is responsible for keeping a list of such students updated on the Staff Room notice board.

Written parental consent (faxed or electronically scanned) must be obtained for students' participation in overnight or overseas trips.

Timing of trips

Check the calendar produced by the Vice Principal at the start of each academic year.

Activities consent forms

The Activities Dept. holds a list of the students for whom parents have given permission to go on trips and any restrictions that may have been imposed by the parents. If students' names are not on this list, they must not go on a trip. Forms for parental permission for specific trips can be obtained from the Activities Dept. for completion, should parents wish their permission to be sought on a trip by trip basis.

Group composition

Staff student ratios should be in line with guidelines detailed in *Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Trips (DfEE 1998)*.

Day trips within the UK - 1:15, though this ratio does not apply to trips which involve hazardous activities or where other hazards have been identified in the risk assessment.

For trips abroad and overnight trips, the minimum ratio is 1:10, though there should be a minimum of two teachers, one of each gender.

All staff that accompany trips must have enhanced CRB checks. Volunteers are not permitted to accompany overnight or overseas trips.

Transport (College vehicles)

No charges must be made for use of the College minibuses, which are licensed as Private Light Goods Vehicles, and no payment must be made for driving.

Book a minibus through the Porters' lodge.

Make sure that any drivers have passed their test.

Ensure that minibus checks have been carried out with the Porter.

Insurance and Health

All students must be adequately insured for any trip organised by College. College insurance cover will extend to most activities arranged by St Clare's staff, though you must check the exclusions, particularly for hazardous activities.

E111 forms should be obtained for British and EU nationals travelling abroad, so that they can get free hospital treatment.

Check with students that they have received the inoculations required, as appropriate to the country visited and the activities in which the students are to be engaged.

Emergency contact arrangements

It is essential that parents and/or College should be able to contact a staff member on the trip should an emergency occur relating to College or the family of one of the students on the trip.

Should an emergency occur on the trip, then a member of staff must be contactable at College who will be able to liaise with staff, parents, students as required.

In serious emergencies the following numbers are available:

- College switchboard (for use during College working days): 01865 552031
- Porters duty mobile number: 07967 127281
- College internal emergency number: 07817 302284 (use only in emergencies)

Safety arrangements

1. Ideally, one or more of the trip leaders should be first aid trained.
2. A first aid box (in the minibus or otherwise obtained from the Nurse) must be taken on every overnight trip, overseas trip and any trips that involve hazardous activities.
3. Where feasible, accommodation to be occupied by students should be visited prior to the trip or alternatively prior to occupation of the premises by students, to ensure that first aid and fire safety arrangements are appropriate. Information must be sought from the owners of the accommodation to be used so that the trip leaders can satisfy themselves that the fire safety and first aid arrangements are appropriate.
4. When the leaders arrive on site (especially for overnight stays) they must satisfy themselves that the fire safety arrangements are satisfactory.

Special needs

Check with students and records held by the College Nurse and the Activities Dept. that students with any special dietary, religious or medical requirements are catered for.

Money

Procedures outlined in the document – 'Financial arrangements for trips and activities' must be followed.

Keep a careful record of income from student trip fees and all expenditure (receipts must be obtained). Present the accounts to the Bursary to check that costs are calculated correctly and allocated to the correct budgets and that all expenditure is appropriate and accounted for.

Documentation

Passports and visas must be checked prior to the visit (overseas) to ensure that all students and accompanying staff will be allowed entry to the countries to be visited.

Risk assessment

Generic risk assessments, which cover many of the hazards common to most trips are part of both the day trips approval forms and the overnight/overseas trips approval forms. Please ensure that you have read and understood these risk assessments. Complete the section on the risk assessment sheet for hazards that are specific to the trip you are leading. Overnight and overseas trips will require specific risk assessments that take account of the accommodation and activities specific to each trip. A blank risk assessment form is included in the trips approval form for such trips.

The trip leader must discuss the risk assessments with accompanying members of staff on the trip and provide them with a copy of the risk assessment before the trip. Students must also be informed of risks and steps they must take to reduce them.

Cancellation and Refunds Policy

There will be no refund for a student who cancels his or her place within 14 days of the trip departure. Likewise there will be no refund paid if a student is prevented from travelling on the trip due to a breach of the school regulations.

Cancellation of a trip can only be done with a signed fax from a parent/guardian outlining the reasons.

If a student cancels but finds another person to replace him or her more than 14 days prior to departure, a refund will be provided less the costs of making the change e.g. name change on travel ticket.

The responsibility for finding a replacement student lies with the cancelling student. The involvement of the replacement student must be approved by the Trip Leader in consultation with the Vice Principal, Pastoral. Even if a replacement student is found, there will be no refunds paid if cancellation happens within 14 days of the trip.

If a student fails to find a replacement we will provide a refund less income spent in advance to secure travel mode, accommodation and meal bookings etc more than 14 days prior to departure.

Associated forms

Day Trips Approval

Trips Pre-approval

Overnight/Overseas Trips Approval

Generic Day Trips Risk Assessment

Generic Overnight/Overseas Trips Risk Assessment

Risk Assessment (blank)

Most recent review / amendment

ST June 2014