

Policy

Health & Safety

Off Site School Activities Policy General Principles

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General Principles for Managing Off Site School Activities

1) Introduction

We believe that learning outside the classroom is an essential component of our curriculum. It gives our pupils unique opportunities to develop their resourcefulness and initiative and to spend time together in an informal environment. Each trip is different. 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 a contribution to your daughter's development and education in the broadest sense of the word. We regularly take our pupils on day trips to sports fixtures, historic sites, museums, galleries, natural features, towns, external lectures and exhibitions to support the curriculum. We also offer a programme of residential visits. This document sets out the general principles of off site management and, attached as appendices are the detailed steps staff are to take before embarking on a visit.

This document should be read in conjunction with the relevant appendices, the school's other policies: in particular, the Health and Safety Manual, Risk Assessment Policy and takes account of ISI Regulatory Requirements Report of 2023.

It is noted that whilst the ISI no longer requires the school to have an Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) or to have a written Risk Assessment (RA) for each school visit, Downe House will continue with both functions until it is no longer deemed best practice.

2) Provision of information

All off site activities are managed digitally by the school database system "SchoolBase". For each activity there is a series of management tools and forms which will enable safe management of the event to be carried out within the parameters of this document. A member of the Leadership Team will sign off the final approval for the event. No event can take place unless all information required has been provided. There are different levels of information required, depending on the activity, and is therefore important to ensure that each activity is managed correctly, as set out in the appendices to these general principles.

3) Permission

Parents give permission for all day visits by signing a default agreement (consent) form when their daughter enrolls at the School. However, on receipt of the invitation letter for each day visit, parents have the right to withdraw their daughter from the visit, even if they have signed the form. Parents give permission for each residential visit by signing a tailored consent form for that visit only. The form accompanies the invitation letter. The consent forms carry certain disclaimers about safety and medical treatment. Parents will always receive, on request from the visit leader, the risk assessment for the visit and the School's travel insurance policy.

4) Guidance for staff managing off site activities:

Set out below are the key principles for managing an off site activity, each activity shall be logged and managed as such on the school database (SchoolBase). For detailed guidance on the process see appendix A, B and C of this document.

- **Provisional information.** You need to establish some information before requesting permission for the visit. You must not commit to pay anything at this stage.

Name of visit	This is how the visit will appear in the calendar.
Location (postcode)	The place where you consider the main base to be (with postcode)
Date(s)	Ensure there are no calendar clashes prior to booking
Meeting time	The time when the pupils will be instructed to rendezvous.
Return time	The time when the visit formally ends.
Year group(s)	Please indicate if it is a whole year visit.
Number of pupils	A precise number which matches the names on the register.

Cost per pupil	Put a precise cost which matches the cost quoted in the letter.
Visit leader	The member of staff who is responsible for the visit.

- **Permission.** You must request calendar permission from the Assistant Head (Operations) who may consult with the rest of the Leadership Team (LT) if necessary. Final sign off and permission is given by the Headmistress.
- **Parental Consent.** Parental consent will only be sort once the activity has been signed off by the Headmistress. For day visits, you are not required to collect consent forms from parents. A generic consent form is signed by parents when their daughter joins the school and this covers consent for day visit. However, for any hazardous activity or residential activities you must obtain specific written permission from parents.
- **Duty Staff.** Record the relevant contact and medical details for staff accompanying the visit. Remind staff accompanying the visit that they need to book their absence and set cover, during term time. The staff ratios are found in Appendix A. Pupils will only be sent on a visit unaccompanied, with prior written permission from their parents. There may be also be planned periods of remote supervision during a visit, but these should be annotated in the trip risk assessment prior to departure.
- **First aid.** The visit leader requires a working knowledge of first aid and must carry a medical bag, requested from the Medical Centre using the appropriate form. Day visits require a member of staff with a one-day first aid certificate (e.g. St John Ambulance Schools First Aid or British Red Cross First Aid for Teachers) if the activities include unsupervised time, walking in rural areas or sports. All residential visits require a member of staff with a one-day first aid certificate, who is contactable 24 hours a day. Any visit involving adventure activities or camping require a member of staff with a full-day first aid certificate (e.g. St John Ambulance Activity First Aid or NGB Outdoor First Aid or NGB Rescue and Emergency First Aid). Any swimming activities must be supervised by a qualified lifeguard.
- **Bookings.** Once you have permission to proceed with the planning, you should book any necessary transport. You must observe that the company has public liability insurance. If more than one coach is to be used, it is essential that the drivers travel in convoy. Private cars are not to be used to transport pupils except in accident and emergency situations. Only when you have booked the transport, and you know you can actually reach your destination, should you make a booking for accommodation. You must observe that safety procedures are in place at all accommodation venues. Only when you have booked the accommodation, and you know you can actually stay in your destination, should you make a booking for activities.
- **Risk Assessment. (see also Appendix B)** Your responsibility is to take reasonable action in the case of risks. An initial site inspection visit, may be required. Risks should be assessed at the main base and all the places to be visited. In the interests of clarity and consistency, a standard risk assessment format is used. A link to the risk assessment template can be found at <https://businesssafe.peninsula-online.com> and comes pre-loaded with generic risk assessment practice for a wide range of activities. This forms part of the “SchoolBase” form that is required to be completed before the off site activity is undertaken. Irrelevant activities should be removed so the result is a bespoke document, for the requirements of your visit. Risk management should be treated as “active” management and subject to change when deemed appropriate by the activity leader.

Generic Risks and Control Measures are listed below, a detailed process of Risk Management for Off Site Activities is included as Appendix B.

Hazard	Likelihood	Control measures
Building fire	Low	Follow the instructions given by the fire safety posters and signs. Evacuate by the nearest exit if instructed to do so. Perform head counts whenever possible.
Coach or minibus accident	Low	Check that seat belts are visibly being worn at the start of each journey. Pupils must not stand or walk when the vehicle is moving. Ensure that there is a first aid kit in the vehicle.
Injury in buildings	Low	An inspection visit should at the very least establish the location of fire exits and escape routes, and the accessibility of hazardous balconies and windows.
Minibus breakdown	Low	All school vehicles are covered by the RAC recovery scheme (the card is in the tax disc holder). Park the vehicle away from traffic if possible. If not, remove pupils from the vehicle and ensure they are grouped in a safe place with a member of staff. The driver should remain in safe position near the vehicle to await breakdown services.
Pedestrian injury	Low	Remind pupils of road safety awareness, the need to concentrate and to use pedestrian crossings.
Public transport accident	Low	Follow the instructions given by the safety information cards and signs. Evacuate by the nearest exit if instructed to do so. Perform head counts whenever possible.
Pupil becoming ill	High	Carry a first aid kit and the pupil's medical and contact details at all times. Certain pupils will carry medication which must be administered. If the pupil is taken to a doctor then the parents and home contact must be informed immediately.
Remote supervision	Medium	Provide all pupils with the staff mobile telephone number and a map of the area. Indicate clearly what the bounds of movement are, the rendezvous point and the meeting time. Show on the map where the teachers may be found.
Robbery and assault	Low	Tell pupils to keep their personal belongings, especially their valuables, safe and out of view.
Separation from group	Medium	Provide all pupils with the staff mobile telephone number. In very busy areas, agree a rendezvous point for this eventuality.
Water hazards	Low	Swimming is only permitted during school visits if there is a qualified lifeguard present. Sea swimming is only permitted with the express permission of the Deputy Head (Academic) and of parents. It is only permitted where an inspection visit has been carried out, and when the tide times are known.

- **Home contact.** You need to arrange a home contact. This person must be available 24 hours a day throughout the duration of the visit. For day visits during term time, between 08.00 and 17.00, this can be Reception. For residential visits, the home contact must be a member of the LT. A telephone tree should be provided to the home contact, in case parents need to be contacted in the case of an incident, or a late return. All members of staff should have a school registered mobile phone.
- **Itinerary.** A schedule of all the places to be visited, including their post codes and telephone numbers where available, should be drawn up in order. Include the names and contact numbers of transport companies. Attach the itinerary to the planning form.
- **Final check.** You should now be able to complete the planning form (via SchoolBase) and submit it for sign off. Copies of the visit documentation should also be given to the

Headmistress, before the trip is due to take place.

Revision History:

Revision	Date	Description of changes	Requested By
	September 2015	Reviewed	Alasdair Heath
	September 2016	Reviewed	Alasdair Heath
	September 2017	Reviewed	Alasdair Heath
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This policy makes reference to the following School policies, copies of which can be located on SchoolBase in the 'Documents' section:

Health and Safety Policy (Reviewer: DES)

Risk Assessment (Reviewer: DES)

Safeguarding and Child Protection (Reviewer: DH(P))

School Vehicle Transport Policy (Reviewer: DES)

Appendix A – Management and planning considerations

Legal Framework and Responsibilities

- DfE ‘Health and Safety: advice on legal duties and powers, for local authorities, school leaders, school staff and governing bodies’. 02/2014
- Keeping Children Safe in Education. 09/2024
- Outdoor Education Advisors Panel (OEAP) National Guidance
- British Standards Institute ‘BS8848:2014 Specification for the provision of visits, fieldwork, expeditions and adventurous activities outside the United Kingdom’
The employer (Governors) retains overall responsibility for health, safety and welfare of staff & students. They must discharge health and safety responsibilities for educational visits through:
 - Policy and guidance – based on Risk Management and defined standards of competence
 - Monitoring – compliance of school visits with School Policy through understanding physical, social and emotional educational purpose and benefit of visit as well as legal requirements for school visits
 - Training – provision of opportunities for appropriate training
 - Information and advice - Provision of information, advice and support where necessary

Underpinning Legal Framework

We have a Duty of Care for all staff and students whilst in school or off site on a school visit. Any accident or incident where negligence is proven can lead to either Civil or Criminal Proceedings being brought against either the individual (Trip Leader) or Employer (School and Board of Governors).

For Further details, see Section 3.2a *Underpinning Legal Framework* of the OEAP National Guidance

Roles and Responsibilities

Governing Body

There is a clear distinction between normal day to day activities involving out of school trips, where Governors would not be specifically notified, and those of a residential nature, especially those which might be classified as unusual, where Governors would need to be informed. The Governors should be advised in good time (dependent upon nature of trip proposed) of such events at an Education Committee meeting of the Board of Governors and have the opportunity to comment and report to the full Board.

It is vital to recognise the responsibility of the Governors by means of the submission of information and a formal request for their approval in case of unusual activities.

Where the Governors are involved in the planning of an event they should;

- Ensure that the visit has clear aims and objectives that are appropriate, realistic and achievable. Where this is not evident the Governors should challenge the nature of the venture but should not be directly involved in Risk Management and other procedures.
- Ensure that appropriate preparation such as site visits can take place, where necessary.
- Ensure the Headmistress and EVC are supported to be able to fulfil their roles, providing guidance where available.

Headmistress

The Headmistress should;

- Ensure visits comply with the school’s Off Site School Activity Policy document and that the planning procedures have been carried out properly; see *CCA1 Trip Planning Checklists*
 - *CCA1 – Residential Trip Planning Checklist*
 - *CCA1 – Non Residential Trip Planning Checklist*

EVC

The EVC should;

- Ensure educational visits meet the employer's and school's requirements by assessing Trip Leader competence, arranging training, guidance and support where necessary (see *CCAO Trip Leader Certification of Competence*).
- Support the Governors and Headmistress with approval and other decisions.
- Support Trip Leaders in organising all visits and ensure the correct processes are put in place according to the CCA1 (Non-)Residential Trip Planning Checklists.
- Facilitate all aspects of trip organisation, ensuring On-Call cover is provided and trip emergency plans are robust and in place.
- Support and facilitate a debrief and wash up of all trips, following up on all incidents. For residential trips see *CCA8 Residential Trip Wash-up* document.

The Trip Leader

The Trip Leader must

- Follow guidelines set out in CCA Trip Planning Documents (*CCA1-8*)
- Have overall responsibility and Duty of Care for the supervision and conduct of the visit including direct responsibility for the health, safety and welfare of all trip participants
- Be approved to carry out the activity, suitably competent and knowledgeable about the school's policies and procedures
- Plan and prepare and assess the risks
- Appoint a Trip Leadership Team where possible
- Define the roles and responsibilities of the Trip Leadership Team and students, ensuring effective supervision of all activities
- Collect all relevant information of trip participants and obtain suitable permission from Parents/ Guardians/ Next of Kin
- Keep the EVC (and Headmistress) aware of health and safety issues, and cancel the trip if it is deemed unsafe to continue
- Review and evaluate the trip and planning procedures with the Trip Leadership Team as well as in a wash-up meeting with the EVC; for residential trips see *CCA8 Residential Trip Wash-up* document.

Preparation and Planning

The importance of meticulous planning for any event and the importance the school places upon it, cannot be over emphasised.

Whether the visit is to the local shops or to the other side of the world, it is essential that formal planning takes place. This involves considering the risks and difficulties which may arise and making plans to reduce them. Thorough planning and preparation are key to the success of off-site activities. Those who organise and run off-site activities have substantial responsibilities to those in their charge. Furthermore, proactive planning greatly increases the harmony and efficiency of the trip, enabling all participants to focus on and enjoy the trip itself.

The purpose and rationale for each activity must be clearly set down in accordance with the School's Ethos as part of the pre-planning procedure, be it social, recreational, academic, cultural or spiritual, and will be reflected in each departmental policy. For non-residential trips, see event description section of SchoolBase event request and for residential trips, see *CCA2 Residential Trip Proposal*.

The Headmistress will need time to study the submitted documents and take legal advice where appropriate. She must also give the Education Committee of the Board of Governors time to consider the proposed venture. It is therefore, important to submit the documents in good time.

Planning Considerations

It is vital that planning and organisation and where necessary, reconnaissance, be set in train well ahead of the departure date. It is not always necessary to have visited the place in advance

of the trip, especially if a tour operator is providing guides or local expertise. All the appropriate Trip Planning documents (CCA1-8 for residential trips) and SchoolBase Event Planning Stages will have been completed, submitted and signed off in the correct order. Parents will have been provided with the information and, where appropriate, permission obtained. The completion and submission of the forms should be, in itself, a manifestation of the planning process. Guidance and support in this can be sought from the EVC.

Trip Research including venues and location

The Trip Leader must research the implications of an off-site activity thoroughly. Experience over many years indicates that where accidents have occurred the cause can often be traced back to this initial crucial stage of the process. In this context knowledge of an activity and venue is vital. This is of particular importance when a venue involves naturally hazardous areas or activities (see Appendix B – Risk Management, Hazardous Activities). In cases where a pre-visit or recce is not feasible then great care must be taken in seeking advice and information from elsewhere. As preliminary visits may be an important part of the planning of activities, any reasonable costs incurred can be included in the overall cost of the activity or our other school funds.

When choosing a location, the suitability of staff, participants and activities should be assessed. The following should be given consideration:

- The distance to the venue/location. Long journeys can be tiring and stressful in themselves.
- The cost in time and money is worth the educational benefit.
- The environment is appropriate. It may be challenging but not involve unnecessary risk
- The activity meets all the objectives set
- The climate and weather conditions are appropriate at the time of the visit. Hot sun and heavy rain can bring their own dangers. This should be assessed carefully and the persons on the trip carefully considered.

Programme preparation

When activities are in the planning stage it is important to ensure that the venue, programme and cost are appropriate to the aims of the venture, the needs and abilities of participants and the resources available. For example, if achievement of the aims requires a mountain environment or a foreign country then clearly the venue must reflect this. By the same token the venue should not involve more cost, greater distance or more potential hazard than is necessary an appropriate.

A clearly defined programme should be put together prior to the visit. This should form part of the information proved to parents/ guardians and should be checked against the objectives laid out for the visit and also the identified needs and abilities of the participants. When using an outside agency to provide outdoor activities the Trip Leader (at the guidance of the EVC) should consider UK providers that hold the LoTC Quality Badge and adventurous overseas trips providers that are BS8848 compliant.

Choosing outside agencies and travel companies

It is important to take steps to learn as much as possible about services and facilities that are included in any contract. In considering this you might find it helpful to speak to colleagues who have used a specific company on a previous occasion.

It is usual for payment to be made to companies, in a number of stages, well before the date of departure. Therefore, it is essential that the company is financially secure. You must use companies that have some form of bonding that enables us to recover funding or to return home should the company cease to trade before or during an activity. Any company offering a residential package deal at an inclusive price, which includes any two aspects out of accommodation, transport and 'other service', is obliged in law to be bonded.

When considering the use of organisations, companies and centres for offsite activities the following should be considered:

- It is a statutory requirement that outdoor activity centres are licensed by the Adventure Activities Licensing Authority (AALA). The only time that this does not apply is when the technical level of the activities involved is very low or that the centre operates beyond the parameters of the scheme. For Further details, see Sections 3.2f AALA Licensing and 4.4f Assessing an Adventure Provider of the OEAP National Guidance.

Travel arrangements

When making travel arrangements, the following should be considered:

- Advice from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office; [Foreign travel advice - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)
- Are these reasonably priced and appropriate?
- The likelihood of delay should be considered and the option with the least likelihood of disruption chosen. Contingency plans for any possible delays should be drawn up.
- The travel operators own rules affecting supervision ratios
- If the arrangements for the journey itself have specific hazards affecting supervision, such as sea crossings, overnight sleeper trains or small group transport in developing countries e.g. tuk-tuks and rickshaws
- Overnight road travel must not happen in developing countries unless in extremis and only once On-Call have been informed

Third Party Staff & Equipment

Along with the guidance from the EVC the Trip Leader should consider the qualifications and experience of the school and third party staff in charge of the activities. For trips involving adventurous activities, to ensure compliance, providers that hold the LoTC Quality Badge must use appropriately trained and qualified staff as well as certified and inspected equipment.

Buildings and other facilities

The Trip Leadership Team should consider the following when assessing the buildings and facilities available at a venue:

- Appropriate and functional fire safety equipment, exits and signage. These should be highlighted and explained to all trip participants
- All participants should be made aware of any emergency procedures, either in place at the venue or established by the Trip Leadership Team.

Day Trips/Activities

Follow *CCA1 Non Residential Trip Planning Checklist*

Residential Events

Follow *CCA1 Residential Trip Planning Checklist*. It is imperative that all the necessary research is carried out well beforehand. The Headmistress MUST give signed permission through *CCA2 Residential Trip Proposal* form before any approach can be made to the pupils or parents.

Emergency contacts

It is important that, as far as reasonably practicable, it is possible for groups to be contacted and for them to be able to make contact with Downe House. It is sensible to arrange regular exchanges of information if the activity is residential. In this way the school and family can be assured of the participant's well-being. This is highlighted through the CCA Trip Planning Document, *CCA5 Residential Trip Emergency Contacts*.

First Aid

It is essential that there is appropriately trained First Aiders within the Trip Leadership Team to deal with any likely emergency. All members of staff at Downe House should be qualified in first aid at some level.

Leadership and Supervision

Supervision - there are two types, both acceptable if risk assessed appropriately

- Close – pupils are in sight
- Remote – away from staff but within set control systems

Supervision and Staffing Ratios

Trip Leader – Trip Leaders must be clearly identified; this may not be the person organising the activity. The Trip Leader must be an approved member of staff with appropriate skills, expertise and experience for the activity. Newly qualified staff are not considered to be experienced enough to take on the role of Trip Leader, staff leading a trip must have completed their probation period before a trip can be considered. Downe House Staff must have the appropriate level of sign off on *CCAO Trip Leader Certification of Competence*. External trainers and technical advisors can be Trip Leaders once experience and qualifications have been verified by the EVC and HR are satisfied with provision of Duty of Care and are in receipt of their DBS clearance.

Trip Leadership Team – Staff must have the appropriate sign off on *CCAO Trip Leader Certification of Competence*. The Trip Leadership Team would normally consist of academic or House staff, bank staff or occasionally family members (particularly those who are resident). They must be appropriately qualified and experienced.

It is important to have an appropriate ratio of adult supervisors to children for any trip or specific part of a trip. The factors to be taken into consideration include

- Sex, age, ability and characteristics of the group
- Participants (staff and students) with medical or physical needs
- The nature of the activities
- The experience and competence of staff, both general and on specific activities
- The duration and nature of the journey
- The type of accommodation
- Requirements of the organisation/location to be visited
- Competence and behaviour of the participants
- First aid cover

Calculating staffing ratios

All ratios are subject to change in relation to the specific activity. The final decision will be taken by the Headmistress in consultation with the LT and EVC. As a guide, the requirement is:

Local Non Residential Trips, <i>where the pupils will be working in groups accompanied by staff</i>	1:15 <i>should be 2 adults, one of whom is female</i>
Local Non Residential Trips, <i>where the pupils will be dispersed and not in accompanied groups</i>	1:15 <i>should be 2 adults, one of whom is female</i>
Residential visits in the UK	1:15 <i>must be 2 adults, one of whom is female</i>
Residential visits outside the UK	1:10 <i>must be 2 adults, one of whom is female</i>
Hazardous activities	Discuss with EVC <i>in line with National Governing Bodies</i>

The circumstances in which it may be acceptable to have less than the minimum number of staff are:

- Where activities involve situations that are familiar to participants, and where additional appropriate adult help could be available in a short time, should the party leader become incapacitated.
- On a journey where additional help will be available at the group's venue. Providing that there is adequate supervision of participants during the journey
- Supervision in minibuses
- Local activities, for example PE matches, and where further adult help is available quickly
- Activities that are not directly supervised
- For groups of participants that are Sixth Form can be involved in the supervision process themselves. The participants should be closely considered, to ensure that this appropriate, Max 1:20

Children, relatives or close friends of staff

In situations where it is proposed that the children, close relatives or friends of staff accompany a group on an off-site activity then there is a serious risk that roles will conflict. Permission of the Headmistress, Deputy Headmistress or Boarding Deputy must be obtained.

Any children of staff should be of a compatible age to the participants in the group and should be treated as any other participant in the party. The staff member will not be able to lead the group and should not be counted in the staffing ratio.

Activities where participants are not under direct supervision i.e. remote supervision

It is acknowledged that there are occasions when it is appropriate for participants to work in situation where they are not directly supervised. Examples might be shopping trips, Duke of Edinburgh's Award expeditions, some field work exercises and in order to explore, however briefly, a carefully and clearly defined area. In such cases, care must be taken to ensure that the following are observed:

- Participants must have the aptitude and maturity for, and be appropriately trained, briefed and experienced for whatever is involved
- The next of kin must be informed, before being asked to give their consent – by sending their pupils to us they have done these things
- Each Participant must have a *CCA5b Participant Emergency Contact Card*
- There must be appropriate emergency back-up available and participants must have the means, knowledge and ability to use it. The extent of back up depends on the circumstances
- In all cases staff are still supervising up to a clearly defined exit point
- If there is any doubt as to what is appropriate here then further advice should be sought from the EVC well in advance, during the initial trip planning phase

Groups when activity leaders are male

- Groups should have at least one female member of staff. However, there are exceptions that have been sanctioned by the Headmistress. This regulation is concerned with the position of staff as well as the welfare of participants
- Staff members are advised to take particular care in such circumstances and follow guidance given in the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Supervising adults other than professional staff

It is acknowledged that on occasion it is necessary to make use of responsible adults other than members of staff to supervise participants. The Headmistress and EVC will decide whether such adults would be suitable. In making this decision the following factors will be taken into consideration:

- Will the adults know the participants and other adults involved?
- Have they appropriate skills, qualifications or experience to offer?

- Would staff and participants be likely to respond to them as they would to staff members?

Good practice in supervision and the standard of care

It is most important that staff members and other supervisory adults are:

- Aware of the high standard of care required of them on off-site activities
- Always aware of potential dangers and take necessary safeguards
- Have pupils in minimum groups of three during all activities and set up a 'buddy system'. Do not rearrange groups unless absolutely necessary. When bringing groups back together ensure all pupils are back
- Ensure that all staff (and pupils) understand that high standards of behaviour apply at all times. Not just during activities
- Ensure that all supervisors understand that their supervisory role continues in the evening – however hard a day it has been that it is not a time to relax and switch off
- Use down-time to brief the group on the planned activities for the day to come
- Use down time for individual reflection on personal learning outcomes, and group discussion
- Apply the advice contained in "Remote Supervision" above, adapted as necessary, if it is felt reasonable to allow pupils some time without close supervision
- Occupy the group with mildly active, non- academic activities in the evening.

Night time

Group leaders should ensure that:

- The group's immediate accommodation is exclusively for the group's use if possible
- Teachers have sleeping accommodation on the same floor adjacent to pupils' accommodation
- Child protection arrangements are in place to protect both pupils and staff in alignment with the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Where possible, internal doors are lockable but staff must have reasonable access to the pupil accommodation and where pupils doors are locked, teachers have immediate access, as necessary, to a master key.
- All staff and pupils know the emergency procedures/escape routes in the event of a fire. Where windows and doors are locked against intrusion, ensure that alternative escape routes are known and fire doors function properly.

Who to brief, and how

Teaching staff, other supervising adults, the next of kin and participants directly or indirectly involved with an off-site activity must be fully briefed with regard to the nature of the activity, their role and responsibilities, and all arrangements that will or might be made.

Check lists and information

Each member of the Trip Leadership Team should carry the trip pack, including any information that enables them to act quickly and effectively. Particular care should be taken if a group is to divide into smaller units. As far as it reasonably possible the Trip Leadership Team should know where each of the participants are at all times. All group participants should also be aware of all relevant emergency procedures.

Students should also know who to contact and when, should the needs arise. When remotely supervised this must be recorded on *CCA5b Participant Emergency Contact Card* or Participant Trip Pack, either of which should be with them at all times. The suitability of each option is dependent upon the type of trip, if needed this should be discussed with the EVC.

Communicating with Parents

Parental Consent

Specific parental consent is not necessary for day visits. By sending pupils to Downe House parents/guardians accept that they are giving consent for regular activities. However, it is good practice to notify parents of all events that their daughters are attending, particularly for all visits involving hazardous activities. For all residential activities away from Downe House it is important to get parental consent.

Timing of Consent and Information for the Next of Kin

Information to the next of kin must be fair and realistic and should be given in sufficient time to make an unhurried and informed decision before they are financially committed. There should be enough information to allow the next of kin to make an objective decision and this information must be in a written form.

Next of Kin/ Parents Meeting

For residential visits or visits to a foreign country a parents meeting or presentation with the next of kin would in many cases be appropriate, in addition to any written information, to answer questions. This may not be practical so it is important that the opportunity for direct communication to the Trip Leader is made available to parents & guardians in order to resolve issues and ask questions. In addition to this parents and guardians should be informed of the following, by either letter(s), including the initial letter, or during a meeting:

- Dates of the visit
- Visit's objectives and details of activities planned and/or itinerary
- Modes of travel including names of any tour company
- Size of group, level of supervision and any potential remote supervision that may take place
- Details of accommodation and security
- Procedures for pupils who may become ill
- Names of leader and other staff or accompanying adults
- Standards of behaviour. The code of conduct should be signed by parents and pupils.
- Outline details of insurance
- Clothing and equipment list
- Money issues

Medical Consent

- The Medical Centre MUST be consulted before every activity. The Medical Centre in conjunction with the CCA will provide First Aid kits and any materials for students who have special needs
- The trip planning document *CCA4 Residential Trip Code of Conduct* should be used for all residential trips where full consent is to be obtained. It must have all necessary information attached to it when it is given to the next of kin
- Copies of forms signed and returned by the next of kin should be retained until such time as all matters relating to an activity are finally settled
- If the CCA4 consent form needs to include more information for a particular trip/activity the EVC in the first instance should be contacted to discuss this
- If the next of kin withholds consent, the trip leader and/ or the EVC should contact the parents/ guardians in question to discuss the trip and their concerns. If these cannot be resolved, the participant should not be taken on the visit but the curricular aims should be delivered to the participant in some other way. If the next of kin gives a conditional consent the Headmistress should consider whether the participant might be taken on the visit or not
- Doctors can be expected to carry out necessary emergency treatment without next of kin consent but it is possible that a surgeon in another country might be reluctant to operate

on a participant unless assured that the group leader had authorisation to agree to such treatment. When travelling abroad it is sensible to include a translation of the medical consent in the relevant foreign language.

Insurance

Downe House Insurance Policy covers all activities undertaken by pupils and staff as part of extra-curricular provision. It is important that Party Leaders of residential, or hazardous, activities liaise with the Finance Department with regard to insurance. The Finance Bursar will need to know, in all residential cases, how many pupils and staff are involved, and in some cases will need a full list of names. If you are unsure, check with the Finance Bursar. It is also important, to avoid double indemnity, to make sure that you are only covered by one insurance policy on a trip.

Transport

For information on Transport please refer to the School Minibus and Vehicle Transport Policy.

Financial Issues

Parents and pupils must be advised of the charging process for each activity prior to departure. For any activity over £35.00, explicit parental consent should be obtained. The cost of wholly curricular activities must be met out of Department budgets. Trip Leaders of residential activities MUST consult the Finance Department regarding charging for trips as per the *CCA2 Residential Trip Planning Document*. The EVC will also advise. Copies of any letters sent to parents detailing a trip should be sent to the Finance Department.

Once the details of the trip have been confirmed, or the trip has taken place, a list of those who took part plus any costs and any additional expenditure to be taken into account MUST be passed to the Finance Department as soon as possible (within two weeks) of your return. This can be done on SchoolBase. The information required is:

- Pupil's name in full
- Pupil's House and Year Group
- Full cost of the event for each pupil
- Evidence of expenditure e.g. invoices from tour companies, receipts

Some trips require a deposit to be paid in advance. Although it is possible to have this put on the pupil's bill this is normally only done if there is enough time to collect the money before the deposit has to be paid to the tour company. The normal and preferred method is by cheque. Deposits are always non-returnable unless otherwise agreed. Please make this clear in initial information to parents.

During the trip some payments will need to be made – for entries etc. It is sometimes possible, given enough notice to the Finance Department, to arrange a school credit card for the trip. However, if you have to deal with a large sum of cash, it is important that the school's insurers know you are taking cash. You should also distribute the cash amongst staff to minimise the risk. Use hotel safes if possible. Keep a daily budget record.

Sometimes a pupil who has signed to take part in a trip will withdraw at the last minute. If this happens tell the bursary and whether she is to be charged for the trip. It is possible to replace a pupil with another and charge the new pupil's account. However, there may be administration charges from tour companies for late changes and these will still need to be charged to the pupil who has withdrawn. You must give as much detail as possible to the bursary so that they can answer parent's queries without having to pass them to you.

Emergency Procedures

All those involved with off-site activities must be familiar with and adhere to guidelines set out in the following Emergency Procedures documents;

- *CCA5 Non-Residential Trip Emergency Contacts and Procedures*
- *CCA5 Residential Trip Emergency Contacts and Procedures*

- *CCA5a On-Call Emergency Procedures*
- *CCA5b Participant Emergency Contact Card*

Preparing Pupils

Pupils who are involved in a visit's planning and organisation, and who are well prepared, will make more informed decisions and will be less at risk. Providing information and guidance to pupils is an important part of preparing for a school visit. Pupils should clearly understand what is expected of them and what the visit will entail. Pupils must understand what standard of behaviour is expected of them and why rules must be followed. Pupils should be told about any potential dangers and how they should act to ensure their own safety and that of others.

Participation and Code of Conduct

The group leader should ensure that the pupils are capable of undertaking the proposed activity. Pupils should be encouraged to take on challenges but should not be coerced into activities which they have a genuine fear. Pupils whose behaviour is such that the group leader is concerned for their safety, or for that of others, should be withdrawn from the activity. On residential visits the group leader should consider whether such pupils should be sent home early/ repatriated. This decision must be made in unison with the Headmistress. The expected standard of behaviour and associated sanctions should be outlined in *CCA4 Residential Trip Code of Conduct and Consent* form. This form should be specifically updated for each trip and presented to the parents and participants during the initial planning stages of the trip. This should then be signed by both parents and trip participant.

Information to pupils

For all visits the Trip Leader should decide how information is provided, but any briefing must ensure that the pupils understand key safety information. Pupils should understand:

- The aims and objectives of the visit/activity
- The background information about the place to be visited
- How to avoid specific dangers and why they should follow rules
- Why safety precautions are in place
- What standard of behaviour is expected
- Appropriate and inappropriate personal and social conduct including sexual activity
- Who is responsible for the group
- What to do if approached by anyone from outside the group
- Rendezvous procedures
- What to do if separated from the group
- Emergency procedures

For residential visits, the group should be involved in all elements of planning and where appropriate they should be made familiar with/tasked to research the following key elements:

- Basic foreign words where appropriate
- Relevant foreign culture and customs
- What not bring back either within the UK or from abroad such as drugs, knives etc

For residential visits all group members should carry *CCA5b Participant Emergency Contact Cards* with contact details of accommodation and the Trip Leadership Team in case an individual becomes separated. This applies to exchange visits when pupils will also need to know about any ground rules agreed between group leader and host family.

For visits which involve Remote Supervision all group members should carry *CCA5b Participant Emergency Contact Cards* with School and Trip Leadership Team contact details as well as space for rendezvous points and timings.

If at any time there is a change in the planned schedule new activities should be assessed and pupils provided with the appropriate information. These changes to itinerary should be discussed

with the EVC for Risk Assessment approval.

Preparing pupils for remote supervision

During any time that remote supervision takes place the group leader must ensure that pupils are aware of the ground rules and are adequately to be on their own in a group. It is important that pupils understand and accept the ground rules. The size of each group should also be considered. As a minimum, pupils should have the following:

- *CCA5b Participant Emergency Contact Cards* including telephone numbers and emergency contacts if lost and knowledge of how to summon help. Do not merely rely upon storing the Trip Leader phone number into participant phones.
- Money
- Maps and plans and any other information for them to act effectively
- Knowledge of out of bounds areas or activities
- Downe House identity cards (or similar) and a rendezvous point

Equal Opportunities and pupils with special educational and medical needs

Every effort will be made to ensure that school journeys and activities are available and accessible to all who wish to participate. All young people should be encouraged to participate in as wide a range of activities as possible. If a trip is to cater for pupils with special needs, a suitable venue should be selected.

Special attention at the planning stage should be given to appropriate supervision ratios and what additional safety measures may be needed. Arrangements for taking medication, ensuring sufficient supplies and where resupply can be arranged if necessary for residential visits may be required.

The Trip Leader must ensure that they have an up to date Medical List (downloaded off SchoolBase) and that they have visited the Palmer Centre to obtain a First Aid Kit. It is at this point that any specific medical needs and associated, signs, symptoms and medication must be discussed with the Trip Leader. The trip **Must Not** go ahead unless the Trip Leader understands and is comfortable with the medical needs of all participants. The information required for this is as follows:

- Details of medical conditions
- Written details of any medication required (including instructions on dosage/times) and parental permission to administer; a parental permission if they pupil needs to administer their own medication or agreement for a volunteer teacher to administer
- Information on any allergies/phobias
- Information on any special dietary requirements
- Information on any toileting difficulties, equipment or aide to daily living
- Special transport needs for pupils who need help with mobility

If teachers are concerned about whether they can provide for a pupil's safety or the safety of other pupils on a trip because of a medical condition, they should seek further advice from the Medical Centre. The group leader should check that the insurance policy covers staff and pupils with pre-existing medical needs.

Enquiries should be made at an early stage about access and facilities for securing wheelchairs on transport and at residential centres etc. If ramps are not going to be available in certain places, the organiser may wish to arrange to take portable ramps with them. The group leader should at an early stage assess whether manual handling skills will be needed and, if so whether training should be sought. All teachers supervising the visit should be given the opportunity to talk through any concerns they may have about their ability to support the child. Extra help should be requested if necessary.

Immediately prior to departure the Trip Leader must ensure that all participants have their

prescribed medication with them, such as Epipens, asthma inhalers and suitable medication and monitoring equipment for diabetes. It is also the responsibility of the Trip Leader to alert the Trip Leadership Team to any specific medical needs of the participants and staff.

Appendix B - Risk Management (Contingency Planning)

What is Risk Management?

Risk Assessment is a fundamental part of the Risk Management Plan, designed to ensure the safe and effective completion of any trip or activity. This Risk Management includes ensuring that there is provision of transport, shelter and sustenance where needed, as well as a suitable back-up plan. Risk Assessment, making up only part of this plan, is essentially a two stage process:

- Identifying all reasonably foreseeable hazards
 - The issue or cause for concern; this is only relevant if the issue has a potential to cause harm (the definition of hazard) and is likely to happen to the participants on this trip (the definition of risk).
 - Only hazards that are above and beyond the normal risk exposure of everyday life should be included in Risk Assessments of Risk Management Plans. A certain level of common sense must be applied.
- Identifying the control measures
 - This should include those currently in place
 - Document any further control measures required

All activities MUST have a completed Risk Assessment, and this should be in line with the schools Risk Assessment policy and usage. Risk Assessment Templates can be found: <https://businesssafe.peninsula-online.com>

The *CCA3 Residential Trip Risk Assessments* form should be used for all residential trips. Non-residential trip Risk Assessments are to be completed through the Business safe online portal <https://businesssafe.peninsula-online.comwithin>

Any activity that takes place without a completed and signed Risk Assessment is uninsurable.

The initial planning documents CCA 1-8 should be discussed with the EVC before presentation to the Headmistress. It is the EVC's responsibility to provide guidance where requested and assist in the planning of all offsite visits. This is most pertinent with Risk Management Planning and completion of the Risk Assessment.

Remember:

- You cannot and should not eliminate all risk
- Prepare for and bring risk to an acceptable reasonable level through appropriate control measures and educated, professional judgment
- Manage risk to the best of your ability, if you cannot manage the risk, avoid it
- There will always be accidents

Risk Management is:

- A living dynamic process that involves the whole group, Participants and the Trip Leadership Team – not a piece of paper to be filed away
- A careful examination of what, in the course of events, could cause harm to people
- An aim to reduce the likelihood of participants becoming ill or injured

Pupils could be involved in Risk Management because it is

- An important educative process
- Part of safe education
- Leading to their support for your decision on site
- An essential part of their outdoor education

Three types of Risk Assessment

Generic

- Often applies to an activity whenever and wherever it takes place

Visits/event specific

- Will differ from place to place and group to group but can be modification of general template
- Prepared by school staff and include activity hazards, pupil behaviour hazards, group Management/supervision
- Can say in Risk Management we rely on the institution's own Risk Managements and systems e.g. coaches, reputable tour companies/organisations

Dynamic

- Dynamic Risk assessments are carried out on the ground during the trip. This includes judgements and decisions made during the trip. Any changes to the itinerary or new hazards identified must be recorded retrospectively, after the specific event or during the trip and highlighted during the evaluation/ wash-up process after visits. For Residential visits this should be recorded on the *CCA8 Residential Trip Wash-up* form.
- For residential trips it is good practice to have briefings each day to take stock and assess the circumstances for the next day and to spend time explaining arrangements to the group. This is a key part of ensuring the Physical, Social and Emotional Welfare of the Participants. This briefing should include;
 - **How is everyone**
 - Highs & Lows, how they felt about these experiences
 - Any medical issues, monitor food consumption as well as toilet habits
 - All medication up to date, including Anti-Malarial Prophylactics
 - **Check the local weather forecast**
 - To inform decisions on appropriate clothing
 - To be aware of whether water activities might be in areas prone to flash floods, high winds etc.
 - To be aware of whether trekking or climbing at altitude might be subject to dramatic changes of weather; potential for fallen trees, avalanches etc.
 - **Seek local knowledge of potential hazards**
 - Tides
 - Rivers/streams prone to sudden increases in flow
 - Difficult terrain
 - Crossing points for road, rail or water
 - Unstable cliffs

Plan B

A robust 'Plan B' is essential for all visits, this could simply be to return to School but for residential visits this is a less desirable first option. Good forward planning will always include alternative plans in case the itinerary needs to be changed. This is considered good practice for the following reasons:

- A flexible itinerary can allow activities from later in the visit to be substituted for earlier activities if those prevented by unexpected circumstances
- Trip Leaders faced with potential difficulties will feel more confident to change the itinerary if a pre-assessed alternative is available

Remember:

- Regardless of whether alternatives have been pre-assessed, always take time to reassess risks if the itinerary changes.
- On arrival at an alternative site or activity that has not previously been risk assessed with the EVC, the Trip Leader should, where possible, carry out a dynamic Risk Assessment to the best of their ability and contact the EVC to discuss the proposed activity and associated risk assessment before allowing the pupils to disembark from the transport or engage in the activity

- An unknown location might involve hazards not covered in the original Risk Assessment

Examples of things to consider during Risk Management Planning

- Is there adequate supervision?
- Are there regular head counts?
- Have you sufficient money for emergencies?
- Has all documentation been prepared and checked?
- Is the system for communication adequate?
- Do all staff and pupils know what to do in an emergency?
- Are there sound procedures for coping with a 'lost' pupil (or staff)?
- Have you considered 'What if?'
- For residential trips, have you hard and electronic copies of all documentation, including passports, visas?
- Are there clear parameters for when activities cannot take place? Especially hazardous activities?
- Are you having regular meetings with staff and pupils during the day for review and planning/preparation?
- Are you ready to 'expect the unexpected'?

Hazardous Activities

Most activities within the realm of off-site activities contain an element of danger and hazard. The Risk Management process should address these issues. However, some activities contain a greater element of hazard and risk than others.

For the purpose of obtaining approval for an off-site activity, the list below (which is not a definitive list as there may be another activity not identified below that would be added to the list) will be regarded as hazardous activities. In all cases you must refer to the BAPA guidelines and the West Berks Manual guidelines on hazardous activities.

<u>Land Pursuits</u>		<u>Water Pursuits</u>	<u>Air Pursuits</u>
Angling/Fishing	High Ropes	Angling/Fishing	Ballooning
Archery	Initiative courses	Canal Boating	Flying
Air Rifle Shooting	Low ropes	Canoeing	Gliding
Archery	Judo/ Karate etc	Coasteering	Hang-Gliding
Bungee Jumping	Karting	Power Boating	Parachuting
Camping	Motor Sports	Rafting (White Water)	Paragliding
Caving/Potholing	Mountaineering	Rowing	Parascending
Climbing (artificial and rock)	Orienteering	Sailing	
Cycling	Shooting	Sub aqua and snorkelling	
Expeditions	Skiing	Surfing	
Fencing	Trampolining	Swimming	
Fell Walking	Trekking	Water Skiing	
Horse Riding/Pony		Windsurfing	
Trekking			

Appendix C - Guideline Documents

- West Berkshire Manual
- Health and Safety of Pupils on educational Visits (DfES 2018) [HASPEV]
 - [Health and safety on educational visits - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)
- Standards for LEA's in Overseeing Educational Visits (HASPEV Supplement 1)
- Standards for Adventure (HASPEV Supplement 2)
- A Handbook for Group Leaders (HASPEV Supplement 3)
- Group Safety at Water Margins (DfES)
- High Quality Outdoor Education (English Outdoor Council, 2015)
- Good Practice in Adventure Activities within the Education Sector (AALA, 2011)
- Working with Young People in the Outdoors (OAEP, 2023)
- Five Steps to Risk Management (HSE)
- BAPA Safety Standards
- Demystifying Risk Management (NST, 2004)
- Child Safe (Avon & Somerset Constabulary, 2004)
- Trips and Visits Pocketbooks (Teachers' Pocketbooks, 2004)
- Remote Supervision Guidance Notes (MLTE)
- National Guidelines for Climbing and Walking Leaders (MLTE, 2005)
- The Protection of Young People in the Context of International Visits (City of Edinburgh Council Education Department, 2002)
- Minibus Safety Code of Practice (ROSPA, 2024)
- Weekend Duties
- Downe House School Insurance Policies
- ISI September 2024
- OEAP National Guidance (2014 - <http://oeapng.info/>)