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*School Trip: an event in which schoolchildren journey to a separate location to their normal learning environment under the authority of the staff of their school and with the purpose of learning by experience or reward.*

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Welling School offers a range of educational visits which are regarded as a useful part of the learning provision or are used as positive reinforcement.

A wide range of day visits are arranged involving students in all year groups; these include sports, theatre, participation in competitions and many others. Other visits involve residential stays - these can be within Britain or abroad.

The policy includes consideration of the OEAP National Guidance:  
(<http://oeapng.info/2012/04/educational-visits-coordinator/>).

**This policy is in conjunction with the Safeguarding Policy**

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## **Safeguarding**

The school requires that all members of staff in leading and supporting trips/visits understand and accept their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and of possible concerns being raised during a trip of visit as safeguarding incidents could happen anywhere. All staff attending trips/visits are responsible for referring any concerns to the Designated Teacher responsible for child protection.

## **Student participation in trips / visits / events**

The school reserves the right to refuse or cancel a student's participation in a trip, event or visit according to the following criteria:

- The student's behaviour has given cause for concern and does not match the high standards expected by Welling School.
- The student's attendance at school has given cause for concern and has not been at expected levels.
- Parents have failed to confidentially disclose any pre-existing medical condition which the school deems to have a possible impact upon the safe and smooth conduct of the trip, event or visit.
- The school's risk assessment process and staffing availability reveal concerns that the student's needs might not be met whilst participating.
- Reference for example could be made to the ePORTAL and student planner with regard to behaviour. This includes social events - for example, the End of Year Prom. The school's minimum attendance target is 96%. Should a child fall below 94%, it could jeopardise a student's place on a trip / attendance at an event.
- Should a student be withdrawn from a trip, event or visit as a result of parental failure to confidentially disclose any pre-existing medical condition, it is possible that the school might be unable to bear the costs of reimbursement of any monies paid in respect of the trip, event or visit.
- Should a student be withdrawn from a trip, event or visit as a result of the school's risk assessment process and staffing availability, a full refund of monies paid will be made.
- If a student has paid to attend a trip / event, but in the interim has not behaved / attended school to our expected high standards, the school may refuse to allow that child to attend. A refund of monies paid will be made.

- Poor behaviour will not be tolerated on trips, with the outcome possibly leading to a student being banned from trips for a period of time. The ban maybe lifted at the Head Teacher's discretion.
- In the event of a student's withdrawal from a trip/visit, to avoid financial loss, every attempt should be made by staff to find a substitute to attend (who will pay for the trip).
- Unless impractical, students will be expected to wear full school uniform on trips. Agreement with the link DHT is required for students not to be in full school uniform and a valid reason given. For example, field trip, sporting fixture, skiing holiday.

### **Minimum Expectations of students are that they will:**

- Co-operate fully with staff at all times.
- Follow instructions and guideline without hesitation
- Never place any other member of the party at risk by behaving thoughtlessly..
- Behave in line with Welling School's Code of Conducted all times.
- Behave in a manner that will not make excessive demands on staff.

### **Additionally:**

- A student with specific medical or other needs must be included in the risk assessment and must adhere carefully to support measures in place to ensure her/his safety.
- A student who behaves in an unacceptable manner will be disciplined by staff and may be withdrawn from activities and may be banned from subsequent activities/visits whilst on the trip. Serious misbehaviour may result in suspension or permanent exclusion, in accordance with school policy.

### **Expectations of parents and carers**

- All information regarding the visit should be carefully read.
- Written consent will always be required before a child is permitted to participate.
- All pre-existing medical conditions must be confidentially disclosed, no matter how dormant or trivial.
- Any queries or concerns should be raised with the Lead Organiser prior to the day of the visit, event or departure.
- That they accept that no risk assessment can completely eliminate the risks.
- That they will support school staff in their decision making, in a spirit of trust and mutual respect with an expectation of reasonable behaviour from the student.
- Where applicable, countersign the code of conduct signed by the student in their Student Planner.
- For residential/ overseas visits, attend the Pre Trip Briefing meeting
- Provide up to date contact information so that the school is able to reach them. Also, to ensure that all other emergency contact information is kept current at all times.

### **Expectations of organising / accompanying staff**

- Any member of staff intending to propose and/or plan a trip must ascertain from their line manager whether their previous experience of school trips has provided them with an adequate level of experience to enable them to successfully undertake such a role.

- Colleagues who consider that they might be involved in the leadership of a trip, event or visit are strongly encouraged to seek the opportunity for professional development in respect of this. Such training might be in the form of sessions provided in-house, or through a dedicated meeting with a senior member of staff to go through and exemplify the contents of this policy and the risk assessment procedure.
- All school trip policies and procedures for organising visits must be followed.
- Staff will be expected to have regard to the national Teaching Standards
- No trip will go ahead unless the appropriate proposal and planning pro-formas have been completed and approved.
- The Lead Organiser must ensure that the appropriate consent and medical disclosure pro-formas in respect of every participating student have been completed, returned and checked, leaving enough time to consider whether any disclosure relating to a student's health or well-being might impact upon the risk assessment.
- A comprehensive and specific risk assessment should be carried out, following the advice of the SLT line manager for their curriculum area or, in the case of extra-curricular activities, the deputy Head Teacher assigned by the Head Teacher. This must be discussed with all members of the party including students.
- Necessary skills, such as first aid or leadership relating to particular activities must\* be acquired.
- The Lead Teacher should reflect upon and evaluate the visit/trip upon return and make any relevant suggestions to the DHT linked with the trip.
- In all cases it is the duty of the Head Teacher to make the final decision regarding the 'go ahead' of the trip/visit.
- In event of an emergency during school office hours 8am-4pm it is the responsibility of the Lead organiser (or delegated person) to contact the school. Outside of these hours the Lead Organiser (or delegated person) must contact the delegated member of the Leadership Team.

An emergency is defined as any circumstance where unexpected factors have occurred, leading members of the party to have been injured seriously enough to require specialist treatment, problems with transportation or accommodation, or any other matter which might give rise to heightened levels of anxiety amongst parents or carers, including 'near misses'.

### **Expectations of the Senior Leadership Team**

- The Head Teacher must give formal approval for each visit. This will not be given unless all appropriate forms have been signed off by those staff listed.
- All completed forms must be submitted to the Head Teacher's P.A. for noting on the Trips and visits log.
- The Head Teacher will delegate a member of the Leadership Team will act as a point of contact for each visit which involves overnight stay or takes place at weekends or during holidays.

### **Expectations of the Governing Body**

- The overall responsibility for all Health and Safety matters including school visits lies with the Governing Body.
- A Governor must sign to give approval for any overnight visit.

## **Risk assessment**

No visit or activity can be entirely risk free. For each visit the significant hazards must be listed and, for each hazard, there must be an assessment of the risk (likelihood and extent of harm) to those involved. Sufficient control measures must be in place to reduce the risk posed by each hazard to an acceptably low level.

All participants should be involved in the risk assessment process and in the case of an overnight visit by including a summary and answering any queries at the Pre- Trip Briefing, the trip Leader will have included parent/carers in this process. This gives the additional support advantage of parent/carer input.

Risk assessment can never eliminate risk, but it can reduce the likelihood of harm by careful planning of each aspect of the visit. All participants in the visit have a responsibility to behave in such a manner as to maintain the low level of risk for all involved. The Lead Organiser must continuously reassess the risks as the visit progresses, enlisting the help of colleagues and other party members. Successful leadership may necessitate the imposition of different control measures to those originally planned.

## **Organisation – Guiding Principles**

- The school relies on the goodwill of those staff that regularly organise visits many of which take place at weekends and in holidays.
- The Head Teacher will appoint for any residential trips an assigned member of SLT who will be the key link between the school party and the school. They must be available for contact if the trip/visit is occurring during holiday time. The member of SLT will be responsible for assessing the trip against the SLT check List. They may be required to 'stand in' for the Head Teacher in a critical incident.
- The school has high expectations of all those who are involved in visits i.e. students, parents and staff.
- Lead organisers **must** involve a professional travel agent when taking residential trips abroad. Appropriate insurance must also be taken out. Advice can be sought from the Business Manager.

## **The Lead Teacher Checklist**

### ***The Lead Teacher must***

- Read and ensure that they understand the School Trips and Visits Policy.
- Scrutinise the school calendar carefully in order to ascertain that there are no clashes. Consult the examination calendar, via the exams office, consult specifically with the Key Stage Director and other various colleagues whose work might be affected, prior to submitting a proposal.
- Ensure that one member of the staff accompanying the trip is prepared to accept the role of first aider and will be responsible for the first aid kit, which will be supplied by the Cover Manager. The member of staff who accepts the role of first aider may not necessarily have undertaken first aid training, but it is expected that any member of the staff team involved in a trip, event or visit will use their best endeavours to deal with illness or injury among party members. Work with Finance Office to ascertain whether it is feasible to create a financial plan at the proposal stage of the trip/visit and agree a critical date by which the trip/visit will be deemed financially viable or unviable and therefore proceeded with or cancelled.
- Agree and diarise regular liaison meetings with the Finance Office through which to monitor the financial progress of the trip, event or visit and remedy any issues.

- Complete a standard School Trip Proposal form which must be submitted to senior staff (these can be found in the shared drive). This may lead to approval in principal.
- Use a standard template or compose a draft letter to parents outlining the purpose, timing, eligibility of students and cost of the trip. The letter must refer parents to existence of this policy on the school's website.
- Have the parental letter approved by the delegated SLT member before reproduction and distribution.
- Work with senior colleagues to assemble a staff team for the trip, event or visit which is appropriate to the needs of the students, having regard to nationally advised ratios, student-teacher ratios, gender, skill sets, levels of seniority, experience and (where the trip, event or visit is during term time), the likely impact on the conduct of learning at the school in their absence.
- Approval in principal allows colleagues to proceed with invitations to students and gather deposits. However, the final go-ahead for any trip is dependent upon enough financial support in the form of firm commitments to participate, and the completion of detailed submissions in the form of parental consent, confidential medical disclosures in respect of all participating students, risk assessments, approved itineraries, party member and travel confirmations, within the various school trip pro-formas. No trip may proceed unless and until these have been signed off. This signing-off constitutes formal approval. The trip may then proceed.
- Be responsible for and sign-off the invoices related to their trip or visit, in line with the financial plan referred to above.
- Produce a financial summary of the trip / visit at the conclusion, which they sign in order to certify how all monies were spent. .
- Must ensure that the trip / visit does not run at a loss. In the event that an unforeseen deficit arises it is their responsibility to raise the issue immediately with the school's Business Manager.
- Keep evidence of detailed, thorough planning;
- Undertake a detailed risk assessment;
- Ensure that any staff training needs are identified and addressed.
- Plan and invite all participants in residential visits or in any activity with a higher degree of risk than normal to attend a Pre-Trip Briefing, with parents and carers, at which the accommodation, itinerary and risk assessments are fully discussed.
- Provide detailed feedback after the trip in order to improve school practice.
- Work with the guidance and assistance of the Cover Manager to ensure that all trip documentation is available for distribution to the designated SLT link(s) and for lodging in the school office.

### **Senior Leadership Team (SLT)**

For any residential trips the SLT checklist must be completed within a reasonable time before the departure date with sign off of the completed trip pack occurring in accordance with this policy, in a timely fashion, prior to departure.

### **SLT Checklist**

- Ensure that the trips / visit Lead Teacher has read and understood the School Trips and Visits Policy and Emergency Contingency Policy (Business Continuity Plan).
- Discuss the composition of the party involved in the trip, event or visit, having regard to the students and any known issues in terms of attendance, behaviour or confidential medical disclosure.
- Scrutinise the proposed staffing arrangements for the trip, event or visit, having regard to student-teacher ratios, gender, skill sets, levels of seniority, experience and (where the trip, event or visit is during term time), the likely impact on the conduct of learning at the school in their absence.

- Ensure that staff induction and training needs have been identified and addressed.
- Monitor the progress towards completion of all the required paperwork, so the trip/visit may be formally approved.
- Satisfy yourself that staff leading visits are competent to lead the trip. For example: evidence maybe through qualification, but more usually will be through the experience of practical leadership over time (years). In summary, such a person should be an experienced visit leader with sufficient status within the school to guide the working practice of colleagues.

Ensure that

- All adults, including volunteers are vetted, and that those with significant unsupervised access are subject to full DBS /ISA checks and processes.
- Where will be appropriate risk management for all visits.
- Where appropriate, all staff, young people, parent/carers are involved in visit planning, including risk-benefit assessment, via the Pre Trip Briefing.
- There are contingency plans in place to cover any eventuality involving the cancellation of specific activities during the course of the trip or visit, (e.g. excursions or activities which fall foul of the weather or unforeseen events
- Preliminary planning / research visits have taken place if required.
- Third party provider assurances have been obtained.
- The number and competence of leaders will ensure effective supervision.
- A staff duty system operates so that groups continue to be appropriately supervised at all times.
- Medical, first aid and inclusion issues have been addressed.
- There is an establishment emergency response procedure, appropriate to the nature of visits to be undertaken.
- There is a designated 24/7 SLT emergency contact, with access to all information and documentation relating to the visit. This would normally be the SLT member who has liaised with the Trip Leader in the planning stage.
- The Cover Manager has primed and checked that the dedicated mobile phone has the list of contacts already accessible.. Ensure that the Cover Manager provides them with a list of the parental and next of kin contact details for all party members.
- All staff and group members are aware of their roles and responsibilities.
- Those in parental authority have been appropriately briefed through a Pre-Trip Briefing regarding itinerary, accommodation, activities, transport and emergency telephone numbers.
- The visit leader has sufficient contingency funds and an effective means of communication in case of an emergency (that all accompanying staff have mobile phones, and that the Lead Teacher has a credit card with an appropriate limit)
- Visits are monitored by accompanying staff in accordance with the policy.

- Accidents/near misses and incidents are reported to the Head Teacher and Business Manager.
- The Cover Manager has provided copies of the itinerary, the travel routes and approximate timings, flight details, accommodation details and contact details for the travel agent, and that these are given to the SLT emergency contact AND lodged in the Current School Visit File in the school office in case of the need to convene an emergency meeting in school.

### **Cover Manager Checklist**

- Oversees the initial feasibility of a possible trip/visit going out, in regards to whether the school can balance its everyday operational staffing needs. The cover manager will discuss the feasibility with the SLT member with responsibility for cover.
- Ensures that the emergency designated mobile phone for trips/visits is fit for purpose and is programmed with emergency contact numbers for school and SLT contacts.
- Liaises with the reprographics officer to ensure the paperwork is complete for the Lead Organiser and distributes accordingly.
- Ensures that the Attendance Officer is supplied with an accurate list of attendees, including last minutes amendments.
- Maintenance of the school trip emergency file, kept readily available in the school offices
- Scrutinises the school calendar of events and discusses timings to avoid operational clashes
- Ensures the trips/visits are placed on the school website calendar via Head Teacher's PA.
- Is responsible for the supply of first aid kits to the designated members of staff on each trip or visit.
- Is responsible for the maintenance of first aid kits.

### **Non-staff members on school trips / visits**

If the Lead Organiser requires a non-staff member to accompany the trip / visit, a business case **must** be presented a minimum of 8 working weeks in advance to the Senior Leadership Team for consideration so that the educational request can be judged on its merits. There may be fully valid reasons for a non-staff member to accompany a trip – e.g. as a carer for a disabled student.

Any non-staff member will not count in the staff / student ratio (1:15). Any attending non-staff member must be under the overall supervision of a staff member and **must** provide proof of a full DBS check (which may not be paid for by Welling School).

On no account would it be appropriate for children / relatives of Welling staff to accompany a school trip / visit unless they are Welling students in the year / group concerned.

For short visits / trips (non-residential), parents / carers may be invited to accompany a group on a day visit, but at no time must a parent be left in charge of students unless in extreme circumstances where there is no other option. Parents/carers may be asked to assist in managing a group, but only under the overall supervision of a teacher.

*The lead teacher **must** (as best practice) brief any non-staff, supporters on the purpose of the trip/visit and code of conduct (teaching standards/behaviour policy) for students / staff.*

## Non-staff members on school trips / visits

The children, spouses, partners, or other relatives of Welling School staff may not accompany them on a school trip or visit. The only exceptions to this are where the relative

- is a student at Welling School
- has a particular qualification which is not held by any other eligible staff member. The case for the inclusion of such a relative must be made in writing to the Head Teacher, via the SLT line manager, in enough time in advance of the trip / visit for alternative arrangements to be made if the inclusion of that person is not approved.

For short visits / trips (non-residential), parents / carers may be invited to accompany a group on a day visit, but at no time must a parent be left in charge of students unless in extreme circumstances where there is no other option. Parents/carers may be asked to assist in managing a group, but only under the overall supervision of a teacher.

## Remote supervision and 'Down Time'

There is no such thing as completely unsupervised time on an activity or visit. The school expects all members of staff in leading and supporting trips/visits to maintain a sense of professional propriety at all times.

- However the school does recognize that time with their peers, away from direct adult supervision, is an important feature, particularly of residential visits, and brings many additional learning opportunities for young people. This is also the time where many accidents tend to happen so it needs to be appropriately managed. **Such time is best referred to as 'down' time and appropriate opportunities should be built into the visit plan, included in information to parents (and their consent) and be covered by the risk-benefit assessment.**
- 'Down time', or recreation time, is that period before, between or after more structured activities. Visit leaders should ensure that pupils continue to be appropriately supervised during downtime and such supervision could be direct or remote.
- It is essential practice to:
  - avoid using the term 'free time', ensure that all staff and young people understand the standards of behaviour that apply at all times, not just during activities;
  - ensure that a staff duty system operates so that groups continue to be appropriately supervised at all times.
- At any time all students must know/be aware of how and where to contact the duty member of staff.
- Standard techniques for remote supervision in this context could include:
  - setting geographical boundaries within a suitable area;
  - setting a time limit by which all are to be back at an agreed location and interim 'check-ins'
  - ensuring young people are in small 'buddy' groups and know to stay together;
  - no student should be allowed to go unaccompanied to any location whilst on the trip /visit.
  - briefing students as to the location of staff during the 'down time' period.
- Sensibly some staff could be in a fixed position and others roaming the agreed area.
- If students get lost, they know not to wander aimlessly but to stay together and wait for the staff to find them.
- If abroad, ensuring students carry a small briefing card in the local language.

- Ensuring students know the location of the hotel or hostel they are staying at (carrying a hotel card from reception is a simple and effective idea).
- Clearly the age, maturity and competence of the students will affect how you put this into practice.