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SAFEGUARDING AND PROMOTING THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF STUDENTS ON ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE THE SCHOOL

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Review Frequency	3 years
Date of next review	November 2029
Scope of Policy	This policy applies to all staff, students and volunteers at Riverside School

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Riverside School seeks to ensure that every student has access to as wide a range of educational experiences as possible. It recognises the significant educational value of visits and activities which take place away from the immediate school environment either during or beyond the normal school day.

Education away from the classroom helps students to:
- acquire skills which promote well being and healthy lifestyles;
- develop knowledge and understanding about risks and how to promote their own and others' safety;
- enjoy and achieve as a result of activities beyond the classroom;
- gain an awareness and appreciation of environments, other than those they are familiar with; and
- gain and apply key skills including leadership, team work and decision making.

The aim of this policy is to ensure that the duty of care for the students of Riverside School is fulfilled with full compliance to the DfE best practice on educational trips and visits as outlined in the document "Health and Safety of Pupls on Educational Visits" (DfES 2018). The procedure for planning a visit and associated documentation can be found elsewhere.

2.0 LEGAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 The Management of Health and Safety at Work regulations 1992 made under the 1974 Act require employees to:
- assess the risks of activities
- introduce measures to control those risks
- tell their employees about the measures

Also under the Health and Safety legislation employees must:
- take responsible care of their own and others safety
- co-operate with their employers over safety matters
- carry out activities in accordance with training and instructions
- inform the employer of any serious risks

These duties apply to all school visits.

2.2 Common Law

Teachers are said to have a particular duty of care for student, meaning that a teacher is expected to exercise the same standard of care as a reasonably careful and responsive parent ("in loco parentis"). Staff at Riverside School must therefore take all reasonable steps to ensure that every student under his or her care is not exposed to unacceptable risks.

3.0 APPROVAL FOR VISITS

The Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) responsible for co-ordinating visits should be approached, if possible, at least, 2 weeks before the proposed visit. For overnight / international trips the EVC should be approached 6 months in advance. They will then guide the Visit Leader through the approval procedures which are stored on the school SharePoint site. All offsite activities must be formally approved in writing by the Head teacher or the EVC, whom the Head teacher can delegate responsibility for approval to.

4.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 Visit Leader

One teacher, the Visit Leader, has overall responsibility for the planning, supervision and conduct of each trip or visit and must take overall responsibility for the health and safety of the group.

The Visit Leader should:

- obtain the Head of School's / EVC prior agreement in principle before any planning for an offsite visit takes place
- undertake and complete the planning and preparation for the visit, following the school's procedures, preparing and submitting all paperwork on time to the EVC, including undertaking a comprehensive risk assessment
- be able to control and lead students of the relevant age range
- be suitably competent to instruct students in an activity and be familiar with the location where the activity will take place
- be aware of student protection issues
- ensure that appropriate first aid provision will be available
- clearly define each additional teacher or group supervisor's role
- where necessary, organise and run a briefing for parents,
- review progress during the planning phase regularly and advise the EVC when adjustments need to be made
- ensure the ratio of students to teachers is appropriate
- to make parents aware of the details of the trip
- ensure that the group supervisors have details of the school contact procedures
- ensure the additional teachers and supervisors have a copy of emergency procedures
- ensure that details of students' SEN and medical needs are known by all staff supervising the visit.
- ensure that brief summary of the trip on the appears on the website after it it has taken place

4.2 Educational Visits Coordinator

The Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) has responsibilty for advising Visit Leaders on the planning and organisation of trips and visits, guiding them through the completion of the pre-trip paperwork and associated activities and checking and approving that paperwork before making a recommendation for approval to the Head of School.

The EVC should:

- guide the VL through the organisation and planning process ensuring that all procedures are adhered to
- satisfy themselves that the VL has experience in supervising the age groups going on the visits and will organise the group effectively
- ensure that the VL has understood all issues relating to health and safety as outlined in this policy and is competent to monitor the risks throughout the visit
- ensure the ratio of supervisors to students is appropriate
- ensure the competence of the staff and volunteers to lead or supervise the visit
- ensure that staff accompanying students have appropriate DBS checks and that adequate student protection measures are in place
- ensure parental consent has been obtained

● ensure that the emergency arrangements and contact systems for each visit are in place for the duration of the trip
● check that all paperwork, procedures and associated activities are compliant with school policies before making a recommendation for approval
● ensure the number of trips taking place on any given day are not too high so they do not stretch the schools resources
● ensure that the school is able to adequately cover any teachers away on a trip
● ensure upcoming trips are placed on the school calendar so all staff are aware
● keep records of individual visits including accident/incident or near-miss reports
● review systems, monitor practice and make any recommendations for changes to the Head of School

4.3 Head of School
The Head of School should satisfy themselves:
● that the EVC checks all necessary paperwork and associated actions for compliance with school policies
● that risk assessments are completed and appropriate safety measures are in place for educational visits.

5.0 PLANNING THE VISIT
The process and procedures to follow when organising a visit are outlined in online Trip Approval form. Visit Leaders should begin a dialogue as early as possible with the EVC regarding compliance with these procedures.

Whatever the destination of the visit it is of primary importance that formal planning is undertaken to consider the potential dangers and difficulties, with plans drawn up to minimise any risks.

5.1 Risk Assessments
Risk assessments must be undertaken by the Visit Leader. Students must not be placed in situations which expose them to an unacceptable level of risk. Safety must always be the prime consideration. If the risks cannot be contained then the visit must not take place.
The risk assessment should be based on the following considerations:
● What are the hazards?
● Who might be affected by them?
● What safety measures need to be in place to reduce the risk to an acceptable level?
● Can the visit leader put the safety measures into place?
● What steps will be taken in an emergency?

The person who conducts the risk assessment should give copies to all teachers/supervisors on the visit, with details of the measures they should take to reduce the risk. For all students with a Statement of Special Education Need an individual risk assessment for off-site visits, updated each full term, is recorded in their personal file. Visit leaders will ensure that the individual risk assessments have been updated to take account of the planned activities during the proposed visit and that all leaders hold a copy for each student in their group. Frequent visits to local venues such as swimming pools do not have to be done each time – a generic risk assessment being made annually. The visit leader should monitor the risks throughout the visit and take appropriate action when necessary.

5.2 Initial Visits
For a venue which has not been used before, the Visit Leader should carry out a preparatory visit in order to:
● ensure the venue is suitable to meet the aims and objectives of the educational experience
● assess potential areas and levels of risk
● become familiar with the area before accompanying young people

5.3 First Aid
Before undertaking any offsite activities the Visit Leader should assess the level of first aid which might be needed. On all visits the visit leader should ensure that a first aid bag is taken. For adventurous activities, visits abroad or residential visits the risk assessment may identify the need to have a trained first aider, sometimes with specialist knowledge e.g. first aid for mountain leaders. In addition, all adults in the group should know how to contact emergency services.

5.4 Types of Visit
Visits may be classified as follows:
● Category A visits – these comprise activities which present no significant risk
● Category B visits – higher risk activities which require that the leader has undergone any additional familiarisation process or induction, specific to the visit and or location
● Category C visits – higher risk activities

5.5 Competence to Lead
● For activities with no significant risk (e.g. walking in parks, museum visits, field studies in benign situations) any competent teacher may lead the visit. All permanent members of teaching staff will be deemed competent. Newly qualified teachers or other teachers new to the profession will need to seek guidance from the EVC.
● For activities involving some higher risk activities (e.g. residential visits, walking in non remote areas, camping, low level initiative challenge) the leader will need to have been specifically inducted in the activity or location by a suitably qualified or experienced leader.
● For more demanding activities (trekking in remote areas, water sports, exchange visits) the leader will need to have attended a recognised course of training or recorded relevant experience or have his/her competence assessed by an appropriate technical adviser, depending on the activity.

5.6 Supervision
The factors which need to be considered when calculating the ratio for supervision are:
● Age and ability of the group
● SEN and students with medical needs
● Nature of activities
● Experience of adults
● Duration and nature of visit
● Competence and behaviour of students
● First aid requirements.
Staffing ratios may vary according to the factors noted above and must be agreed with the EVC as part of the planning process. However, the minimum, appropriate for local Category A visits would be:
● 1 adult for every 15-20 students in Years 7 and above.
In addition to the teacher in charge there should be sufficient supervisors to cope effectively with an emergency. When visits are in Category B and C the level of supervision will need to be greater. Supervisors must either be employees of Riverside School or volunteer supervisors appointed under the requirements of 5.8 below.

Whatever the length and nature of the visit staff must check students regularly. All staff must carry lists of students at all times. Students must be identifiable and known to the person/s supervising them. In some types of activity involving outdoor pursuits (Duke of Edinburgh, Outward Bound) students may be subject to Remote Supervision. The Visit Leader must ensure that the students are aware of the ground rules and are adequately equipped to be on their own or in a small group.

As a minimum all students being remotely supervised must have the following:

- suitable clothing and footwear
- water and a high calorie snack
- telephone numbers with emergency contacts if lost
- money
- maps and plans and any other information for them to act effectively
- a mobile phone
- knowledge of how to summon help
- a rendezvous point

5.7 Students with Medical Needs

For students with medical needs, additional safety measures will need to be taken to those already in place for all students. Arrangements for taking medication and ensuring sufficient supplies for residential visits may be required. All teachers accompanying students with medical needs must carry copies of the student's Health Care Plan and be fully aware of the student's medical needs and any medical emergency procedures. Summary sheets must be held by all teachers containing details of each student's needs. If a student's safety cannot be guaranteed then the student may be withdrawn from the activity. The Head of School's decision is final in this matter.

Parental information on the following must be obtained:
- current medical conditions
- emergency contact details
- GP's name, address and phone number
- written details of medication required
- parental permission for student self administration or agreement for staff member to administer
- information on allergies or phobias
- special dietary requirements
- toileting difficulties.

If the staff member is concerned about whether they can provide for a student's safety or the safety of other students on the visit they must discuss this with the EVC. The EVC will discuss this with parents and the school health service or the student's GP.

5.8 Voluntary Help

Volunteer supervisors should normally be people well known to the school, for instance as either parents or governors. Volunteers will be told that they have the responsibility to follow instructions of the Visit Leader who retains overall responsibility for the visit. The Visit Leader will ensure that each volunteer knows precisely what their role is and understands that they have a responsibility to carry out that role.

Where students are organised in small groups, a student will not generally be placed in a group for which his/her parent is responsible. The EVC retains the right to make the final decision as to which volunteers are permitted accompany the visit.

Volunteers/parents who are volunteering to help supervise one-off trips (not involving an overnight stay) do not need to be DBS checked if they will not be left unsupervised in charge of students at any time. However, if a volunteer/parent is helping to supervise trips regularly they must be subject to appropriate DBS checks. Volunteers/parents should not normally be used as supervisors on trips involving overnight stays. Any such proposals would need explicit written approval from the Head of School.

5.9 Travel and Transport

Arrangements for booking coaches should be done via the school finance team. Parents should be informed as to the type of transport being provided for an educational visit.

Coach travel

Seat belts will be provided and it is school policy that these must be worn whilst travelling on a school visit. Staff must check before the vehicle is in motion that belts are fastened and remind students that these must be worn throughout the journey.

Public transport

If using public transport the teacher to student ratio will be higher. If using TFL a member of admin will ensure the free school group tickets are applied for at least 2 weeks before the trip.

On Foot

Students should walk in controlled groups. One member of staff should be at the front in control of the group, another at the back or aware of any individuals who are behind. The degree of control will depend upon the nature of the group (age, ability) and the location.

5.10 Briefing for Students Prior to the Visit

As part of their preparation for the visit students should be made aware of the educational benefits of the visit. Prior to the visit the students will be made aware of the standards expected of them - this will be appropriate for the age group going on the visit.

The Visit Leader should make it clear to students that they must:

- not take unnecessary risks
- follow instructions given by any member of staff or volunteer supervisor
- be sensitive to people in the local environment
- watch for anything which might hurt or threaten themselves and anyone else in the group and advise a supervisor immediately

Any students whose behaviour may be considered to be a danger to themselves or the group may be stopped from attending the visit. The curricular aims of the visit for these students should be fulfilled in other ways where possible. The Head of School's decision will be final in this matter.

5.11 Parents

Parent/guardian approval must be obtained for all categories of visit. When joining the school parents will be asked to give consent for all future school trips, however for all trips that involve payment or where students are away outside normal school hours further permission will be asked. In some cases a series of short off-site visits may take place over a term - in this case blanket approval should be sought from the parent, which gives details of the activity and the means of transport. Model letters are held by the school office and should be appropriately modified and then approved by the EVC. In order that parents may make a reasoned judgement, written information about the visit should be sent with the approval form. In cases where the visit is residential, parents should be invited to a meeting where information is given about the nature of the activity and emergency procedures. For residential visits, parents should be notified of, and requested to agree to, an appropriate Student Code of Conduct. Arrangements must be put in place to inform parents if significant changes occur during a visit - e.g. a change in return time.

5.12 Accidents and Incidents

All accidents and incidents taking place during school visits and journeys must be reported and recorded in accordance with the Riverside School Health and Safety Policy. Accidents and incidents will be reviewed to identify learning points which will be shared, as appropriate, with others.

Emergency Procedures

Emergency procedures are an essential part of planning a visit or an offsite activity. If an accident occurs the priorities are:

- Assess the situation and safeguard the rest of the party

- Attend to the casualties
- Inform the emergency services.
- Inform the Senior Leadership Team contact back at school

For minor injuries:
- Supervisers to give appropriate assistance using First Aid bag
- Visit Leader to phone SLT contact so they can inform the parent of the injury
- Visit Leader to fill in an accident form on return to school

For anything other than minor injuries:
- Supervisor to give appropriate immediate assistance within their capabilities
- Call for an ambulance – ensure information is obtained as to which hospital the ambulance will be taking the injured student to
- Supervisor to accompany student to hospital if needed and if the Visit Leader judges that this will not leave the remaining level of supervision unsafe
- Visit Leader to phone SLT contact so they can inform the parent of the injury and the hospital to which the student has been taken
- SLT contact to phone the parents (under no circumstances should a supervisor call the parents directly)
- SLT contact to go to hospital to be with the injured student and take over the responsibility from the accompanying supervisor, unless parent/guardian is able to do this promptly
- Supervisor to remain with the injured student in hospital until SLT or parent/guardian arrives
- Visit Leader to fill in an accident form on return to school