



EDUCATIONAL VISITS, SCHOOL JOURNEYS AND OFF-SITE ACTIVITIES POLICY

Legal Status:

- The school complies with the Regulatory Requirements, Part 3, Paragraph 12 of the Education (Independent School Standards (England) (Amendment) Regulations.
- Health and Safety Department of Education (DfE) advice on legal duties and powers for local authorities, Headmasters, staff and governing bodies (DfE)
- Health and Safety Executive (HSE) School trips and outdoor learning activities tackling the Health and Safety myths (HSE)
- The school has regard to guidance and advice from the Outdoor Education Advisory Panel (OEAP)

Applies to:

- The whole school (inclusive of the EYFS) along with all activities provided by the school, including those outside of the normal school hours;
- All staff (teaching and non-teaching), the Advisory Governance Board and volunteers working in the school.

In our school the term 'staff', in the context of safeguarding, is inclusive of all staff and is also inclusive of students on placement, contractors, agency staff, volunteers and proprietor.

Related Documents:

- Health and Safety Policy, Procedures and Working Practices
- Trip Risk Assessments (School Visits General, Remote Supervision, Health Risk Assessment for LOtC, School Transport Risk Assessment)

Availability: This policy is made available to parents, staff and students in the following ways: via the School website www.ashwickehall.sabis.net, and on request a copy may be obtained from the Office.

Monitoring and Review: This policy is subject to continuous monitoring, refinement and audit by the Principal, who will also undertake a full annual review of this policy and procedures, inclusive of its implementation and the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged. This review will be formally documented in writing. Any deficiencies or weaknesses recognized in arrangements or procedures will be remedied immediately and without delay. All staff will be informed of the updated/reviewed policy and it will be made available to them in either hard copy or electronic format. This policy was last reviewed agreed by the Executive Regional Director and Principal of the school in April 2018 and will next be reviewed no later than April 2019 or earlier if significant changes to the systems and arrangements take place, or if legislation, regulatory requirements or best practice guidelines so require.

Amanda Woods

Signed:

Ms Amanda Woods
Principal

Date reviewed: April 2018

Date of next review: April 2019

Ashwicke Hall School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of our students and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. It is our aim that all our students fulfil their potential.

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Introduction: This policy and guidance help to simplify the systems in place for supporting 'Educational Visits' and 'Learning Outside the Classroom'. It is essential that qualified competent staff can lead and undertake these activities and experiences safely carefully weighing up the benefits against the risks. Training is provided to enable professionals the confidence to take part in these activities with their young people. Appropriate courses can be found in this policy and guidance document.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that trips are planned in an organised and responsible fashion, and that the health, safety, and welfare of students and staff are maintained. We ensure that Ashwicke Hall School fulfils its responsibilities for visits, including students' behaviour. Integral to this process, Ashwicke Hall School:

- plans visits to include risk assessments and first aid;
- ensures appropriate supervision including ratios and vetting checks;
- prepares students for visits including those with special and medical needs;
- communicates with parents;
- plans transport;
- has insurance in place;
- makes appropriate arrangements for the range and types of visit;
- has clear procedures with reference to visits abroad;
- has emergency procedures, including contact details and permission for emergency medical treatment if a parent cannot be contacted.

The school ensures that we follow both DfE and Health and Safety at Work guidance and regulations (including those issued by the Local Authority) along with this policy concerning activities that take place off school premises.

Recognising the Benefit of Learning away from Ashwicke Hall School: Although not a requirement, the school has appointed Joe Buckley who is the Student Life Coordinator (SLC) as the Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC). Travel is an integral part of the Ashwicke Hall School education and experience. It is one of the stated aims of Ashwicke Hall School to give all students every opportunity to experience trips and visits outside of the school environment. It is by extending learning beyond the classroom, and by drawing on the cultural riches of the wider world that Ashwicke Hall School becomes truly distinctive and enables our students to gain life skills and a first-hand perspective, which would not be possible through classroom instruction alone.

We encourage teachers to undertake educationally valuable visits to sites within the United Kingdom and overseas, providing these do not unduly hinder the normal operation of the school and that the Health and Safety and welfare of students is paramount at all times. Before the school decides to arrange an educational visit, we consider educational objectives and how they are to be achieved.

'Well-managed school trips and outdoor activities are great for students. Students won't learn about risk if they are wrapped up in cotton wool.'

In striking the right balance between protecting students from risk and allowing them to learn from educational visits we:

- provide learning opportunities for all our students;
- focus on real risks when planning educational visits and manage these risks during the off-site activities;
- ensure those running activities understand their roles, are supported and are competent to lead/take part.

It is a legal expectation that employees **must** work within the requirements of their employer's policy and guidance. Ashwicke Hall School employees must follow the requirements of 'Outdoor Education Advisers Panel National Guidance', as well as the requirements of this document. Where an Ashwicke Hall School employee

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commissions an educational visit or learning outside the classroom activity, they must ensure that the provider has either:

1. adopted the Ashwicke Hall School Policy and Guidance and the OEAP National Guidance

Or

2. have systems and procedures in place where the standards are as robust as those required by the OEAP National Guidance.

Scope and Remit: The OEAP National Guidance document: **“Status and Remit and Rationale”** clarifies the range of employees whose work requires them to use the guidance. In summary, it applies to employees whose work involves any one of the following:

- direct supervision of children and young people undertaking experiences beyond the boundary of their normal classroom or environment;
- direct supervision of children and young people undertaking experiences that fall within the remit of learning outside the classroom;
- facilitating experiences for children and young people undertaking experiences beyond the boundary of their normal classroom or environment;
- deploying staff who will supervise or facilitate experiences for children and young people undertaking experiences beyond the boundary of their normal environment.

This applies regardless of whether or not the activities take place within or outside of normal working hours, including weekends and holiday periods. For a more expansive explanation of legal expectations, all users of the guidance are strongly recommended to read the NG document: **“Underpinning Legal Framework”**

Ensuring Understanding of Basic Requirements: As an employer, Ashwicke Hall School is required to ensure that its employees are provided with:

- access to appropriate guidance relating to educational visits and learning outside the classroom activity;
- access to appropriate training courses to support the guidance to ensure that it is understood;
- suitable systems and processes to ensure that those trained are kept updated and
- access to advice, support and further training from appointed accredited advisers who have proven expertise and professional understanding of the guidance.

Training: The school ensures that staff are given the Health and Safety training they need for their job. This certainly does not mean that all employees have to attend a training course. It may simply mean providing them with basic instructions or information about Health and Safety in the school. Employer Guidance given by the Outdoor Education Advisers’ Panel sets out clear and detailed responsibilities and functions of specific roles that relate to roles to be found the establishment. These are:

- Principal;
- SLC;
- Visit or Activity Leader;
- Assistant Visit leader;
- Volunteer Adult Helper;
- Parents.

Refer to individual NG documents headed as above.

Duties and Responsibilities of the Proprietor (Employer)

Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, the employer in a school must take reasonable steps to ensure that staff and students are not exposed to risks to their Health and Safety. This applies to activities on or off school premises. Regulations made under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 set out in more detail what

actions employers are required to take. For example, the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 require Ashwicke Hall School to:

- assess the risks to staff and others affected by school activities in order to identify the Health and Safety measures that are necessary and, in certain circumstances, keep a record of the significant findings of that assessment;
- introduce measures to manage those risks (risk management);
- tell their employees about the risks and measures to be taken to manage the risks and
- ensure that adequate training is given to employees on Health and Safety matters.

Our school sets out Health and Safety arrangements in a written Health and Safety policy. It is the responsibility of the Principal to ensure that:

- the off-campus activity or visit is appropriate and relevant;
- the establishment can be run efficiently in the absence of staff engaged in the activity or visit.

Responsibilities of the Principal: This is the key role for ensuring that the management of visits and ventures meets the regulations and guidance offered by the Local Authority (LA), DfE and others, as well as conforming to the Ashwicke Hall School Health and Safety policy. This management process is in conjunction with the expectations and standards that are to be achieved by making the most of the positive learning opportunities presented. Our delegation of responsibilities is done with a clear rationale, derived from a good knowledge of the people concerned; the visits and activities; the aims and objectives; and the risk assessments they require. We delegate some tasks to the SLC.

Duty as an Employee: The law requires employees to:

- take reasonable care of their own Health and Safety and that of others who may be affected by what they do at work;
- co-operate with their employers on Health and Safety matters;
- do their work in accordance with training and instructions; and
- inform the employer of any work situation representing a serious and immediate danger, so that remedial action can be taken.

In addition, all staff at Ashwicke Hall School have a common law duty to act as any prudent parent would do when in charge of students. Employees should follow any Health and Safety procedures put in place by their employer. However if they feel that the procedure is inappropriate (e.g. it is too bureaucratic) they should discuss this with their employer and request that it is reviewed. The Principal will work with the Proprietor and Advisory Governance Board to ensure that the procedures at Ashwicke Hall School are proportionate, effective and appropriate.

Our teachers on school-led visits act as employees of the School, whether the visit takes place within normal working hours or outside those hours, by agreement with the Principal. Our teachers will do their best to ensure the Health and Safety of everyone in the group and act as any prudent and reasonable parent would do in the same circumstances. They will:

- follow the instructions of the group leader and help with control and discipline;
- consider stopping the visit or the activity, notifying the group leader, if they
- think the risk to the health or safety of the students in their charge is unacceptable;
- be aware of potential conflicts of interest and role if their own children are members of the group. Where staff do take their own children on a visit or activity the member of staff would only be included in the staffing ratio if appropriate, as determined by the Principal.

Approval and Notification of Activities and Visits: The SLC/Principal is responsible for approving each visit. This is important for the formal notification and approval processes. Approval in principle should be sought from the SLC/Principal as soon as possible before any bookings, letters or financial commitments are made.

Ashwicke Hall School must be informed of all visits involving adventurous activities; all visits to 'wild country' and Duke of Edinburgh Award expeditions, High risk activities and Residential visits. These visits **must** be approved by Ashwicke Hall School through the SLC/Principal.

Non-adventurous activities do not require notification to the SLC but the Principal should still be notified e.g. visits to any museum, local parks, the theatre, theme parks such as Thorpe Park. – Please contact the SLC if you are not sure.

Risk Management: The employer has a legal duty to ensure that risks are managed - requiring them to be reduced to an "acceptable" or "tolerable" level. This requires that suitable and sufficient risk management systems are in place, requiring the employer to provide such support, training and resources to its employees as is necessary to implement this policy.

The risk management of an activity should be informed by the benefits to be gained from participating. Ashwicke Hall School strongly recommends a "Risk-Benefit Assessment" approach, whereby the starting point for any risk assessment should be a consideration of the targeted benefits and learning outcomes. HSE endorse this approach through their "*Principles of Sensible Risk Management*" and advocate that it is important that young people are exposed to well-managed risks so that they learn how to manage risk for themselves.

There is a requirement for the risk assessment process to be recorded and for suitable and sufficient control measures to be identified for any significant risks i.e. those that may cause serious harm to individuals. EVOLVE ensures that establishments are supplied with electronic generic risk-benefit assessments for educational visits and learning outside the classroom.

What our Staff should expect from Ashwicke Hall School: *'Teachers should expect their schools to have procedures that encourage participation and are proportionate to the level of risk.'*

Our school ensures that the precautions proposed are proportionate to the risks involved, and that our paperwork is easy to use. We also take account of assessments and procedures of any other organisations involved, and ensure that communications with others are clear. Our arrangements also ensure that:

- risk assessment focuses attention on real risks – not risks that are trivial and fanciful;
- proportionate systems are in place – so that trips presenting lower-risk activities are quick and easy to organise, and higher-risk activities (such as those involving climbing, caving or water-based activities) are properly planned and assessed;
- those planning the trips are properly supported – so that staff can readily check if they have taken sufficient precautions or whether they should do more;
- staff are given the training they need to keep themselves and students safe and manage the risks effectively.

What our School, Students and Parents should expect from the Staff: *'Those running school trips need to focus on the risks and the benefits to people.'*

Our staff running school trips should clearly communicate information about the planned activities to colleagues and students (and parents where appropriate). We explain what the precautions are and why they are necessary. Those running school trips act responsibly by:

- putting sensible precautions in place, and making sure these work in practice;
- knowing when and how to apply contingency plans where they are necessary;

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- heeding advice and warnings from others, for example those with local knowledge or specialist expertise (especially in respect of higher-risk activities).

Refer to OEAP National Guidance document: **“Risk Management”**

Emergency Planning and Critical Incident Support: A critical incident is an incident where any member of a group undertaking an educational visit or learning outside the classroom activity has either:

- suffered a life threatening injury or fatality;
- is at serious risk;
- or has gone missing for a significant and unacceptable period.

School must have emergency planning procedures in place in the event of a critical incident. Every visit leader and assistant leader must be familiar with emergency planning procedures and reporting mechanism. This forms part of the training delivered to SLCs and visit leaders.

Relevant emergency contact telephone numbers should be carried by leaders at all times during an offsite educational visit but should only be used in the case of a genuine emergency. Under no circumstances should these telephone numbers be given to young people or to their parents or carers.

Refer to OEAP National Guidance documents:

“Off Site Visit Emergencies: The Employer’s Role”

“Off Site Visit Emergencies: The Establishment’s Role”

“Emergencies and Critical Incidents – An overview”

Points of Contact: For all off-site activities, the school will organise a ‘Point of Contact’ who will often be the relevant divisional office or reception if the trip is during school hours. During out of school hours it can also be the security or the duty manager. For overnight field trips every group will have a named contact in the UK. This administrator on campus (‘Home Contact’) will be on call 24/7. The ‘Point of Contact’ person must have:

- details of how the group leader may be contacted (school mobile phone);
- the names of all participants, including adults;
- the distribution of students and staff if in separate groups or vehicles;
- the itinerary;
- the names and telephone numbers of any travel company (including coach company) involved;
- access to parental home contacts for all involved (including adults);
- details of the Designated Safeguarding Lead in the event of an emergency;
- a copy of the risk assessment

Safeguarding: Child Protection: The Ashwicke Hall School Safeguarding and Child Protection will apply during educational visits. The group leader will carry out the duties of the designated person or will name an appropriate adult supervisor to do so. Any incident amounting to an allegation or suspicion of abuse that occurs whilst on the educational visit will be dealt with appropriately at the time and will be reported to the Principal or Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately.

Monitoring and Quality Assurance: Schools and other education settings should ensure that there is sample monitoring of educational visits and learning outside the classroom activities undertaken. Such monitoring should be in keeping with the recommendations of OEAP National Guidance. There is a clear expectation that the monitoring function is a delegated task, carried out through systems put in place by the SLC and uploaded to EVOLVE.

Refer to OEAP National Guidance document: **“Monitoring”**

Assessment of Leader Competence and Good Practice Requirements: OEAP National Guidance provides clear advice regarding the assessment of leader competence. It is an expectation of Ashwicke Hall School Policy and Guidance that all leaders and their assistants have been formally assessed as competent to undertake the responsibilities of leading the educational visit or learning outside the classroom activity.

Refer to OEAP National Guidance document: **“Assessment of Competence”**

To be deemed competent, a Visit / Activity Leader, or Assistant Leader must be able to demonstrate the ability to operate to the current standards of recognised good practice for that role.

All staff and helpers must be competent to carry out their defined roles and responsibilities. OEAP National Guidance sets a clear standard to which leaders **must** work.

Staff participating in educational visits and learning outside the classroom activities must be aware of the extent of their duty of care and should only be given such responsibilities as are in keeping with the above guidance. It is particularly important that careful consideration of competence issues is applied to both newly qualified and newly appointed staff.

Where a Volunteer helper is a parent (or otherwise in a close relationship to a young person taking part in the visit) they should be made aware of the potential for their relationship to compromise the Visit Leader's plans for group management. The Visit Leader should directly address this issue as part of the Risk-Benefit assessment.

Refer to OEAP National Guidance document: **“Good Practice Basics”**

Charges for Educational Visits and Off-site Activities: Refer to OEAP National Guidance document: **“Charges for Off-site Activities and Visits in an Educational Establishment”**

Vetting, DBS Checks and CRB Changes: The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) was established under the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012. The primary role of the DBS is to help employers make safer recruitment decisions and prevent unsuitable people from working with vulnerable groups including children and young people.

- all employees who work *frequently* or *intensively* with, or have *regular access* to young people or vulnerable adults, must undergo an enhanced DBS check as part of their recruitment process.
- For the purposes of this guidance:
- *frequently* is defined as ‘once a week or more’;
- *intensively* is defined as 4 days or more in a month or overnight.

However, it must be clearly understood that a DBS check (or other vetting procedure) in itself, is no guarantee as to the suitability of an adult to work with any given group of children, or young people. Careful consideration should be given to whether a voluntary helper may require a DBS Enhanced Disclosure. In general terms, those helpers with *frequent* or *intensive* contact e.g. working with a group or groups regularly or involved in

accompanying a residential should be checked. It is **essential** that the full contents of the document below are taken into account.

Requirement to Ensure Effective Supervision: In general terms, the law does not prescribe activity-specific staffing ratios; but it does require that the level of supervision and group management is effective when on educational visits and learning outside the classroom activities.

However, as an exception to the above, Ofsted and DfE guidance prescribe ratios. Refer to OEAP National Guidance documents:

“Ratios and Effective Supervision”

“Group management and Supervision”

Preliminary Visits and Provider Assurances: All educational visits and learning outside the classroom activities should be thoroughly researched to establish the suitability of the venue and to check that facilities and third-party provision will meet group needs and expectations. Such information gathering is essential in assessing the requirements for effective supervision of young people. It is a vital dimension of risk management.

Wherever reasonably practicable, it is good practice to carry out a preliminary visit. Establishment policy should clarify the circumstances where a preliminary visit is a requirement.

It is good practice for Visit Leaders to take full advantage of the nationally accredited, provider assurance schemes that are now available, thus reducing bureaucracy.

Examples of such schemes include:

- [The LOTC Quality Badge](#)
- [AALS licensing](#)
- [Adventuremark](#)
- [School travel forum](#)
- Association of Heads of Outdoor Education Centres Gold Badge
- National Governing Body centre approval schemes (applicable where the provision is a single, specialist activity).

Where a provider holds one of the above accreditations, there should be no need to seek further assurances regarding risk assessments of the provider. Ashwicke Hall School will ensure that leaders complete a risk benefit assessment and record any significant findings for any aspects of a visit that they are leading or responsible. This will usually include transport to and from the venue plus any stops or visits on route.

Refer to: NG document **“Preliminary Visits and provider Assurances”**

Refer to: OEAP National Guidance document **“Using External Providers and Facilities”**

Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations: Employers, Heads/Managers, SLCs and Leaders should have a basic understanding of where and when the provision of adventurous activities is legally regulated.

The Activity Centre (Young Persons Safety) Act (1995) established the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations and the Adventure Activities Licensing Authority (AALA). The scheme is now the direct responsibility of HSE and operated through the Adventure Activities Licensing Service (AALS). Leaders should be aware that the AALS licence is an assurance of safety. It does not accredit educational or activity quality. Refer to OEAP National Guidance document: **“Adventure Activity Licensing Regulations”**

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Insurance for Educational Visits and Off-Site Activities: Non-delegable duty of care. In October 2013 the UK Supreme Court ruled that, in particular circumstances, schools and other public bodies have a non-delegable duty of care. This is an exception to the normal fault based principles of law. It means that, in these particular circumstances, schools and other organisations are liable to be sued for the negligence of a third party.

For example, a school contracts with a third party provider to deliver swimming lessons within school time. If, through the negligence of this third party, a child is injured, the child can sue the school and Ashwicke Hall School for compensation. The fact that the school was not responsible for the actions of the third-party is irrelevant as; in this case, the school's duty of care is non-delegable. It is therefore important to ensure that any contracts entered into with third parties include terms to carry insurance including indemnity in the event of negligence as Ashwicke Hall School and schools will need to pursue independent third parties for an indemnity or contribution should any such claims succeed.

Employer's Liability Insurance: Employer's Liability Insurance is a statutory requirement. Ashwicke Hall School holds a policy that indemnifies it against its legal liability in respect of all claims for compensation resulting in bodily injury suffered by any Ashwicke Hall School employee. As this type of policy is a statutory requirement any other employer should hold a similar policy in respect of its employees. This cover should extend to those persons who are acting in a voluntary capacity as assistant supervisors.

Public Liability Insurance: The school also holds Public Liability Insurance, indemnifying it against its legal liability in respect of claims for compensation for bodily injury from persons not in its employ, as well as for the accidental loss of, or damage caused to, property. Employees (as agents of the employer) are indemnified under the policy, as are voluntary helpers acting under the direction of the employer's staff. The indemnity covers activities such as educational visits and off-site activities including school sports, together with approved extracurricular activities organised by all establishments and settings for which the employer is responsible. It is recommended that parents obtain a E111/EHIC for trips in countries in the EU.

Employees: Ashwicke Hall School operates an Employees Personal Accident Scheme. Cover under this section is provided for all Ashwicke Hall School employees and employees, in the course of their employment, providing predetermined benefits in the event of an accident. The scheme's benefits are designed to provide compensation for injury where the employer is not deemed negligent. The Personal Accident Scheme provides cover for all full and part-time employees.

Insurance for Students: Ashwicke Hall School only covers accidents to students when due to its negligence and these claims are covered within its Public Liability Insurance detailed above. Personal Accident Insurance for students is not arranged by Ashwicke Hall School but may be arranged by the school direct; however, there is no statutory requirement for LAB to arrange this cover. The cost of Personal Accident Insurance arranged by the School may be recharged to parents. Parents should be reminded that Ashwicke Hall School does not insure children's belongings.

For journeys/visits overseas: The Advisory Governance Board **must** insist that Foreign Travel Insurance is arranged that covers **all persons on the visit**. This is especially important, due to the high costs of medical care abroad and possible repatriation expenses in the event of an accident or illness.

For all journeys within the United Kingdom the Principal should decide whether or not they require insurance to be arranged, having regard to the nature of the journey and the capabilities of the students involved. In all cases, reference should be made to Ashwicke Hall School's guidelines governing educational visits, before final decisions are made. Ashwicke Hall School will notify insurers if the activity involves any form of winter-dangerous sports as the insurers may need to charge an additional premium. If additional insurance is not taken

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out, it is recommended that parents are advised of this and a suggested wording for parental consent forms is detailed below:

"The School is insured against its legal liability to pay compensation should it be held responsible for causing an injury to your child whilst in our care. The school has not taken out any additional insurance in respect of this visit e.g. personal accident, and, should you be concerned about this area of risk, you are advised to make your own personal arrangements".

It must be remembered that the Ashwicke Hall School public liability arrangements apply for all School organised activities, including visits within the UK and abroad. Visit and activity leaders should contact Ashwicke Hall School Insurance Section to seek clarification of the above, including any circumstances requiring early notification of specialist activities to the insurer. They should also ensure they have obtained current information regarding any special policies that may be available to offer more comprehensive cover.

We must notify insurers if the activity involves any form of winter-dangerous sports as the insurers may need to charge an additional premium.

Refer to OEAP National Guidance document: **"Insurance"**

Equal Opportunities and Inclusion: Every effort should be made to ensure that educational visits and learning outside the classroom activities are available and accessible to all, irrespective of special educational or medical needs, disability, ethnic origin, gender, sexuality or religion. If a visit needs to cater for children and young people with special needs, every *reasonable* effort should be made to find a venue that is both suitable and accessible and that enables the whole group to participate fully and be actively involved. We are an inclusive school. The challenge is to make activities available and accessible to all who wish to participate or are required to take part. This is to be achieved whilst maintaining the safety of all those concerned, the integrity of the activity and the ability to manage the visit or venture. Ashwicke Hall School recognises that there are significant factors to be managed that may override other considerations. Our risk assessments are within the context of the school's Equality and Diversity Policy.

Establishments should take all *reasonably practicable* measures to include all children and young people, unless risk assessment determines otherwise. In accordance with the Equality Act 2010 the principles of inclusion should be promoted and addressed for all visits and reflected in the establishment's policy, thus ensuring an aspiration towards:

- an entitlement to participate
- accessibility through direct or realistic adaptation or modification
- integration through participation with peers

Refer to OEAP National Guidance document: **"Inclusion"**

Duke of Edinburgh Award: The Duke of Edinburgh Award (DofE) is available through Ashwicke Hall School. Any schools wishing to deliver the DofE must be a Directly Licensed Centre with the DofE and responsibility lies with them for in accordance with their licence with the DofE. Where DofE expedition activities are involved all appropriate external and internal notifications and approvals should be gained. A DofE Expedition is notifiable as an adventurous activity. Advice can be sought from the Outdoor Education and Educational Visits Adviser. The Regional D of E office can offer help and advice. You can also refer to the OEAP National Guidance Document: **"Duke of Edinburgh's Award Expeditions"**

Transport: Thought must be given to planning transport to support educational visits and learning outside the classroom (off-site) activities. Statistics demonstrate that it is much more dangerous to travel to an activity than to engage in it. All national and local regulatory requirements **must** be followed.

We only hire taxis, minibuses and coaches that are approved by the relevant authorities, where drivers are DBS checked and each seat has either a seatbelt or a booster seat as is applicable. In advance of the trip, students will be given clear safety instructions based on the risks associated with the particular type of travel. Students must sit only two to a double seat. Seat belts must be worn and where appropriate, booster car seats should be used. All drivers of a school mini-bus must have undertaken an appropriate training course. In cases of long journeys, students will be given the opportunity to exercise after reasonable intervals. The recommendation is 15 minutes every two hours. A First-aid kit must be carried and be readily available throughout the visit. If at any time in the future Ashwicke Hall School were to operate a mini-bus or other vehicle designed to carry nine or more passengers operated by the school is in accordance with the restricted *Passenger Carrying Vehicle (PCV) Operators licence* and any driver must hold a *PCV Driving Licence*.

The Visit Leader should ensure that coaches and buses are hired from a reputable company. Refer to OEAP National Guidance documents:

“Transport: General Considerations”

“Transport in Minibuses”

“Transport in Private Cars”

Drivers of school and private cars: Those authorised to drive any students in the party should:

- be at least of the minimum age required by the local authority and its outdoor education adviser in relation to each vehicle and be between the age of 25 (as required by our insurance company) to 70 years of age inclusive;
- have a minimum of two years’ driving experience;
- hold a current driving licence valid in the country of use and never have been disqualified.

Private Car Transport Statement: Each driver must be personally satisfied that:

- the driver must read this policy and sign the transport policy slip annually consenting to the policy.
- the driver must have a full and valid driving licence for the class of vehicle they own and be free of any motoring convictions, and be willing to present their driving licence for inspection if requested;
- drivers must have fully comprehensive insurance cover inclusive of business use, in respect of liability to passengers and others, which will then allow them to transport students in their own private cars;
- the driver lodges a copy of such insurance with the school office;
- the driver has made all necessary disclosures of material facts to the insurers, for example any particular problems relating to health;
- the vehicle is roadworthy;
- the driver has not consumed alcoholic liquor within twelve hours before or while in charge of the vehicle;
- the driver carries evidence of insurance.
- and no child should be transported in the front passenger seat, with the exception of the driver’s own child at their discretion;
- No adult should be 1:1 with a child unless it is their own.
- The teacher in charge will ensure that permission has been obtained from the parent to ensure that all parties are fully informed of the transport to and from events.

Refer NG document: **“Transport: General Considerations”**

Criteria for Selecting Tour Operators: Our SLC requires a copy of the tour operator's safety management system. The safety management system must define how the tour operator manages safety for the component parts of the visit and show how they are diligent in checking the safety of hotels and transport. The tour operator must provide details of independent checks made by appropriate external organisations on their safety management system along with certificates of bonding the company to registered bodies, list of staff in charge of our students showing qualifications and competences, motor insurance, legal and public liability insurance if requested by the SLC. All documents are to be made available to the school and to parents if requested.

It is the school's policy to travel only with a company or use an activity centre that has an external verified management system. It is likely that supervision will be by a combination of teachers, support staff and parents. efficient use of resources.

Planning and Consent: Planning should reflect your establishments' procedures, employers' requirements, legal requirements and good practice requirements. It is a critical part of the Risk Benefit assessment and management process that this document is referred to: Refer to OEAP National Guidance document: **5.2b "Planning Basics for Outdoor learning, Offsite Visits and Learning Outside the Classroom"**

The degree of complexity of a particular plan or policy (along with its supporting procedures) will need to reflect the nature and complexity of several variables that can impact on any given activity. These variables can be remembered as '**SAGED**' and include:

- Staffing requirements – trained? experienced? competent? ratios?
- Activity characteristics – specialist? insurance issues? licensable?
- Group characteristics – age? prior experience? ability? behaviour? special and medical needs?
- Environmental conditions – like last time? impact of weather? water levels?
- Distance from support mechanisms in place at the home base – transport? residential?

To reduce bureaucracy and encourage activity, establishments need to take account of the legalities regarding a requirement for formal consent. When an activity is part of the establishment's curriculum or normal working practices and no parental contributions are requested, there may not be a need for specific parental consent. However, in the interests of good relations between the establishment and the home, it is good practice to ensure that those in a position of parental authority are fully informed. Consent forms are often used to update parent's guardians/carer's current phone numbers, contact details plus any medical conditions which have developed since the last check. It is good practice to obtain blanket parental consent for a range of regularly occurring activities or a specific programme.

It is also good practice to develop *activity-specific* policies at establishment level for regular or routine activities. Such policies should be robust and equate to "*operational guidance*" that makes it clear how the activity should be planned and delivered, meeting all necessary recommendations and requirements, as well as assuring educational quality. The subject of obtaining consent is a matter for individual school / establishment discretion provided they comply with law. Refer to OEAP National Guidance document: "**Consent**"

In the event of a critical incident:

First point of contact: Ms Amanda Woods 07780 161718

For all critical incidents outside of normal school hours please phone 01225 891841

Approval Procedures: All visits will require a full list of students involved, and relevant contact and medical details to be left at school, and taken on the excursion. Visits should be recorded, checked, and approved in accordance with the following procedures.

Category A: Offsite Visits within the local Community: This category includes any visits for which there is an element of risk similar to that encountered in daily life. It includes visits to sports complexes, sports fixtures, theatre visits, local field study work and visits to other local sites of educational interest. Category A visits should be recorded using: EVOLVE and checked and approved by the Principal. Submitted at least 3 weeks prior to trip taking place.

Category B: Outdoor and Adventurous Activities within the local Area: These are activities that have a perceived extended risk to include such things as sailing, canoeing/kayaking including activities at commercial and not for profit activity centres such as PGL, White Lodge Centre, climbing/ abseiling, open water swimming etc. Leaders are expected to provide a site/ group specific risk assessment for the activity. Where the Party Leader does not possess the approved NGB qualification but is visiting an authorised centre where the instructors are fully qualified, consent in writing must be given by the SLC and designated person responsible for outdoor activities at Ashwicke Hall School, before such activities are authorised thereby ensuring all insurance and Health and Safety requirements are fully operational.

Category C: All foreign Visits or Visits outside of the immediate geographical Area: For all activities in this category, the relevant forms must be completed, together with the visit risk assessment and these must be lodged with the SLC prior to the planned departure. Where there are any 'adventurous activities' planned, prior consultation must take place with the Head of Year before financial arrangements are entered into and the relevant paperwork must be completed and lodged with the school's SLC prior to the planned visit. Residential or day visits to any place outside England/Scotland/Wales. Category C visits should be recorded and checked and approved by the SLC and Principal. Submitted at least 8 weeks before trip taking place. For visits with significant financial commitment, 'Outline Approval' should be obtained before firm bookings are made. If any of the above three types of visit involve what may be regarded as 'High risk activities or environments' they MUST be given classification of *HIGH RISK*.

High Risk refers to all day visits, or residential or overseas visits that involve hazards which are significantly different or more serious (in terms of severity and/or likelihood) than might normally be encountered in everyday or school life. For example: a weekly climbing day visit, a day visit to dry ski slope, a residential stay at outdoor centre, an overseas trekking expedition.

High Risk visits:: All *HIGH RISK* visits should be checked and approved:

- Internally - by the SLC and Principal
- Externally – Final approval by Ashwicke Hall School

All *HIGH RISK* visits should be submitted for approval at least 8 weeks in advance of the visit.

Risk Assessments: Risk assessment and risk management are legal requirements. For educational visits, they involve the careful examination of what could cause harm during the visit and whether enough precautions have been taken or whether more should be done. The aim is to make sure no one gets hurt or becomes ill. The control measures should be understood by those involved. Risk assessments should explicitly cover how special educational needs and medical needs are to be addressed. The programme of a visit should include details of contingency measures. The Group leader in consultation with the Education Visits Coordinator (SLC) assesses potential risks of a proposed visit, and concludes the necessary safety measures that need to be put in place to minimise these risks. Risk assessment/s will be drawn up before the activity, if relevant adapted from a generic model, agreed with the SLC.

Health and Safety law often refers to risk assessment and risk management. These are terms used to describe the process of thinking about the risks of any activities and taking steps to counter them. A written assessment is not required for every activity, but only in exceptional circumstances. Where a risk assessment is carried out,

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the Proprietor must record the significant findings of the assessment. Some activities, especially those happening away from school such as mountaineering, canoeing sailing, involve higher levels of risk. In these cases an assessment of significant risks should be carried out. Our Principal ensures that the person assessing the risks understands the risks and is familiar with the activity that is planned. However, a risk assessment is not needed every time our school takes students to a local venue such as a swimming pool, parks or museums. Ashwicke Hall School will always take a commonsense and proportionate approach, remembering that in schools the purpose of risk assessment and management is to help students to undertake activities safely, not to prevent activities from taking place. We recognize we cannot remove risk altogether. Risk assessment for educational visits can be usefully considered as having three levels:

- **generic activity risk assessments**, which are likely to apply to the activity wherever and whenever it takes place;
- **visit/site specific risk assessments** which will differ from place to place and group to group; and
- **ongoing risk assessments** that take account of, for example, illness of staff or students, changes of weather, availability of preferred activity.

Recommended Ratios: The ratio of school students to adults varies according to the age of the students, the nature of the activity and the special educational needs. The school will err on the side of caution on this matter. There are no circumstances under which the staffing ratios are less generous than those to be found in school. The Principal would expect that supervision for school trips outside of the immediate vicinity of the school is appropriate. All groups on a visit outside the school grounds should be accompanied by a minimum of two adults and that where groups contain both boys and girls, wherever possible there is an adult of each sex. This is essential on residential visits. For visits by small groups to art galleries, cinemas and local amenities the appropriate staffing ratio will be agreed with the SLC. There will always be sufficient adults in the group to cover an emergency. Refer to NG document: *"Ratios and Effective Supervision"*

Group leaders should assess the risks and consider an appropriate safe supervision level for their particular group. Regular contact must be kept with students who are enjoying non-direct supervision e.g. at a theme park or on a visit to a town. Students should only be allowed non-direct supervision within a strictly defined area and should be given clear guidelines as to the behaviour expected. They should be aware of where members of staff may be found. Students are instructed to remain in groups of at least 3 at all times.

Key Stage 3	(11-14yrs) – 1:10
Key Stage 4	(14-16yrs) – 1:12
Key Stage 5	(16-18yrs) – 1:15

The Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) - Student Life Coordinator (SLC): Our SLC is experienced in leading and managing a range of educational visits and is of sufficient status to be able to influence change. Responsibility within our school for the approval of visits, however, remains with the Head of Division. The Ashwicke Hall School SLC will ensure that all necessary actions have been completed before the visit begins. This includes, where appropriate, that a pre-trip visit has taken place, risk assessments and appropriate safety measures are in place, suitably competent instruction is available for the activity, the ratio of supervisors to students is appropriate and that arrangements have been made for the medical needs and special educational needs of the students. It is good practice for our members of staff leading a group to visit the site beforehand to gain first-hand knowledge of the area and route. This knowledge will then inform the risk assessment and pre-planning. The SLC's key functions include:

- being involved in educational visits management in order to ensure that the guidance and regulations are followed; and
- working with group leaders to ensure that the aims of the educational visit are achievable and in line with those of the establishment.

The SLC is:

- to confirm that the leadership of the visit is appropriate and to check staff qualifications, this includes accompanying staff and volunteers;
- to confirm that adequate risk assessments have been carried out;
- to recommend and organise training of group leaders and help organise the induction of staff new to the venture and volunteers;
- to ensure that the establishment's management of behaviour and other relevant policies are able to be transferred off site successfully and are consistently used;
- to ensure that liaison with parents and obtaining consent are effective.

The SLC has overall responsibility for:

- appointing a suitable group leader for each visit;
- insuring all necessary actions have been completed before the visit begins;
- the risk assessment is complete and that it is safe to make the visit;
- training needs have been met;
- the group leader has experience in supervising and controlling the age groups going on the visit and will organise the group effectively;
- the group leader has relevant skills, qualifications and experience if acting as an instructor, and knows the location of the activity;
- all supervisors on the visit are appropriate people to supervise children and have appropriate clearance;
- parents have signed consent forms;
- liaising with the medical centre and the Learning Resource Centre (LRC) regarding any health conditions and special educational needs which staff need to be aware of;
- the mode of travel is appropriate;
- travel times out and back are known;
- there is adequate insurance cover;
- they have the address and phone number of the visit's venue and have a contact name where possible;
- that they have the names of all the adults and students in the travelling group, and the contact details of parents and the staff's and volunteers' next of kin.

Emergency Contact Details must be given to the SLC and to other nominated emergency contact person(s) as far in advance as possible of the departure date of the visit. Once this has been done, all the pre-trip procedures have been followed and completed and the documentation relating to the trip will be held centrally by the SLC.

All Trip Staff:

- Any member of staff listed as on the rota for the duration of a trip are jointly responsible for the behaviour and wellbeing of the students at all times, until the trip returns to the school grounds;
- The group leader is in control of the group at all times once the trip has left school grounds and requires the full support of the accompanying staff in looking after the students at all times;
- Trip staff should be prepared to do anything that is reasonably asked of them by the trip leader when concerned with any matters relating to the students or the trip in general;
- Please note that the trip staff should make their whereabouts known to the trip leader at all times unless taking specified free time. Staff are still 'On Duty' during this free time. Free time is not guaranteed and is arranged on a shift pattern at the group leader's discretion;
- Any member of staff on a trip should take it upon themselves to monitor and speak to any students that display bad, negative or dangerous behaviour. The group leader should be made aware of all instances;
- Staff wishing to leave feedback can do so by emailing the SLC after the conclusion of the trip.

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The Group Leader: The group leader, who is the person with overall responsibility for the supervision and conduct of the venture, is an important part of the Health and Safety and good practice support system. The relevant experience is essential along with accepting the need to:

- agree specific roles, responsibilities and communications systems;
- agree incident and emergency procedures, the who, where and what of such situations;
- agree what will happen if the practicalities of the day require a major adaptation of the programme (ongoing risk assessment);
- have high expectations of what the students, young people and the venture can achieve;
- be accountable for individual students who are not under visual supervision;
- to know the identity, whereabouts and expected time and place of return of the students.

The Group Leader should also:

- check they are happy and understand the full itinerary of the trip and are completely clear of their role;
- know the whereabouts of students at all times;
- check all medications are provided for before departure;
- check all students have the staff mobile number and collect as many student mobile numbers as possible before departure;
- return the trip pack to the SLC via reception along with the first aid kit and phones.

Venues:

- If tickets or email confirmations are needed they will be left in the trip pack with instructions;
- Students should be made aware of the meeting point and roll call time of every venue upon arrival. All students should be walked to the meeting point and released from there;
- In any free time, students should remain in a group of three at minimum. Any students not in a group of three or more should remain with staff;
- When walking large groups between locations or across roads staff should be distributed among the students with one leading at the front and one from the rear with no student behind them. All remaining staff should be assisting in moving the students along.

Staff will be given the opportunity to raise concerns about an educational visit if it is proposed less than one term in advance and is likely to impact on effective curriculum delivery. It is the group leader's responsibility to ensure that all accompanying adults have a full trips pack. Group leaders and accompanying staff must carry these with them at all times. The trip packs should include:

- who is in their group
- who is travelling in each vehicle
- the name and telephone number of the contact person/s who can be contacted in an emergency
- Full details of students names, telephone numbers and any medical issues
- A risk assessment

The group leader must also ensure that there is a contact person available throughout the period that the group is off-site. In addition, an accurate list of participants with the trip mobile telephone number must be forwarded to the SLC prior to the visit.

Collection from a Trip: In order to exercise their duty of care, the group leader must ensure the students' safe dismissal and departure from their supervision, at the end of a trip or activity.

Responsibilities of Students: The group leader will make it clear to students that they must:

- not take unnecessary risks;

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- follow the instructions of the group leader and other supervisors including those at the venue of the visit;
- dress and behave sensibly and responsibly, using safety equipment as instructed;
- be sensitive to local codes and customs;
- look out for anything that might hurt or threaten themselves or anyone in the group and tell the group leader or supervisor about it.

Any students whose behaviour may be considered to be a danger to themselves or to the group may be stopped from going on the visit. Reasonable adjustments will be made for disabled students.

Communications to Parents: The group leader will ensure that parents/guardians are fully informed in writing about the trip or visit well in advance. This should include proposals for alternative activities in case, for example, adverse weather conditions prevent the intended activity from taking place. Reasonable adjustments will be made for disabled students. Care will be taken to ensure that those accompanying the trip are fully informed about the special or medical needs of any students participating. For all day trips medical details will be obtained from the school database. Parents/guardians will be given the code of conduct and details relating to standards of behaviour expected from students during a visit. Parents will be advised that the school reserves the right to exclude a student from a visit on behavioural grounds. Trip organisers will ensure that all students involved in the excursion have been properly prepared and briefed.

As part of the information provided to parents about trips and off-site activities communication will be produced with the following details:

- dates;
- destination with full address;
- the aim and purpose of the visit, the activities planned, any hazardous or adventurous activity clearly specified
- the nature of supervision;
- any extra costs.

Parental Consent to off-site Activities: Written consent from parents is not required for students to take part in the majority of off-site activities organised by our school, as most of these activities take place during school hours and are a normal part of a student's education at Ashwicke Hall School. However, parents should be informed where their child will be at all times and of any extra safety measures required. Written consent is usually only requested for activities that need a higher level of risk management or those that take place outside school hours. We have adapted the DfE "one-off" consent form that we ask parents to sign at the beginning of each school year. This will cover a student's participation in any of these types of activities throughout the school year, like adventure activities, off-site sporting fixtures outside the school day, residential visits and all off-site activities which can also take place during school holidays or at the weekend.

Our parents are informed in advance of each activity and must be given the opportunity to withdraw their child from any particular school trip or activity. Parents contribute to the success of the visit by:

- understanding the objectives of the visit;
- giving written consent to all emergency and other medical or dental treatment necessary for the safety and well-being of the student; for all residential or overseas trips
- giving clear information where relevant on their son/daughter's ability or inability to swim;
- providing clear information on their son/daughter's health and any special needs;
- giving permission for medical attention or medication if required; and
- ensuring that there are clear contact arrangements.

Students and young People: An essential aspect for the school policy is that all groups are made aware of and active in the process of managing the visit or venture as they can be. Procedures, group and supervision strategies must be explained and understood. Individual and group responsibilities need to be clear, as well as the rewards and sanctions for ensuring they are kept to. A code of conduct, negotiated and agreed in an acceptable way, is a key component of educational visits e.g. communication, behaviour, dress, group supervision and 'down time'. The standard of behaviour expected of staff will be no different from behaviour expected within school. It may be necessary to have individual behaviour contracts with some young people, signed by themselves. Everyone should be as risk aware as is realistic.

Preparation for a Trip or Activity: Students should, as appropriate, be involved in the planning of the activity, undertake appropriate roles whilst it is in progress and be involved in identifying Health and Safety issues that may arise. They should know the expectations of the trip leader and have a full understanding of the parameters covering all aspects of the trip or activity. Students should be given the trip mobile number of the trip leader so that contact can be made should the need arise over transport issues or in the case of an incident.

Special educational Needs, Disability and Learning outside the Classroom: Where students are identified as having particular special needs this is reflected in a higher staffing ratio, which is never less than that which applies in the school and in most cases is higher.

We do not discriminate against disabled students either intentionally or unintentionally where such discrimination can be prevented by taking '*reasonable measures*'. All our students are included in all off-campus visits. Where their inclusion appears to require special adjustments, a risk assessment is undertaken. This is in two parts: firstly in terms of a whole visit or activity and then secondly in relation to the inclusion of the individual students. The risk assessment and medical care plans include details of any special aids and equipment that the students may need and, in particular, details of any such items to be brought from home or obtained prior to the visit. This will usually entail discussion with the students, parents, group leader and other supervisors, the manager of the venue to be visited, or the tour operator etc. Where a student has a statement of special educational needs that requires support in school for access to the curriculum, this is taken into account. The above are examples only and group leaders should assess the risks and consider an appropriate safe supervision level for their particular group.

Emergencies: In the event of emergency the management on duty must be contacted. The emergency services may need to be called if appropriate. In the event of a missing student a full roll call must be taken. Then an attempt to phone the student's mobile. If the student answers a staff member must determine their location and head there immediately. If there is no answer the trip must be put on hold while the current group remains in a safe location until the missing student is found. After no longer than ten minutes the management on duty must be informed. The mobile number must be tried constantly. After twenty minutes the management on duty must be informed that the police are being phoned for assistance. When the student is found they must remain with a member of staff for the remainder of the trip, and the school must be alerted. An incident form should be completed upon return to the school and given to the SLC.

Trip Evaluation Form: Upon return to school a review and evaluation should be carried out as soon as possible. A signed copy of the Trip Evaluation Form must be given to the SLC. This will ensure that improvements in accommodation, travel, activities for similar trips, the educational value of the trip, value for money and any perceived hazards are identified and rectified before a similar trip is proposed or approved. Upon completion of a visit or activity a complete file of names, addresses, insurance arrangements, contacts, procedures, etc. is kept for at least three years. This information would be required in the event of any future claim arising from any incident that may occur on the visit.

