



OLD BUCKENHAM HALL

A leading co-educational preparatory school for children aged 2-13 years

Off-site Visits (Travel) Policy

OBHP34

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OFF-SITE VISITS POLICY

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INTRODUCTION

OBH encourages educational and off-site visits which enrich, enhance and extend the academic studies and extra-curricular pursuits of its pupils.

The utmost care will be taken by the school to ensure the safety of pupils and staff involved in visits and activities which take place off the school premises. The Headmaster, informed by the OSV Co-ordinator (Mr Nick Drake), will ensure that any visit is adequately staffed and will assess all the factors involved in the visit.

Members of staff in charge of and assisting with educational visits must be conversant with this policy and all local requirements. It is important that sufficient time is allocated to the preparation and planning of a visit to assess the risks and to ensure its safety and success.

Sports Trips:

A generic risk assessment is completed by the Director of Sport at the start of every academic year. This is sufficient for most sports fixtures with the exception of over-night or over-seas visits, or the trip leader's discretion.

Parents Consent:

At the beginning of every academic year a trip consent form, sent via Microsoft forms, is sent to all parents to complete. There is no need to complete additional consent documentation for each trip. However, other documentation including accident forms, first aid kits and administer records, pupils lists and contact numbers should be. Parents must be informed of the details of every trip and additional consent must be sought for any overnight trips or trips with activities involving a higher level of risk.

Boarding Outings:

All Boarding Outings must follow this policy in its entirety.

SECTION ONE

RESPONSIBILITIES FOR VISITS

1.1 The Headmaster informed by the OSVC should ensure that:

- Adequate child protection procedures are in place.
- All steps on the Evolve system have been completed.
- Adequate risk assessments have been identified and completed.
- Accompanying staff are adequately trained.
- The group leader has the relevant experience in organisation and in supervising the age group concerned.
- Any non-teacher supervisors on the visit are appropriate people to supervise children.
- The ratio of supervisors to pupils is appropriate.
- Parents have signed consent forms.

- Arrangements have been made for the medical needs of the pupils.
- Travel times out and back are known including pick-up and drop-off points.
- Adequate first-aid provision will be available.
- The mode of transport is appropriate.
- There is adequate and relevant insurance cover.
- The nominated contact person has the address and telephone number of the visit's venue and a contact name.
- A school contact has been nominated and the group leader has details.
- The group leader, group supervisors and nominated school contact have the names of all the pupils travelling in the group.
- There is a contingency plan for any delays including a late return home.

1.2 The group leader should:

- Obtain the Deputy Head's prior agreement for an off-site visit. (Complete the OA - Outline Approval forms on Evolve).
- Appoint a deputy leader.
- They will be responsible for all planning aspects of the trip, including the submission of all Evolve forms and risk assessments. Guidance from the Deputy Head is advisable but ultimately it is the trip leaders responsibility to complete all the necessary paperwork.
- Clearly define each group supervisor's role.
- Be aware of child protection issues.
- Ensure that adequate first-aid provision will be available.
- Undertake and complete the planning and preparation of the visit including the briefing of group members (and parents, where applicable).
- Undertake and complete a comprehensive risk assessment.
- Ensure that the ratio of supervisors to pupils is appropriate for the needs of the group.
- Ensure that the group supervisors have details of the school contact.
- Ensure that the group supervisors have a copy of the risk assessment and have signed them.
- Ensure that the group's teachers and supervisors have the details of pupils' special educational or medical needs.

1.3 Accompanying teachers should:

- Follow the instructions of the group leader and help with control and discipline.
- Speak to the group leader if concerned about the health and safety of pupils at any time during the visit.
- Do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group and act as any reasonable parent would do in the same circumstances.

1.4 Accompanying non-teacher adults must:

- Not be left in sole charge of pupils.
- Follow the instructions of the group leader and teacher supervisors and help with control and discipline.

1.5 Pupils

The group leader should make it clear to the pupils that they must:

- Not take unnecessary risks.
- Follow the instructions of the leader and other supervisors during the journey and the visit.
- Dress and behave sensibly and responsibly.
- If abroad, 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 about it.

1.6 Parents

- Should be given sufficient information on all aspects of the visit to allow them to make an informed decision on whether to allow their child to take part in it.
- Should be encouraged to help prepare the pupil for the trip by, for example, reinforcing the code of conduct for the visit.
- Should be asked to agree to the arrangements for sending a pupil home early for disciplinary reasons and to covering the cost of such action.
- Should provide the group leader with emergency contact numbers.
- Have signed a consent form – either the annual form or a specific one, whichever is appropriate.
- Give the group leader information about the pupil's psychological and physical health which might be relevant to the visit.

SECTION TWO

PLANNING VISITS

2.1 Risk Assessments

Generic risk assessments should be identified, and specific risk assessments be completed well before the visit and they must be circulated to and discussed with all adult supervisors accompanying the visit. All adult supervisors must sign to say they have read risk assessments.

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 risks to an acceptable level?
- Can the group leader put the safety measures in place?
- What steps will be taken in an emergency?

A generic risk assessment may be used for 'routine' visits (e.g. to Church) but this should be monitored and reviewed periodically. However, visits which may involve more specific risks (e.g. field trips) will need additional risk assessments and it is the responsibility of the trip leader to ensure that these are in place.

If using a tour operator, the group leader should obtain written assurance from them that they have assessed risks and have put in place appropriate safety measures.

It may be a good idea to discuss the risk assessment with pupils in some circumstances.

The group leader should take the following factors into consideration when assessing the risks:

- The type of visit/activity and the level at which it is being undertaken.
- The location, routes and modes of transport.
- The ratio of teachers and supervisory staff to pupils.
- The group members' age and competence and the suitability of the activity.
- The special educational and medical needs of the pupils.
- The quality and suitability of available equipment.
- Seasonal conditions, weather and timing.
- Emergency procedures.
- How to cope when a pupil becomes unwilling or unable to continue.
- The need to monitor the risks throughout the visit.

Detailed advice on risk assessments can be obtained from the Health and Safety Executive booklet 'Five Steps to Risk Assessment'.

Please see policy OBHP12 'Risk Assessment Policy' for further guidance.

An initial Outline Approval (OA) should be completed and agreed a term before the visit is due to take place. This ensures that the proposed date is not in any conflict with any other trips or visits.

All other forms completed in Evolve must be completed within two weeks of the proposed visit. The trip leader is responsible for all paperwork including the Evolve forms and Risk assessments.

2.2 Exploratory visits

Where possible, a group leader should endeavour to make an exploratory visit to the location. If this is not practical, the group leader should endeavour to find out as much as possible about the location by asking other schools, the tour operator, the manager of any residential centre to be visited, the tourist board etc.

Even when taking a group to a location previously visited, checks should be made to ensure that no significant changes have been made since the last visit.

2.3 Other considerations

Other factors which should form part of the planning stage include:

- Ensuring all COVID 19 regulations are followed and referred to in the trip Risk Assessment.
- The facilities/equipment the group will need to take on the visit.
- The facilities/equipment to be provided at the venue.
- Staff training needs.
- The designation of someone to record the details of the visit and to carry accident forms etc.
- Transport arrangements.
- Insurance arrangements.
- Information to the provider.

- Communication arrangements.
- Supervision ratios.
- Contingency measures for enforced change of plan or late return.
- Information to parents.
- Preparing pupils.
- Emergency arrangements.
- Arrangements for sending pupils home early.

2.4 First aid

- First aid should form part of the risk assessment.
- Either the group leader or an accompanying supervisor should have a working knowledge of first aid.
- An adequate first aid bag should be taken on the visit. The school Nurse is aware of the minimum requirements for an adequate first aid box.
- For particularly hazardous activities, the group leader should ensure that first aid provision at the centre is adequate.
- All adults in the group should know how to contact the emergency services (particularly important on foreign visits).
- A record must be kept of any medication administered to pupils during the course of the visit. This should include what has been administered, to whom and when.
- The minimum first-aid provision for a visit is a suitably stocked First-aid box and a person appointed to be in charge of first-aid arrangements.
- All sports first-aid bags have a list of pupils' medical conditions. Individual Healthcare Plans are available from the School Nurse in hard copy.
- The group leader must take with him/her the appropriate forms for recording accidents and medication administered.
- Each non-sport trip goes with a first aid bag made up specifically for the trip and needs of the children involved
- Paperwork going always includes - list of medical conditions, healthcare plans of any child with a medical condition, info on dealing with asthma attacks and administering AAI's if relevant.
- Overnight trips will include a drug chart that is signed off daily by administering staff, form for any homely remedy given, dispensing policy, individual healthcare plans, an edited version of the school medical policy, my phone numbers,

2.5 Costing

The Bursary will undertake the costing of your trip. Complete the appropriate fields on the outline approval forms on Evolve. These will automatically go through to the Bursary.

SECTION THREE

MEDICAL

3.1 Medical Issues

It is vital that trip leaders for all types of trips have up-to-date and accurate medical information for all the pupils who are travelling. This information will be sourced in two ways:

- a. It must be supplied by parents as part of the information required for the trip.
- b. It is available on the data base and from the School Nurse. See Emma Easdale for further information.

Essential information:

- Name of medical conditions.
- Details of medication being taken and the form in which it is taken (tablets, syrup etc.)
- Dosage.
- Timing and indications for use.
- Side effects of the medication.
- Whether or not the pupil can self-administer and parental permission for them to do so.
- Allergies and how to deal with them e.g. inhalers, epi-pen.
- Whether or not the pupil has been in contact with any contagious or infectious diseases in the four weeks before the departure and any illnesses suffered by the pupil in that time.
- Status of the pupil's tetanus protection.

N.B. Whilst away, the trip leader (or the member of staff designated to oversee medical issues on the trip) must keep an accurate record of medication administered, whether by the pupil or by a member of staff.

Procedure for gathering medical information:

1. Attached to the initial letter to the parent about the trip, should be the appropriate information form.

3.2 Accidents

The trip leader (or designated member of staff) must take with him/her copies of the accident form and this form must be completed as soon as possible after the accident occurs. It must be handed to the OSVC on return to school.

SECTION FOUR

SUPERVISION

4.1 Recommended Ratios

Years Reception to Year 3: 1 competent adult for every 6 pupils

Years 4-6: 1 competent adult for every 10-15 pupils

- For OBE Residential Activities this ratio would be 1:8

Years 7 & 8: 1 competent adult for every 15-20 pupils

- Ideally minimum of 2 competent adults even for the smallest number of pupils – we recognise that this is not always possible for sports fixtures.
- In addition to the teacher in charge, there should be enough supervisors to cope effectively with an emergency.

If a teacher plans to take his/her own child/children on a school visit, they may do so but only if a partner (or other adult) travels as well, taking full responsibility for the staff child/children.

A competent person can be defined as a person who possesses sufficient technical knowledge, experience and skills to be able to carry out the specific task and prevent danger or injury arising during the course of the work, or as a result of the work.

4.2 Additional non-teaching supervisors

- Parents/volunteers may be used to supplement the supervision ratio but they should be carefully selected and should not be left in sole charge of pupils. Teachers retain responsibility for the group at all times.
- Anyone who has not had a DBS check should never be left in sole charge of pupils.
- Gap students can be used as supervisors but the tour leader must clearly define their jobs and be satisfied that they are competent to carry out the specific duties assigned to them.

4.3 Child protection issues

The tour leader must consider child protection issues. Technically, anyone who has ‘substantial unrestricted access to children’ should be DBS checked. In fact, this is not practical. However, tour leaders should be sure that any adult supervisors who are not teachers be given suitable responsibilities and tasks.

A post-trip Safeguarding form should be completed at the end of each trip and returned to the DSL.

4.4 Adventure activities

- If a teacher is leading or instructing pupils in the activity, he/she must be able to demonstrate his/her competence by holding the relevant National Governing Body (NGB) award where it exists.
- If an activity centre offers instructors, the group leader should check that they have the appropriate qualification.

4.5 Head counts

- Regular head counts should take place.
- Head counts should take place each time the pupils leave or board a means of transport and when they arrive at and leave a venue.
- All supervisors should, at all times have a list of all pupils and adults involved in the visit.

- Group leaders should establish rendezvous points and tell pupils what to do if they become separated from the group.
- Remote supervision – see p. 12.
- Pupils should NOT wear name badges but may wear a badge displaying the name of the school and its emergency contact number.

SECTION FIVE

PREPARING PUPILS

5.1 Pupils should be made aware of:

- The aims and objectives of the visit.
- Relevant foreign customs for trips abroad.
- How to avoid specific dangers and why they should follow rules.
- What standard of behaviour is expected from them.
- The relevant risk assessments.
- Who is responsible for the group.
- What not to bring back into the UK from abroad.
- Rendezvous procedures.
- What to do if separated from the group.
- Emergency procedures.
- A suitable dress code.
- What to do if approached by someone from outside the group.

5.2 Remote supervision

In preparation for remote supervision, pupils must be aware of the ground rules. As a minimum, pupils should have:

- Telephone numbers and emergency contacts. A card can be given to pupils at the start of the trip showing important telephone numbers, including the mobile numbers of the supervising staff.
- Staff should ensure they have the mobile numbers of all pupils on the trip where relevant.
- Money.
- Maps and plans and any other information for them to act effectively.
- Location of local telephones and the appropriate coins (do not rely solely on mobiles).
- A knowledge of how to summon help.
- A knowledge of out of bounds areas and activities.
- A rendezvous point.
- Group leaders must ensure that parents have agreed to remote supervision and the group leader remains responsible for pupils even when not in direct contact with them.

5.3 Transport

Pupils should be aware of basic safety rules, including:

All staff to be aware of the transport regulations during Covid 19 and it must be included in the risk assessment.

- Arrive on time and wait for transport in a safe place.
- Do not rush towards transport when it arrives.
- Wear a seatbelt and stay seated whilst travelling on transport.
- Never tamper with any of the vehicle's equipment or driving controls.
- Bags must not block aisles or cause obstructions.
- Never attempt to get on or off moving transport.
- Never lean out of or throw things from the window of transport.
- Never distract or disturb the driver or impede the driver's vision.
- When alighting from transport in a foreign country, be aware that the door of the vehicle may open onto a road rather than a pavement.

When travelling long distances - over 2 hours - the drivers of vehicles should, where possible, be accompanied by another qualified driver. There should be 2 members of staff in each vehicle.

SECTION SIX

COMMUNICATING WITH PARENTS

6.1 Essential Information

As a minimum, parents should be given the following information:

- Dates of the visit.
- Objectives of the visit.
- Times of departure and return, ensuring that parents have agreed to arrange to pick up their children on return.
- Departure and return location.
- Modes of transport including the name of any travel company.
- The size of the group and the level of supervision including any times when remote supervision may take place.
- Details of accommodation with security and supervisory arrangements on site.
- Names of leader and of all other accompanying adults.
- Details of the activities planned.
- Standards of behaviour expected in respect of, for example, alcohol, smoking and general group discipline.
- What pupils should not take on the visit or bring back.
- Details of insurance taken out for the group as a whole in respect of luggage, accident, cancellation, medical cover, any exceptions in the policy and whether parents need to arrange additional cover.
- Clothing and equipment to be taken.
- Money to be taken (and which currency, if applicable).
- The information required from parents and what they will be asked to consent to.
- For exchange visits, the details of the host families.
- Details of the cost of the visit.

- Information regarding procedures for dealing with misbehaviour, how a pupil will be returned home safely and who will meet the cost.

6.2 Parental consent

Your initial letter to parents should give all the details of the trip. Parents will have signed the original consent for educational trips and visits, however if it is a residential visit then a further consent form is required.

6.3 Medical consent

On admission all parents sign medical consent that allows giving of homely remedies, emergency treatment, blood transfusion and anaesthetic, etc. as considered necessary by a qualified medical practitioner.

A letter requesting such consent should also include a clause stating that the school cannot be held responsible for problems arising from existing medical conditions about which it has not been informed.

6.4 Other parental consent

- Parents should be asked for consent for all sports fixtures and day trips at the start of each academic year. This will be done via Microsoft forms. It will not be necessary for further consent forms to be signed for each trip unless it is a residential visit. However, a letter must be sent home detailing any costs and significant hazards for every trip
- Parental consent should be obtained specifically for the transporting of pupils in the private vehicle of a teacher or a non-teacher adult. Parents must be told the name of the driver.
- The group leader should tell parents if they will be expected to fund the early return of a pupil whose conduct on a visit gives cause for concern.
- The pupil's ability to swim in a pool or in the sea.
- Pupils may, at the trip leader's discretion, be picked up or dropped off at a point other than the main pick-up or drop-off point. However, a pupil must never be left alone at any point and such an arrangement must not unduly delay the trip.

6.5 Parental contact during the visit

- Parents should be able to contact their child via the group leader in the event of a home emergency.
- Parents should have a number to ring for information in the event of an incident during the visit or the late arrival home of the group.
- The Clarion Call system will be set up by the School Office. This system will be used for passing information to parents.

SECTION SEVEN

PLANNING TRANSPORT

7.1 Factors to consider:

- Passenger safety. Including adhering to social distancing on all vehicles and drivers to wear masks where appropriate.
- The competence and training of the driver to drive the proposed vehicle and whether the driver holds the appropriate valid licence.
- Number of driving hours required for the journey and length of the driver's day (including non-driving hours).
- Capacity and experience of the driver to maintain concentration - whether more than one driver is needed.
- Traffic conditions.
- Arrangements in case of breakdown/emergency.
- Appropriate insurance cover.
- Weather.
- Journey time and distance.
- Staffing of vehicles, two per vehicle over journeys of more than two hours.
- Stopping points on long journeys for toilet and refreshments.
- Supervision.

7.2 Seat belts

All minibuses and coaches which carry groups of three or more children aged between 3 and 15 years inclusive must be fitted with a seatbelt for each child. The seats must face forward and seat restraints must comply with legal requirements. For further information, contact the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions (DETR).

7.3 Supervision on transport

- The level of supervision necessary should be considered as part of the risk assessment for the journey.
- The group leader is responsible for the party at all times including maintaining good discipline.
- All group members should be made aware of the position of the emergency door and first-aid and anti-fire equipment on transport.
- On double-decker coaches, there should be a minimum of one supervisor on each deck.
- On buses, trains, ferries and boats the group leader should make clear to the pupils how much or little freedom they have to 'roam'.
- Pupils should be made aware of what to do in an emergency and where emergency procedures are displayed.
- In the event of an accident or breakdown, the group should remain under the direct supervision of the group leader or other teachers.
- Head counts should be carried out when the group is getting off or onto transport.
- An adult should check that seat belts are fastened.
- Pupils should be made aware that they are not allowed access to the driving area at any time.

- The driver should not normally be responsible for supervision.

7.4 Hiring coaches

The group leader is responsible for ensuring that coaches and buses are hired from a reputable company. Several quotes should be obtained in order to decide the best value for money. The School Office or Bursary can advise on this and obtain quotes. Professional operators are legally required to be licensed and the group leader should ensure that the operators have the appropriate public service vehicle (PSV) operators' licence. When booking the transport, the group leader should ensure that seat belts are available for children. If any of the group uses a wheelchair, the group leader should ensure that transport used has appropriate access and securing facilities. All booking for transport must go through the school office.

7.5 Using a school minibus

- All potential drivers of minibuses must have the relevant qualification on their licence. Check with the Bursary if unsure.
- When booking the minibus, through the school office, the driver is responsible for the roadworthiness of the vehicle.
- If a school minibus is required for a visit, it should be booked at the earliest opportunity.
- It is the responsibility of any minibus driver to inform the Bursary of any change to the status of his/her new driving licence.
- If a teacher intends to drive a school minibus, consideration should be given to the number of hours already worked in the day by that teacher, the distance of the journey (are two drivers needed?). If in doubt, speak to the Bursary who will advise. Two adults (including the driver) should ideally accompany all but the shortest trip (25-mile radius). The minibus driver cannot, in addition to driving, be expected to be responsible for the supervision of the pupils travelling. It is noted that some sports trips may be longer than this. It is also recognised that this is a desired staffing level and that in many cases only one adult will be able to take pupils on a journey as long as legal requirements are adhered to.
- Staff are to check that they have all the relevant breakdown assistance cover and information in case of an incident. They can check these documents with the Bursary.

The minibus driver must:

- Not drive when taking medication or undergoing treatment that might affect their ability or judgment.
- Know what to do in an emergency.
- Know how to use fire-fighting and first-aid equipment.
- Avoid driving for long periods and ensure that rests are taken when needed.
- Take into consideration the effects of teaching and the working day.
- Have regular medical check-ups e.g. eyesight.

7.6 Private cars:

- Teachers and others who drive pupils in their own car must ensure their passengers' safety, that the vehicle is roadworthy and that they have the appropriate licence and insurance for carrying the pupils.

- The driver is responsible for ensuring that pupils have a seatbelt and use it at all times.
- Parents' agreement must be sought for pupils to be carried in a teacher's car, another pupil's car or another parent's car. Parents must be told the name of the car driver.
- Teachers transporting one pupil should consider child protection issues. If there are any concerns, they should discuss the situation with the DSL when planning the trip.

7.7 Picking up and dropping off

- Pupils may not be dropped off at any point other than at the agreed drop off, OBH. Private arrangements for drop off at other locations is strictly forbidden.
- On return from a visit, the group leader or other adult supervisor should wait until all pupils have been collected.

SECTION EIGHT

INSURANCE

8.1 General

The group leader must ensure, well before the group departs, that adequate insurance arrangements are in place. The group leader should, at the earliest opportunity, make copies of the insurance schedule available to parents.

8.2 School travel insurance

OBH holds travel insurance with AIG Independent Schools Personal Accident and Travel Insurance Group Policy. Policy Number 0010529412. Staff should contact the Bursary for further details.