



**MOUNT HOUSE
SCHOOL**

INSPIRING EVERY INDIVIDUAL

SCHOOL POLICIES

EDUCATIONAL TRIPS

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Policy Principles

The school believes that the pupils' education is enriched significantly by the opportunities trips and visits offer. In order to ensure that pupils, parents and staff are fully informed about the arrangements for off-site activities and to make every effort to ensure the safety of all personnel on such trips the following procedures are adopted. The responsibility for overseeing the organisation of all trips and visits is delegated to the Principal, Finance Director or Deputy Head Pastoral who keep records of all off-site activities and who ensure that appropriate risk assessments and related tour operator forms are completed before a trip can take place.

All trips are organised following guidelines laid down in DCSF Guidance Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits (HASPEV). All staff are advised to consult the Educational Visits coordinator and read the Trips and Visits paperwork stored in the staff shared area before starting to plan any trip.

For all school visits there is a designated safeguarding officer on call and a member of SLT on call.

Ratios for trips are as follows

Day trip 1:20 Residential trip 1:10

Driving the school minibus

Only staff who have D1 and have passed the Midas test are permitted to drive the minibus.

1. All off-site activities require permission from the Principal. In practice this is delegated to the Deputy Head (Pastoral).
2. Every trip has a nominated Party Leader who takes responsibility for ensuring the trip is organised in line with this policy, who recruits and leads a team of Staff (and sometimes parents), in liaison with the Deputy Head (Academic). Before and whilst on the trip the party leader takes full responsibility for Health and Safety and for decision making in case of an emergency.
3. Trips are carefully planned with due regard to safety. Where trips are organised through a travel company which organises all the transport and accommodation, only recognised and reliable companies are used. When the trip is organised in-house, careful guidelines are followed regarding modes of transport and chosen routes, especially where the pupils have to walk any distance.
4. All residential and international day trips require the parents to complete the 'Consent Form'. Pupils may not travel on trips without the necessary Consent Form being completed.
5. In order for SLT and school nurses to provide comprehensive support to staff with regard to student physical and mental well-being for residential trips, as soon as students have paid a deposit staff must immediately send a list of the students to the Deputy Head (Pastoral).

6. Sixth Form trips to Central London are common. Frequently, the pupils to make their way to and from the venue independently, meeting the staff at a stated time and location. In this case parents give written permission and staff carry mobile phone numbers of all the pupils in addition to the emergency contact numbers of the parents. The pupils are also provided with a mobile phone number (school phone number) for the party leader.

7. Parents are always informed in writing of the arrangements for any trip in which their child is involved and are always provided with an emergency school contact number for use whilst the trip is in progress.

8. For overseas trips the Party Leader must always organise a Parents' meeting in addition to any paper communication. At this meeting, details about the trip are outlined and parents have the opportunity to ask questions. (See below

for further advise on residential trips)

9. The PE department informs parents of weekly after school fixtures via the website and via their children. Parents are informed separately of events which take the pupils out of lessons via letter.

10. Parents complete an Annual Medical Information and Consent Form for all category A, low risk day trips. Residential trips (or day trips with any degree of risk involved) require trip-specific consent forms. These forms also include emergency contact numbers for parents (or parentally nominated alternates) during the trip.

11. The Party Leader is responsible for checking the medical details on ISAMS of all pupils travelling on the trip. Some pupils require individual risk assessments which are produced by school in conjunction with the parents and the Party Leader.

12. A first aid kit is always carried on every trip. Wherever possible one of the accompanying staff is a qualified first aider.

13. Staffing ratios are laid down by the school and it is the Party Leader's responsibility, in conjunction with the Deputy Head (Pastoral), to ensure that these are adhered to.

14. The Party leader always has an emergency contact phone number back at school for use if required during the trip. This will normally be the School receptionist during office hours; a Senior Member of staff takes over for out of school hours, 0208 449 6889.

15. The Party Leader is responsible for preparing a risk assessment for the trip. This should be discussed with all staff travelling with the party and should be shared with any parents accompanying the trip on the day of the trip. Hard copies signed by all staff are submitted to the Deputy Head (Pastoral) before departure. Separate guidance and a pro-forma are available in the Staff Handbook and on the K drive. Training is also provided for staff who are leading trips in the school for the first time.

16. Without a full DBS parents should not be left alone with a group of students.

17. The Party Leader is responsible for ensuring high standards of pupil behaviour.

Pupils are briefed before a trip and on frequent occasions during a trip. Senior school pupils and their parents sign a code of conduct.

Guidelines & advice for residential trips

The following guidelines and advice are useful tips to follow when organising a residential trip.

Additional Trips and Visits Information

Parents' Meeting

All staff supporting a school trip will be expected to attend all parent meetings and staff briefing meetings. For residential trips this is an essential part of the organisation as parents feel reassured they can talk to the staff looking after their children whilst they're away. This will also provide invaluable support for the party leader and give important information regarding the itinerary.

Pastoral responsibilities

All members of staff on a residential trip have a duty of care to look after the students. This includes travel to and from venues where the students should be supervised by all travelling members of staff.

The party leader may split the students into sub-groups and assign a member of staff to each group. This gives the pupils a first point of contact and is useful for spreading out the tasks such as collection of passports, staff acting as a 'bank', head counts etc.

Staff should make every effort to familiarise themselves with the students in their group before departure and should be prepared to step in to support other groups when necessary.

Contingency Funds

Even with the best planning, residential trips do present unexpected costs from time to time. It is therefore acceptable to add a surplus to the cost quoted by the tour company to the student's balance. This should be a common-sense figure and the party leader needs to bear in mind that any surplus left at the end of the trip needs to be returned to the parents.

Staff Food and Drink

Under normal circumstances, accommodation, breakfast, lunch and evening meal should be paid for out of the contingency fund by the party leader. This includes non-alcoholic drinks with meals. Any snacks, coffee & alcoholic drinks should be paid for by the staff themselves.

Staff & Alcohol

Some countries and certain organisations also prohibit the possession and consumption of alcohol, whether by minors or adults.

It should be noted that it is a potential disciplinary offence for a teacher to be at work (as they are when accompanying a school trip) when affected by drink (even if not 'drunk' in the everyday sense of the word) or indeed by other substances which may affect their judgement and behaviour (other than those medically prescribed and of which the school is aware) because being in such a state potentially puts pupils and colleagues at risk and may also undermine discipline and

good order and perhaps bring the school into disrepute.

Staff who choose to drink alcohol whilst on school trips should remember:

- The core responsibility of staff, who are in loco parentis, must take priority over all other considerations.
- Staff must be able to respond in any emergency or unforeseen circumstances, for example during the evening, or where more than one teacher is needed.
- The example which pupils take from the behaviour of staff
- The nature and age range of the pupils and the context of the trip
- Any particular factors, such as the presence of guests, younger children, etc
- The possible effect on the school's reputation, including how this may be perceived by others.

In practical terms, where there are several members of staff accompanying a trip, it might be acceptable for staff to have a small glass of wine at dinner, providing another member of staff acts as the 'designated driver', and remains 'tee-total', but who this will be depends on factors such as who has first aid qualifications, who can drive the available vehicles, etc.

All staff alcohol should be purchased by staff and not drawn from the contingency fund.

Students & Alcohol

Where students are over the age of 18 and if staff feel comfortable allowing students to drink alcohol, students may have one glass of wine or one pint of lager/beer with their evening meal as long as they have provided written consent from the parent and this is in the presence of staff. For some trips this may not be appropriate, however it is up to the party leader's discretion.

Telephone calls

Staff who need to make or receive frequent business calls when out of the office or outside normal working hours will be provided with a school mobile telephone. This should be used for business calls, and occasional short personal calls (e.g. calling home when staying away overnight) only. Students should not have access to staff personal numbers.

General

The same level of professionalism should be adopted on a residential trip as in day to day school life. Punctuality is essential for the smooth running of a trip from both students and staff.

Roles and responsibilities for staff should be clearly defined before the day of departure. This should be carried out in a meeting led by the party leader.

All staff on the trip should have an input into the risk assessment after the initial draft has been drawn up by the party leader and then sign the document.