



**MOUNT HOUSE
SCHOOL**

INSPIRING EVERY INDIVIDUAL

SCHOOL POLICIES

EDUCATIONAL TRIPS & VISITS

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Policy Principles

The school believes that the students' education is enriched significantly by the opportunity to participate in trips and visits and is committed to undertaking out of school trips and activities in accordance to and compliance with all statutory requirements that apply and are in force. The school follows good practice to ensure the safety of all participants (including staff, students, volunteers and third parties) and provides effective on-going training and support for staff and volunteers.

The Deputy Head (Pastoral) is delegated to manage the arrangements of all off-site educational visits that take place involving Mount House staff and students. They will present trip proposals to SLT and will work closely with Trip Leaders to ensure that an audit trail is maintained as evidence of compliance with current legislation. They will ensure that the relevant paperwork is completed, including Risk Assessments for all aspects of the trip. The Director of Sport manages all aspects of off-site Physical Education (PE) and Sport visits and activities in line with the PE and Sport policy. Final approval and decisions remain with and are the responsibility of the Head.

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

It is essential to the smooth running of the rest of the school that trips are properly planned and arranged to ensure minimal disruption to all, both those on the trip and those left behind. Students should miss lessons as rarely as possible. Obviously, there will be times when it is impossible to avoid taking students out during lesson time, but full consideration must be made of alternative times before making such a decision. Staff organising trips consult as widely as possible with colleagues who might be affected and think carefully about the possible impact of a trip.

Mount House is an inclusive school. The challenge is to make trips and 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. The school recognises that there are significant factors to be managed that may override other considerations, and these will be addressed during the trip risk assessment process.

Staffing Ratios for trips:

There can be no exact ratios for school trips. The trip leader, in conjunction with the Deputy Head (Pastoral) will ensure that the staffing for a trip is 'reasonable'. This depends on the age, gender mix, ability and behaviour of the students involved. It will depend on the type of activity undertaken, the nature of the journey and the type of accommodation if the trip is overnight. The competence of the adults supervising a trip must also be considered, together with the need for first aid cover.

For residential/overnight trips, wherever possible there will be a minimum of two adults of opposite sexes if the group is a mixed party.

The trip leader must carefully assess the risks and consider an appropriate safe supervision level for their particular trip. Trips to remote areas or those which involve more hazardous activities clearly require a higher level of supervision

Basic requirements for a school trip

- Students should wear full school uniform when participating in trips during curriculum time unless permission to do otherwise is granted by a member of the Senior Leadership Team, or unless

specific activities demand otherwise.

- All participants involved in a trip will be supplied with, and must carry, an ID card with contact details in case of emergency (name badges are not recommended).
- Good practice, as defined in this policy, will be demonstrated and evidenced at all times.
- All activities undertaken are covered by the terms and conditions of the school insurance.
- All third party insurance and certificates of competence are obtained and kept on file by the school.
- The reputation and financial stability of all tour operators and third party providers will be checked, before trips proceed.
- All staff and accompanying adults must have undertaken a satisfactory Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check (enhanced disclosure) in accordance with Child Protection requirements and have read the school 'Safeguarding Policy' and received training. Any adult who has not been DBS checked will not be left alone with children but accompanied by a member of staff who has a DBS.
- Formal written evidence of DBS clearance of volunteers or staff contracted by third parties will be obtained. All accompanying adults must be safeguarding trained.
- Visits and activities are planned and led by competent members of school or trip/visit establishment staff, with appropriate qualifications and experience as required by the activities. Appropriate technical expertise is sought in relation to the planning and management of more hazardous or adventurous activities, including the verification of activity leader qualifications, safe activity management, risk assessments, etc.
- As part of the risk assessment for all trips, consideration is given to the level of staff training required for first aid. School policy is that at least one member of staff has at least a minimum level of first aid training for all trips. For all foreign trips, residential trips and adventurous activities trips, appropriate first aid provision, including suitably qualified first aiders, is essential. Regular opportunities for training will be provided by the school.

Planning and Organisation

Trip Objectives and Outcomes

- School trips will be planned to enhance the learning and experiences of students. They will be planned to achieve a positive and/or social and cultural outcome. Learning objectives will be identified when completing the required process on Evolve.
- Trips will be evaluated by the Trip Leader via Evolve, generally within two weeks of returning. 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.

Planning the Trip

- 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 students have to walk any distance.
- Proposals and trip objectives must be sent electronically to Deputy Head (Pastoral).
- SLT to discuss and decide whether trip is to be approved or not.
- Once approved the Trip Leader must complete the EVOLVE management system. This should be at least four weeks before departure for residential trips and two weeks before a day trip.
- EVOLVEvisits is an online system for the planning, approval and management of educational visits, sports fixtures and extra-curricular activities. It encourages the Trip Leader to ensure they have the required paperwork completed; including letters to parents, itinerary, risk assessments for activities and individuals students and staff, insurance documents, registers, checks on tour operators (where tour operators are recognised by EVOLVE). Completed paperwork must be submitted to the EVC (Deputy Head – Pastoral) and available to accompanying staff to read (they

must read).

- Trips must be self-financing unless an agreement for a subsidy has been obtained for SLT or the relevant budget holder in advance. When planning the trip all costs must be budgeted for. Receipts must be obtained for all purchases. Gifts for hosts/partner schools/travel contacts must be approved by a line manager in advance of a trip and must be in line with the image and reputation of Mount House. Failure to obtain approval first may result in costs not being reimbursed.
- Parents are responsible for meeting the payment schedules for the trip. Where students have decided to raise funds to pay for their own trip, the risk of non-payment will not rest with the school. Parents are made aware of this when they receive the trip consent form to sign, are responsible for the costs and must pay them.
- Staff attending the trip must be aware of their role and the responsibility they hold. They must be aware that they are in parental loci throughout the trip. Staff places should be funded from the trip and should be in line with expectations and ratio's. Staff places will not be paid for by individuals as this may result in a conflict of interest.
- Whilst completing the required paperwork for a day trip the Trip Leader must refer to ISAMS, the 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. Students may not travel on trips without the necessary 'Consent Form' being completed.
- Having referred to and having received the required information the Trip Leader will liaise with the relevant members of staff and produce individual risk assessments in conjunction with parents.
- For overseas trips the Party Leader must organize a Parents' Information Evening in addition to any paper communication. At this meeting, details about the trip are outlined and parents have the opportunity to ask questions.
- A clear and concise information pack outlining all details of the trip and the programme to be undertaken will be formulated and distributed along with an emergency school contact number for use whilst the trip is in progress, to all parents and participants. The programme presented to parents should be the final version and should not be deviated from unless the weather is considered unsuitable or an emergency occurs. The information pack will be distributed at a Parents' Information Evening and a copy of the College insurance cover must be available to inspect.
- A copy of the information pack and a list of participants must be given to the front office staff in order that any questions that arise can be satisfactorily answered.

Points of Contact

For all trips and off-site activities, the first point of contact at the school during school hours is the school Reception. Outside school hours, the primary contact will be the Head or the Deputy Head Pastoral, who is the EVC, with at least one member of the Senior Leadership Team next in line. The Head and EVC (Deputy Head Pastoral) will have electronic access to information regarding all the trips taking place via EVOLVE.

Please see Appendix A - Chain of Command in the Event of an Emergency during a School Trip, for further information.

Responsibilities

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. Our school sets out health and safety arrangements in the Health, Safety, Risk Assessment and Welfare Policy. There are a number of specific responsibilities regarding school trips that are considered within this policy;

Responsibility of the Governing Body

The governors are required to agree a policy for trips and visits which takes into account codes of practice, procedures and protocols to ensure compliance with current legislation, good practice and insurance cover. The governing body must be aware of the school programme of all off-campus visits. Mount House School has a statutory liability to ensure and demonstrate a duty of care that minimises risk to its students, staff, volunteers and third parties.

Responsibility of the Head

The Head must ensure that:

- Any off-campus activity is appropriate and relevant;
- The school may be run efficiently in the absence of staff engaged in the activity or off-site visit;
- Only the Head, acting on behalf of the Governing Body, is able to finally approve the organisation of such activities. Approval systems must be clearly evidenced, and involve the Governors as appropriate.
- The policy is implemented for out of school trips and activities, and the governors are aware of the programme.
- The Deputy Head (Pastoral)/EVC and Trip Leaders are competent to manage and/or lead off site visits and understand their roles and responsibilities.
- Adequate Child Protection/Safeguarding policies and procedures are in place for all trips and visits.
- Sufficient time is allowed for Trip Leaders to organise visits according to the policy.
- All staff members accompanying trips are appropriately trained, and suitable to supervise students.
- An emergency response group is prepared to be convened in the event of a major accident or event.

Responsibility of the Deputy Head (Pastoral)/EVC

The management of overall visit and activity planning, risk assessment and the visit approval process is carried out by the Educational Visits Coordinator, who is the Deputy Head (Pastoral), and has the appropriate training and experience to take on the role. He/she has attended an EVC training course, and an EVC training update every three years.

The Deputy Head/EVC must ensure that;

- All staff going on a trip/visit are fully trained and have received CPD linked to organising a trip.
- All staff have received training on how to use EVOLVE.
- They liaise with admissions and SENCO to ensure all staff have access to accurate medical and individual needs registers.
- They are available to help and support Trip Leaders with questions when completing EVOLVE and required paperwork.
- The Trip Leader completes EVOLVE and the required paperwork for the trip in-line with this policy (this should be at least four weeks before departure for residential trips and two weeks before a day trip).
- All paperwork is checked accordingly.

Responsibility of Trip Leader

The Trip Leader is the person with overall responsibility for the administration, programme, supervision and conduct of the venture, and is an important part of the health and safety and good practice support system. The Trip Leaders should demonstrate the ability to undertake a comprehensive review of the needs of the venture and in particular be able to risk assess the locations, groups travelling and leader competencies, in order to put good risk management procedures in place, that they can monitor and use.

The Trip Leader must ensure:

- EVOLVE and all required paperwork is submitted in-line with this policy (this should be at least four weeks before departure for residential trips and two weeks before a day trip).
- That all accompanying staff are fully informed, receiving all relevant and required information at

least one week before a residential trip and two days before a day trip. Roles and responsibilities for staff must be clearly defined before the day of departure. This will be done in a meeting led by the Trip Leader.

- That all accompanying staff have signed a document to say they have read the information given to them.
- That parents are kept informed of plans via letters.
- An Information Meeting is organised before a residential trip.
- That high standards of student behaviour are an expectation throughout the trip. Students are briefed before a trip and on frequent occasions during a trip.
- That any adult accompanying the trip without a DBS is not left alone with children but is accompanied by a member of staff who has a DBS.
- They always have 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.
- That the required/relevant procedures are carried out when leading a Sixth Form trip to Central London;
 - Frequently, the students 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 students in addition to the emergency contact numbers of the parents.
 - The students are also provided with a mobile phone number (school phone number) for the party leader.

In the case of Sports Fixtures, 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 students out of lessons via letter or email.

Responsibility of Accompanying Staff

The accompanying staff have a duty of care for their students. This applies to all trips, even those undertaken voluntarily and out of school hours. Our staff will do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group.

- Staff members in charge of students have a common law duty to act as any reasonably prudent parent would in the same circumstances.
- The Trip Leader may split the students into sub-groups and assign a member of staff to each group. This gives the students 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.
- Accompanying staff must ensure that they have read all information given to them by the Trip Leader.
- Staff members accompanying a residential trip have a duty of care to look after the students. This includes travel to and from venues where the students will be supervised by travelling members of staff.
- Staff must familiarise themselves with the emergency evacuation procedures on arrival at a location or venue.
- Staff must always be prepared to deal with an emergency with a student or students and at least two members of staff should regard themselves as being on call at any one time and refrain from drinking alcohol. It is not acceptable for staff to drink to excess at any time on a school trip. It is not acceptable for staff to use recreational drugs or to abuse prescription drugs whilst on a School trip.

Responsibility of All Participants

It is the responsibility of all participants in a trip to:

- The same level of professionalism will be adopted on a residential trip as in day to day school life.
- Punctuality from both students and staff is essential for the smooth running of a trip.
- Take reasonable care of their own and others' health and safety.
- Carry out activities in accordance with training and instruction.
- Students should be told of the expectations placed upon them during the trip, and have a full understanding of the parameters covering all aspects of the trip or activity
- Inform accompanying staff of any serious risk that becomes apparent during the trip.
- Adhere to school procedures and policies.

The Employer Guidance given by the Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel sets out clear and detailed responsibilities and functions of specific roles with regards school trips and off-site activities, that relate to roles in the school. These are:

- [Member of Board of Governors or Management Board](#)
- [Head teacher](#)
- [EVC](#)
- [Visit or Activity Leader](#)
- [Assistant Visit leader](#)
- [Volunteer Adult Helper](#)
- [Parents](#)

Third Parties

Third parties in contact with or involved in the instruction or supervision of Mount House students must be made aware of:

- The need to provide valid certification if they are to supervise hazardous activities (e.g. D of E activities).
- UK Child protection/ Safeguarding guidance and legal requirements/procedures.
- Contact details for the Trip Leader.
- The school's expectations on student behaviour (Behaviour Policy) and school rules.
- That any physical contact with students must be only as part of the necessary support of an activity, or to prevent injury.

Parents

Parents will be given sufficient information in writing, in order that they can make an informed decision on whether the student should go on the trip/visit. For longer trips, particularly those overseas, it is essential to hold a Parents Information Evening a few weeks before departure. This allows information to be shared, questions to be asked and answered, and reassurance to be given where appropriate.

Parents will be given full details of what a visit or activity entails, and be asked to give consent for their child taking part in the trip and agree to any payments that are applicable.

First Aid

The Trip Leader will consider what level of First Aid might be needed on a visit and then ensure that at least one accompanying member of staff is trained and that the required number of adequate First Aid kits are requested from school.

- Trip Leader will be in possession of relevant medical information.

- Trip Leader to have completed individual Risk Assessments.
- Accompany staff to have read and be aware of individual needs of students.
- Where students need to travel with medication for chronic conditions a doctor's letter should be supplied by the parents to avoid problems at airports.
- Trip Leader and accompanying staff will make themselves aware of the distance to the nearest Accident and Emergency Unit.
- A log will be kept of any first aid or non-prescription medication administered.

Emergencies

Emergencies are by their nature unexpected. Emergency planning is an important part of the planning and organisation of all trips and activities since this can mitigate the trauma of an emergency situation.

- On trips abroad the Trip Leader should have the number of the nearest British Embassy or Consulate alongside the other essential information carried so that notification can be made and support given should a major emergency arise.
- In the event of such an emergency the Trip Leader or another member of staff will refer to/follow the emergency procedures set out by the school (see below).

Emergency procedure for Educational Trips and Visits

1. Establish the nature and the extent of the emergency.
2. Get medical attention for any casualties.
3. Ensure the safety and security of the rest of the group.
4. Keep all other adults in the group informed and allocate roles as necessary.
5. Ensure that no-one in the group uses their phone until the situation is under control and the parents of injured students can be properly informed.
6. Notify the appropriate point of contact at school, see Appendix A – Chain of Command in the Event of an Emergency during a School Trip, providing clear details.
7. Notify the British Embassy /Consulate (if abroad, and if necessary depending on the nature of the emergency)
8. Keep a log of events, times, and names of injured and contacts.
9. Refer all media enquiries to the Principal. Never disclose the names of those involved to the media.
10. Ensure that a member of staff accompanies students to hospital.

General Information

Travel

Trip Leaders and supervising staff will ensure that:

- Transport hired within the EU meets with all EU and UK standards.
- Where private transport is used Insurance policies must be checked to ensure that the situation is covered.
- Road transport is fitted with seat belts and that students wear them at all times.
- That supervision is adequate when travelling.
- That vehicles are parked safely to enable students to get on and off safely.
- That luggage is securely stored and emergency exits are not blocked.
- That behaviour is such that the driver is not distracted.
- That where students are transported in private cars, adequate insurance for this purpose has been obtained – liaise with Bursar.

School Vehicles

Mount House School does not own or lease any vehicles so all transport will be booked with a fully licensed and appropriate transport provider.

Downtime

All periods of time when students are not involved in organised activities is designated as 'downtime'. During this time it is good practice for staff to:

- Utilise the time for clear briefing and discussion sessions ensuring that any special needs or vulnerabilities of students are taken into account.
- Ensure that students understand the standards of behaviour that are expected of them, and that these standards apply at all times including downtime.
- Ensure that staff understand that their supervisory role continues at all times

Overnight Safety during a Residential Trip

In order to ensure the safety of students the following will be taken in to consideration;

- Where possible Trip Leaders should arrange accommodation and sleeping arrangements so that members of staff are accommodated on the same floor as students.
- Students will be informed of where staff are located, and rooms occupied by staff should be labelled so that students know where to find them in an emergency.
- Males and females should be located in separate areas where possible.
- Students should not enter the room of others at any point.
- Ensure that Child Protection arrangements are in place to protect both students and staff.
- When rooms have been allocated on arrival, a member of staff should draw up an occupancy plan so that staff know where all students are based.
- See that security arrangements are in force where Hotels or Hostels are without 24hour security or reception staff to prevent unauthorised intrusion.
- Check that external doors and windows are secured to prevent intrusion and unauthorised exit by students.
- Internal doors should be lockable but staff must have reasonable access at all times.
- Where student's doors are locked, staff should have immediate access to a pass key in case of emergency.
- All staff and students must know the emergency procedures and escape routes in the event of a fire or other emergency.
- Staff must run through a fire practice evacuation within the first two hours of arriving.
- Staff should remain vigilant and regularly patrol student areas. Staff should knock before entering student rooms.
- A register should be taken throughout the day but also before lights out.
- It is good practice to include staff of both genders for residential trips so that a male adult can be responsible for the boys and a female adult for the girls.
- Students should have signed a Mount House Behaviour Contract before the trip commences. The terms of that contract should be observed at the venue.

Contingency Funds

Even with the best planning, residential trips can present unexpected costs from time to time. In this event, an amount surplus to the cost quoted by the tour company, may therefore be added to the student's balance for the parents to cover these. The amount should be a common-sense figure. Conversely, any surplus monies left at the end of the trip, will be returned to parents.

Staff and Alcohol

Some countries and certain organisations prohibit the possession and consumption of alcohol, whether by

minors or adults. 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). Being in such a state potentially puts students and colleagues at risk and may also undermine discipline and good order, and 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 students take from the behaviour of staff.
- The nature and age range of the students and the context of the trip
- Any particular factors, such as the presence of guests, younger children.
- 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 and 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 (signed by the parent in the presence of staff before the trip begins). For some trips this may not be appropriate, however it is up to the Trip Leader's discretion.

Appendix A - Chain of Command in the Event of an Emergency during a School Trip

