

WATFORD GRAMMAR SCHOOL FOR BOYS



SCHOOL ACTIVITIES AND VISITS POLICY

Headmaster's signature

28/2/18

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'I. J. ...'.

Chair of Governors' signature

28/2/18

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Paul ...'.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Watford Grammar School for Boys is committed to the provision of educational visits and outdoor education. Such opportunities enhance and enrich the learning experience and may even serve to change the course of a child's life. Educational visits and outdoor education can result in the development of self-esteem, interpersonal skills, independence, creativity and enhanced motivation. Watford Grammar School for Boys is passionate about the need to ensure that all of our students gain an experience of other cultures and exposure to native speakers in their own country and further afield.
- 1.2 The value of off-site educational visits is well recognised by the Governing body and fully supported throughout the school. It is emphasised that a culture of safety must prevail and there is a need for careful planning and adherence to statutory procedures. Off-site educational visits must be well managed, information communicated and responsibilities recognised.
- 1.3 This document outlines the specific policies and procedures for Watford Grammar School for Boys. It supplements and follows the advice and guidance contained within the following significant publications:
- DfE Health and Safety: Advice on Legal Duties and Powers (2014) https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/335111/DfE_Health_and_Safety_Advice_06_02_14.pdf
 - Hertfordshire County Council Guidelines for Off-Site Visits <http://www.thegrid.org.uk/info/healthandsafety/visits/index.shtml>
 - Outdoor Education Advisory Panel (OEAP) <http://www.oeap.info/>
 - A Guide to the Law for School Governors <http://media.education.gov.uk/assets/files/pdf/g/governors%20guide%20may%202012.pdf>
 - DfE guidance Charging for School Activities https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/514619/Charging_for_school_activities.pdf
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2. Criteria for approval

- 2.1 All visits will be considered in three categories in accordance with County guidance.

Level 1: Regular one day or less – low risk activities (e.g. theatre trips, student conferences, History trip to St Albans etc.)

Level 2: Non-routine, residential stays, adventurous activities run by licensed/accredited centres (e.g. Geography Field Trip to the Dare Valley Centre etc.)

Level 3: All overseas visits and school led adventurous activities i.e. those not run by a licensed/accredited centres (e.g. Sail France Sailing Trip, ski trips, World Challenge, scuba diving trips, Battlefields Trip, etc.). The Governors' Health & Safety Committee must approve Level 3 trips before the date of departure. Level 1 & 2 trips only require the Headteacher's approval.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

- 3.1 The Group Leader is responsible for identifying the purpose of the visit and for following the procedures outlined in this policy document. It is important to realise that compliance with these

procedures will be crucially important in protecting staff in the event of something going wrong. The Group Leader is responsible for completing the trip details and all associated documentation in the EVOLVE online system. This requires the production of a risk assessment, which is necessary for all off-site visits. The risk assessment will take account of:

- Generic risks: Risks that are associated with any trip that takes students off the school site. It is essential that staff familiarise themselves with the details of these generic risk assessments.
- Event Specific Risks as identified from a pre-visit or through knowledge or experience of the environment, accommodation, the leader's competence, the group and other factors such as transport.
- On-going risks identified by the professional staff responding to changing circumstances and the success, or otherwise, of planned activities and procedures. This may involve inclusion of a 'Plan B' in the risk assessment produced prior to departure. The participants and staff will be fully briefed on the purpose and the risk assessment control measures. Participants are encouraged to consider risks involved in an off-site educational activity and to assist in the design of appropriate risk management strategies that support their learning.

The Group Leader will also keep records and make reports of accidents and 'near' accidents in the 'incident' section of the EVOLVE website

3.2 The Group Leader, along with accompanying supervisory adults, has a duty of care both for the students and for each other at all times during the educational visit. In particular, all supervisory adults must take a sensible approach to the consumption of alcohol. In this respect the school's policy on the consumption of alcohol states that no student will be allowed to consume alcohol whilst on a school trip even if they exceed the minimum legal drinking age for that country. All supervisory adults must take a sensible approach to the consumption of alcohol.

Staff & Alcohol

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 students 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 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, 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 may be acceptable for staff to drink alcohol in moderation, 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.


Provided that all of these procedures are followed, the School will not take legal action against a member of staff and, in the event of legal action by a third party, WBGS will indemnify staff except in circumstances where the member of staff has been found guilty of criminal negligence, assault, or criminal damage.

- 3.3 The Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) is responsible for ensuring that all off-site activities follow the correct procedures. The person with these responsibilities will approve the group leader for every visit and check all forms prior to signing to ensure good practice. In addition, the EVC has the following responsibilities and duties:
- Support the group leader in identifying the purpose for the visit and the selection, training and briefing of appropriate supervising adults.
 - Ensure that DBS checks are in place where necessary.
 - Act as or arrange for an Emergency School Contact and draw up proper procedures to be followed in such an event.
 - Review and regularly monitor procedures.
 - To provide a list of all Level 3 off-site visits for the Chair of the Governors' Health and Safety Committee for their meetings
- 3.4 The Headteacher is delegated by the Governing Body to approve all off-site educational visits. The Headteacher is required to report a list of visits to the Governing Body for information on a termly basis.
- 3.5 The Governing Body satisfies itself that the appropriate procedures, risk assessment and control measures are in place and that the documented guidance notes are being followed. The Governing Body delegates responsibility for the approval of educational visits to the Headteacher. The Governors' Health & Safety Sub- Committee will approve and countersign all Level 3 visits. The termly report to the Governors must be recorded in the minutes of the Governing Body.

4. Procedures for Off-Site Educational Visits

To ensure proper good practice and compliance with the necessary regulations it is expected that:

- 4.1 All group leaders will familiarise themselves with the Government advice and guidance available from https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/335111/DfE_Health_and_Safety_Advice_06_02_14.pdf. Training for group leaders will be arranged to include all aspects of supervision, on-going risk assessments (including being prepared to stop an activity that has become too hazardous) and how to deal with an emergency.
- 4.2 It is good practice for group leaders to use the relevant guidance from OEAP <http://www.oeap.info/> in order to plan an off-site activity. The EVC should be involved in discussing plans at an early stage. Residential and overseas trips must be discussed in principle in the preceding academic year. Routine or local visits such as games matches need to be planned ahead also. It may be possible to approve a series of events on an annual basis. No letter should be sent to parents and no financial commitment should be agreed until all relevant approvals have been achieved. It is advisable, before submitting appropriate approval forms, that the outline of the trip is discussed with the relevant staff including the Headteacher and Finance.
- 4.3 Approval forms must be submitted via EVOLVE to the EVC at least **two months** in advance for any educational visits which involve any of the following:
- hazardous activities
 - an overseas trip
 - a residential trip.

- 4.4 All other educational visits will require the submission of approval forms via EVOLVE at least **one month** in advance. The approval of visits where forms are submitted with less notice may not be completed in time for the visit to go ahead.
- 4.5 All communication, including the initial letter and forms such as passport and PIF forms, should be uploaded to EVOLVE and will then be sent home via the School Office.
All forms and letter templates are available on EVOLVE in the Resources tab .
- 4.6 Admin will set up a ParentPay account to collect monies for the trip. On the ParentPay website parents tick to give their consent for the trip, thus most trip letters do not need consent forms. However, where there are no costs incurred for the trip a consent form will have to be included – this should be returned to the School Office.
- 4.7 Any student in receipt of Pupil Premium whose trip costs are to be paid out of PP funding will need to be sent a separate letter. Use the relevant template in EVOLVE.
- 4.8 Before the visit takes place, the group leader must ensure that all supervising adults are familiar with the risk assessment and the Emergency Action Plan. Emergency Response Cards must be carried by all supervising adults.
- 4.9 Any incidents that occur on the trip should be recorded on the ‘incident’ section on Evolve.
- 4.10 After a trip has been completed an evaluation of the trip’s outcomes in terms of learning and development should be completed on the EVOLVE website.