



# DITCHAM PARK SCHOOL

*Where every child is known and valued*

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## Educational Visits Policy

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| Compiled by         | Head of Juniors |
| Approved by         | SLT             |
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## Educational Visits Policy

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### Aims & Purposes

Ditcham Park School recognises the wider educational benefit that visits out of school offer to our pupils. Planned visits most usually support the delivery of the teaching curriculum. They also nurture pupils' social, cultural and spiritual development, reflecting the school's ethos and aims. These include:

- Out of hours clubs
- Inter school team sports
- Nearby visits (libraries, parks, shops, places of worship)
- Day visits for particular year groups (theatres, museums, art galleries, environmental activities)
- Residential visits and activities, which might be classed as adventurous.

We also acknowledge the commitment, planning and goodwill shown by the staff in arranging day and residential visits.

### Responsibilities

Staff are responsible for the organisation of any visits undertaken by the pupils of the school. Most visits are complementary to the curriculum and are arranged and lead by the Subject Teacher (Seniors) or the Class Teacher (Juniors). Residential visits, which have a blend of curriculum and team-building components, are available for the pupils in six successive years: 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9. These visits are arranged by the school staff.

A range of further optional residential trips are available to pupils from Year 5-11, annually.

Specific responsibilities include:

- Headmaster / Head of Juniors: to approve visits and assess competence of visit leaders;
- Visit leader: to plan visits in line with procedures in this policy, including completion in advance of a full risk assessment and all prescribed and relevant forms, and to dynamically risk assess throughout the duration of the visit. To fully brief all accompanying adults;
- Supervising teachers and other adults: to supervise children, dynamically assess risks, manage risks in line with risk assessment;
- Pupils: to follow instructions and procedures in line with the risk assessment;
- As long as the school guidance is adhered to, any problem resulting in injury will normally be considered an accident.

### Planning

Each visit is planned in advance and a **trip form** completed. Safety of the pupils is paramount and as part of the planning, a **thorough risk assessment** is undertaken.

### Supervision

The school maintains a high pupil to adult ratio on all visits, in line with or more usually, above the DCSF recommended guidelines.



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### Day visits

|             |           |
|-------------|-----------|
| Nursery     | 1: 4      |
| Reception   | 1: 4      |
| Years 1- 3  | 1: 6      |
| Years 4 - 6 | 1: 8      |
| Years 7-11  | 1:15 – 20 |

### Residential visits (UK & Abroad)

All year groups 1: 10 at least 2 of whom should be permanent members of staff appropriate for the trip. All adults accompanying a school party overnight must have an enhanced DBS check.

However, a professional judgement must be made for **each visit**, by the residential visit leader and Headmaster / Head of Juniors, as a range of characteristics relevant to the particular visit should determine the ratio. These are:

Type, duration and level of activity;  
Needs of individuals within the group;  
Experience and competence of staff and accompanying adults;  
Nature of venue;  
Weather conditions at that time of year;  
Nature of transport involved;  
The competence of supervisors and the supervision arrangements are more important than ratios.

### **Preparing the pupils**

All pupils are:

Prepared for the content of subject related visits;  
Made aware of the code of conduct expected on any visits;  
Made aware of personal safety issues;  
Provided with equal opportunities whilst engaged in the visit.

### **Communicating with the parents**

As part of the planning, parents are informed of proposed visits by letter. This includes details of timing, the proposed activities, meal arrangements, clothing and the cost. Parents are requested to sign the online consent form for each visit, without this pupils are not eligible to join the visit.

On day trips, staff take a list of contact numbers in case of minor accident, incident or unexpected delay to the return timing. Should there be a serious emergency then the group leader contacts the school and the school's emergency procedure is put into place and this becomes the parents' point of contact.

For residential visits there is a pro-forma to be completed with medical details, including allergies, emergency contact numbers and a loco parentis signature.



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### Insurance

The school maintains a valid insurance policy for all school visits covering personal injury and liability.

### Types of visit

The vast majority of visits are day trips and complement the curriculum studies of those pupils involved.

There are residential visits which have a blend of curriculum and team-building components for the pupils in four successive years. Pupils are expected to attend these residential visits, for which there is a charge, in support of their personal and academic development:

- Year 4 pupils have an overnight stay in the New Forest;
- Year 5 pupils visit Cobnor Activities Centre (3 days/ 2 nights);
- Year 6 pupils visit Hooke Court in Dorset (5 days/ 4 nights);
- Years 7 and 8 visit Calshot Activity Centre in Southampton (3days/ 2 nights);
- Year 9 visit Ypres (3 days/ 2 nights).

In addition, there are also a variety of voluntary trips such as a French exchange, Spanish Trip, Ski Trips, Climbing Trips and Music Tours. The School also runs expeditions as part of its participation in the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme.

All visits are arranged and accompanied by the school staff with volunteer helpers when necessary to maintain pupil/staff ratios.

Pupils must be supervised throughout all visits. However, there are circumstances when they might be unaccompanied by an adult (remote supervision). The decision to allow remote supervision should be based on risk assessment and must take into account factors such as:

- Prior experience of pupils;
- Age of pupils;
- Responsibility of pupils;
- Competence/ experience of staff;
- Environment/ venue

### Visits abroad (European)

The school staff arrange an annual skiing trip for pupils in Seniors and a separate ski trip for pupils in Juniors. An annual music tour for members of the School Choirs and Concert Band is also organised to a European destination and, on alternating years, visits to Spain and France take place. All such visits are facilitated through recognised travel agencies.

### Risk Assessment

“Risk assessment” is a careful examination of what could cause harm to pupils, staff or others, together with an identification of the control measures necessary in order to reduce risks to a level which, in the professional judgement of the assessor, is deemed to be acceptable (i.e. low).

In considering risk, there are 3 levels of which visit leaders should be mindful:



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- Generic Risks: normal risks attached to any activity out of school.
- Event Specific Risks: any significant hazard or risk relating to the specific activity that is not covered in the generic policies.
- Ongoing Risks: the monitoring of risks throughout the actual visit as circumstances change.

Staff must be aware of the needs and risks associated with individual pupils and not adopt a complacent attitude as a result of previous accident free visits.

Pupils should be involved in risk assessment and management. This may include identifying potential risks and discussing their role in reducing risks. Through this they will develop risk awareness – an educational issue as well as a safety issue. It is an essential life skill.

Risk Assessments are signed by the Headmaster or Head of Juniors and a copy is stored in the School Office and on SharePoint. The Bursar also receives a copy.

### Plan B

Despite the most detailed and careful pre-visit planning, things can go wrong on the day (e.g. parent helper is unavailable, member of staff is ill, transport fails to arrive, museum have lost the booking). To avoid having to make important decisions under pressure, it is important that some advanced thinking is done to cater for any foreseeable eventuality. Trips without adequate supervision or transport are postponed or cancelled.

### Transport

Travel arrangements should be included in the risk assessment. If public transport is to be used, all pupils and supervisors must be fully briefed as to procedures on platforms, at bus stops, on busy streets etc.

If travel is by coach or minibus, all pupils must wear a seat belt. Staff must ensure that pupils comply with this rule.

### First Aid

The level of first aid provision should be based on risk assessment. On all visits there should be a responsible adult who has a good working knowledge of first aid.

### Emergency Procedure

The school has a staff emergency contact line in the event of serious incident which is not known to parents which gives direct access to the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) of the school. It is the responsibility of the Headmaster to inform parents and outside agencies as to the nature of the incident and steps being taken. This is in accordance with the school's Disaster / Emergency Management Plan and Procedures. In the case of all residential trips, the contact telephone number of a member of the SLT is confirmed with trip organisers.

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