



EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY

The Educational Visits Policy applies to the whole school including the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Assistant Head (Operations) is the Visits Co-ordinator in the Senior School and the Deputy Head of the Prep. School is the Visits Co-ordinator in the Prep. School. Farlington believes strongly in the value of educational visits which fall into four main categories:

- those which are an essential part of GCSE or A level studies (eg geography field trips)
- those which are a desirable enhancement of GCSE or A level studies (eg theatre and art gallery visits, visits to the Somme battlefields)
- those which enhance the curriculum in the Preparatory School and the EYFS (eg visit to the INTECH Science centre)
- those which add to pupil's life experience and education in it's broadest sense (eg Isle of Wight trip, PGL adventure trip, ski trip, Wilderness Trust)

All arrangements for off site visits and the behaviour of pupils during those visits are the responsibility of the Group Leader, from conception until the return of all pupils to the school day or until the time that the last pupil is collected. The Group Leader should complete the necessary forms and must accompany the visit.

Full instructions for planning and booking visits are found in Appendix I; these include risk assessments, first aid, insurance checks, communication with parents, preparing pupils (with particular attention to those with special and medical needs) and planning transport. Group Leaders organising overseas trips must also ensure the proper passport and visa procedures have been followed.

Emergency procedures are detailed in the Emergency Packs with which all staff accompanying school visits must make themselves familiar. They must be collected from the School Office before any visit departs.

The staff: pupil ratio for visits is as follows:

- for all trips with Years 7 – 11 and Sixth Form overseas the staff: pupil ratio must be at least 1:10 plus one adult
- for any other Sixth Form trips the ratio will vary according to the nature of the trip and the girls involved. Please check with the Visits Co-ordinator.
- for Years 3 – 6 the ratio should be at least 1:8 plus one adult, and
- for the Early Years Foundation Stage and KS1, the ratio should be between 1:4 and 1:6, depending on the activity.
(Any parent volunteers who regularly form part of the adult complement must have an enhanced CRB check by the School. Any volunteers on overnight stays must also have enhanced CRB checks by the School.)

Variations to these ratios may only be made in extenuating circumstances with the express permission of the Visits Co-ordinator.

Planning transport

No one under 25 years of age may drive the School minibuses nor anyone who is not on the Facilities Manager's Register of Drivers. Appropriate theoretical and practical training sessions are provided by the School for all staff who are required to undertake driving duties.

The School minibuses are managed by the Facilities Manager and the School Caretaker. Their responsibilities include servicing, maintenance, inspection and cleaning. The Bursar is responsible for paying the road taxes.

Educational Visits Booked through a Tour Operator

It is quite common when using a tour operator that they will manage all aspects of transportation on the trip. The Group Leader and the Educational Visits Coordinator will oversee these arrangements to ensure they satisfactorily meet the requirements of the School.

Appendix I

INSTRUCTIONS FOR PLANNING AND BOOKING A TRIP

The Group Leader should complete the green form. (See Appendix II)

Allow sufficient time for the Green Form to go through the system, as any trip not organised in time to go in the School Calendar may not be able to take place.

DO NOT MAKE ANY FIRM BOOKINGS OR ARRANGEMENTS UNTIL ALL SECTIONS OF THE OFF-SITE VISIT REQUEST FORM HAVE BEEN SIGNED.

Complete Part I of the green Off-site Visits Request Form (available in Staff Common Room), detailing what you are proposing to do, where and when, and with which group of pupils. You must make clear what activities will be undertaken, and whether these will be led by school staff or staff at an activity centre.

Take the form to the Bursar who will check that school insurance covers the activities you intend to do. S/he will either sign their approval or make clear what further insurance needs to be arranged before the trip can proceed. The budget for the trip will also be agreed at this point.

Submit the green form to the Trips Co-ordinator (MHH Senior School, SP Prep School) who will check that the date is appropriate, and pass it to the Headmistress for approval. The form will be returned to you.

NB

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- For any other Sixth Form trips the ratio will vary according to the nature of the trip and the girls involved. Please check with the Visits Co-ordinator.
- For Years 3 – 6 the ratio should be at least 1:8 plus one adult, and
- For the Early Years Foundation Stage and KS1, the ratio should be between 1:4 and 1:6, depending on the activity.

(Any parent volunteers who regularly form part of the adult complement must have an enhanced CRB check by the School. Any volunteers on overnight stays must also have enhanced CRB checks by the School.)

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Complete Part II of the request form and **sign** page four of the green form to indicate that you have assessed the risks involved in the visit.

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Submit it to the Visits Co-ordinator for final approval. If the visit involves special activities arranged/led by a third party, copies of their activity licence and staff qualifications **must** be attached, or the Visits Co-ordinator will not be able to approve the visit. If the activities are to be provided by school staff you must **complete** and **attach** a pink Risk Assessment form. All Group Leaders should complete a generic transport risk assessment form; these are available on the staff pool and in the staff common rooms.

Once you have final approval

- Book your trip in full
- The member of SLT responsible for the Calendar will enter the details on to the Calendar Overview on the Staff Pool.
- Write a letter, via the Office, to parents/guardians of girls involved in the visit, giving details of dates, time, transport etc, together with the cost. The letter should have a tear-off slip at the bottom for parents/guardians of **all** girls to sign giving permission for their daughters to go on the visit. (Boarders should have their slip signed by the Housemistress.)
- Ensure all staff who are going on the visit complete a request for cover and submit to the member of staff who organises cover.
- Parents need to be given as much advance notice as possible, giving details of the cost, with further reminders sent out nearer the time.
- All correspondence and information about the visit is posted on the Parents' area of the Website by the School Office.

Overseas Visits

- The Group Leader should ensure that all members of the group have valid passports and visas (if appropriate) in the early stages of planning the visit. Farlington requires individual passports rather than a group passport even when the latter is allowable. Non EU passport holders maybe required to use a separate passport channel from the rest of the group.
- Pupils who are not nationals of any EU member state may need a visa to travel from the UK to another member state. The Group Leader must check individual details in each case. Advice can be obtained from the British Council on 0161 957 7755.
- With regard to the new accession states, the Visits Co-ordinator should ask the consulate to confirm that appropriate arrangements are in place — and to obtain assurances in writing before leaving the UK.

At least one week before the visit

- Organise mobile phones and contact numbers. At least two mobile phones should be taken, or one per group if the pupils are to be divided into more than two groups during the outing. Arrange an SLT home contact if the trip extends outside normal school hours and give them two copies of the details.
- Complete an outing form (**lists of whole year group** - available in the Staff Common Room) and give a copy to the Office.

Every member of staff accompanying the trip must have a copy of this form with them.

A copy should also be pinned up on the Outings Board in the Staff Common Room.

- Order packed lunches, where appropriate, from the kitchen.
- For Sixth Form pupils, issue each one of them with a “lesson absence request form” (available in the Staff Common Room) to be initialled by subject staff. Make sure all forms are returned to you.
- **Request first aid kit from the Medical Centre**

On the day of departure, CHECK

- with the School Nurse in case there are any new medical requirements for any of the group
- all staff have copies of the trip form
- the nominated first-aider has collected a first aid kit (and checked the contents) and copies of the pink accident/injury forms
- mobile phones are working and the given numbers are correct
- arrangements are in place for supervision of pupils involved if departure is after 4:30 pm.
- **Take an emergency pack from the School Office**

Immediately prior to departure

- take a roll-call of pupils and make sure the School Office is aware of any absentees. It is essential that we all know exactly who is in or out of school at any time, in case of fire, accident or enquiry.
- remind pupils of their code of conduct whilst travelling, and physically check that seat belts are being worn. If minibuses are being used, it is the responsibility of the driver to do a visual check of the vehicle.
- leave a list of who is travelling on which minibus in the School Office if more than one minibus is being used.
- ensure that there is at least one staff mobile phone in each minibus and that the School Office has the details
- a complete list of girls going out to fixtures must also be left in the Prep or Senior Office as appropriate.

Throughout the visit it is the responsibility of the Group Leader to be aware of risks and hazards and adjust accordingly. Staff and pupils must understand potential safety problems and staff must constantly check that existing control measures are adequate. If there is any doubt, staff should implement additional measures to reduce risks to an acceptable level, **and inform School.**

- Do not allow girls to swap from one minibus to another.
- Regularly do a headcount of pupils, particularly when getting on and off transport. Always get another member of staff to double check.
- Insist on silence before giving out any information.
- Ensure reasonable supervision at all times. Allocate groups of students to each staff member; this helps with proper supervision and communication of information.
- Whenever pupils are allowed 'free range', they should always be in groups of at least three girls.
- Set regular times and places for them to report back to members of staff and establish a base where a member of staff may always be found.
- If your return to School is delayed by 20 minutes or more the Headmistress or SLT contact must be informed.

On your return to school ensure that at least one member of staff waits until the last girl has been collected.

School Minibuses

Driver Requirements

No one under 25 years of age may drive the minibuses nor anyone who is not on the Facilities Manager's Register of Drivers. Appropriate theoretical and practical training sessions are provided by the School for all staff who are required to undertake driving duties.

Procedure For Use Of The Minibuses

- All proposed minibus journeys must be recorded in the Bus Booking Diary, kept in the Staff Common Room. This should be completed at least 48 hours before the visit is undertaken.
- Keys may be collected from the Bursary and in each case must be signed in and out. Keys must be retained in the possession of a member of staff at all times.
- Please ensure you always return keys promptly after a visit to avoid any inconvenience for the next person needing the minibus.
- After a visit, please ensure that the interiors of the minibuses are in a clean state - all sweet papers, etc. must be removed.
- The cost of expenditure for fuel should be reclaimed from the Finance Officer if appropriate.

Vehicle Maintenance

Checks are required to be carried out with regard to steering, brake lights, indicators, vehicle lights, tyres, windscreen washers/wipers, windows and mirror cleanliness by drivers before each journey. Operational faults must be immediately logged and reported to the Facilities Manager.

Safety

- On all journeys a mobile phone must be collected from the Caretaker's pigeonhole to be carried in each minibus. Additional equipment which is carried in the minibuses also includes a fire extinguisher, first aid kit and a seat belt cutter. For added safety a warning triangle, reflective jacket and torch are also carried. There is also a card showing emergency phone nos.
- No member of staff is expected to drive a School vehicle for more than two hours at a time without a break - journeys longer than this require a second driver. With certain age groups, e.g. pupils of Prep 3 and below, it is necessary to have a second adult (who need not be a driver) in the minibus.
- It is the responsibility of all drivers, on behalf of the School, to ensure that all passengers have their seatbelts fastened before the bus is started and throughout the journey and that all doors are secure and unlocked
- The relevant speed limits should be observed at all times.

If the minibus breaks down:

1. Contact the breakdown service – the number and membership details are kept in the vehicles.
2. Contact the appropriate member of staff at School.

In the event of a vehicle fire:

1. Switch off engine.
2. Evacuate passengers.

3. Do not fight under-bonnet fire.
4. Operate extinguishers only if this can be done without personal danger.
5. Close doors.
6. Retreat to safe place.
7. Call emergency services.

In the event of an accident:

1. If thought necessary, phone emergency services: first Ambulance then Police and/or fire service
2. Exchange name, School address and registration number with driver of any other vehicle involved.
3. Do not admit any liability.
4. Obtain names and addresses of any willing witness.
5. Phone the appropriate member of staff at the School.
6. Record the details on the appropriate form kept in the vehicle.