



Subject: Trips and Visits	Number: POL00115
Approved by:	Type: Policy
Managing Director	Issued: October 2021
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1. Objectives

The Robert Holme Academy believe that visits and learning off-site are an essential part of the curriculum. Successful trips provide memorable learning experiences and enhance student’s education in ways that are not always possible in the classroom. Hands-on experience in developing social skills as well as cultural learning is important to ensure that students gain life skills from a young age. The Robert Holme Academy is committed to using trips and visits to positively expand our student’s independence and investigative skills in both the local and wider community.

The Robert Holme Academy recognises its duty of care to its staff, students and visitors and recognises compliance with statutory regulation as a legal requirement. All activities are carried out with the highest regard for the health, safety and welfare of our staff, helpers and children under our care.

We recognise that the achievement of our high standards requires total commitment from all members of staff. Our staff are therefore empowered, competent and confident in the work they carry out by providing high quality information, instruction and training.

The aim of this policy is therefore to offer support and guidance for staff in the planning and organising of all offsite activities in order to ensure the health and safety of both staff, students and any accompanying adults.

We ensure that responsibilities for safeguarding and safety for trips and visits are documented, understood, monitored and are correctly implemented.

The safety of students and staff during all trips and visits is paramount and for this and other reasons meticulous planning and organisation is essential.

We work with all members of staff to promote an open and positive attitude to safeguarding and safety in everything that we do, including trips and visits. We encourage all staff to identify and report risks and hazards that need attention, along with recommended solutions, so that everyone contributes to maintaining a safe and happy experience on a trip or visit.

2. Scope and Applicability

This policy is applicable to all staff members, parents/carers and others who are involved in organising or taking part in trips and educational visits.

For the purposes of this policy, an ‘educational visit’ means any educational, cultural or sporting activity that requires the student to leave our premises having been authorised to do so by the Headteacher. This includes but is not limited to the following activities:

- visits to places of interest and participation in events within the local area;
- fieldwork visits;
- participation in cultural events and celebrations;
- day visits to museums, galleries and places of educational interest;
- trips to boost social independence and life skills;
- sporting activities including trips to the local leisure centre;
- teambuilding, outward bound and adventure activities;



The policy also outlines the requirements for ensuring all preparation has been completed and paperwork is in place to protect the welfare of students and staff.

Most classes will have one trip per half term which relates to their current learning topics. Additional visits can be arranged if the Headteacher agrees with the value of the trip and the necessary safeguarding arrangements can be made.

3. Procedure

3.1 Responsibilities

3.1.1 Responsibilities of the Managing Director

The Managing Director is responsible for ensuring there are effective and robust procedures in place for safeguarding all participants on a trip or visit including students, staff and any accompanying adults.

In this capacity, the Managing Director will:

- ensure policies, procedures, systems, guidance and working practices are freely available and are both compliant and up to date with legal obligations for health and safety, safeguarding, etc.;
- review the implementation of policies and practices and monitor their effectiveness in meeting obligations;
- make adequate provision for necessary training and resources to ensure that requirements for health, safety, safeguarding and risk assessment are achieved on all trips and visits;
- ensure reporting and investigation of all trip related incidents is completed to identify learning or improvements needed to maintain adequate levels of safety;
- ensure that all staff are fully aware of their accountabilities for health, safety and safeguarding in areas of their control, including trips and visits;
- review and audit ongoing compliance and ensure any corrective or preventive actions are taken to mitigate any emerging risks and potential hazards.

3.1.2 Responsibilities of the Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for implementing policies and procedures for trips and visits and ensures all necessary preparations are made, including the completion of the required paperwork for each visit. This includes the use of risk assessments for every trip and visit to identify potential hazards and establish appropriate controls to mitigate risk, including actions necessary to reduce risk to an acceptable level.

The Headteacher assigns a Trip Leader for every off-site trip or visit and ensures they have the necessary competency and experience to undertake this role, including the completion of necessary paperwork and preparations.

The Headteacher approves all trips, visits and off-site activities and is responsible for reviewing all paperwork in advance of each trip or visit to ensure adequate preparations have been made and risks have been evaluated effectively.



3.1.3 Responsibilities of the Trip Leader

All visits will have an assigned Trip Leader who has overall responsibility for the trip. The Trip Leader may be any member of teaching staff.

The Trip Leader ensures a risk assessment is completed for the trip, along with all necessary paperwork, including parent/carer consent and any necessary Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks for accompanying adults.

The Trip Leader must be trained in all requirements of this policy with particular emphasis on risk assessment and dealing with an emergency.

3.1.4 Responsibilities of all Staff

All accompanying adults, including staff and volunteers with valid Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks are responsible for the students during a trip or visit and must ensure that students are kept safe at all times.

All staff therefore have a responsibility to:

- comply with the requirements defined within this policy and supporting policies for Health and Safety, Safeguarding, etc.;
- take reasonable care of their own and others health and safety;
- carry out activities in accordance with training, instruction and the actions provided in the specific risk assessment for the trip/visit;
- inform the Headteacher of any serious or unacceptable risk associated with the trip/visit.

3.1.5 Responsibilities of Students

Whether offsite or onsite, our behaviour policy is always enforced. We hold higher expectations for students while offsite as they are ambassadors for the Robert Holme Academy and it is essential for their safety.

Students are expected to be polite and courteous to all members of the public that they meet. They are required to listen carefully to staff members and actively participate in the tasks given.

Students are reminded of this before leaving site and during the trip. If a student is unable to behave or puts others in danger, arrangements are made to return the student to the premises by calling the assigned Emergency Contact (below). A member of staff and facilities are always available to collect a student who is required to return to the premises.

3.2 Planning

The Trip Leader completes the paperwork and ensures all planning for the trip is in place at least 2 weeks prior to the trip. This allows ample time for the Headteacher to check the paperwork, approve the trip and gain all parental consent.

The Trip Leader planning the trip must consider:

- transport requirements;
- costs;
- provision of food and drink;
- staffing;
- first aid;
- timings;
- the suitability of the venue; and
- risks.



The staff member completes all necessary planning forms, along with the risk assessment for the trip. They add the date to the events diary as a possible trip to ensure there is no double booking.

All off-site visits must have appropriate staffing levels, which are sufficient to deal with any emergency. Staffing levels must account for the number of accompanying adults as well as their experience and competence in supporting students during off-site visits.

All trips will be staffed by no less than 1 staff member to every 3 students. This may be increased depending on the type of trip and the individual students attending. If a student has additional support in place during a normal on-site day, this must also be provided on a trip.

3.3 *Safety*

The safety of our students is of the highest priority, and all staff are reminded of the duty of care they have to students. The following rules will apply:

- the safeguarding policy will be implemented on all off-site activities;
- a staff member of the same gender as the students will be in attendance;
- an experienced member of staff is appointed as Trip Leader;
- a member of staff that is trained in first aid should attend;
- all student detail forms should be taken in case of emergency, including full name, address, next of kin, emergency contacts and medical details;
- the Trip Leader must have a mobile phone for contact purposes;
- any medications required for individual students should be taken in line with policy and administered by a First Aider qualified to provide medication;
- All staff are briefed in advance of the trip regarding the arrangements in place;
- Regular headcounts are taken during the trip;
- when walking on trips all students must walk in pairs or single file where necessary with a staff member at the front and rear of the group; while
- other staff members and adults accompanying the trip should walk alongside.

Swimming and paddling in the sea or other forms of open water are potentially dangerous and are only undertaken after several factors are considered. These include, but are not limited to:

- the prevailing weather conditions;
- tidal flows and likely currents;
- local instructions and guidance.

All conditions for accessing open water, including informal 'paddling', must be included in the risk assessment. The Trip Leader and other staff attending the visit are not authorised to approve informal access to open water.

Students must always be in sight of a teacher when visiting open water sites. At least one member of staff is required to stay out of the water to maintain adequate surveillance. Swimming is only permitted under the direct supervision of a qualified lifeguard or instructor.

In addition, a trip risk assessment must always take account of safety arrangements when students are visiting sites that are close to water, including lakes and rivers in local parks.

Risk assessments are also used to assess any potential exposure to infection, such as Weils Disease, Lyme disease, etc., that could result from a trip or visit. The Trip Leader ensures appropriate preventative measures are taken.

Whenever possible, roads are crossed using identified crossings such as Zebra or Pelican crossings. Fluorescent jackets are worn by adults when leading a group by road.



The Headteacher reserves the right to exclude a student from a planned trip on the grounds of poor behaviour, where the student's behaviour is likely to put themselves or others at unacceptable risk. This is not a punishment, and care is taken to ensure that any decision to prevent a student from attending a trip is proportional and appropriate.

3.4 *Vetting of Volunteers and Helpers*

Careful consideration is given to whether voluntary helpers should be used to support a trip or visit. All helpers are vetted and are normally required to have a satisfactory Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Enhanced check.

Helpers who assist regularly or take sole responsibility for students are always required to have a satisfactory Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Enhanced check.

3.5 *Parental Consent*

All off-site visits and activities require the consent of a parent/carer in advance of the event. Limited generic consent may be obtained for local trips during the academic year, such as visiting local amenities or sporting events. This information is stored on file and is checked in advance of any trip. Parents that have not provided generic consent are required to complete a consent form for every trip. Students are not permitted to leave the premises for trips and visits without prior consent from a parent/carer.

Parents are given full details of the trip in order to give informed consent. Written consent is only accepted from a parent or carer and must be signed and dated. Verbal consent either face-to-face or by phone is not accepted. Text messages and informal emails are also not acceptable forms of consent.

Parents are notified with at least one week of notice if additional costs are required for a trip, or specific clothing is required to attend a trip.

3.6 *Supporting Medical and Special Educational Needs*

Students with additional needs must be accommodated within planned trips and visits. The Trip Leader therefore checks and makes adequate provision for all medical requirements and additional needs that a student attending a trip may have. This includes any arrangements to cater for students with challenging behaviour.

Medical and special educational needs, and the additional risks they represent, are taken into consideration when completing the risk analysis.

Additional consent is required in cases where a student requires medication to be administered during a trip.

Any necessary medication, including EpiPens, inhalers, etc., must be carried by the Trip Leader who is responsible for ensuring accompanying staff and other adults who may be responsible for a student are aware of the student's medical conditions on a need-to-know basis.

Preparations for first aid are also planned for. First aid precautions depend on the nature of the trip and the extent to which the group will be away from emergency services. A first aid kit is carried on every trip.

In general, at least one adult member of the team supporting the trip will be a qualified first aider. However, any low-risk local trips only require a member of the team to have basic first-aid knowledge and competency to use the first aid materials carried by the group.



Consideration is given to the risk of sunburn and heatstroke when outdoors trips are organised during the summer. Measures are taken to avoid exposure including:

- wearing suitable clothing and sun hats;
- applying UV sunblock to exposed areas (subject to parent/carer approval);
- having access to shade and ample supplies of drinking water;
- not scheduling activities that are too strenuous or energetic for the conditions.

3.7 *Mobile Phones and Valuables*

Valuable personal items can only be taken on a trip if approved by the Headteacher. Valuable items include, but are not limited to:

- mobile phones;
- electronic tablets;
- jewellery;
- gaming devices;
- designer goods and clothing, etc.

Even if approval is given to take valuables on a trip, parents/carers must be clearly informed, in advance of the trip, that the Robert Holme Academy cannot be held responsible for the loss or damage of valuables. For these reasons, the Robert Holme Academy advises parents/carers not to allow students to bring valuables on a trip.

3.8 *Emergency Contact*

An Emergency Contact is nominated for all trips and visits. The Emergency Contact is normally a senior member of staff who is able to respond to a serious situation on a trip including dealing with:

- accidents;
- medical emergencies;
- road incidents; and
- abandoning the trip.

The Trip Leader and Emergency Contact agree the actions to be taken to deal with a serious event and exchange details about the trip including:

- the students and adults participating in the trip;
- the risk assessment and measures to be taken to deal with any special medical or behavioural needs;
- the planned route and activities taking place on the trip; and
- all emergency contact information.

The Emergency Contact is available at all times during the trip to deal with any emergency that may arise, including being able and authorised to drive a vehicle to assist.

The Trip Leader informs the Emergency Contact of any significant incidents that occur during the trip, including:

- medical emergencies;
- accidents;
- behavioural problems;
- safeguarding incidents, etc.



The Emergency Contact is the main point of contact for Parents/Carers and other stakeholders who may need to have details of any serious incident. Parents/carers are called by the Emergency Contact if a serious incident has occurred involving their child. For some incidents, it may also be appropriate to contact all parents/carers, including those of students who have not been directly involved in an incident, to provide reassurance.

The Emergency Contact stands-down once a trip has ended.

3.9 *Emergency Procedures*

The Trip Leader always completes the Emergency Arrangements section of the Risk Assessment in advance of the trip and takes a copy of the approved risk assessment with them.

If a student requires urgent medical attention, one staff member will accompany them. The Trip Leader will notify the Emergency Contact, who will notify parents.

In the unlikely event that a student becomes separated from the group, they must wait so the Trip Leader can retrace steps to try to locate the child at the last known headcount.

If a child has been left on a train or bus. The student should get off at the next stop and wait, speaking only to adults in uniform (bus drivers, police officer) but should not go with them and should wait at the stop. This information is briefed in advance and all students should be aware.

The Trip Leader will search the entire vicinity. Another staff member will be appointed as a temporary group leader while the Trip Leader searches. The temporary group leader is required to maintain the safety and wellbeing of the other students.

If the student is not found within 15 minutes the Trip Leader phones the designated Emergency Contact to see if they have had any contact and ask them to notify parents.

If within 30 minutes the student has not been found, then the Trip Leader will call the police. When the police arrive, all relevant information will be shared with them including specific information on the student so the police can help with the search. The Trip Leader stays with the police in order to support and comfort the student when found. They remain in regular contact with the Emergency Contact for updates.

Where practicable, the rest of the group will return to the premises. The Emergency Contact arranges the return of the staff member and student as required.

Once the situation is resolved, the Headteacher conducts a full investigation to determine how the incident occurred. Risk assessment instructions, procedures and working practices are revised and redeployed to prevent possible reoccurrence.

An accident record is completed for any incidents during a trip that involve:

- exposure to hazards, such as contaminants, contagious diseases, etc;
- a student or adults requiring first aid or emergency medical treatment; and
- any other dangerous events that could have resulted in injury, even if they did not.

IMPORTANT NOTE

If you have a concern about a student or you receive information that leads you to be concerned that a student has been harmed or is at risk of harm or their welfare is being compromised, you are required to act to ensure action can be taken to protect the student concerned. If the information you have indicates that the student has suffered harm or there is a high level of risk of potential harm (either from others or from themselves (for example self-harm), immediately speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead to report this and then as soon as possible make a written record on the MyConcern log.



4 References

This policy has been developed in line with the following guidance:

1. Health and safety on educational visits guidance, 2018, available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-and-safety-on-educational-visits/health-and-safety-on-educational-visits>
2. HSE guidance on school trips and outdoor learning activities, available at: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/services/education/school-trips.pdf>
3. Health and safety: responsibilities and duties for schools, available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-and-safety-advice-for-schools/responsibilities-and-duties-for-schools>
4. Keeping children safe in education statutory guidance 2023, available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>
5. Children act 1989, available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/41/contents>
6. Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018, updated Feb 2019) available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/942454/Working_together_to_safeguard_children_inter_agency_guidance.pdf
7. The Education Regulations (Independent School Standards) (2014), available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2014/3283/schedule/made>
8. The Children Act (1989 amended 2004), available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/31/contents>
9. Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (2006), available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/47/contents>
10. Statutory guidance on the Prevent Duty, available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/439598/prevent-duty-departmental-advice-v6.pdf
11. Nothing Ventured... Balancing risks and benefits in the outdoors, the English Outdoor Council, available at: <https://www.englishoutdoorcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/Nothing-Ventured.pdf>