

**Rugby High School
Guidelines for Off-Site Activities
Revised July 2011**

Contents

Subject	Page Number
Inclusion	2
These Guidelines	2
Authorisation Before Booking/Advertising	2
Planning	3
Adventurous Activities	4
Pre-Trip Planning Meeting	4
Planning Meetings During Residential Trips	4
Risk Assessment	4
Parents' Information Evenings	5
Parental Consent	5
Preliminary Visit	6
Transport	6
Coaches	6
The Minibus	6
Cars: Staff	6
Cars: Students	7
Insurance	7
Finance	7
Charging	7
Supervision	8
Behavioural Expectations	8
Child Protection	9
Off-Site Health and Safety Briefings	9
Swimming	9
First Aid	9
Mobile Phones	9
When Things Go Wrong (Emergency Procedures)	10
Logs and Reports	11
Training	11
Appendices	
Model Code of Conduct	12
Risk Assessment Form	13

Rugby High School Guidelines for School Off-Site Activities

The governors and staff of Rugby High School believe that off-site activities and visits play an important part in students' learning. The school is committed to providing a diverse programme of off-site activities with clearly identified educational benefits for students.

Inclusion

The governors are committed to offering the opportunity to participate in off-site activities to all students irrespective of their special needs, disability, ethnic origin, gender or religion. Students whose families are in receipt of working family tax credit or comparable benefits will be offered financial assistance. Parents should approach the Educational Visits Co-ordinator in confidence about financial difficulties. Parents of students with a disability or a medical condition which might affect the student's ability to participate in a trip should inform the party leader following the information evening, or on receipt of a letter regarding a day trip, so that arrangements can be made for a detailed discussion of the student's needs. All reasonably practicable efforts will be made to enable the student to participate in the trip. Where appropriate e.g. where a medical condition requires experienced support, parents will be invited to accompany their child.

These Guidelines

All off-site activities involve a degree of risk. The school is committed to following best practice with regard to the management of the risks involved in off-site activities: students' safety is paramount. These guidelines are intended to provide the school community with a basic framework for planning and conducting off-site activities. Further guidance for staff is available in the form of the Off-Site Activities Guidelines produced by Warwickshire County Council (www.warwickshire.gov.uk/offsiteactivities), 'The Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Trips and Visits' DfEE1998. The school notes the DfE advice on 'Health and Safety' issued on 4th July 2011.

These guidelines apply to all off-site activities and journeys which are organised or managed through the school, whether during or outside the school day, at weekends or during the holidays. The term 'activity' will be used throughout the guidelines to cover journeys, visits to museums, theatres, sporting fixtures etc and foreign travel. Unaccompanied student visits e.g. to university open days are not covered by these guidelines.

Authorisation Before Booking/Advertising

All off-site activities must be properly planned and require the written authorisation of the Headteacher. Additionally, residential activities and adventurous activities e.g. water sports require the authorisation of a governors' committee or full meeting of the governing body. No financial commitments may be entered into and the trip may not be advertised until the headteacher (and governors in the case of a residential trip) has given authorisation.

All category B and C trips (see Warwickshire guidelines) which include all Duke of Edinburgh trips, all adventurous activity, all visits to large towns and cities e.g. London, Birmingham, Coventry, Manchester etc and all residential trips and overseas trips require Form OSA1 to be completed and submitted with all the necessary accompanying documentation:

- itinerary
- risk assessments
- OSA2 Young Person (medical details and consent)
- OSA3 Adult (medical details and consent)
- a list of all participants and emergency contact arrangements for their parents/next of kin/carers
- a copy of any insurance policy covering the trip
- swimming consent forms (if applicable)
- copies of any centre licences and instructor qualifications
- signed copies of the code of conduct

OSA1 and its accompanying documentation must be with the headteacher/Educational Visits Co-ordinator **at least six weeks before the visit is due to take place** to enable it to be checked.

If Lawrence Sheriff School students are involved in an off-site activity, permission should be sought from the headteacher/EVC of Lawrence Sheriff School for those students to participate. Copies of the trip documentation (including itinerary and risk assessments) relating to Lawrence Sheriff students should be sent to the headteacher of Lawrence Sheriff as well as to the headteacher of Rugby High School. An emergency contact at Lawrence Sheriff should also be agreed for each trip.

Planning

The educational benefits of any off-site activity must be clearly identified before planning for any trip begins. Planning is a complex process and may take several months. The first step is to put together an outline proposal. This will give a basic framework on which later plans can be built. RHSOSA1 (residential off-site activities) or RHSOSA2 (non-residential off-site activities) must be completed at this stage.

The headteacher/EVC must be satisfied that the person planning to lead the activity has sufficient competence to do so. All staff accompanying school trips are expected to have had recent experience and/or relevant training with regard to off-site activities. All staff including any volunteer helpers (including Sixth Formers) must be properly briefed regarding their roles, responsibilities, the itinerary and the risks and risk management procedures for the trip. The party leader and all members of staff or volunteer helpers accompanying the trip have a duty of care towards the students in their charge and are expected to follow established good practice.

Adventurous Activities

Adventurous activities e.g. caving, climbing, trekking, skiing, watersports in England, Scotland and Wales are governed by the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 2004. Leaders organising these activities must check that the provider holds the relevant licence (a photocopy of the licence or written confirmation from the centre including the licence number and the expiry date is essential).

Pre-Trip Planning Meeting

A pre-trip planning meeting must be held for all staff and supervisors accompanying any trip at which the party leader goes over arrangements for the trip and the risk assessment and at which duties and responsibilities are discussed.

Planning Meetings during Residential Trips

The party leader should hold at least one daily planning meeting whilst the trip is in progress. These meetings should provide an opportunity to debrief on the day's events and discuss any issues that have arisen e.g. health and safety issues, concerns about student welfare etc. It should also provide an opportunity to go over the plans for the following day and discuss roles and responsibilities.

Risk Assessment

A full and detailed risk assessment must be carried out in advance by the party leader and reviewed and amended according to changing circumstances whilst the trip is in progress. The school has a bank of generic risk assessments which leaders should use as a starting point for risk assessment. In many cases where the activity is low risk (e.g. partnership work with another school), the generic assessment will be adequate.

Risk Assessment should be completed in three stages. An initial risk assessment should be submitted with the application for authorisation of the trip. This assessment should highlight major risks and the measures planned to control them and should be based on the draft itinerary/programme of activities. Once the itinerary has been confirmed and any preliminary visit undertaken, this initial risk assessment should be reviewed and amended if necessary. Changes should be made in writing.

In some cases e.g. adventure holidays the risk assessment may be supplied by another organisation e.g. a tour company or an adventure centre. The authorship must be made clear. Party leaders using generic risk assessments must ensure that where necessary, they are personalised to fit the particular circumstances of the activity and the needs of the young people. Training and help with compiling risk assessments is available from the headteacher/EVC.

The updated risk assessment must be lodged with the headteacher/EVC well ahead of the risk taking place: six weeks ahead of time for category B and C trips, two weeks ahead of time for category A trips. It is important that all those supervising the off-site activity have a copy of the updated risk assessment and understand what their roles and responsibilities are in relation to managing the identified risks and any other risks not previously identified that may emerge during the trip. The risk assessment should be shared in a user-friendly form with students

and, in the case of residential trips, with their parents (at the parents' information evening). Briefings should be in a user-friendly format. For complex trips/activities, they should be written and a copy given to students. For most day trips, a pre trip oral safety briefing, supplemented with brief pertinent reminders as hazards are encountered during the course of the off-site activity, will be sufficient.

It is important that whilst staff are away they recognise potential risk, hazard and harm and intervene appropriately to protect the young people in their care. This process of dynamic risk assessments does not need to be recorded in writing but staff should be able to explain any adjustments that they made to their original assessments and why they made them if asked about them at a later date.

Parents' Information Evenings

An information evening must be held for any residential off-site activity before parents are asked to give their consent to their child participating in it. The evening should provide parents with information about:

- the destination and the purpose of the trip (including the potential educational benefits)
- transport arrangements
- proposed itinerary/activities
- clothing/kit list
- accommodation arrangements (including security arrangements)
- supervisory arrangements (e.g. details of staff accompanying the trip, remote supervision arrangements etc.)
- health and safety information (including details of the major risks and how it is proposed to manage them)
- insurance cover
- behavioural expectations (pre-trip expectations, code of conduct for the trip, repatriation/return home arrangements)
- costs and any payment plan arrangements

Parents should be informed of any subsequent significant changes e.g. to the itinerary, in writing.

Parental Consent

Parental Consent

No student under the age of 18 may participate in an off-site activity unless her parents have given their written consent that she may do so. At the start of the year, parents will be asked to give their consent to local trips and visits taking place in curriculum time where no charge is incurred and for sporting fixtures. Parents will normally be notified of local trips and visits where there is no charge via the diary published in the school newsletter rather than by letter.

Trips and visits which incur a charge require a letter from the group leader to parents setting out the arrangements for the visit. The letter should include:

- details of the nature and purpose of the visit including date and time
- information about transport arrangements including departure and collection arrangements
- information regarding clothing/kit

- information regarding eating arrangements and any money that the student might require whilst on the trip
- information regarding behavioural expectations
- information regarding costs (N.B. Parents cannot be charged for educational activities which take place during the school day but they can be asked to pay a voluntary contribution. School funds are available to support students whose parents receive some state benefits.)

Consent slips must include a slot for parents to fill in emergency contact details so that they can be readily contacted in the event of an emergency during the course of the trip. The text of the letter must be approved by the headteacher/EVC before it is sent out to parents. Letters for residential trips must be approved by the headteacher.

Preliminary Visit

A reconnaissance trip in advance of any off-site activity enables staff to conduct detailed risk assessments and consider risk management strategies. It is strongly recommended for all trips featuring new venues and activities. Where no preliminary visit has been undertaken, the party leader will have to convince the headteacher/EVC that the alternative arrangements have enabled adequate assessment of risks.

Transport

Coaches

Coaches should only be hired from approved companies whose licences and safety checking procedures have been approved by governors.

The Minibus

The school minibus may be used by authorised drivers in accordance with the Minibus Policy. In addition to the member of staff driving the bus, a member of staff must travel on the bus to supervise the students. The bus can be booked via the school office.

Cars

Staff

In exceptional circumstances, the headteacher may give permission for students to be transported in a member of staff's car. Wherever possible, parental consent will also be sought. Staff are strongly advised not to transport single students in this way..

The school has an business use motor policy which covers any person, including voluntary helpers (parents/guardians), who is driving on the headteacher's order and on the policyholder's (headteacher's) business subject to the driver holding a vehicle licence to drive the vehicle to cover staff in exceptional circumstances. All students under the age of 12 or shorter than 135cm must use a booster seat. The only exception to this is in a genuine case of emergency.

Students

Because of the high accident rates for young drivers accompanied by friends, the difficulties of ensuring that students' insurance is adequate and of obtaining informed parental consent, students are strongly advised not to drive other students to school off-site activities.

Insurance

The school has an insurance policy with Zurich which covers its financial liability in the case of staff negligence. The school has group travel insurance through Endsleigh which covers students and staff participating in off-site activities and journeys. The policy covers accidental death (£5,000), death as a result of sickness (£2,000) and permanent disablement (£30,000), medical and other related expenses (up to £1,000,000), possessions (up to £800) and travel documents (up to a total of £200), personal liability (£2,000,000) and cancellation (£1,500) and curtailment (£1,500) within the limits, terms and conditions set out in the policy document.

Parents must be fully informed of the insurance arrangements for all residential off-site activities.

Finance

Staff should consult the Business Manager for advice regarding off-site activities budgets. Off-site activities should be self-funding (when the contributions from the School Fund to meet the costs for students whose parents are in receipt of some state benefits are included).

Contingency funds can be built into trip budgets. When a substantial surplus remains at the end of a trip, it must be divided between all those who funded the trip.

Monies in payment for school trips and relevant permission slips should be put in the postbox beside reception - not given to individual members of staff. Party leaders should make arrangements with the finance office so that office staff are aware that payments and slips are due. A receipt will be issued for sums in excess of £50. The party leader is responsible for keeping the off-site activities accounts (Form RHSOSA3 is to be used for this purpose). At the end of each trip all receipts and a complete copy of this form must be given to the Business Manager together with any unspent cash.

Charging

Off-site activities undertaken during the school day must be of educational benefit. Parents will be asked for voluntary contributions to cover the costs of these activities.

Charges will be made for meals and lodging and for activities which fall outside the normal school day e.g. evening theatre visits, overseas visits.

Supervision

In deciding the ratio of staff to students the ratios set out in the Warwickshire Guidelines on Off-Site Activities will be used. Ratios vary according to the age of the students and the nature of the activity but are never less than 1:15 for day trips, 1:12 for residential trips and 1:10 for overseas visits.

During off-site activities students may be subdivided into smaller groups, each with its own staff leader. Regular checks will be made to ensure that students remain with their group. Remote supervision may be allowed in certain circumstances where the party leader judges it to be safe to do so. Where remote supervision (students allowed to explore a defined area, unaccompanied by staff) is allowed, students must remain in groups of four. An agreed meeting place and time must be clearly designated and students must know how to contact staff in the interim.

A female member of staff must accompany all residential trips. If a residential trip involves students from Lawrence Sheriff School, a male member of staff (either from LSS or RHS) must accompany the trip. Staff supervising off-site residential activities have 24 hour responsibility for supervising students and therefore must make sure that they are capable of exercising that responsibility. Staff accompanying school trips may not drink alcohol during the trip or activity even when 'off-duty'.

Being on call 24/7 is exhausting. Wherever possible party leaders of residential trips should arrange duty rotas so that each member of staff has some time during the day in which he/she is not directly responsible for supervising students.

Behavioural Expectations

Students engaging in off-site activities are representing the school and are expected to adhere to all normal school rules whilst off-site. All students participating in residential off-site activities and their parents will be expected to sign a behavioural code of conduct setting out the expectations that will apply for the duration of the visit. Students engaging in off-site activities are expected to be polite and courteous and obey staff instructions. Smoking, the consumption of alcohol and controlled substances (apart from those prescribed by a medical practitioner) are forbidden whilst students are on off-site visits.

Students who do not meet behavioural expectations during the term time at school or whose behaviour outside school is a cause for concern may be refused permission to engage in off-site activities. In these very rare cases, a meeting will be called with the student and their parents to explain the school's position. Any monies already paid will be refunded if they can be recovered without loss to the school. All other sums will be forfeit. Serious breaches of behavioural expectations on residential trips may result in students being repatriated at parents' expense (in the case of overseas trips) or collected and taken home (in the case of UK trips). Additional sanctions, depending on the nature of the breach may also be imposed. These sanctions include fixed term and permanent exclusion.

Child Protection

Staff are automatically CRB (Criminal Records Bureau) checked on appointment. Instructors and adult volunteers supervising students on residential off-site activities will be CRB (enhanced disclosure) checked as will anyone likely to be in sole charge of a student under 18 on a one to one basis. Occasional volunteers on non-residential trips do not require a CRB check but they must never be left in sole charge of a single student.

Off-Site Health and Safety Briefings

Regular health and safety briefings should be a feature of any off-site activity. In the case of a residential visit, these should include a briefing on accommodation evacuation procedures, security arrangements, behavioural expectations and details of how to contact staff in the event of an emergency in the middle of the night.

Swimming

If an activity involves swimming, students' parents must give their consent in advance (using the swimming consent form) and indicate their child's ability. Swimming pools must be inspected in advance of the party swimming by the party leader using the swimming pool checklist. Qualified lifeguards must be on duty and the ratio of one lifeguard to twenty students preserved.

Swimming in open and coastal waters is a high risk activity and requires a very high level of supervision. It may only be undertaken if thorough research has been undertaken to establish that the beach or water is safe for bathers and a qualified lifeguard (who may be a teacher) is on duty and there is adequate lifesaving equipment close to hand. Students must remain within sight of their supervisors (one of whom must remain on the shore to act as a spotter). Where swimming is a part of an adventure activity RHS must clarify the nature of their supervisory responsibilities with activity instructors so that boundaries are clear (often the handover point is at the water line). Additional lifeguards are not necessary when water sports instructors who hold lifeguard qualifications are in charge of students. The staff to student ratio should be 1:6.

First Aid

First aid cover must be provided for all school trips by a member of staff with a good working knowledge of first aid. This person must carry with them a first aid kit (provided by the school) and be prepared to use it if the need arises. He/she should be familiar with the medical needs of students going on the trip and know how, if necessary, to respond to them in the short term before more specialist help arrives.

Mobile Phones

Further to the 'Staff ICT User Agreement' policy.

Staff **DO NOT** give students their personal mobile number.

If staff want to give students a phone number for emergencies or, input their numbers into a phone, they must **book a school mobile** for their trip and use the number allocated to that phone.

Staff may still use a **handwritten** list for students' phone numbers if they wish.

When Things Go Wrong (Emergency Procedures)

Party leaders and accompanying staff should familiarise themselves in advance of any trip with the emergency contact arrangements and procedures for their trip which will be given to them by the headteacher/EVC following receipt of the updated risk assessment and confirmed itinerary. Careful planning, common sense and good emergency contact arrangements are the key to the successful management of crises whether they involve a broken-down coach, an accident or a major security alert.

When things go wrong, the party leader and accompanying staff should ensure students' and colleagues' safety first and then follow the procedures set out on Form RHSOSA4 making use of school emergency contacts to gain further advice and support if necessary.

Lost Group on Visit

Students conducting group work or being remotely supervised (minimum of 3-4 students per group depending on location and activity) are required to check in at specified times. All students should be briefed before beginning the activity on how to contact a member of staff during group activities or remote supervision and should know where the contact point will be. Students abroad will additionally be given a contact sheet giving details of their accommodation and the party leader's contact details. They should use these to re-establish contact with the main group.

Staff should wait at the rendez-vous point for missing students. In the event of this being impractical, they should meet at the accommodation or in the event of a day trip, the main railway terminal or coach pick up point.

Students often have mobile phone numbers for missing friends so using them to help track down a missing group can be helpful. In remote areas where mobile phone signals are weak, party leaders may need to notify mountain rescue and or police in cases where the students are significantly late (the point at which they do this will depend on the time of day and the weather conditions) and where other attempts to contact them have failed.

In cases where a group is significantly overdue, contact the school emergency contact for additional support.

Natural Disaster on Visit (Abroad)

Students and staff should follow the instructions of emergency service personnel. The staff need to do what they can to ensure their own and students' safety and be prepared to adapt plans according to the circumstances. As soon as possible, they should establish contact with the British Embassy or Consulate, with the group's insurers and with the school emergency contact.

Logs and Reports

The EVC will keep a log of all trips which will be shared on a regular basis with the governing body. All party leaders will be required to write a brief report including any learning or action points for the future (using RHSOSA5).

Training

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that all party leaders and accompanying staff receive appropriate training to enable them to put this policy into practice and lead and accompany off-site activities safely.

APPENDICES

Code of Conduct

Codes of conduct are drawn up primarily for the safety of all those participating in an off-site residential visit and to ensure that behavioural expectations are clear. Students and their parents are asked to sign the code of conduct at the point at which the student's place on the trip is booked. If, in the period between booking the trip and the trip taking place, a student's behaviour becomes a cause of concern such as to make staff believe that her presence on the trip would pose a threat to her own or others' safety, the offer of a place will be withdrawn. In these circumstances, refunds will be limited to those expenses which the school can recover from tour operators and other parties.

In signing the code of conduct the student agrees to abide by the expectations set out in the code during the course of the visit and parents agree that in the event of a serious breach of these behavioural expectations they will make arrangements to collect their daughter from a UK residential trip or to meet the costs of repatriation in the case of an overseas trip.

Students are expected to:

- obey staff instructions at all times (including instructions issued by instructors not employed by the school, security personnel and other staff responsible for their safety e.g. flight attendants).
- accept that rules may have to be set or changed in response to changing circumstances whilst the trip is in progress and to respect these decisions.
- be polite and considerate to all those that they encounter during the course of the visit including the staff and instructors responsible for them, their fellow students and other guests (especially when in the hotel at night when noise can prevent others from sleeping).
- be responsible and not engage in any act which is likely to put themselves or anyone else at risk of injury. Any concerns about safety should be reported immediately to the member of staff in charge of the group/activity.
- be punctual at all times.
- abide by any curfews that are set (this includes remaining in their designated rooms once they have gone to bed).
- maintain the security of their accommodation by locking room doors at night where possible, keeping ground floor and balcony windows closed and not inviting other guests, hotel staff or strangers into their bedroom at any time.

Students are expected not to:

- buy or consume any alcohol
- smoke
- take or have in their possession any controlled substances (except those for which they have a prescription from their general practitioner)

Student Declaration:

I understand the behaviour expected of me on the visit to
and agree to meet the behavioural expectations set out in the Code of Conduct above.

Signed:

Parent Declaration

I understand the behavioural expectations set out in Code of Conduct above and agree that in the event of a serious breach of them I will, if requested to do so, make arrangements to collect my daughter from the venue (UK) or pay for her repatriation (overseas visits).

Signed:

RUGBY HIGH SCHOOL

RISK ASSESMENT FORDATE OF TRIP.....

Name of Assessor.....Assessor's Signature.....Date.....

Activity	What are the Hazards to Health & Safety	What Risks do they pose and to whom?	Risk Level H/M/L	What precautions have been taken to reduce the risk?	Risk Level Achieved H/M/L	What further action is needed to reduce the risk
Sitting/Watching Ceremony	Falls/trips in darkness. Sudden illness/sickness Fire/Not aware of emergency procedures for the venue.	Cuts/bruises/related injuries	M	Students should remain seated throughout, especially if in darkness.	L	Emergency contacts have been established. Groups to have experienced member of staff to support them.
		Exposure to vomit	M	Point out location of toilets to students on entering the building.	L	
		Burns/Death	M	Point out fire exits to students. Point out emergency procedures.	M	