



TAUNTON
— SCHOOL —

SNR.030

**SCHOOL JOURNEYS AND TRIPS
POLICY**

GUIDANCE ON OFF-SITE VISITS

The following guidance will be regularly reviewed and adapted to meet the needs of TSI, TPS and TS.

Rationale

School visits and associated field work, along with out of classroom activities, are an essential part of the Taunton School student's education because they:

1. Are concerned with real people, situations and issues.
2. Develop the enthusiasm for, and commitment to, the environment.
3. Provide opportunities to practise exploration and practical investigation skills.
4. Work beyond the normal framework of the timetable.
5. Develop organisation and leadership skills.
6. Build relationships within groups and teams.

Aim

To give our students the opportunity to learn at first hand about the world around them.

Teachers at Taunton School recognise that there are unlimited opportunities outside the classroom that must be used as resources by the children. The effectiveness and immediacy of real world situations cannot be matched in the classroom; learning is more rewarding and enjoyable out of doors. Off-site activities range from applications within walking distance from School, through visits for part or all of the day involving transport, to residential experiences. [The visits are often cross-curricular and require careful planning, and in most cases pre-visits are carried out.]

"One lesson outdoors is worth seven inside"

Tim Brighouse, Chief Education Officer, Birmingham

Objectives

1. To enhance topics covered in the classroom.
2. To act as a stimulus for a unit of work.
3. To develop an understanding and awareness of the environment.
4. To make comparisons with materials already studied.
5. To encourage continuity and progression in:
 - Knowledge
 - Understanding and application of skills
 - Personal and social education
6. To cover the requirements of the curriculum.
7. For variety and enjoyment.

8. To develop the autonomy and self-esteem of students
9. To gain confidence to act as an agent of change in the environment.
10. To give equal learning opportunities to all children despite their backgrounds.
11. To prepare children for the out of education pursuits they may well experience or can expect in the future.

Off site visits comprise:

Day trips which do not miss lessons.

Day trips which miss lessons.

Overnight trips within UK.

Overnight trips outside UK.

Safe practice for these trips depend on:

1. Careful planning (see notes at the end)
2. An awareness and investigation of the potential dangers and hazards when you are there: dynamic risk assessment
3. Preventing access to those dangers by those ill-equipped to cope.
4. Adequate supervision.
5. Being prepared to review plans in the course of the trip and make proper changes as required.
6. Knowledge of how to help oneself and others in danger.

Check list (detailed notes follow this summary)

A. Before you advertise the trip to students or parents:

The School Policy can be found here:

<https://intranet.tauntonschool.co.uk/policies-and-staff-handbook/senior-staff>

The forms can be found here:

I:\SENIOR\Risk Assessment Forms\off site visits\off site visits_22

Make sure your trip has been agreed with SMT. Complete the following forms

<http://intranet.tauntonschool.co.uk/calendar/senior-calendar>

- a. For a co-curricular trip: 'Outline Proposal'
- b. For an academic trip or event: 'Academic trip proposal form'

B. Detailed planning: (not in order)

Once it has been agreed you will need to assess the level of risk.

C. Before you advertise the trip to students or parents:

Make sure your trip has been agreed with SMT. Complete the following forms

<http://intranet.tauntonschool.co.uk/calendar/senior-calendar>

- c. For a co-curricular trip: 'Outline Proposal'
- d. For an academic trip or event: 'Academic trip proposal form'

(The School Policy (with all forms) can be found here: <https://intranet.tauntonschool.co.uk/policies-and-staff-handbook/senior-staff>)

D. Detailed planning:

Once it has been agreed you will need to assess the level of risk using the forms here: [I:\SENIOR\Risk Assessment Forms](#)

- e. If it is a low risk trip – such as taking a minibus to Kings for a school debate – then complete the form 'off site visits 1' and make reference (or use) 'Generic Risk Assessment Form 4'
- f. If it is a trip with a higher level of risk then you will need to complete 'off site visits 2' and supplement this with evidence of letters to parents (exemplars in WMD3) and hazards (WMD5) + supplementary evidence from the partner or centre you are using eg Insurance liability and their risk assessments
- g. Regardless of the level of risk you need to have up to date medical information: [Senior Reports – TS & TPS Intranet \(tauntonschool.co.uk\)](#)

Summary of Forms

Off Site Visits 1	A low risk trip (see 'Examples of Specific Hazards' on page 2 of this doc)
Off Site Visits 2	A higher risk trip (see 'Examples of Specific Hazards' on page 2 of this doc)
Off Site Visits 3	Examples of letters written to parents
Off Site Visits 4 Generic Risk Assessment Form	Generic Hazards and risk reduction measures
Off Site Visits 5 Post Trip Evaluation	Post trip evaluation

E. When you go on the trip

- 1) You have a copy of the risk assessment and other copies are distributed to your colleagues

- 2) A verbal briefing occurs between you and your colleagues to ensure dynamic risk assessment occurs i.e. here is our current risk assessment are there any new risks and what control measures should we put in?
- 3) A copy of the critical incident policy is available for all members of staff and emergency contacts numbers are shared with the pupils

Activity
<p>This should help with an examination of your activity and what potential hazards could arise from/during your activity.</p> <p>This list is not exhaustive, rather a starting point that can be expanded upon when completing your risk assessment.</p>

Physical							
Assault / Violence		Defective Equipment		Slips, trips, falls		Falls from height	
Electricity		Impact /Puncture		Crushing		Spillages	
Collisions		Rip /Tears / Jewellery		Entanglement		Water / Rivers/ Canals/ Ditches/	
Kick (i.e. Animals)		Bite (i.e. Animals)		Trampled		Heat stroke	
Hypothermia		Sun burn		Burns		Trapping	
Dehydration		Cuts / Lacerations		Vibration			

Examples of Specific Hazards

Biological					
Virus		Body Waste		Bacteria (e.g. leptospirosis)	
Parasites (Toxicaris)		Zoonosis		Bird faeces (e.g. Pigeon)	

Chemical							
Gas		Fumes		Vapour		Dust, i.e. Wood, Clay	
Asbestos		Petrol		Diesel		Chemicals Irritant / Harmful / burn to body	

Ergonomic / Environmental							
Manual Handling /Lifting		Poor body posture		Confined spaces		Extreme weather conditions	
Fire		Workplace (Ventilation and heating)		Falling trees		Overgrown vegetation	
Mud / Quick sand		Marsh / Boggy		Barbed Wire		Contaminated ground	
Insufficient lighting		Insufficient space		Terrorism		Wind speed	
Fragile roof		Traffic		Cliffs		Vibration	
Noise		Tidal Strength					

Psychological / Individual							
Work related stress		Insufficient / poor Supervision/Briefing		Bullying		Lone Working	
Physical capabilities		Mental health conditions		Safe guarding		Separation during activity	
Cultural (Abroad)		Poor posture					

Things to consider:

- 1) Risk assessment; site visit.
- 2) Assess competence, experience, qualifications of staff.
- 3) Letter to parents including Parental Consent Form.
- 4) Clarity on who is leading the trip and deputy if appropriate.
- 5) Student list and medical issues: are we trained to support these issues?
- 6) Check insurance and finance.
- 7) Check travel details.
- 8) If you are using a **Centre**, request copies of documentation (their RA) and their Liability of Insurance documentation. When planning an activity involving caving, climbing, trekking, skiing or water sports, staff must check that the provider holds a license as required by the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 2004.
- 9) Emergency action plan; circulate details more widely for trips during holidays.
- 10) Code of conduct for students, copied to parents if appropriate.
- 11) Food.
- 12) Money and security.
- 13) Equipment.
- 14) Accommodation.
- 15) Information **from** parents and staff.
- 16) Further guidelines for staff organising school trips abroad.
- 17) Have I read the critical incident policy? Do I know how to access medical support in the location?

F. During the trip:

- 1) Ongoing risk assessment.
- 2) Take advice if needed.

G. After the trip:

- 1) Report any accidents.
- 2) Complete Form 'Post Trip Evaluation Form'.
- 3) Blow your own trumpet in Courier, Review, Magazine etc.

A. Before you advertise the trip to students or parents:

Make sure your trip has been agreed with SMT. Complete the following forms

<http://intranet.tauntonschool.co.uk/calendar/senior-calendar>

- a. For a co-curricular trip: 'Outline Proposal'
- b. For an academic trip or event: 'Academic trip proposal form'

B. When you go on the trip

- 1) You have a copy of the risk assessment and other copies are distributed to your colleagues
- 2) A verbal briefing occurs between you and your colleagues to ensure dynamic risk assessment occurs i.e. here is our current risk assessment are there any new risks and what control measures should we put in?
- 3) A copy of the critical incident policy is available for all members of staff and emergency contacts numbers are shared with the pupils

Detailed Notes:

HM's agreement ensures that this is a "school activity," not your own excursion. This has legal and insurance benefits for you.

Staff ratio: ATL recommend 2:20, but assess the nature and terrain of the trip. Check gender ratio male/female staff, age of students and appoint a Deputy Leader if necessary. If some students have special needs the ratio may need to be adjusted. Assess whether any students have behavioural difficulties.

Plan a date which avoids known difficulties, such as established School events, exams etc. Use last year's calendar as well as the skeleton for the forthcoming year. Your trip can only be agreed and verified by SMT – it is not sufficient to say 'we have always done it'

Check the guidelines for staff driving school vehicles in this handbook and book the vehicle well in advance. Specific parental consent should be sought if a private vehicle is to be used. Do you have enough drivers?

The purposes and objectives of the visit must be clearly identified and appropriate to the age and ability of the group. Think about any special needs: students for whom English is a second language, for instance.

Ensure safety procedures are understood; check existing measures; identify necessary additional measures. Keep it going through the trip! Think about risks to **staff** as well as students. Check students' medical information on lists in the Common Room (provided by the Medical Centre). In addition check any medical information supplied on the parental consent form. You will need this information to complete Section 26 of WMD1. If you are using a Centre or company, get their risk assessment in writing (more on this under B8). Seek advice on a 'site visit' from the Deputy Head. Prepare an alternative programme in case of a change of plan, including a contingency plan for a late return.

- You may find www.education.gov.uk to be a useful source of guidance.

It is very tempting to include a generic risk assessment in this policy, but we need to think afresh about each trip and check our risk assessment against a previous trip; consult a specific checklist for the particular activity; discuss with a colleague / Deputy.

Check training and experience of staff. Some trips will require particular qualifications. Check on First Aid training. If you are using volunteer helpers, Criminal Record Bureau checks will be required. This includes any spouse, girlfriend or boyfriend on the trip who may have "access to children." Think about effects of teaching and the working day when assessing your needs. Foreign exchanges pose particular problems: the way ahead for the moment is to warn parents (see B3) if, as is likely, students will be staying with families in which there are adults we have been unable to "check". Parental consent for students to stay with these families can then be sought. A checklist on measures to take when arranging an exchange is available from the Deputy Head.

You **must** get parental consent* and an update on medical details previously provided (if any). (A medical questionnaire is sent out to parents by the Health Centre when students join the school, but the consent form should contain a line asking for details of any medical issues that may have occurred since the questionnaire was completed.) A specimen introductory letter and a specimen “off-site” consent form are supplied later in this section. Parents must be informed in advance if any remote supervision is involved. Make it clear what activities are involved; clarify options. Reinforce school policies and beware of conflicting with published documents (eg on alcohol). Ensure that parents have a copy of what is said to students (eg a code of conduct, arrangements for supervision etc). They will also need contact details and emergency numbers.

*sometimes it is difficult to get parental permission for boarders. If the (low risk) trip runs during the formal school day (i.e. lesson time) then ‘parental permission’ may be obtained from house staff. If the trip has higher risk attached to it then full parental permission must be obtained.

Check students’ medical information on lists in Common Room (taken from information provided by parents).

If the trip is overseas then consent for medical treatment in the event of an emergency must be sought.

The staff leading activities must:

- be suitably experienced or qualified for the activities proposed.
- be aware of hazards.
- be clear that high standards of student behaviour will be expected at all times.
- be aware of their supervision responsibilities.
- process a list of names of students and carry it at all times.
- regularly count the students, and every time students mount or dismount.
- know what action to take if there is a problem (see Critical Incident Guidelines).
- know how to contact the emergency services.
- have a mobile phone (which on day visits must be switched on) and check that it can be used overseas if required.

The student check list for all school trips should be signed by HM (or a member of SMT, on HM’s behalf) and posted in the Common Room before you leave. It must be accurate. The list will include venue, date, times, outline of the programme – and in the case of overnight trips this information must be supplemented by a named contact in the School (and telephone number) to whom all these details have been given.

Check with the Finance Office on the School’s **insurance**. Alert the office to any unusual or hazardous activity. Agree with the Finance Office on arrangements for the receipt of **money**.

Make sure you have checked tickets, times of departure / arrival. Think about risk assessment and supervision for the **journeys** as well as the activities. Are drivers competent and qualified? Are the hours safe?

Check any Centre: get a copy of their Health and Safety Policy, risk assessment, licence, staffing levels, emergency plans; get details of their equipment, insurance, accommodation and First Aid. Clarify any demarcation of responsibility between the School and the Centre.

Check what you will do in an emergency. Read the Critical Incident Guidelines. If your trip involves an overnight stay, give a copy of the details to **Reception** and your emergency contact (as well as the Common Room board).

Advertise ground rules well in advance. Stay in line with published School policies – for your own protection. Copy code of conduct to parents. Briefing to students **before departure** should include:

- rendezvous procedure for lost students (including the journey).
- recall system and action in an emergency. Provide emergency phone number.
- relevance to prior and future learning.
- grouping for study or supervisory purposes.
- kit-check: appropriate dress/equipment for the activities proposed.

An example of an information sheet and itinerary for students / parents is included later in this section. If any doubts, require parents to respond by letter / email.

Catering department must be advised of anticipated absentees from meals. You need to plan for packed lunches, if required. The kitchens will help provide variety with adequate warning. Warn students if they will need to bring food (or money for food). Think about your estimated time of return and how that fits with meals. Plan for late suppers, if required.

Inform students and parents if they will need to bring money. Plan for its safe-keeping. You may also need to think about passports and their health insurance. It can help to put money-belts on the kit list.

Ask parents to warn you about medical issues. Beware of rejecting students on any grounds such as “disability.” Health and safety considerations may mean that special arrangements are necessary in some cases. If these cannot be put into place or the parents do not wish to meet the additional costs thereof, this could prevent the student from taking part in the trip.

If you are taking equipment (eg tents), check it in advance. Consider whether you need to have extra “base camp” kit to help groups whose kit has given trouble. If students are bringing equipment, have a kit-check. If you are using a centre’s equipment, check their paperwork.

Is the accommodation safe? Check fire procedures (at camp sites as well as accommodation), lock-up, siting of rooms, supervision, hazards.

If parents offer information (eg “John is not a very confident skier”), respond to it in your planning. Be prepared to check in advance with House Staff.

For School Trips abroad:

Send copy of **all** correspondence to parents **and** guardians (including initial details).

Include sentence / paragraph in an early letter (info letter or first confirmation letter) stating that *parents / guardians* of foreign nationals are responsible for ascertaining if visas are required by the host country and for assisting the student to obtain the appropriate visa. (State that HM Sec, TS, will provide letter confirming student status if requested.) *Photocopies* of passports of **all** students must be submitted by the student to the teacher i/c the trip at least one month before departure. (Teacher can then check validity of all passports before travel.)

For trips within the EU, consider whether to use a ‘List of Travellers’ (see Forms). [This may negate necessity for visas.]

Passports must be valid for at least six months after the date of return to the UK.

For trips within Europe, students must provide current EHIC.

No refunds will be given if a student is unable to travel owing to sickness or the student's passport and / or visa being out of date or declined.

After all the excellent planning, this turns out to be the most important: adapt your plan if necessary in response to weather, behaviour, unforeseen circumstances, illness etc... Ensure that you continue to communicate clearly with your colleagues on the trip. Training before remotely supervised activities should be assessed separately by an instructor with suitable qualifications.

Be aware of your own limitations. Continue to seek and accept advice from the local experts (e.g. "rivers rise really quickly in these parts; that will be a torrent tomorrow!").

RIDDOR require us to report accidents. Follow the procedures as listed in the Health and Safety Policy.

After the trip, you are required to fill in a standard evaluation form which should be passed to the Deputy Headmaster within 24 hours of your return. This will be held on file. It will matter when knowledge of disciplinary issues will enable staff taking trips after you to assess the risks posed by disruptive students. Own up to any problems experienced.

Most trips are enormous fun and completely successful.