



## THE SKINNERS' SCHOOL

### REGULATIONS CONCERNING SCHOOL VISITS AND THEIR MANAGEMENT

*Last amended on 16<sup>th</sup> June 2009*

#### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The School has every wish to encourage extra-curricular activity and visits by pupils to places of interest. It also recognises the value of the many trips which members of staff arrange and which have, by tradition, been heavily supported by both pupils and parents. The School is also aware of the very considerable responsibilities staff incur when visits of this kind are organised. When things go wrong, the position of the School can become difficult. For this reason, the procedures set out here need to be followed by all staff.
- 1.2 Visits and journeys taking place during term time must be of definite educational value and normally linked with the work of the School. Visits which are predominantly of a holiday nature must be confined to School holiday periods, though they may be permitted in special circumstances to extend not more than two days into term time.
- 1.3 These regulations apply to all school organised visits and trips. Regular trips, such as sports fixtures, must submit annually a generic risk assessment for the relevant period.
- 1.4 A checklist for staff organising visits is included at the end of these Regulations, and to the Excel spreadsheet that must be used for every visit. It is available on <School on Homer><Trips and Visits><Trips and Activities Form.xls>.

#### 2. Permission to organise a visit

- 2.1 No visit may be advertised to pupils or parents until the Headmaster has agreed to it taking place. If the visit is to take place during lesson time, the Deputy Headmaster will consider and agree the date(s) involved. A 'School Visit' form must be used: it is available on <School on Homer><Trips and Visits><Trips and Activities Form.xls >.

### **3. Finance**

- 3.1 The Education Reform Act (1988) which sets out the rules relating to charging, divides visits into two categories.
- 3.2 For visits defined as 'during School hours' parents may be charged only for lodging and accommodation. It is School policy that they are requested to make a contribution towards travelling expenses but no pupil may be excluded because of his parents' unwillingness to do so. Parents must be told this by letter and they must also be informed that, if insufficient funding is forthcoming, the visit may have to be cancelled. See the standard letter
- 3.3 For the visits which involve lodging and accommodation, the School is required to advise parents that anyone in receipt of Family Credit or Income Support is entitled to claim remission. See the standard letter.
- 3.4 For visits defined as 'outside School hours' the full cost of each pupil's involvement may be recovered from parents unless the education provided fulfils a requirement specified in the syllabus of a prescribed public examination or statutory duties relating to the National Curriculum.
- 3.5 Visits not related to public examinations or the National Curriculum and taking place outside School hours, e.g. a Theatre visit, are regarded as optional extras. Here charges may not exceed the cost of providing the activity divided equally by the number of pupils taking part. The costs can include elements for travel, board, materials, entrance fees, insurance and staffing.
- 3.6 An account must be opened through the Bursar's assistant, acting for the Bursar. Into this all money received must be paid, and from it payments required will be made. Receipts will be issued on request for payments received.

### **4. Adult Supervision**

- 4.1 Suitable arrangements must be made for pupils to be supervised by adults (i.e. persons aged 18 or over), at least half of whom must belong to the School's teaching staff. The figures given in this section are to be regarded as the minimum requirement; the special circumstances of a particular visit may make a greater number desirable. An adult whose own child is in the party cannot be counted as part of the staffing ratio when their child is part of the group they are supervising.

- 4.2 For visits lasting longer than one day, two adults will be required for a party not exceeding twenty pupils and, for a larger party, two adults for the first twenty pupils plus one additional adult for each additional fifteen pupils or fewer. Normally at least one teacher (or adult), of the two or more, should be male; if the party includes girls from another school, then one of the adults should be a female.
- 4.3 For visits of one day or less, two adults will be required for a party not exceeding thirty pupils and, for a larger party, two adults for the first twenty pupils plus one additional adult for each additional twenty pupils or fewer. Where students are accompanied by more than one member of staff on an extended day, it is preferred that at least one accompanying teacher (or adult) is male, and if the party includes girls from another school, then it is preferred that one of the adults be a female.
- 4.4 If it is felt that any variation in the minimum figures given above might be acceptable (e.g. for sports fixtures), then the agreement of the Headmaster must be sought. This might, in the case of sixth-formers, include dispensing with all adult supervision. If this were to happen the written agreement of parents must be obtained.
- 4.5 Where required by the Risk Assessment one of the supervising adults should be nominated in the Risk Assessment as responsible for the first aid kit and for summoning medical assistance, where necessary.

## **5. Insurance and Transport**

- 5.1 The School has all necessary insurance to protect itself, its employees and any other adults acting in a supervisory capacity from any liability arising from an approved School visit. *(NB Currently [2008-2009] the policy excludes North America.)*
- 5.2 If a special 'risk' can be identified (eg adventurous activities), this must be discussed with the Bursar at the planning stage to ensure that it falls within our umbrella cover or that if necessary other provisions are made.
- 5.3 Where a booking is made through an agency, it is necessary to check their public liability insurance and cover for the funds paid. Only agencies/services backed by associations such as ABTA, AITO, ATOL and AALA should be used. Also check that the agency has vetted any accommodation booked through it.
- 5.4 For all overseas visits details of the insurance cover provided must be sent to the parents of all participating pupils.

- 5.5 If a privately-owned vehicle is to be used in connection with a School visit, each driver is personally responsible for ensuring that he/she is adequately insured to use the vehicle for that purpose. The written agreement of the insurance company concerned must be obtained. *(NB this cover is not automatic on many policies, but staff are currently covered by the school insurance policy - 2008/09.)*
- 5.6 The School will not accept responsibility for students travelling in their own cars or the cars of other students. A pupil will never be asked by School staff to drive themselves or other students to and from trips or sports fixtures, as this would be against the School Trips Policy.
- 5.7 If a hired 'self-drive' vehicle is to be used, the company insuring the vehicle must be asked to provide a written guarantee that appropriate insurance cover exists for the purpose for which the vehicle is to be used.
- 5.8 If a minibus is to be used, the driver must have passed the Kent County Driving Test.

## **6. Communication with Parents**

- 6.1 When approval has been given for a visit to take place, a letter should be sent to parents. It should include as much detail as possible about the visit. The letter should also indicate whether any deposit payable is returnable and when any further payments will have to be made. The letter must be cleared with the Headmaster. See Section 2 of the Checklist and the standard letter.
- 6.2 Insurance details should be given to parents at an early stage in the planning of the visit. Parents should be aware of what is not covered, perhaps for example students' personal possessions. Check this with any external businesses being used and with the Bursar.
- 6.3 In the case of an extended visit, shortly before the date of departure parents should be issued with an information sheet. Details provided should include the address and telephone number at which the party may be contacted and, in the case of an overseas visit, the address and telephone number of the organising agency (if there is one). The times of departure and return should also be given.
- 6.4 Where pupils are to leave a coach either on the way to or at School, it should be established with parents where this will be and it should be made clear that staff responsibility will cease when the pupil leaves the coach at the agreed time and place.
- 6.5 A briefing meeting for parents is recommended in the case of extended visits.

- 6.6 Authority should be obtained from parents to approve such medical treatment as is deemed necessary in an emergency or on the advice of a qualified medical practitioner. Details of any existing medical condition and the treatment required should also be obtained. See the standard letter.
- 6.7 For any extended visit a telephone number at which parents may be contacted at any time during the visit is required. A list of these numbers should be given to the Office, the Headmaster, and a contact in the Tunbridge Wells area agreed with the Headmaster.
- 6.8 There are school mobile telephones that can be taken on trips by staff. The numbers can be given to pupils and parents to aid communications. Parents should normally make contact through the school where possible.

## **7. During the Visit**

- 7.1 If there is an obvious hazard (e.g. skiing, moving about on rocks near dangerous currents) staff must be with pupils at all times.
- 7.2 In the absence of such a hazard, pupils may be allowed to go about unsupervised provided:
- i) That they are in groups of not fewer than four;
  - ii) That each pupil has an identity card bearing his name and details of where he is staying, and where applicable stating the school mobile or other telephone contact number;
  - iii) That, where appropriate (e.g. in a city), each pupil has a map of the location;
  - iv) That in the initial letter of information about the visit, parents have been made aware that the above arrangements will apply and have signed an agreement to this effect;
  - v) That such unsupervised activity will not last for more than three hours at any one time, the time depending on factors such as the year group, location and activity;
  - vi) That pupils are aware of what to do in order to contact staff as soon as practicable if necessary. This should be assisted by issuing the school mobile telephone number to pupils.

- 7.3 **Bathing parties require special supervision** and parents' permission for bathing should have been obtained. It is not acceptable for any pupils to bathe without supervision by an appropriately qualified adult. Swimming involves a special 'risk', because water so often plays a part in serious incidents.
- 7.4 Unless the steps described in 7.2 (i)-(vi) have been taken, the pupils must be supervised at all times.
- 7.5 Teachers in charge of parties must emphasise the need for good behaviour at all times, and the need to observe the Risk Assessment precautions. Smoking and drinking by pupils of all ages is banned. During travel there should be a 'counting of heads' at all appropriate times, e.g. after a boat trip and before the coach leaves. For day visits in school time, or partly in school time, full uniform must be worn. The only exception is a field course, or something similar, when it is necessary to wear suitable clothing.
- 7.6 Staff may be asked to look after pocket money. In this event boys should be advised that no responsibility can be taken. Where individual passports are used, staff could well insist on the boys using travellers' cheques which can, of course, be looked after by staff.

## **8. Checklist for staff organising visits**

- 8.1 This list includes some points not included in the above Regulations. Unless they are clearly advisory (e.g. para. 4.4), they are to be regarded as part of the Regulations governing School visits.

***Last amended on 16<sup>th</sup> June 2009***



## THE SKIDDERS' SCHOOL

### CHECKLIST FOR STAFF ORGANISING VISITS

To be used in conjunction with the Regulations concerning School visits and the School Trips and Activities Form.

* Always necessary	# Necessary when applicable	§ Recommended good practice	TICK as
<b>1. PLANNING</b>			appropriate
* 1.1	Permission from Headteacher for trip (as early as possible);		*
* 1.2	Agreement of Deputy Head to dates, pupils and staffing (as early as possible);		*
§ 1.3	Pre-visit carried out;		§
* 1.4	Agree costings and charge to pupils with the Bursar;		*
* 1.5	Inform Bursar's assistant (DT) so consent slips expected, and account opened for monies paid in;		*
# 1.6	Transport arranged – check insurance cover;		#
# 1.7	Other bookings made (at least provisionally) – check insurance cover and ABTA, ATOL, AALA membership as appropriate;		#
* 1.8	Risk assessment agreed with trip co-coordinator (JB) and saved to S: drive (at least one month before overnight, overseas or adventurous trips; two weeks before other trips);		*
* 1.9	All documentation placed with General Office (inc. R/A, pupils, staff, contact details);		*
# 1.10	Emergency cash arranged; foreign currency should be arranged with the Finance Officer (SH) at least a fortnight ahead of the trip;		#
* 1.11	All staff should be familiar with the Regulations regarding trips and visits, and in particular with the Risk assessment for the specific trip;		*
* 1.12	Necessary communications made with staff and parents – <u>see below</u> .		
<b>2. COMMUNICATIONS WITH PARENTS AND GUARDIANS</b>			*
* All communications with pupils' homes should be based on the standard letters and cleared with the Headteacher.			
# 2.1	Any introductory letter inviting participation should include details of the trip – such as information about dates, timing, purpose, cost, and any information evening;		#

* 2.2	Parents must be sent a letter giving details of the trip including details of dates, timing, purpose (with specific reference to any industrial premises), cost (consistent with the Education Reform Act), insurance cover, travel and staffing arrangements and containing a permission slip for the pupil to take part under the outlined plans and to receive any emergency treatment as necessary, and requesting relevant medical information;	*
§.2.3	An information evening is particularly relevant for residential trips. It may be necessary to have both an introductory evening and a meeting before departure;	§
# 2.4	For extended days/trips if the letter did not include contact information parents must have this and any other information finalised after the letter (2.2 above).	#
<b>3. COMMUNICATIONS WITHIN SCHOOL</b> - in addition to Section 1 above		
# 3.1	The school kitchen must be given three weeks' notice of the number of boys who will miss school lunches that they would normally have;	#
# 3.2	Teaching staff should be given one week's notice of the names of boys who will miss any lessons – list to be posted in the staffroom and to Register Officer (KL);	#
*.3.3	Meeting of staff involved to agree on the rules for the trip and the allocation of duties, including First Aid, and review application of the Risk Assessment;	*
# 3.4	Staff involved should have an information sheet, including the itinerary, contact details, all names and identification of the group for which they are responsible;	#
# 3.5	Pupils involved should have an information sheet, including the itinerary, contact details, identification of the group of which they are part, and rules of the trip including risk assessment precautions, and a map of the area to be visited if appropriate;	#
# 3.6	If privately owned or hired transport is to be used, consult 5.5, 5.6, 5.7, 5.8 of the regulations;	#
# 3.7	On residential trips pupils should have Identity Cards, with their name, their overseas address and telephone number and school mobile if taken;	#
# 3.8	For visits to EC countries, a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) is required by each party member. This may be obtained from a main Post Office or online at: <a href="http://www.ehic.org.uk">www.ehic.org.uk</a> ;	#
# 3.9	If a group passport is not being used, check passports are valid for at least six months.	#
<b>4. COMMUNICATIONS WITH OUTSIDE BODIES</b> - in addition to Section 1 above		
# 4.1	Confirm bookings and transport arrangements of booking made under 1.6 Transport;	#
# 4.2	Confirm bookings made under 1.7 Other bookings;	#
§ 4.3	Check the availability of group discounts;	§
4.4	Consider a group passport.	
<b>5. MISCELLANEOUS</b> - there are always other considerations: eg litter bags.		