



ST JOHN'S COLLEGE
Cardiff

Educational Trips and Visits Policy

St John's College, Cardiff

EDUCATIONAL TRIPS AND VISITS POLICY

This policy applies to all sections of the School:

Sixth Form, Senior School, Junior School,
Infant School & Nursery.

Version: September 2025

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1. Introduction

1.1 Statement of intent

An educational trip or visit has enormous potential for enriching the school curriculum and, in some cases, it is an essential requirement of examination courses. Such enterprises, though demanding, can be enjoyable experiences for both students and staff. Thousands of school trips and visits take place every year, the vast majority safely and without incident. However, we are all aware that very occasionally things can and do go wrong. It is, therefore, very important that all trips and visits are properly planned and organised and that all staff involved with school trips and visits take all reasonable steps to ensure that risks are minimised.

It is the intention of St John's College (SJC) that all practicable steps will be taken to meet statutory requirements, recognised codes of practice and government guidance in establishing a safe and healthy environment on educational visits.

St John's College believes that participation in high quality visits by pupils and staff will enhance development and wellbeing, promote positive interactions between pupils and staff and improve overall school performance and ethos.

This policy has been written with regard to the All Wales Guidance 2010, Educational Visits - A safety guide for learning outside the classroom and the Health and Safety Executive 'School trips and outdoor learning activities', June 2011, and the Department for Education 'Advice on Legal Duties and Powers For Local Authorities, Head Teachers, Staff and Governing Bodies.' Essentially these documents summarise the existing health and safety law relevant to schools and how it affects governing bodies, head teachers and other staff.

St John's College adheres to the recommendations set out by The Outdoor Education Advisers Panel National Guidance, (OEAPNG), and has appointed a Head of Outdoor Education, (from April 2018) <https://oeapng.info/about-national-guidance/>. A qualified Educational Visits Coordinator oversees all school visits and all new teachers receive induction to ensure school procedure and National guidance is followed.

Updates to trip protocols and policy updates are provided regularly, with time allocated at compulsory INSET days. All staff are informed of their duty of care to avoid injury to themselves and others, and to cooperate with the school and EVC/SLT to ensure statutory duties and obligations are fulfilled.

1.2 Definition

For the purpose of this policy, a school trip or visit is defined as any occasion when a student or group of students are away from the school campus, undertaking a school activity and under the supervision of a member of staff. In order to avoid unnecessary repetition, the word 'trip' will largely be used throughout this policy but where this occurs, please understand 'trip and/or visit', as appropriate.

This policy does not apply to:

- work experience, which has a separate policy and government advice;
- local, frequent sporting activities or physical education (PE), as outlined below;
- activities conducted outdoors but within the school's boundaries, as the safety of these is managed under standard school policies and processes.

As above, the risk management of all PE fixtures falls outside this policy as sporting activities come under the remit of the PE department, thus teachers leading or supervising PE fixtures outside the school grounds need to follow the guidance of their professional training and the Association for Physical Education (AfPE). School fixtures are managed on the SOCS portal. The risk management of the travel to and from games lessons and PE fixtures comes under the minibus/transport policy for the school. Any other, non-sports fixture trips undertaken by the PE department are educational visits and should be approved as such.

This policy is informed by DfE guidance - 'Health and Safety: on Educational Visits November 2018' and will be reviewed annually or after any changes of legislation or approved codes of practice. This policy is also informed by the Outdoor Advisers' Panel National Guidance, to which Educational Visit Coordinators (EVCs), Visit Leaders and others should refer.

1.3 Guidance

This policy pays attention to the following guidance:

- Children should be able to experience a wide range of activities. Health and Safety measures should help them to do this safely, not stop them;
- It is important that children learn to understand and manage the risks that are a normal part of life;
- Common sense should be used in assessing and managing the risks of any activity. Health and safety procedures should always be proportionate to the risks of an activity;
- Staff should be given the training they need so they can keep themselves and the children safe and manage risks effectively.

1.4 Educational Visits Coordinator

The Head of Outdoor Education is the designated Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) and has completed the EVC Training. He is supported by the Headteacher, Director of Estates, Assistant Head (Admissions and External Relations) and School Administrator (Trips and Visits) to offer advice and support on all aspects of school trips and visits. Together, they have access to all relevant documentation from the Health and Safety Executive and other agencies. Staff are asked to consult as fully as possible with the EVC before, during, and after a school trip or visit. Feedback from trips and visits is compulsory and an important mechanism for ensuring against future incidents.

1.5 Educational Visit Objectives

Every educational visit must have a clear aim and objective designed to support and enhance curriculum delivery. Clear curriculum links should be made during the application process.

2. Roles and responsibilities

2.1 Trustees

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, places overall responsibility for health and safety with the employer, which is St John's College (SJC). To meet these responsibilities, SJC will:

2.1.1 provide an Educational Visits (EV) policy and ensure it is reviewed at least annually;

2.1.2 set procedures for the planning, management and approval of EVs;

2.1.3 ensure staff are adequately trained, guided and supported so they can plan and carry out safe, educational visits that are in line with the SJC policy;

2.1.4 ensure individual establishments are suitably resourced to comply with policy requirements;

2.1.5 determine the charging and remissions policy and appropriate procedures for the financial management of visits having regard to any government guidance;

2.1.6 monitor compliance of this policy.

2.2 The Headteacher

The Headteacher has responsibility for the development and implementation of EV procedures and processes for all staff and pupils. The Headteacher will:

2.2.1 ensure that EV procedures are being followed and that a review mechanism is in place;

2.2.2 appoint a suitably competent EVC;

2.2.3 ensure that the EVC is appropriately trained and has sufficient time and authority to fulfil their role;

2.2.4 ensure that appropriate insurance arrangements are in place;

2.2.5 inform the Trustees of any concerns or issues as early as possible;

2.2.6 ensure that there is a process to obtain best value for individual visits;

2.2.7 personally approve all **overnight**¹, **adventurous**¹ and **overseas**¹ EVs.

2.2.8 ensure that suitable emergency procedures are in place, including procedures to ensure parents are appropriately informed in the event of a serious incident and that SJC reporting procedures are followed;

2.2.9 ensure that critical incident management plans are in place for dealing with an emergency;

¹ - 1 Default, overnight, adventurous and overseas are the four visit categories for all SJC visits and link to the Trip Approval Process. See section 3.2

2.3 The Senior Leadership Team

The Senior Leadership Team will ensure that:

2.3.1 SJC EV policy and procedures are determined, implemented and reviewed annually;

2.3.2 staff are adequately trained and supported;

2.3.3 there is a clear approvals procedure in place for EVs;

2.3.4 there is an appropriate level of monitoring in place for EVs;

2.4 Educational Visits Coordinator

The functions of the EVC will be subject to the job description and primarily include a requirement to:

2.4.1 ensure EVs meet SJC procedural requirements and that the EV Checklist is followed (see EV Checklist on the 'Educational Visits Shared Drive')

2.4.2 advise the Headteacher and SLT of any issues concerning the approval of visits;

2.4.3 submit all policy-compliant default EVs to SLT for approval.

2.4.4 work alongside trip leaders submit policy-compliant applications for overnight, adventurous or overseas visits before passing them to SLT and the Headteacher for final approval;

2.4.5 assess the competence of prospective leaders and staff in terms of qualifications and/or experience and organise appropriate training and induction;

2.4.6 work with the Health and Wellbeing Officer to ensure that first aid training requirements are in place in support of any educational visit, as necessary;

2.4.6 ensure that emergency arrangements are in place for each visit;

2.4.7 work alongside the School Administrator (Trips and Visits) to keep an accurate record of visits, incidents, accidents and near misses on the internal 'Educational Visits Shared Drive';

2.4.8 review the use of the trip application system and monitor practice;

2.4.9 report all incidents to the Headteacher at the earliest opportunity;

2.4.10 ensure, where reasonably practicable, that pre-visits have taken place for higher risk visits.

2.5 Visit Leaders / Activity Leaders

A Visit Leader is the person who has overall responsibility for managing a visit, including for the health and safety of participants and staff, and the supervision, welfare, learning and development of the participants.

An Activity Leader is responsible for the management of a group (or subgroup) taking part in a specific activity within a visit, including for their supervision, health, safety, welfare, learning and development. They are responsible to the Visit Leader.

The leader in charge of any SJC EV must be competent, confident, and an employee of or otherwise contracted directly by the school.

SJC have allocated the following responsibilities to Visit Leaders:

2.5.1 to plan the visit carefully and in line with the EV policy, including assessing the risks of activities and recording any significant findings;

2.5.2 to fill out the trip application accurately and work within the policy stipulated approval timeline;

2.5.3 to work closely with the EVC and follow their guidance;

2.5.4 to supervise the visit and ensure planned control measures remain suitable and are followed by themselves and any other visit staff and volunteers;

2.5.5 to prepare contingency and emergency plans;

2.5.6 to carry out dynamic risk assessments to take into account changing environment, conditions or the group.

For further information on roles and responsibilities see <https://oeapng.info/guidance-by-role/>

3. Procedural Requirements

3.1 Visit Categories

SJC has identified four categories of EV, each requiring escalating levels of risk management. The table below shows how the visits are classified:

	Default	Overnight	Adventurous	Overseas
Description	Takes place in the UK and does not involve an adventurous activity or an overnight stay.	Takes place in the UK with an overnight stay/s but not an adventurous activity.	Takes place in the UK with adventurous activity, regardless of whether overnight stay or not.	Takes place abroad, regardless of whether or not it involves an adventurous activity.
Planning Process	Visit leader completes the Educational Visits Application Form - within the approval timelines.	Visit leader completes the Residential Application Form - within the approval timelines.		
Approval	EVC will advise SLT, who will give final approval for the trip.			

Default visits

Where a visit involves neither an overnight stay, an adventurous activity or is overseas, it is classed as a default visit. These visits, if compliant with the policy, will be approved by SLT.

Overnight Visits

Where a visit takes place in the UK and involves an overnight stay, additional measures should be put in place to protect and safeguard pupils. These should be in line with the SJC Safeguarding Policy and OEAP National Guidance. Overnight visits will need to be approved by SLT.

Adventurous Activities

Where an EV takes place in the UK and involves an adventurous activity, whether or not it also includes an overnight stay, the visit is considered an 'Adventurous Activity'.

Where practicable, any activities of an adventurous kind should be arranged through a specialist provider. However, qualified and experienced staff may organise and run visits with the approval of the Headteacher.

When planning an adventurous activity, the Visit Leader should familiarise themselves with [The Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 2004](#). The Visit Leader must ensure that any activities that are licensable under these regulations are covered by an AALA licence. These activities include caving, climbing (except on artificial walls), trekking (including pony trekking, off-road cycling, off-piste skiing) and watersports (on certain bodies of water including the sea, rivers and "turbulent inland waters").

Many activities are not licensable by AALA (e.g. ropes courses, indoor climbing, archery etc) and can be covered by other accreditation marks such as [Adventuremark](#) and the [Learning Outside the Classroom \(LOtC\) quality badge](#).

The Adventuremark and LOtC quality badge, unlike the AALA licence, are non-statutory so if a centre is offering non-AALA-licensable activities and does not hold an Adventuremark or LOtC badge, it does not mean they cannot be used, only that more checks and measures should be carried out on the provider by the Visit Leader. A '[Provider Statement](#)' must also be completed by the centre and uploaded onto the Educational Visits Shared Drive ahead of the trip. Refer to Section 6.5 - Using External Providers.

Further information on activity licensing and 'badging' schemes is available on the [Outdoor Education Advisor Panel National Guidance](#).

Overseas Visits

St John's College encourages overseas visits. All trips should be managed by an experienced and competent Trip Leader. If using a tour operator, these should also be reliable and trustworthy. Where possible, these should be recommended by reliable sources or operators with historical track records for success.

3.2 Educational Visits Checklist

The EV Checklist outlines the steps for a Visit Leader to work through when planning an EV. The checklist represents a cornerstone of compliance and should be completed and followed thoroughly. A copy of the EV Checklist can be downloaded from the 'Educational Visits' Shared Drive.

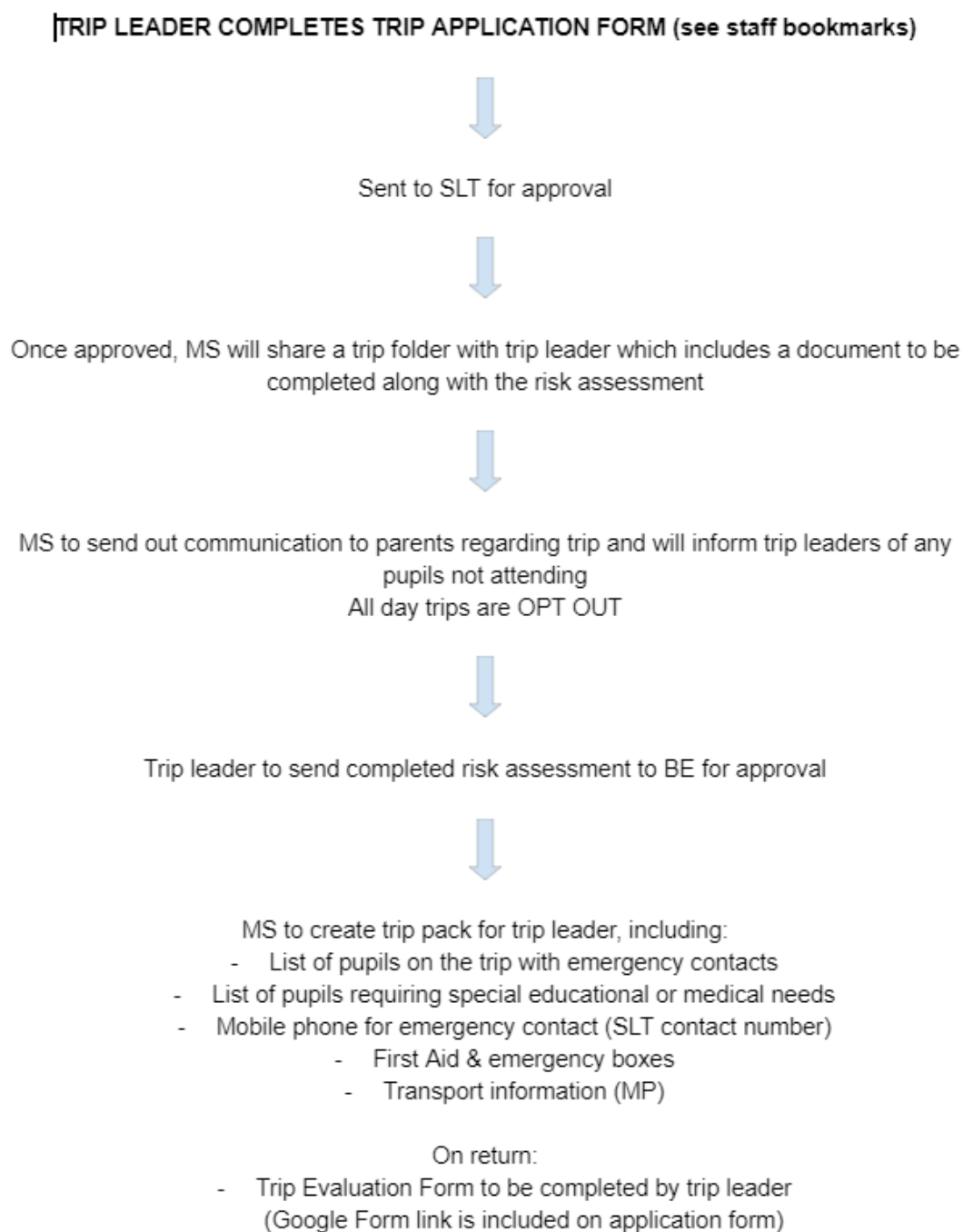
Checklist

Please ensure you have completed the checklist below:

Read all policies and guidelines regarding school visits	☐
COMPLETED THIS FORM AND RISK ASSESSMENT AND SUBMITTED TO EVC <u>AT LEAST TWO WEEKS</u> PRIOR TO THE TRIP	☐
Included a list of pupils who will be going on the visit	☐
Attached a copy of the information letter to be sent to parents	☐
Included a list of ALL staff members accompanying the visit	☐
A leave of absence (LOA) form has been completed for each member of staff at least TWO WEEKS in advance	☐

3.3 Educational Visits Approvals Process

The flowchart below should be used in conjunction with the EV Checklist on the 'Educational Visits' Shared Drive to ensure the correct approvals process is adhered to.



3.4 Educational Visits Approvals Timeline

In order for the EVC and SLT to appropriately check, return for more information and approve EV's, a structured approvals timeline has been put in place, a diagram of which can be found below.

It is the responsibility of the Visit Leader to ensure that they meet the timelines in order to allow the due diligence process to be completed properly by the EVC, Headteacher and SLT.

A record of staff members who repeatedly fail to submit their visits in enough time to gain appropriate approval will be kept by the School Administrator (Trips and Visits) in order for follow-up to be carried out by the EVC and SLT where required.

Overseas visits can vary greatly in complexity and risk. The recommended approval timeline for overseas visits is therefore a guideline. The EVC will inform SLT in advance of upcoming overseas visits so an appropriate, specific timeline for that visit's approval can be agreed between them.

3.5 Permission for and notification of School trips

The EVC **must** be notified of all occasions when a student or group of students leave the school premises, either accompanied by members of staff or to meet members of staff at a pre-arranged location. This forms a key part of the duty of care we owe to students. It is not easy to give a definitive list of such trips, but examples include trips to museums, galleries and theatres, trips to educational conferences, end of year trips, residential trips such as skiing holidays or sports tours and the Duke of Edinburgh's Award expeditions. If staff are in doubt about the nature of a trip or visit then they should seek the advice of the EVC.

All staff must complete a School Trip Application Form before departing on a school trip and submit the form to the EVC / SLT.

The EVC/SLT **must** also give permission before any trip can take place. Staff wishing to organise a trip **must** complete a School Trip Application Form and submit it **as far in advance as possible** (this document is accessible via the SJC Staff bookmarks). This application is automatically submitted to SLT, where it will be checked against the school calendar for potential clashes. The Assistant Head (Admissions and External Relations) will inform the EVC and School Administrator (Trips and Visits) of the outcome of each application. Any overnight or overseas trips will be required to complete a separate application, using the 'Residential Application' form. All trips will be reviewed by SLT so that any trips or visits can be judged against the potential for impact on the day to day running of the school. Factors such as cost, staffing, pupil absence, academic relevance etc are all factors which are discussed and reviewed by SLT. Where possible, proposals for overnight, adventurous and overseas trips should be sent to SLT one full academic year in advance of the trip so that parents can be given fair warning of any significant additional costs.

Staff must not spend any money or inform students or parents that a trip or visit is going ahead until it has been formally approved and all sections of the relevant form have been signed.

3.6 Planning Trips and Visits

The following list is not exhaustive, but it tries to summarise what needs to be done during the planning and organisation of a trip. The list also gives further ideas about areas for risk assessment:

- Ensuring all staff (volunteers/parents helpers where appropriate) understand their role and responsibilities and where appropriate, for example, expedition leaders in DofE have received appropriate training and have been officially recognised as competent to lead such activities;
- Follow the School's approved process for checking the competency or suitability of a member of staff to lead or accompany a trip or expedition;
- Student behaviour and expectation;
- Facilities/equipment the group will need to take;
- Facilities/equipment provided at the venue;
- Staff training needs e.g. first aid qualification;
- Designating someone to record the visit and carry accident forms, etc.;
- Transport arrangements, including meeting arrangements for trips which leave before the start of morning school and collection arrangements for trips which return after the end of normal school;
- Appropriate Risk Assessments;
- Insurance arrangements;
- Communication arrangements e.g. trip mobile phones (accessed via the EVC)
- Supervision ratio (see 3.7 supervision ratios)
- Contingency plans for enforced changes of plans or late return;
- Information to parents;
- Information to school;
- Preparing students, including specialist training for DofE activities and medical needs;
- Arrangements for sending students home early;
- First Aid provision;
- Medical information;
- Emergency procedures, including contact details and permission for emergency medical treatment if the parents cannot be contacted.

Members of staff are strongly encouraged to plan their pattern of trips and visits for the coming academic year as early as they can. This allows clashes to be kept to a minimum. Trips and visits planned well in advance must be included in the termly school calendar. Events listed in the school calendar take priority over non-calendared events. The earlier a trip is planned, the more likely it is to be approved. If two events clash, then the Senior Leadership Team will resolve the matter.

Students must miss lessons as rarely as possible. While it is often easy to justify a trip from the benefit to one's own subject, lessons missed in other subjects need to be considered. Obviously, there will be times when it is impossible to avoid taking students out during lesson time, but full consideration must be made of alternative times before making such a decision.

Staff organising a trip must consult as widely as possible with colleagues who might be affected and think carefully about the possible impact of a trip. For example, trips should not be organised on busy games afternoons, and **residential trips should take place during school holidays to avoid a loss of teaching time wherever possible.**

3.7 Informing Other People

It is essential that all people concerned with the trip are fully informed at appropriate times. Once the planning has been completed and the trip has been approved, the full details of the trip must be prepared. Trip leaders must consult with the EVC and School Administrator (Trips and Visits) before producing any relevant correspondence to parents.

3.8 Communicating with parents

Parents must be informed in writing about all trips. Written consent is not required for students to take part in the majority of off-site activities organised by a school (with the exception of nursery age children), however this School operates a policy where **Parental permission is required for all trips**. It is acceptable for this permission to be gained through an 'opt out' system rather than by asking parents to complete a consent form and send it back. When a pupil joins SJC, they are asked to complete an Educational Trips Consent Form. This gains permission from parents for their child to be taken on school day trips unless they let us know in advance that they would not like their child to attend. They are given the opportunity to do this when the trip letter is sent out. For example, a phrase along the lines of *'It will be assumed that you are happy for your son/daughter to go on the trip unless we hear otherwise'* is acceptable. This method may be easier where whole Year groups are being taken out and/or when a trip takes place during normal school hours. However, where smaller numbers are involved, where a trip leaves very early or returns very late, and **for all overnight trips**, specific signed permission must be obtained from parents. Trip leaders must have an alternative option planned for any student whose parents decline permission to go on a trip.

If a trip involves overnight accommodation, parents must be given full details of the type of accommodation provided and the security arrangements which are in place to ensure the safety of their child. They must be fully informed as to the nature of the trip, with a clear indication if the students may be unaccompanied while away from school. Parents must acknowledge that their child is fit enough to go on the trip, outline any health problems and authorise the leader of the party to act on their behalf in an emergency. They must also provide a contact number for the duration of the trip.

For longer trips, particularly those overseas, it is essential to hold a Parents' Information Evening a few weeks before departure. This allows information to be shared, questions to be asked and answered, and reassurance to be given where appropriate. The publication of an information booklet for parents and students is also strongly advised.

3.9 Informing the School

The School must also know all the relevant details for a trip. The School Trip Application Form **must** be completed in full and submitted to the EVC/SLT, well in advance of the departure date. For default day trips this should be at least two weeks before the trip departs. For overnight, adventurous and overseas trips, where possible the School Trip

Residential Form should be submitted at least 6 weeks prior to departure so that any concerns or problems that may arise can be resolved.

These forms must contain all the information required about a trip. It will include a comprehensive staffing list, which has been approved by the HR Officer (Cover Manager) so that disruption to lessons and timetabling is minimal. Leave of Absence applications should then be submitted - following the usual procedure, with plenty of notice.

A generic risk assessment document will be available to all Trip Leaders. This should form the basis of the risk assessment, but is not exhaustive to every eventuality and should be amended accordingly. The final risk assessment must be shared with the EVC and School Administrator (Trips and Visits) at least two weeks before the trip departure date. Failure to do so can result in postponement or cancelling the trip, at the EVC's discretion.

The trip leader must ensure that he/she is in possession of all contact number details throughout the trip. The trip leader should also ensure that a designated first aider is in attendance, with the relevant first aid supplies (to include a generic first aid kit and any specific medication needed for the trip delegates). These can be obtained from the Health and Wellbeing Officer before departure.

The EVC acts as the school contact for the trip. If the EVC is unable to do this, for example for a residential trip during the school holidays, it is up to the **trip leader** to ensure that another senior colleague is designated as the school contact. This could be the Headteacher, Assistant Head (DSL), Director of Estates etc.

4. Cost of School Trips

4.1 Charging for visits

Staff must think carefully about the cost of a school trip. Some parents have financial constraints and it must not be assumed that all parents can simply add extras to their school bill. Costs should be kept to a minimum and parents must be given the chance to decline a trip on financial grounds. In such a case, provision must be made for the student who cannot go on a trip.

4.2 Costing of visits

The Visit Leader is responsible for ensuring that the full costs involved in an EV are covered, either by parental contribution or by pre-arranged departmental funds.

The following main costs need to be considered but others may apply, depending on the nature of the trip:

- any cost of cover for absent staff;
- accommodation;
- food;
- travel and transfers;
- excursions;
- administration costs in organising the journey;
- insurance;

- clothing
- contingencies.

For further advice, see OEAP National Guidance Document - [Charging for School Activities](#).

4.3 Payment

It is very important that the cost of trips is recovered by the school, via the Finance Manager, as quickly as possible. Indeed, if it is possible to charge for a trip before it has taken place then this should be done. For example, where a cheque is raised by the school to pay for a trip in advance, the trip leader must pass a list of the students on the trip, together with a copy of the letter sent to parents, to the Finance Manager at the same time as the request for the cheque, so that charges can be added to school bills quickly. Once final numbers are known, any changes must also be passed through to the Finance Manager. Delays and/or errors in this process have the potential to create significant problems. **The trip leader must take responsibility for all financial arrangements in connection with the trip.**

It is not good practice for members of staff to handle cheques and cash brought in by students. If money goes missing for any reason, then this can lead to unnecessary difficulties. As far as possible, it is recommended that the cost of a school trip be added to the school fees. The letter sent to parents must make clear the method of payment. If cheques are requested then they must be made payable to St John's College, not to individual members of staff, and handed in or sent to reception. The letter sent to parents must be clear on this point.

Any money left over at the end of the trip cannot be carried forward to the next financial year or to future trips. It must either be credited to parents or, if the amount is too small for this to be practical, credited to the relevant academic department budget.

Where a pupil withdraws from an EV, or is banned from an EV because of bad behaviour, after arrangements have been made, sufficient funds should be withheld from the contributions already made by that pupil's parents in order to cover any irrecoverable costs incurred on the pupil's behalf.

Parents should be informed in the trip letter for the EV of the relevant visit budget, the finance procedures and rules.

5. Insurance

5.1 Educational Visit Insurance Requirements

St John's College will ensure that appropriate insurance is in place to cover employees (Employer Liability Insurance) and the liability to the public (Public Liability Insurance), including pupils.

It is the duty of the Visit Leader, followed by the EVC, Director Estates and Headteacher to ensure that the insurance policy will cover all activities being undertaken and to arrange additional insurance if it does not.

It is possible that some adventurous activities are not covered by SJC's insurance policy, in which case, additional cover will be required. Tour operators may include additional travel insurance as part of the package they offer, but it is generally expected that the school insurance policy will be used, unless otherwise agreed by the Headteacher. The school will determine whether additional insurance needs to be taken out by parents for their children and to inform the parents of this necessity and how it is to be arranged.

For more complex EVs the school will tell parents what insurance arrangements are in place and ask parents to accept the insurance arrangements through the consent form. Some parents may cancel their child's place on an extracurricular activity (one that takes place outside the school day or term). If the place cannot be refilled, and the cancellation is covered by the insurance policy, the school should forward the cancellation to the insurer and operator as soon as possible to help to mitigate cancellation charges.

6. Personnel

6.1 Duty of Care

The duty of care expected of St John's College Visit Leaders is that of a reasonable, prudent and careful teaching professional applying his or her mind to the situation. The duty is continuous during the whole period of the visit and cannot be delegated to anyone else. However, the Visit Leader should arrange a duty roster to ensure members of staff have adequate rest. It is essential that everyone involved in the visit understands the supervision arrangements and expectations.

For information on direct, indirect and remote supervision refer to [National Guidance document 4.2.](#)

6.2 Supervision Ratios

From September 2021 new statutory guidance is in place that all 'early years' (aged 0 – 5 years) providers must adhere to. This will include the Nursery and Infant sections of St John's College. Visit Leaders that cover this age group must familiarise themselves with the [Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage](#) and operate within it at all times. This framework outlines supervision and other expectations for the classroom only. The table below sets out the recommended supervision ratios for 'early years' pupils on SJC EVs.

Supervision ratios are determined as part of the planning and approval process. The appropriate ratio for any activity will be informed by the risk assessment where there are no specific external or stakeholder guidelines, such as National Governing Bodies, that dictate instructor : pupil ratios. The decision should take into account:

- pupil gender, age (including developmental age), ability, competence and behaviour;
- general and specific supervision competencies;
- special educational needs and disabilities (which should trigger a higher ratio or individual care plan(s));
- duration and nature of the activity, including any journey required to get there/back;
- location and environment of where the activity will take place, including accommodation and requirements of the venue.

Unless a trip is operating under National Governing Body ratios (as will be the case for many adventurous activities), there are no clear, legal requirements for adult : pupil supervision ratios on educational visits. However, taking into account the OEAP National Guidance and other bodies of work, this Policy stipulates the following ratios should be adhered to unless the Headteacher gives case-specific consent, which should be recorded in writing, to operate outside of them:

	Default Trip	Overnight	Adventurous Activity	Overseas
Nursery	1:3	-	-	-
Reception	1:6	-	-	-
Years 1 - 3	1:6	1:6	1:6	1:6
Years 4 - 6	1:10	1:10	1:10	1:6
Years 7+	1:15	1:10	1:10	1:10

Notes:

- these are **minimum staff to pupil ratio guidelines**;
- NGB ratios must be observed if school staff are delivering adventurous activities;
- for specific pupils (medical/SEND/behavioural), ratios might need to be tighter;
- **at least two adults, each of a different gender** should accompany overnight and overseas visits (where this is not practicable, staff must still be able to access the Assistant Head (DSL) during the duration of the trip);
- at least two adults must accompany adventurous visits.

These are merely minimum staff : pupil policy ratios. The actual supervision ratios must be informed by the needs of the group members and the complexity of the activity and they must be agreed by the EVC.

Further guidance on supervisory ratios can be found here:

- [RoSPA](#) (Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents)
- The Department for Education
- [OEAP](#) (Outdoor Education Advisers Panel)

6.3 Exploratory Visits

St John's College supports exploratory/reconnaissance visits by any member of staff who is to lead a group abroad, on a residential visit, or in a location that is not familiar to them. These visits will enable Trip Leaders to gain first-hand knowledge of the area and facilities which will inform the risk assessment and pre-planning.

Any costs incurred will be included in the total cost of the visit, although some contractors or providers may offer a pre-visit for the Visit Leader free of charge.

Where a pre-visit is not possible, the Headteacher, advised by the EVC will determine whether the subsequent risk assessment is acceptable prior to authorisation of the visit. Whether a pre-visit has been carried out or not, the Visit Leader should make a preliminary check of the venue upon arrival, noting any hazards or safety features.

6.4 Choosing Trip Support Staff / Supervisors

When trip leaders are considering the staffing for their trips they must always bear in mind the consequences of staff absences on those left behind. **If several people are required to staff a trip then the Trip Leader should engage with the** HR Officer (Cover Manager) so that disruption to lessons and timetabling is minimal. Leave of Absence applications should then be submitted - following the usual procedure, with plenty of notice.

Although it is the responsibility of the Trip Leader to coordinate this process, all staff who go on trips must take responsibility for ensuring their lessons and duties are covered appropriately. Disruption to lessons, duties and the co-curricular should be as minimal as possible.

Any concerns with regard to staffing or staffing ratios on trips should be referred to the EVC who can give further guidance and advice.

6.5 Using External Providers

If using the facilities of a contractor, e.g. a tour operator, the Visit Leader should arrange a meeting with the local representative or manager in order that both parties can be kept fully informed and any concerns can be raised. Any points discussed should be noted in writing.

External providers contracted to run EVs should, wherever possible, hold the [Learning Outside the Classroom](#) 'Quality Badge'. Where an un-badged provider is selected, the Visit Leader must undertake appropriate risk assessment (as with any EV), and check what other accreditation the provider holds. In this case an [OEAP National Guidance Provider Statement](#), should be completed by the provider. The Trip Leader and EVC should check they are satisfied with the provider's answers then upload the completed Provider Statement to the document library on the EV Shared Drive. Provider Checklists should be updated annually.

An exception to the requirement to attach a Provider Statement to a non-LOtC badged provider, is if the venue being visited is a public access building. In this case, as long as the visit does not include areas or activities that members of the public would not visit or complete, a Provider Statement does not need to be completed.

In **all** cases the Visit Leader must write their own risk assessment to include any likely risks posed by or to the members of the group. **See section 8 - Risk Assessments.**

6.6 Transport

Most school trips will involve transportation by some type of bus, either a school minibus, hired minibus or hired coach. It is extremely important that staff and students use such transportation safely. **Everyone must wear seat belts at all times.** It is good practice for staff to remind all students of the need for good behaviour before all minibus and bus journeys. Staff must be aware that the journey is an integral part of a school trip and appropriate risk assessments must be carried out.

6.6.1 The Wearing of Seatbelts in Vehicles

In order to ensure that all journeys by St John's College students are undertaken in the safest possible manner, it is the school's policy that **seatbelts must be worn at all times by all staff and students in cars (including taxis), minibuses and coaches.** All staff and students are made aware of this and are asked to adhere to the policy strictly. Visit Leaders must do everything they reasonably can to enforce this policy.

6.6.2 Private Hire

Where coaches are being hired to provide the transport for an Educational Visit, due diligence must be carried out on the coach company prior to the visit. The Risk Assessment must state the name of the transport provider. This should be vetted by the Director of Estates, to ensure that a reputable company is being used. Information should also be collated on the transport providers on overseas trips. This information should be obtained from the tour operator and included in the risk assessment.

7. Staff and Pupil Welfare

7.1 Consent for medical treatment

Some Educational Visits may require consent from parents for emergency medical treatment (including, for example, anaesthesia or blood transfusions), where such treatment is considered necessary by the medical authorities. Parental consent will be sought for such treatment by way of a letter. This letter may be sent to parents at the beginning of the academic year or in advance of specific Educational Visits. Where parents refuse to consent to emergency medical treatment, either on religious or other grounds, advice will be sought from the School public liability insurer and/or legal adviser to determine whether their child is still able to take part.

If abroad, a doctor may be reluctant to treat one of the group participants if the Visit Leader does not have documented consent, therefore it is good practice for the Visit Leader to have ready access to a record of parental consent on such Educational Visits.

7.2 First Aid

The Health and Safety (first aid) Regulations 1981 apply to St John's College and make it clear that "adequate" and "appropriate" first aid equipment, facilities and personnel must be in place. Other than for 'early years' providers, where separate legislation is in place ([Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage](#)), there is no specific guidance outlining the numbers of first aiders that must be present in a school or accompany an educational visit. Visit Leaders must therefore follow any guidelines contained within the School Health and Safety Policy, when determining the first aid arrangements for an EV.

Minimum first aid provision for low-risk settings should comprise a suitably stocked first-aid kit and a designated and qualified first aider. The minimum qualification required for default trips is the 1-day emergency first aid at work course. All staff should feel comfortable in calling an ambulance and containing the situation, preventing further injury to pupils and staff.

For early years providers, at least one member of staff with a pediatric first aid qualification must attend each EV.

7.3 Safeguarding

Child safeguarding measures must be considered at an early stage of the planning and, ideally through pre-visits, appropriate venues should be chosen that allow staff to effectively manage the safeguarding of the students. The Safeguarding Policy underpins all operational practice at SJC, including that outlined in this policy, and it should always be adhered to. If the Safeguarding Policy is updated, its contents override the contents of this policy, in relation to Safeguarding. A key summary of safeguarding measures for staff to adhere to on EVs can be found below.

All supervisory staff or adults who are employed to instruct students must be DBS checked before being allowed to supervise a group.

Visit staff should give careful consideration to sleeping arrangements on EVs and allocate staff and student rooms with child protection as the main focus, taking into account any additional needs. The relationship between staff and students on EVs, particularly on residential visits, is often less formal than in the classroom, which can be of enormous benefit, but can also introduce higher risks. Staff should be acutely aware of the professional boundaries within which they need to operate, and be at pains to maintain professional standards at all times, including in how they speak, how they act, the conversations they allow to take place between students in their presence etc. If students need first aid treatment or emotional support during a visit, particularly overnight, particular care should be taken by staff to provide this in a way in which professional boundaries are maintained, through visible, transparent and appropriate actions.

If staff become aware of a safeguarding incident, disclosure or concern whilst on an EV, they must follow the Safeguarding Policy and report it to the Assistant Head (DSL). If the student in question is at **immediate** risk of harm, the DSL will make an immediate referral to social services or the police.

The Safeguarding Policy must be referred to and followed, and incidents, concerns or disclosures must be recorded, maintaining confidentiality whilst prioritising the safety of the student(s) concerned.

When using external providers, clear handovers between provider and SJC staff should take place so it is evident to all who is responsible for the students at any point. Where reasonably practicable, visit staff should not leave students in the care of provider staff unobserved and monitored by SJC staff (unless in an emergency when that is necessary to preserve life or prevent an injured student's condition from worsening). A Provider's safeguarding arrangements should be reviewed prior to the visit and questions raised, if necessary, by the Visit Leader. In the event of a potential safeguarding breach by provider staff (and after the immediate safeguarding of students has been secured), this should be raised immediately by the SJC staff on site with the provider's management. Thereafter the liaison should be made between the Assistant Head (DSL) and the Provider's own DSL.

Further guidance can be found in the School Safeguarding Children Policy and the Keeping Children safe in Education statutory guidance from the Department for Education.

8. Risk Mangement

St John's College supports the notion that risk assessments for EV's should not make the activity as safe as possible but as safe as it needs to be to maximise the learning outcomes whilst keeping an acceptable level of residual risk.

Visit Leaders who are in doubt about the risk of an activity should consult with the EVC. The EVC is empowered to make decisions on the balance of benefit and risk. Where the EVC is unsure he/she can consult the Headteacher, Director of Estates and seek advice from Thomas Carroll, the appointed advisory organisation on all Health and Safety matters at SJC.

8.1 Risk Assessments

In order for an EV to be approved to go ahead, a written, suitable and sufficient risk assessment must be submitted by the Visit Leader. An exemplar risk assessment is automatically generated for each trip during the application process. This is to be used as a starting point for Trip Leaders. It is imperative that the Visit Leader takes ownership of this generic risk assessment by making it relevant to their particular EV. This means they should take into account not only the activities being undertaken, but any specific needs of individuals on the trip.

The template risk assessment should be personalised and returned to the EVC / School Administrator (Trips and Visits) at least two weeks prior to departure of any trip. It is essential that Visit Leaders use this template so that risk assessments are standardised across SJC. In order to be a useful, compliant document, the risk assessment should contain evidence of the knowledge of possible risks and ways to manage, avoid or mitigate them.

8.2 Risk assessing pupils with SEN, disability or medical needs

Every effort should be made to include pupils with particular additional needs where possible, in accordance with SJC's SEND Policy. Risk assessments should consider:

- any additional aids or equipment that are needed;
- any additional staff requirements – e.g. higher staff : pupil ratios (see SJC SEND policies);
- parking/access requirements for pupils with blue badge mobility issues (consider bringing the blue badge and letting venues know in advance, which may allow parking closer to the entrance);
- PEEPS (Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans) and evacuation arrangements.

8.3 Dynamic Risk Assessments

Dynamic risk assessments should be carried out by EV staff continuously. These will not usually be written at the time, but any significant changes made to the risk assessment as a whole or the control measures, or any additional hazards seen or anticipated should be recorded, e.g. they can be handwritten onto the risk assessment and documented in the evaluation form. This should then be made available by the EVC for the benefit of future visit staff.

8.4 Coronavirus and other localised or seasonal risks

The covid-19 pandemic caused a huge amount of disruption to schools, businesses, families and individuals. For as long as the virus continues to be a problem, Visit Leaders must consider it, and any restrictions, guidance and associated risks surrounding it when planning their EVs. Should any other major infectious illnesses cause similar disruption before the revision date of this policy, they should be considered in a similar way.

When starting to plan an EV, bearing Covid 19 in mind, a Visit Leader must:

- check the UK government's guidance and ensure that the EV is planned in line with this;
- be aware that the UK government's guidance may change at very short notice thus keep themselves abreast of any such changes;
- as with any EV, consider the risk : benefit analysis;
- be aware that guidance can differ in devolved areas of the UK so restrictions and rules in Wales are likely to be different to restrictions and rules in England;
- if planning an overseas EV, consider not just the restrictions for the countries being visited but also any countries being transferred through as well as restrictions in place for returning to the UK. Note, these may in turn be different for different passport holders and ages. Restrictions may relate to vaccine status, testing before departure and for reentry to the UK and passenger locator forms. The [FCDO website](#) provides the definitive guidance regarding travel regulations;
- refer to the SJC Covid-19 Risk Assessment for further guidance about how to manage EVs in a way that addresses the risks presented by the virus;
- ensure that SJC insurance is in place and be aware of any covid-related inclusions, exceptions or limitations;
- ensure that a contingency plan is in place to consider cancellations, staff illness/self-isolation and potential virus outbreaks.

9. Inclusion

St John's College supports the inclusion of all pupils on EVs wherever possible. In accordance with the Equality Act 2010, it is against the law to discriminate against someone based on any of the protected characteristics, thus Visit Leaders must make reasonable adjustments, if required, to include would-be participants who have a disability or present with other protected characteristics. The risk assessment can include such enabling measures.

The Visit Leader must ensure that practical measures are in place to include pupils with special educational needs or medical conditions where reasonable and practical. They should have, where possible, the same learning opportunities as the others in the group. The SENCO should determine what ratio of supervision the pupil will need for the visit and liaise with the EVC.

Refer to generic SJC policies and OEAP National Guidance for further information.

10. Behaviour

10.1 Pupil Code of Conduct

The St John's College Behaviour Policy must be complied with by pupils and staff. All pupils participating in an adventurous activity, overnight or overseas visit should complete a written Code of Conduct. This should be signed by both the parents and pupils. It is the Visit Leaders responsibility to ensure that this has been carried out for each individual trip.

10.2.1 - Alcohol

St John's College does not allow pupils to consume any alcohol on EVs.

10.2.2 - Smoking

St John's College does not allow smoking of any tobacco products on EVs, including e-cigarettes.

10.2.3 - Drugs

The possession or use of any drug, other than legal over-the-counter medicines or medically prescribed drugs (pre-advice of which should be given to the staff in charge of the activity), is totally banned and any deviation from this rule will have severe consequences.

10.2.4 - Sexual Activities

St John's College does not allow pupils to participate in sexual activities whilst on EVs. Staff should be aware of any existing or developing pupil relationships and ensure that pupils conduct themselves in accordance with this rule.

Any breach of the above guidelines will be treated with the utmost seriousness and may result in any or all of the following sanctions:

- the pupil being sent home immediately at their parent's expense;
- the pupil being banned from all future trips;
- an exclusion.

11. Staff Code Of Conduct

St John's College has a formal Code of Conduct which must be complied with.

It is the expectation that all adults acting in *loco parentis* on any school trip will be mindful of responsible and proper behaviour, so that they are able to exercise their professional judgement at all times.

Members of staff may wish to consume alcohol during an off-site visit, provided this is within the UK drink-driving limit. Drinking alcohol above this amount is unacceptable on an EV and may lead to disciplinary proceedings. At all times, there must be at least one (or two) member(s) of staff not drinking any alcohol. However, if it is the decision of the Visit Leader or the Headteacher, that a total ban on alcohol is appropriate then this will be the case.

Although staff have a 24-hour responsibility for pupil welfare on a residential visit, they cannot all be on duty for 24 hours. The duty roster which the Visit Leader creates must be adhered to. All staff must ensure that they are on duty at the times set down and have the necessary information about the group and the events at that time, which should include emergency contact and medical information. This person cannot drink alcohol during that duty period.

The Visit Leader must ensure that all staff are reminded of these expectations whilst on a visit.

12. Monitoring and Compliance

12.1 Quality Assurance and Oversight

As part of the EV application process, the EVC and School Administrator (Trips and Visits) will work together to monitor the effectiveness of processes and compliance, in line with this policy.

The EVC will produce a brief annual report, to be shared with SJC staff at a designated annual INSET day. This will be an opportunity to share procedural updates, celebrate successes and highlight policy breaches or causes of concern.

12.2 Legal compliance and raising concerns

All members of staff should be concerned about any serious and immediate risk, and also about any systemic shortcomings. If concerns cannot be settled amongst the staff leading the activity, all staff will be expected to stop the activity and refer the matter to the emergency SLT contact.

St John's College recognises the right of members of staff to refuse to participate in an activity which they consider unsafe. In such cases an alternative arrangement can be made with consent from the SLT.

13. Data Protection and GDPR

All members of staff should be aware of and compliant with SJC's GDPR policy and should manage visit data in accordance with SJC guidelines. This may include Visit Leaders ensuring that other providers being used, e.g. activity providers, flight carriers, venues etc are collecting, storing and using personal data, when required, appropriately.

The Headteacher remains the Data Controller for any visit-related data and will ensure that any data-processing third parties are assessed and approved, and that consent is correctly gained.

14. Emergency procedures and incident reporting

14.1 Emergency Procedures

It is good practice for Visit Leaders to consider, in advance, an 'emergency plan' for their visit.

The following factors should be considered:

- visit Leaders should have access to the EVC, Director of Estates, Assistant Head (DSL) or Headteacher for the duration of the visit;
- this 'home contact' should have access to the EV trip pack;
- visit Leaders should ensure that they have access to iSAMS and next of kin emergency contact details for every student and member of staff on the visit;
- in the event of a critical incident or emergency taking place on an EV, the school communications process should be followed. The Headteacher should be informed immediately, through the 'home contact', or directly by the Visit Leader, keeping the home contact informed;
- the Headteacher should then decide if a critical incident response needs to be activated and a team of suitable SLT colleagues assembled to respond.

The process for managing critical incidents on Educational Visits is also listed in the St John's College Critical Incident Policy.

14.2 Reporting

Visit Leaders have a duty of care to keep an accurate record of any incidents which occur during EV's. This includes a detailed description of any behavioural incidents as well as a thorough account of any medical issues which arise.

A separate incident log should be created for each EV (overnight and overseas), with the expectation that Visit Leaders will update this report as often as is practicable, but as an absolute minimum, this should be done daily.

This incident log is to be shared with the EVC and SLT. It should include a detailed description of the incident as well as the actions undertaken. From a medical point of view, this log should record the administration of all medicinal drugs and any trips to medical professionals.

This log should state whether or not parents have been informed of any incidents.

It is important to note that this log should not replace the requirement to contact the Headteacher or DSL in an emergency.

14.3 After the Trip

The trip leader must inform the EVC (or whoever has been delegated as the school contact) that the party has returned safely and ensure that all the students are safely collected from school by a responsible adult, such as a parent or guardian.

It is the responsibility of the Visit Leader, in loco parentis, to ensure that all students are collected by the designated contact and not left unattended, awaiting collection.

Visit Leaders are expected to conduct a thorough review of the EV and provide feedback to the EV and School Administrator (Trips and Visits) upon return. This will allow the suitability of the venue, activity, tour operator, activity provider etc to be assessed for future trips and visits.