



APPLEFORD SCHOOL

LEARNING OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM (LOtC)

EDUCATIONAL VISITS, SCHOOL JOURNEYS AND OFF-SITE ACTIVITIES POLICY

This policy applies to the whole school, including boarding, activities outside of the normal school hours, all staff (teaching and support staff), the Proprietor and volunteers working in the school

The Policy is publicly available on the school website and upon request a copy (which can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required) may be obtained from the School Office.

All who work, volunteer or supply services to our school have an equal responsibility to understand and implement this policy and its procedures both within and outside of normal school hours including activities away from school. This policy also takes into consideration the National Minimum Standard (NMS) for residential special schools (RSS).

We have a whole school approach to safeguarding, which is the golden thread that runs throughout every aspect of the school. All our school policies support our approach to safeguarding (child protection). Our fundamental priority is our children and their wellbeing; this is first and foremost.

In our school the term 'staff', in the context of safeguarding, is inclusive of all staff and is also inclusive of pupils on placement, contractors, agency staff, volunteers and proprietor.

Legal Status:

- The school complies with the Regulatory Requirements, Part 3, Paragraph 12 of the Education (Independent School Standards (England) (Amendment) Regulations currently in force.
- Health and Safety on Educational Visits (DfE: July 2018)
- The school has regard to guidance and advice from the Outdoor Education Advisers Panel (OEAP)

Monitoring and Review:

- This policy will be subject to continuous monitoring, refinement and audit by the Headmaster
- The Headmaster and Proprietor undertake a formal annual review of this policy for the purpose of monitoring and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged, by no later than one year from the date shown below, or earlier if significant changes to the systems and arrangements take place, or if legislation, regulatory requirements or best practice guidelines so require.

Policy Agreed: September 2025

Date Published (included on website): September 2025

Next Review: September 2026

Signed:

Dr Peter Gardner
Proprietor and Managing Director

Mr David King
Headmaster and Non-Executive Director

Scope and Remit: The National Guidance (NG) document **"Basic Essentials MUST Read - Status and Remit"** clarifies the range of employees whose work requires them to use the guidance. It applies to employees whose work involves any one of the following:

- direct supervision of young people undertaking experiences beyond the boundary of their normal operational base;
- direct supervision of young people undertaking experiences that fall within the remit of educational visits and learning outside the classroom;
- facilitating experiences for young people undertaking experiences beyond the boundary of their normal operational base;

- deploying staff who will supervise or facilitate experiences of or for young people undertaking experiences beyond the boundary of their normal operational base

This applies regardless of whether the activities take place within or outside of normal working hours, including weekends and holiday periods. For a more expansive explanation of legal expectations, all users of the guidance are strongly recommended to read the NG document: **“Underpinning Legal Framework”**

We encourage teachers to undertake educationally valuable visits to sites within the United Kingdom and overseas, providing these do not unduly hinder the normal operation of the school and that the Health and Safety and welfare of pupils is paramount at all times. Before the school decides to arrange an educational visit, we consider educational objectives and how they are to be achieved.

‘Well-managed school trips and outdoor activities are great for pupils. Pupils won’t learn about risk if they are wrapped up in cotton wool.’

In striking the right balance between protecting pupils from risk and allowing them to learn from educational visits we:

- provide learning opportunities for all our pupils.
- focus on real risks when planning educational visits and manage these risks during the off-site activities;
- ensure those running the activity understand their roles, are supported and are competent to lead or take part.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that trips are planned in an organised and responsible fashion and that the health, safety, and welfare of pupils and staff are maintained. We ensure that Appleford School fulfils its responsibilities for visits, including pupils’ behaviour. Integral to this process Appleford:

- plans visit to include risk assessments and first aid;
- ensures appropriate supervision.
- prepares pupils for visits including those with special and medical needs.
- communicates with parents.
- plans transport.
- has insurance in place.
- makes appropriate arrangements for the range and types of visit.
- has clear procedures with reference to visits abroad; and
- has emergency procedures, including contact details and permission for emergency medical treatment if a parent cannot be contacted.

The school ensures that we follow both DfE and Health and Safety at Work guidance and regulations (including those issued by Wiltshire Local Authority) along with the school policy concerning activities that take place off school premises. Additionally, the school has developed an *Educational Visits guidance notes* which complies with best practice guidelines and is also able to draw on specialist advice from ‘The Educational Partnership’.

The work of staff in taking pupils out on visits is immensely valuable and we must strike a balance between supporting such work and safeguarding the delivery of the timetabled curriculum.

Category A: Offsite Visits within the local Community

This category includes any visits for which there is an element of risk similar to that encountered in daily life. It includes visits to sports complexes, sports fixtures, theatre visits, local field study work and visits to other local sites of educational interest.

Category B: Outdoor and Adventurous Activities within the local Area

These are activities that have a perceived extended risk to include such things as sailing, canoeing/kayaking including activities at commercial and not for profit activity centres. Leaders are expected to provide a site/ group specific risk assessment for the activity. Where the Party Leader does not possess the approved NGB qualification but is visiting an authorised centre where the instructors are fully qualified, ensure all insurance and Health and Safety requirements are fully operational.

Category C: All foreign Visits or Visits outside of the immediate geographical Area

For all activities in this category, the relevant forms must be completed, together with the visit risk assessment. Where there are any 'adventurous activities' planned, prior consultation must take place with Appleford before financial arrangements are entered into and the relevant paperwork must be completed and lodged with the headmaster.

What our staff should expect from Appleford School: *'Teachers should expect their schools to have procedures that encourage participation, are proportionate to the level of risk.'* Our school ensures that the precautions proposed are proportionate to the risks involved, and that our paperwork is easy to use. We also take account of assessments and procedures of any other organisations involved and ensure that communications with others are clear. Our arrangements also ensure that:

- risk assessment focuses attentions on real risks – not risks that are trivial and fanciful.
- proportionate systems are in place – so that trips presenting lower-risk activities are quick and easy to organise, and higher-risk activities (such as those involving climbing, caving or water-based activities) are properly planned and assessed;
- those planning the trips are properly supported – so that staff can readily check if they have taken sufficient precautions or whether they should do more.
- Staff are given the training they need to keep themselves and pupils safe and manage the risks effectively.

Approval: The headmaster's approval must be sought before any bookings, letters or deposits are made. This should be done using the 'Outline Permission to plan an Out of School Visit' and passing this to the relevant Head of Department. The Head of Department will then seek the headmaster's approval. Only the Headmaster, acting on behalf of the Proprietor, can approve the organisation of such activities. All school trips have a named leader. The competence of the visit leader is the key component in ensuring the safety of the participants. Assessment, training and support of visit leaders is a priority Head of Department. Sport fixtures and trips as part of the weekday activities programme are approved by the relevant Head of Department.

What our school, pupils and parents should expect from the staff

'Those running school trips need to focus on the risks and the benefits to people – not the paperwork.'

Our staff running school trips should clearly communicate information about the planned activities to colleagues and pupils (and parents where appropriate). We explain what the precautions are and why they are necessary. Those running school trips act responsibly by:

- putting sensible precautions in place, and making sure they work in practice.
- knowing when and how to apply contingency plans where they are necessary.
- heeding advice and warnings from others, for example those with local knowledge or specialist expertise (especially in respect of higher-risk activities).

Training: The Headmaster ensures that staff are given the health and safety training they need for their job. This certainly doesn't mean that all employees must attend a training course. It may simply mean providing them with basic instructions or information about health and safety in the school. Staff who undertake work that involves a greater element of risk, such as using woodworking machines, will need more training. There is more information available at <http://www.hse.gov.uk/simple-health-safety/provide.htm>

Communications to Parents: The group leader will ensure that parents/guardians are fully informed in writing about the trip or visit well in advance. This should include proposals for alternative activities in case, for example, adverse weather conditions prevent the intended activity from taking place. Reasonable adjustments will be made for disabled pupils. Where appropriate (particularly in the case of any overseas or residential trips) parents/guardians and pupils will be invited to the school to discuss details with the trip organisers. Care will be taken to ensure that those accompanying the trip are fully informed about the special or medical needs of any pupils participating. Consent forms for emergency medical treatment and emergency contact numbers will be provided for overseas and residential trips. For all day trips medical details will be obtained from the school database. Trip organisers will ensure that all pupils involved in the excursion have been properly prepared and briefed. The group leader will also tell parents how they can help prepare their son/daughter for the visit by, for example reinforcing the school's and visit's code of conduct, or by understanding the clothing and footwear that will be required and by ensuring that this is provided.

As part of the information provided to parents about trips and off-site activities communication will be produced with the following details:

- dates.
- times of departure and return.
- method of travel (if appropriate)
- destination with full address and telephone number.
- the name of group leader.
- the aim and purpose of the visit, the activities planned, any hazardous or adventurous activity clearly specified • the nature of supervision.
- any extra costs.

Equal Opportunities and Inclusion: We are an inclusive school. The challenge is to make activities available and accessible to all who wish to participate or are required to take part. This is to be achieved whilst maintaining the safety of all those concerned, the integrity of the activity and the ability to manage the visit or venture. Appleford recognises that there are significant factors to be managed that may override other considerations.

Duties and Responsibilities of the Proprietor (Employer): Under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 2015, the employer in a school must take reasonable steps to ensure that staff and pupils are not exposed to risks to their health and safety. This applies to activities on or off school premises. Regulations made under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 2015 set out in more detail what actions employers are required to take.

For example:

- assess the risks to staff and others affected by school activities to identify the health and safety measures that are necessary and, in certain circumstances, keep a record of the significant findings of that assessment.
- introduce measures to manage those risks (risk management).
- tell their employees about the risks and measures to be taken to manage the risks
- ensure that adequate training is given to employees on health and safety matters.

Our School sets out health and safety arrangements in a written health and safety policy.

Responsibilities of the Headmaster: This is the key role for ensuring that the management of visits and ventures meets the regulations and guidance offered by the Local Authority (LA), Department for Education (DfE) and others, as well as conforming to The Appleford School Health and Safety policy. This management process is in conjunction with the expectations and standards that are to be achieved by making the most of the positive learning opportunities presented. Our delegation of responsibilities is done with a clear rationale, derived from a good knowledge of the people concerned; the visits and activities; the aims and objectives; and the risk assessments they require.

The headmaster must be made aware of all off-site visits. It is for the headmaster to arrange for the most appropriate method of the communication for this. It is also the responsibility of the headmaster to ensure that:

- the off-site activity or visit is appropriate and relevant.
- the establishment can be run efficiently in the absence of staff engaged in the activity or visit.

Duty as an employee

The law requires employees to:

- take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by what they do at work.
- co-operate with their employers on health and safety matters.
- do their work in accordance with training and instructions and
- inform the employer of any work situation representing a serious and immediate danger, so that remedial action can be taken.

In addition, all staff at Appleford School have a common law duty to act as any prudent parent would do when in charge of pupils. Employees should follow any health and safety procedures put in place by their employer. However, if they feel that the procedure is inappropriate (e.g. it is too bureaucratic) they should discuss this with their employer and request that it is reviewed. The headmaster will ensure that the procedures at Appleford School are proportionate, effective and appropriate.

Our teachers on school-led visits act as employees of the Proprietor, whether the visit takes place within normal working hours or outside those hours, by agreement with the Head. Our teachers will do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group and act as any prudent and reasonable parent would do in the same circumstances.

They will:

- follow the instructions of the Group Leader and help with control and discipline.
- consider stopping the visit or the activity, notifying the Group Leader, if they think the risk to the health or safety of the pupils in their charge is unacceptable:
- be aware of potential conflicts of interest if their own pupils are members of the group and discuss beforehand with the Group Leader.

Staff / Pupil Ratios: The ratio of school children to adults varies according to the age of the children, the nature of the activity and the special educational needs. The school will err to the side of caution on this matter. There are no circumstances under which the staffing ratios are less generous than those to be found in school. With young children, and those with special needs, it may be necessary to have a one-to-one staffing ratio. Staffing ratios will be established through appropriate risk assessment.

Volunteers and other responsible Adults: Parents may be used as a supplement to the staff but will not be considered in the calculation of the minimum number of staff required to supervise the group as set out above. Parents or other responsible adults will only be allowed to accompany a residential educational visit if Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks have been made. Parents, other voluntary staff or helpers including non-teaching staff must be fully aware of the visit risk assessment, itinerary, special instructions, emergency procedures and any other relevant information, along with their role, duties and responsibilities.

Non-school employed adults acting as supervisors must:

- follow the instructions of the Group Leader and employed staff and help with control and discipline.
- speak to the Group Leader or employed staff if concerned about the health or safety of young people at any time during the visit.
- never be in sole charge of the young persons or remote from the support of the Group Leader or other supervisors.

The Group Leader: The Group Leader, who is the person with overall responsibility for the administration, programme, supervision and conduct of the venture, is an important part of the health and safety and good practice support system. Our Group Leaders should demonstrate the ability to undertake a comprehensive review of the needs of the venture and be able to risk assess the locations, groups travelling and leader competencies, to put good risk management procedures in place, that they can monitor and use. Relevant experience is essential along with accepting the need to:

- agree specific roles, responsibilities and communications systems.
- agree incident and emergency procedures, the who, where and what of such situations.
- agree what will happen if the practicalities of the day require a major adaptation of the programme (ongoing risk assessment) and
- have high expectations of what the pupils, young people and the venture can achieve.
- be accountable for individual pupils who are not under visual supervision.
- to know the identity, whereabouts and expected time and place of return of the pupils.

All educational visits off the premises should be proposed to the Head of Department in a timely manner so that they can be discussed with relevant staff. Best practice should see educational visits proposed one year in advance so that they are seen as planned parts of the curriculum or extra-curricular programme and can be entered into the annual calendar distributed to parents and staff and published on the school's website. Staff will be given the opportunity to raise concerns about an educational visit if it is proposed less than one term in advance and is likely to impact on effective curriculum delivery.

It is the group leader's responsibility to ensure that all accompanying adults have a full trips pack. Group leaders and accompanying staff must always carry these with them. The trip packs should include:

- who is in their group
- mobile phone
- who is travelling in each vehicle

- mobile device (possibly a school provided mobile)
- the name and telephone number of the contact person/s who can be contacted in an emergency
- Full details of pupils' names, telephone numbers and any medical issues
- For overseas visits, a copy of all pupil and staff passports and insurance documentation should be taken prior to departure and kept with the Group leader during the visit.

Senior Leadership Team (SLT): The SLT have responsibility (with the headmaster) within our school for the approval of visits and will ensure that all necessary actions have been completed before the visit begins. This includes, where appropriate, that a pre-trip visit has taken place, risk assessments and appropriate safety measures are in place, suitably competent instruction is available for the activity, the ratio of supervisors to pupils is appropriate and that arrangements have been made for the medical needs and special educational needs of the pupils. It is good practice for our members of staff leading a group to visit the site beforehand to gain first-hand knowledge of the area and route. This knowledge will then inform the risk assessment and preplanning.

The SLT functions include

- being involved in educational visits management to ensure that the guidance and regulations are followed.
- working with group leaders to ensure that the aims of the educational visit are achievable and in line with those of the establishment.
- appointing a suitable group leader for each visit to confirm that the leadership of the visit is appropriate and to check staff qualifications, this includes accompanying staff and volunteers;
- to recommend and organise training of group leaders and help organise the induction of staff new to the venture and volunteers;
- to ensure that the establishment's management of behaviour and other relevant policies can be transferred off site successfully and are consistently used; and
- ensuring all necessary actions have been completed before the visit begins;
- the risk assessment is complete and that it is safe to make the visit;
- the group leader has experience in supervising and controlling the age groups going on the visit and will organise the group effectively;
- the group leader has relevant skills, qualifications and experience if acting as an instructor, and knows the location of the activity;
- all supervisors on the visit are appropriate people to supervise children and have appropriate clearance;
- parents have signed consent forms;
- liaising with the medical staff regarding any health conditions and with the Head of Boarding. Liaising with the Pastoral Care and Head of Learning Support regarding any additional medical, special educational needs and pastoral matters which staff need to be aware of.
- the mode of travel is appropriate;
- travel times out and back are known;
- there is adequate and relevant insurance cover;
- they have the address and phone number of the visit's venue and have a contact name where possible;
- that they have the names of all the adults and pupils in the travelling group, and hard copy of the contact details of parents and the staff and volunteers' next of kin.

Responsibilities of Pupils: The Group Leader will make it clear to pupils and it must be understood by pupils that they must:

- not take unnecessary risks;
- follow the instructions of the Group Leader and other supervisors including those at the venue of the visit;
- dress and behave sensibly and responsibly, using safety equipment as instructed;
- be sensitive to local codes and customs;
- look out for anything that might hurt or threaten themselves or anyone in the group and tell the Group Leader or supervisor about it.

Any pupils whose behaviour may be a danger to themselves or to the group may be stopped from going on the visit. Reasonable adjustments will be made for disabled pupils. The standard of behaviour expected will be no different from behaviour expected within

school. It may be necessary to have individual behaviour contracts with some young people, signed by themselves. Everyone should be as risk aware as is realistic.

Parental Consent to off-site Activities: Written consent is usually only requested for activities that need a higher level of risk management or those that take place outside school hours. We have adapted the DfE “one-off” consent form that we ask parents to sign. This will cover a pupil’s participation in any of these types of activities throughout the school year, like adventure activities, offsite sporting fixtures outside the school day, residential visits and all off-site activities which can also take place during school holidays or at the weekend.

For residential and overseas visits the educational visit information, medical consent and declaration will be provided by parents or guardians.

Our parents are informed in advance of each activity and must be given the opportunity to withdraw their child from any school trip or activity. Parents contribute to the success of the visit by:

- understanding the objectives of the visit;
- giving written consent to all emergency and other medical or dental treatment necessary for the safety and well-being of the pupil; for all residential or overseas trips
- giving clear information where relevant on their son/daughter's ability or inability to swim;
- providing clear information on their son/daughter's health and any special needs;
- giving permission for medical attention or medication if required; and
- ensuring that there are clear contact arrangements.

Insurance: The employer has, as required by law, appropriate insurance in place. Under the school's insurance, cover is as follows: Employer's liability covers the legal liability to all employees, for each occurrence. Public liability covers claims for injury to pupils and third parties, including those on school organised trips. Full insurance information is available, on request, from the school. The school holds public liability insurance, which will indemnify the school against all claims for compensation for bodily injury from persons not in its employ, as well as for the accidental loss of, or damage caused to, third party property where the school is deemed to have been negligent. Employees (as agents of the employer) are indemnified against all such claims, as are voluntary helpers acting under the direction of the employer’s staff if they commit a negligent act. The indemnity includes activities such as off-site activities and outside visits organised by all departments for which the school may be considered responsible.

Transport: We only hire taxis, minibuses and coaches that are approved by the relevant authorities, where drivers are DBS checked and each seat has either a seatbelt or a booster seat as is applicable. In advance of the trip, pupils will be given clear safety instructions based on the risks associated with the travel. Pupils must sit only two to a double seat. Seat belts must be worn and where appropriate, booster car seats should be used. All drivers of a school minibus must have undertaken an appropriate training course. In cases of long journeys, pupils will be given the opportunity to exercise after reasonable intervals. The recommendation is 15 minutes every two hours. First-aid material must be carried and be readily available throughout the visit.

Drivers: Those authorised to drive any pupils in the party should normally:

- be at least of the minimum age required by our insurance company
- have a minimum of two years’ driving experience.
- hold a current driving licence valid in the country of use; and
- never have been disqualified.

Each driver must be personally satisfied that:

- the driver is covered by insurance in respect of liability to passengers and others.
- the driver has made all necessary disclosures of material facts to the insurers, for example any problems relating to health.
- the vehicle is roadworthy.
- the driver has not consumed alcoholic liquor within twelve hours before or while in charge of the vehicle.
- the driver carries evidence of insurance.

Criteria for Selecting Tour Operators: Our Group Leader requires a copy of the tour operator's safety management system. The safety management system must define how the tour operator manages safety for the component parts of the visit and show how they are diligent in checking the safety of hotels and transport. The tour operator must provide details of independent checks made by appropriate external organisations on their safety management system along with certificates of bonding the company to registered bodies, list of staff in charge of our pupils showing qualifications and competences, motor insurance, legal and public liability insurance. All documents are to be made available to the school.

It is the school's policy to travel only with a company or use an activity centre that has an external verified management system. It is likely that supervision will be by a combination of teachers, support staff and parents. The staffing ratio will vary according to:

- the activity concerned.
- pupils' age and sex.
- Location.
- efficient use of resources.

There will be sufficient adults in the group to cover an emergency.

Preliminary Visits and Provider Assurances: All visits should be thoroughly researched to establish the suitability of the venue and to check that facilities and third-party provision will meet group expectations. Such information gathering is essential in assessing the requirements for effective supervision of young people. It is a vital dimension of risk management.

Wherever reasonably practicable, it is good practice to carry out a preliminary visit. The Group Leader will advise on this in each specific case. A pre-visit is usually required for visits where there is a high complexity factor and the visit has not happened previously, or when the visit is adventurous and led by staff. Residentials, visits abroad, exchange visits, adventure led by school staff all have aspects of complexity. If the visit is led and managed by a provider, then a variety of approaches can reduce the need to pre-visit. It is good practice for group leaders to take full advantage of the nationally accredited, provider assurance schemes that are now available, thus reducing bureaucracy. Examples of such schemes include:

- [The LOTC Quality Badge](#)
- [AALS licensing](#)
- [Adventuremark](#)
- [School travel forum](#)

Responsibilities and the Health and Safety at Work Legislation

Legislation is enforced by the Health and Safety Executive, which has set out to clarify the position in its Health and Safety: Responsibilities and Powers (2001) document. Overall responsibility is with the Proprietor to ensure the health and safety of:

- teachers, non-teaching staff and other leaders.
- pupils and young people, both in their establishments and when undertaking off-site visits and ventures.
- visitors to the educational establishments and volunteers involved in approved activity.

What does it mean to assess and manage risk?

Health and Safety law often refers to risk assessment and risk management. These are terms used to describe the process of thinking about the risks of any activities and taking steps to counter them. A written assessment is not required for every activity. Our teachers should assume they only need to carry out a written risk assessment in exceptional circumstances. Where a risk assessment is carried out, the Proprietor must record the significant findings of the assessment.

Some activities, especially those happening away from school such as mountaineering, canoeing sailing, involve higher levels of risk. In these cases, an assessment of significant risks should be carried out. The headmaster ensures that the person assessing the risks understands the risks and is familiar with the activity that is planned.

Appleford School will always take a commonsense and proportionate approach, remembering that in schools the purpose of risk assessment and management is to help pupils to undertake activities safely, not to prevent activities from taking place. We cannot remove risk altogether and we do not require needless or unhelpful paperwork.

We believe that every child in every school should have access to a comprehensive programme of high-quality outdoor learning, educational visits and adventurous activities as an integral part of their school curriculum. However, the threat from terrorism is significant. To provide some perspective: the UK government identifies five levels of threat from 'low' to 'critical'. Since 2006, when this level was first published, it has never been below 'substantial' – the middle level. Like all risks this is kept in perspective and managed in a proportionate way. By understanding the threat faced, and the ways it can be mitigated, our staff ensure everyone is kept safe. Appleford School adheres to the following guidance which allows our staff to be vigilant and reduce vulnerability of pupils whilst carrying on as normally as possible.

Reducing the Risk from Terrorism During a Visit: When planning any visit, staff consider the likelihood of a terrorist attack and will:

- be aware of the latest news relating to their destination.
- know the [current threat level](#) in the UK and when travelling overseas, check the [UK government's foreign travel advice](#) in the early stages of visit planning, at regular intervals, and immediately prior to leaving;
- consider the threat of terrorism as part of visit risk management and include it within visit emergency plans (see OEAP National Guidance document [4.1c "Emergencies and Critical Incidents – Guidance for Leaders"](#));
- know what to do in the event of a terrorist attack, including specific situations such as marauding terrorist attacks or incidents involving hazardous substances (guidance is available at www.protectuk.police.uk/resources/57);
- provide training in what to do in the event of a terrorist attack for the visit leaders and participants, appropriate to the nature of the visit and the group (training resources for schools and youth organisations are available at www.protectuk.police.uk/resources/57).

Risk Assessments: Risk assessment and risk management are legal requirements. For educational visits, they involve the careful examination of what could cause harm during the visit and whether enough precautions have been taken or whether more should be done. The aim is to make sure no one gets hurt or becomes ill. The control measures should be understood by those involved. Risk assessments should explicitly cover how special educational needs and medical needs are to be addressed. The programme of a visit should include details of contingency measures. The Group Leader in consultation with the Health and Safety Officer assesses potential risks of a proposed visit and concludes the necessary safety measures that need to be put in place to minimise these risks. Risk assessment/s will be drawn up before the activity, if relevant adapted from a generic model, agreed with the Health and Safety Adviser/Headmaster and signed off by the Health and Safety Adviser/Headmaster and copies given to all staff involved.

Health and Safety law often refers to risk assessment and risk management. These are terms used to describe the process of thinking about the risks of any activities and taking steps to counter them. A written assessment is not required for every activity, but only in exceptional circumstances. Some activities, especially those happening away from school such as mountaineering, canoeing and sailing, involve higher levels of risk. In these cases, an assessment of significant risks should be carried out. Our Headmaster ensures that the person assessing the risks understands the risks and is familiar with the activity that is planned. However, a risk assessment is not needed every time our school takes pupils to a local venue such as a swimming pool, parks or museums.

Risk assessment for educational visits can be usefully considered as having three levels:

- **generic activity risk assessments**, which are likely to apply to the activity wherever and whenever it takes place.
- **visit/site specific risk assessments** which will differ from place to place and group to group.
- **ongoing risk assessments** that take account of, for example, illness of staff or pupils, changes of weather, availability of preferred activity.

The risk assessment should take into account the type of visit, location, means of transport, number of pupils, staff ratios required, competence and first aid experience of participating staff, required level of first aid equipment, age of pupils, possible weather conditions, participation of pupils with particular medical requirements, emergency procedures in the case of a pupil requiring medical treatment, insurance for the visit, appropriateness, insurance cover of any external providers and operators involved in transport – ensuring that all transport providers have the required Public Service Vehicle operators' licence. Where appropriate a pre-visit will be undertaken to enable the Group Leader to identify any potential hazards. Issues identified by exploratory visits must be satisfactorily resolved within the risk assessment.

The following questions need to be addressed: What are the hazards? Who is affected by any hazards? What safety measures do you need to take to reduce risks to an acceptable level? Can you put measures in place to reduce risks to appropriate levels? What steps do you need to take in an emergency? Have you ensured that all teachers/helpers involved with the visit have been given a copy of the Risk Assessment document?

When assessing risks, have you considered: The type of activities and the level of expertise required; the location, routes and transport requirements; the competence, experience and qualifications of the supervisors; the ratio of teachers and supervisors to pupils; the ages, competence and fitness levels of the pupils involved; the medical, emotional and educational needs of the pupils; the quality of the equipment; emergency procedures; the ongoing monitoring of the risks of the activity.

Exploratory visit: This is to be undertaken if the venue is not familiar to ensure it is suitable in all respects; Contact other schools who have used the venue to get feedback and identify any risks they have found; Get advice from the centre or location manager to identify any possible risks and the levels of those risks; Ensure that the venue can appropriately cater for the needs of the group.

Other considerations: What equipment needs to be taken on the trip? Is staff training necessary for the activity in question? Who is the designated person to record details of the trip in progress and take responsibility for accident forms and procedures? Is the First Aid box fully equipped with the materials required for the trip?

Preparation for a trip or activity: Pupils should, as far as possible, be involved in the planning of the activity, undertake appropriate roles whilst it is in progress and be involved in identifying Health and Safety issues that may arise. They should know the expectations of the Leader and have a full understanding of the parameters covering all aspects of the trip or activity. Pupils should be given a check list of what to do in various situations and should be given the school mobile number of the Leader so that contact can be made should the need arise over transport issues or in the case of an incident.

Vetting and DBS Checks

- all employees who work *frequently* or *intensively* with or have *regular access* to young people or vulnerable adults, must undergo an enhanced DBS check as part of their recruitment process.
- For the purposes of this guidance:
- *frequently* is defined as 'once a week or more'.
- *intensively* is defined as 4 days or more in a month or overnight.

However, it must be clearly understood that a DBS check (or other vetting procedure) in itself, is no guarantee as to the suitability of an adult to work with any given group of young or vulnerable people. The placement of an adult within a situation of professional trust (where young people could be vulnerable to physical or mental exploitation or grooming) should always be on the understanding that an overview based on a common-sense risk-benefit assessment process has been considered.

In the case of an emergency: assess the situation; safeguard all pupils; attend to any casualties; contact the Emergency services; ensure everyone knows who is in charge; alert the school contact.

The school emergency contact will:

- ensure the trip leader or designated person is fully in control.
- contact the parents.
- inform the headmaster and implement the Crisis Management Plan if necessary.

Emergency Contact Details: ensure the Leader or designated person has all contact details for parents, school and Headmaster. The Leader will inform the headmaster of any need to liaise with the media or to report an incident to the relevant authorities as required by legislation.

Points of Contact: For all off-site activities, the school will organise a 'Point of Contact' who will often be the office or reception if the trip is during school hours. During out of school hours or overnight trips it can also be the Headmaster or Designated Safeguarding Lead who will be on call 24/7. The 'Point of Contact' person must have:

- details of how the group leader may be contacted.
- the names of all participants, including adults.

- the distribution of pupils and staff if in separate groups or vehicles.
- the itinerary.
- the names and telephone numbers of any travel company (including coach company) involved.
- access to parental home contacts for all involved (including adults)
- details of the Designated Safeguarding Lead in the event of an emergency.
- a copy of the risk assessment.

Adventurous Activities: Where adventurous activities are involved, it is important that those leading and instructing the activities are appropriately qualified and competent. Such activities will usually be undertaken at a licensed and approved centre. Parents/guardians will be informed in writing of any adventurous activities that may be undertaken such as caving, abseiling, high ropes, climbing, etc.

First Aid: All staff leading day trips will as a minimum hold the required First Aid qualification. Ideally a 'Full First Aider' who holds the full (3-day) course with a training establishment approved by the Health and Safety Executive will be in attendance for all overseas and residential trips.

Critical Incident/Emergency Procedures: The Group Leader and other members of staff have a duty of care to ensure that all pupils are safe and healthy. They also have a common law duty to act as a reasonably prudent parent would. In an emergency there should be no hesitation to act and to take life-saving action if necessary. All necessary steps should be taken in advance of any visit to assess all risks and take necessary precautions. The detailed actions to be taken by the Group Leader in the event of a serious accident/incident.

Day Trips: A copy of the risk assessment, including pupils' details and Group Leader contact details will be held by the headmaster or delegated Senior Leadership Team (SLT) member which will act as a contact point. The Group Leader will have a mobile phone.

Residential Trips

Every group will have a named contact in the UK, and this will normally be the Head or Proprietor, with whom they will have exchanged telephone numbers and all relevant information about the trip. The school should also have a number where the party can be reached while away from home.

Complaints: Where complaints are received these should follow the school's Complaints procedure. Where complaints are made by the school concerning provision made on behalf of the school these should be in writing from the headmaster to the supplier of the service. All complaints are best dealt with as and when they arise.

Accounting for Individual Pupils: The Group Leader will ensure that each pupil who is not under visual supervision is accounted for. This means the Group Leader will know the identity, whereabouts and expected time and place of return of the pupils.

Special Educational Needs, Disability and Learning outside the Classroom: Where pupils are identified as having special needs this is reflected in a higher staffing ratio, which is never less than that which applies in the school and in most cases is higher.

We do not discriminate against disabled pupils either intentionally or unintentionally where such discrimination can be prevented by taking 'reasonable measures'. All our pupils are included in all off-campus visits. Where their inclusion appears to require special adjustments, a risk assessment is undertaken. This is in two parts: firstly, in terms of a whole visit or activity and then secondly in relation to the inclusion of the individual pupils. The risk assessment and medical care plans include details of any special aids and equipment that the pupils may need and details of any such items to be brought from home or obtained prior to the visit. This will usually entail discussion with the pupils, parents, group leader and other supervisors, the manager of the venue to be visited, or the tour operator etc. Where a pupil has a statement of special educational needs that requires support in school for access to the curriculum, this is considered. The above are examples only and group leaders should assess the risks and consider an appropriate safe supervision level for their group.

Safeguarding: Child Protection: Appleford School's Safeguarding Child Protection Policy and Procedures will apply during educational visits. The group leader will carry out the duties of the designated person or will name an appropriate adult supervisor to do so. Any incident amounting to an allegation or suspicion of abuse that occurs whilst on the educational visit will be dealt with appropriately at the time and will be reported to the Headmaster or Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately or on return.

Illness When Abroad: All staff and pupils will be advised to obtain Health Insurance to cover costs should they fall ill or injure themselves whilst abroad. The school will most cases arrange Health Insurance as part of the package booked when organising the trip.

Process

1. Follow the Flowchart for Out of School Visits
2. Group Leader completes the 'Outline Permission to plan an Out of School Visit' and pass to Head of Department for approval.
3. Head of Department seeks approval from the headmaster, and after discussion with other SLT members, if appropriate.
4. The headmaster gives approval to Group Leader
5. Group Leader ensures all relevant forms are completed and copied to the Head of Department (Risk Assessments / Parental Consent / Medical Forms / Food Orders / Staff List).

All staff should be aware that Risk Assessment does not stop with completion of forms etc – it is ongoing. Risk Assessment throughout the trip is vital and still should amend or stop activities and reduce the level of risk to an acceptable level.

Collection from a Trip: To exercise their duty of care, the group leader must ensure the pupils' safe dismissal and departure from their supervision, at the end of a trip or activity.

If arrangements for the safe return home of a pupil breaks down, (e.g. a parent fails to arrive, or late bus fails to arrive at appointed time etc.) the Group leader must attempt to telephone the pupil's home via the school to make alternative arrangements. The pupil will be placed in the care of the duty of a member of staff who will allocate them a safe area in the school until the parent or guardian arrives.