



School Excursion Policy

School Trips are organized at The Annex School for a variety of reasons. Firstly, they are designed to enrich the curriculum, specifically Citizenship and Assembly time as well as relate to all of the other school subjects. Secondly trips are devised in order to address issues of inclusion and most importantly aspects of socialization. The key skill laid down by 'Every Child Matters'; 'To enjoy and achieve' is critical in terms of the ethos of trips.

Trips occur frequently at The Annex School. We try to incorporate a Assembly related day trip into every term as well as a subject related trip if possible. Cooking/food shopping also occurs regularly as do offsite sports activities. We try to arrange whole school trips for Monday's as this is a day when both teachers are in school.

Trips which are arranged with regards to Assemblies (Citizenship) include: visits to animal sanctuaries such as Battersea Dogs Home, visits to London including The Houses of Parliament and The British Museum, fruit picking trips to local farms and, garden centres and visits to War Museums and war graves.

Trips arranged in accordance with key subjects have included English trips to The Harry Potter Experience and various Theatres. A Geography trip to a local chalk pit, History trips to local caves, Stately Homes, castles and a recreated Norman Village. Art trips include gallery trips and Fantasy/Manga Expos and local pottery trips. In terms of sports these include trips to a local ski centre, ice rinks, horse riding stables, sports centres and martial arts gyms. We also do annual charity fund raising events. Last year this involved a sponsored mountain bike trip around through a giant woodland. With regards to Cooking pupils go on various shopping trips to different cultural markets and regularly visit different restaurants. Trips also occur in relation to the Asdan qualification such as a 5-day coppicing conservation activity with a local woodland trust group. More recently 'Mini-Trips' have been devised to accommodate specific pupils following personal challenges and these may involve 1:1 set offsite activities.

It is important to note that the house provides its own residential trips. There has been some cross over here with teaching staff involved in participation activities such as fishing, canoeing and adventure holidays. Teaching staff have accompanied house staff in rock climbing, coastering, and water sports with work feeding in to Asdan Award challenges.

Older pupils may also engage in individual 1:1 trip activities. These often involve additional funding sports activities or weeklong work experience events (see Careers Policy).

Trip Planning

Due to the extreme nature of our students behaviour all trips need to be carefully planned and recorded. In the case of visiting venues, it is best if the venue is well known or if an exploratory pre-visit can be made beforehand to check out the potential hazards.

Any trips that do not involve travelling to London are best arranged using both house cars. This involves a large multi seater vehicle and a smaller car. The purpose of this is twofold; firstly this enables difficult or unsettled students to travel away from the others, but most importantly it also allows for any students who are behaving inappropriately to be sent back early. With regard to the cars a careful seating plan has to be arranged beforehand in order to create the calmest set-up. Ratios of staff should not fall below 1:2. Ideally if all 5 students are present then a trip leader (usually a teacher) should be accompanied by school L.S.A.'s / care workers. It is preferable to have another Teacher or Senior Care Worker to act as a nominated deputy leader which is useful in circumstances where the group may split. Staff need to be alert to individual special/medical needs of the young people and should never admit legal liability in regard to incurring accidents whilst outside.

With regards to school trips all pupils are expected to wear their school uniform for purposes of identification and smartness. It is the responsibility of the Trip Leader to plan the route and inspect that the vehicles are road worthy. With regards to travelling, basic passenger safety rules include no getting up out of seats (use of a seat belt at all times), and no throwing or shouting out at members of the public. It is with the discretion of the Trip Leader if students are allowed to listen to the radio or bring handheld computer devices to help them relax on the journey. Staff are not allowed to use their own cars to ferry students as normal insurance will not cover this. Petrol costs and lunch should always be covered by house funds. If a packed lunch needs to be provided this should be arranged in advance of the trip with the house domestic staff and any medical needs taken into consideration. It has been noted that school trips involving public transport are particularly problematic with regards to student behaviour as students have been observed to act in a more freely unsettled manner. In these circumstances it is recommended that the staff ratio be slightly higher and that car transport should be used as an initial ferrying system to and from the public transport starting point.

All trips should be cleared by The Head Teacher at least one week in advance of the planned trip and then put on to the 'Clear-Care' communication system. Care should be taken to ensure that the trip does not clash with any forthcoming important events. Furthermore, a Risk Assessment should be written and placed onto the 'Clear-Care' communication system (some venues issue their own assessments, and these can be added as well).

All staff should be comprehensively trained in appropriate support; first aid, hygiene, restraint, health and safety and child protection procedures. All trip staff should be briefed clearly on the journey, and the intention of the trip by the trip leader. All staff should be aware that they have a common law parental duty of care towards all of the young people and should not hesitate to act in an emergency and take life- saving action in an extreme situation. All staff should also be collectively connected through mobile phones and a contact point (ideally a manager of Senior) should therefore remain at the house to be informed of any issues, or in the case of children who have run off (see guideline of Safeguarding Policy).

In the event of a run-away pupil a member of staff should be deployed to search the immediate local surrounding area. It is also important to be aware of local A&E units near the trip venues, and a first aid kit should be carried at all times. Staff should always carry ID cards to prevent any communication problems occurring. The group leader should identify rendezvous points and inform students and staff what to do if they are separated from the group. Vigilance should always be paid to dangers involved in students walking across roads.

Students are encouraged to take photographs whilst on school trips and to collect relevant literature for display purposes. One of our former students won a borough wide photography competition of a picture taken whilst on a farm. Occasionally students are provided with worksheets about the visit, although work is usually done on return to the classroom where lessons are appropriately embedded. Occasionally well-behaved students may be brought small souvenir gifts as a reminder of their day visits.

Common difficulties on trips that have been noted include stealing in gift shops, shouting out at members of the public and arguing with authority staff figures as well as general squabbling between each other. It should be noted that weather conditions can affect unsettled behaviour such as wind, atmospheric pressure, rain, snow and even moon conditions. Care needs also to be taken with contact involving any animals and the associated hazards and precautions that need to be adhered to involving hygiene and safety.

Incident and restraint forms should be filled in the normal way regarding any incidents. All students behaviour is closely monitored during school involving gaining points and grades. The use of a warning system involving the issuing of a red card denotes a student being sent home. Sometimes this may need to be compromised in difficult situations.

Headcounts should be taken regularly and include both staff and students. After the trip the staff team should de-brief. Sometimes the trip leader or students themselves may be involved in writing a thank-you letter to the venue concerned.

The school should always reference a short evaluative comment in the school minutes and points need to be highlighted at the end of day at the house meeting.

In regard to the current Coronavirus pandemic attention needs to be maintained in the light of the latest updated Government guidelines. This is constantly changing on a weekly basis.

Ref : DfES Health & Safety on Educational Visits 2020 GT/FR/BA 2020