

How is a school trip assessment carried out?

Before any school trip is undertaken the following points must be assessed / addressed:

- Adequate child protection procedures are in place;
- All necessary actions have been completed before visit begins;
- The risk assessment has been completed and appropriate safety measures are in place;
- Training needs have been assessed by a competent person and the needs of the staff and pupils have been considered;
- The group leader has experience in supervising the age groups going on the visit;
- The group leader or another teacher is competent to instruct the activity and is familiar with the location where the activity is taking place;
- Non-teacher supervisors on the visit are appropriate people to supervise children;
- Ratio of supervisors to pupils is appropriate;
- The Head of the school (Dunannie, Dunhurst or Bedales) has approved the visit;
- Parents have signed consent forms where the schools' 'Terms and Conditions' require them to do so
- Arrangements have been made for the medical needs and special educational needs of all pupils;
- Adequate first-aid provision will be available;
- The mode of travel is suitable;
- Travel times out and back are known;
- There is adequate insurance cover;
- Contact number and address of visit venue is known;
- Group leader, group supervisors have a copy of emergency procedures;
- Contact numbers are available for all teachers and pupils in the group;
- Contingency plan for any delays.

The person carrying out the risk assessment should record it and give results to all teachers / supervisors on the visit, with details of the measures they should take to avoid or reduce the risks.

Frequent visits to local venues such as swimming pools may not need a risk assessment every time. A generic assessment of the risks of such visits should be made and updated on a defined basis.

Before booking a visit, the group leader should obtain a written or documentary assurance that the providers such as tour operators have themselves assessed the risks and have appropriate safety measures in place.

Exploratory visit

An exploratory visit should be made by any teacher who is to lead a group abroad or on a residential visit or who is to instruct or lead the group in an outdoor activity such as trekking in a location that is not familiar to them.

In other cases the group leader should undertake an exploratory visit, whenever that is possible, to;

Ensure at first hand that the venue is suitable

Obtain names and addresses of other schools who have used the venue;

Obtain advice from the manager;

Assess potential areas and levels of risk;

Ensure that the venue can cater for the needs of the staff and pupils in the group;

Become familiar with the area before taking a group of young people there.

If a visit is not possible, then the group leader will need to obtain a letter from the venue and ideally from other schools who have visited it.

First aid

First aid should form part of the risk assessment. Before the visit is undertaken, the group leader must assess what level of first aid might be needed. On any trip the group leader should have a good working knowledge of first aid and ensure that an adequate first-aid box is taken. For adventurous activities, visits abroad or residential visits, it is sensible for at least one of the group's teachers to be a fully trained first-aider. All adults in the group should have the means to contact the emergency services.

When considering the need for first aid, the numbers in the group, the likelihood of injuries and the distance to the nearest hospital need to be considered.

Supervision ratios:

Please distinguish between day visits and residential ones; please note the need for male/female where possible with mixed groups

It is important as part of the assessment to have a high enough ratio of adult supervisors to pupils for any visit.

1 adult for every 6 pupils in school years 1 to 3 (under 5s reception classes should have a higher ratio);

1 adult for every 10-15 pupils in school years 4 to 6;

1 adult for every 15-20 pupils in school year 7 onwards.

Remote supervision may be possible with older students but during the pre-planning assessment the leader must establish whether the pupils are competent in remote supervision and should ensure parents have agreed to this kind of visit

During remote supervision, the group leader must ensure that pupils are aware of the ground rules and are adequately equipped to be on their own in a group. They should be aware of time limits, boundaries, currencies, contact numbers etc.

Transport

Transport must be given careful thought as part of the initial assessment of the trip. The main factors to consider include:

Passenger safety;

Competence and training of the driver and whether the driver holds license required;

Number of driving hours required for the journey;

Insurance;

Breakdown cover;

Stopping points;

Time and distance.

Emergency procedures

These are an essential part of planning school visit. If an accident happens, the priorities are to:

Assess the situation;

Safeguard the uninjured members of the group;

Attend to the casualty;

Inform the emergency services and everyone who needs to know of the incident.

Risk assessments for individual trips are available at Reception four days before departure.