

EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY

Rationale:

At CATS College London we believe that student and staff involvement in residential and non-residential trips and visits adds significant value to college life and enhances our core values and ethos. First-hand experience adds breadth and depth to the Curriculum and enhances social, moral, spiritual and cultural development.

Aims that focus on Ethos and Values:

CATS College London was founded to encourage all students to realise their potential, by fostering independence and maturity, in order to prepare them for their future as global citizens. CATS College education trips and visits reflect the current Equality Act 2010 and recent DfE Health and Safety 2014 guidance.

- Lessons and Trips will encourage respect for other people paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Equalities Act
- Students should receive an effective preparation for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British Society by participating in educational trips.
- Students will be taught and reflect on their educational visits in ways which do not undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

Our purpose is to:

- Provide a broad programme of trips and visits
- Ensure access for all students
- Develop continuity and progression throughout a student's time here at the college
- Enable students to learn a sense of community, social responsibility, initiative, resourcefulness and self-reliance.

Process:

The following forms are to be used for all Educational Visits and must be fully completed:

- Appendix 1 – Application for Approval of Educational Visit
- Appendix 2 – Risk Assessment for an Educational Visit (for various visit types)
- Appendix 3 – Financial Information Form (if required)
- Appendix 4 – Approval of Educational Visit to go Ahead

- Appendix 5 – Evaluation of an Educational visit

Principles and practice:

The organiser must be clearly identified from the outset and must complete an Appendix 1 - Application for Approval form (available on the College intranet) outlining the purpose, organisational and supervision arrangements. This must be passed to the Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) for outline approval.

A risk assessment must be completed for all visits and the activity must be fully costed. It may be possible to use a generic risk assessment (or modify a previous, specific one) and parental consent form – see below. All trips and visits taking place beyond the Curriculum must be fully paid for prior to departure. Please use Appendix 2 – Risk Assessment Form.

The risk assessment must include clear contingency plans to cover unforeseen problems (e.g. emergency; adverse weather; cancellations; etc.) as well as arrangements for students ‘down time’ during the visit. The Risk Assessment Form and evidence of parental consent must be passed to the EVC for approval. The organiser should comply with any reasonable requests to improve the content of the risk assessment (e.g. to provide more detail). If necessary, any dispute may be referred to the Vice Principal.

The organiser must allow sufficient time when planning visits to allow the EVC time to undertake any checks that may be required. The relevant timescales are:

- Half-day (or shorter) visits within the local area provided there is no physical / adventure element or the visit would be deemed controversial: **3 working days’ notice**
- Day visits (non-residential) provided there is no physical/adventure element or the visit would be deemed controversial: **10 working days’ notice**.
- All other visits: **20 working days’ notice**
- Extended stay and adventure holidays: **minimum 3 months**

If these notice periods are not observed, permission may not be granted for the visit to proceed.

Staff supervising visits, accept the full duty of care for students including staff student ratios, gender balance and special requirements. All students including ALS and disabled students must be taken into account.

Group leaders must ensure they have requested up to date medical information on each student who is planning to take part in the visit, and should consult in advance with the College Nurse to discuss any particular procedures appropriate to the needs of the students.

All staff accompanying visits (types 3 and 4 above) should familiarise themselves with the DfE guide to ‘Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits’ (February 2014) which is available on-line or from the EVC. Group leaders of residential or specialist trips should also consult the EVC or the Operations Manager for relevant advice from local authority guidance on visits.

If a visit is classed as compulsory, the College must bear the full cost and organisers must gain prior permission from the budget holder (usually the Vice Principal) before making a booking.

Most visits will be classed as voluntary (irrespective of the educational value of the trip) and are expected to be funded wholly by students. Please use Appendix 3 – Financial Information Form.

If a visit is classed as voluntary, the entire costs must be paid for prior to the start of the visit. Any student who has not paid for his / her place on the visit prior to the start will not be allowed to attend it. Note that the Finance Office will issue receipts to each student on payment of the visit fees. Visit organisers should ask for these receipts as proof of payment before allowing a student to attend.

Only reputable companies should be used, particularly for overseas and residential trips. Non-refundable deposits should be paid to secure a student's place. Please use Appendix 3 – Financial Information Form.

For hazardous and overseas trips, once a proposed visit has been approved in principle by the EVC, visit organisers must, via the Personal Tutors, seek Parental Consent from the parent or guardian for students Under 18 to participate in visits.

The organiser must produce a draft letter, which must be sent by email to:

- #LONCATS-All ST Staff
- Copy in the EVC

The draft letter should include full details of the trip. Once received, Personal Tutors/ Student Services will forward the letter via email to the relevant parents. All correspondence will be sent and received via this conduit. Personal Tutors will subsequently inform the Visit Organiser of approval/non-approval decision from the parent/guardian.

Once an approved visit has been Risk Assessed by the EVC, visit organisers must ask the Principal for confirmation that the visit can go ahead. Please use Appendix 4 – Confirmation Form.

The group leader should:

- Notify colleagues of the intended visit, using appropriate internal communication channels
- Inform colleagues of the date and time of the proposed visit, and indicating which students will be attending.
- A copy of all information about the visit must be forwarded to the EVC in advance of the visit
- Itinerary, emergency contact numbers and lists of names of students and staff should be copied to Reception and the Attendance team by the Group Leader at least three working days before the visit departs.
- Nominate a member of staff remaining in College/London to act in an emergency.

On the day of the visit, an attendance register must be taken of all students boarding the coach/bus or leaving college premises, in order to ascertain exactly the location of every student. This register must be passed to the Attendance Team (via Reception) without fail and within 15 minutes of it been taken.

The Group Leader must also pass on the list of students who have failed to attend to Reception and ask them to forward this information to the Attendance Team.

Ultimate responsibility for the safety of students and staff on a College trip or visit resides with the Principal.

Pre-departure checks

As previously detailed, the trip shall have been approved and had its risk assessment checked by the EVC; lists of names of those taking part will have been passed to the Attendance Team via Reception. The Risk Assessment contains all the relevant contact details for suppliers, the venue, etc.

The Group Leader shall have obtained a college mobile from the relevant source (IT Support). The Group Leader shall have briefed students explaining:

- Planned itinerary for the visit
- Behaviour and conduct standards
- Health and safety routines
- Double-check contact numbers

On the trip

Whilst on the trip there are many procedures staff and students can follow to ensure they remain safe:

- Spreading staff out. How you do this depends on your staff to student ratio. You can have one at the front and the other at the back OR split students into smaller groups and assign a member of staff to each group.
- Head counting. One can never have too many head counts; ensure that you do this at regular intervals, especially when getting on and off transport.
- During free time ensure that a designated meeting point is assigned, with a set time to meet. The area should be supervised at all times

'Lost' student procedure

In the event of a student(s) going missing, staff should follow these steps. It is also important, where possible, to document events as they happen, particularly the times of incidents:

- Stop as soon as you realise the student is missing.
- Keep the rest of the group together in a safe environment.
- Take a register, to identify which student(s) is missing.
- Call the student's mobile. If they answer ask them to describe where they are and tell them to stay there. Keep on the phone until you reach them.

- If they do not answer; ask other students when they last saw them.
- If no contact has been made after fifteen minutes, contact the college emergency phone and inform them of the incident.
- A member of staff along with two students should go back and look for them; however a member of staff **must** stay with the remaining students. If possible, allow them to carry on with the programme.
- If the student is under 16 you must contact the Police after the student has been missing for more than 30 minutes. Please provide as much information about
- The student as possible; name, age, description, language ability and details of the scheduled itinerary.
- Make sure that you keep in contact with other members of staff, the college and the Police.
- If the rest of the group have to go back to the college, ensure you stay at the location until you are instructed otherwise.
- Once the student has been found, ensure that they are well. Contact the college to inform them the situation has been resolved.

Monitoring and Evaluation

After the visit, the group leader must complete an evaluation form and return it to the EVC. Please use Appendix 5 – Visit Evaluation Form. The EVC will monitor all trips and visits and provide evaluations for the Senior Management Team and CEG as required.

Reference Documents

- Tackling the Health and Safety myths" produced by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).
- Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits (HASPEV) DfE 1998
- A Handbook for Group Leaders (a supplement to HASPEV) 2002
- Disability Discrimination Act
- Equalities Act
- Health and Safety, DfE advice on legal duties and powers for Local Authorities, Headteachers, Staff and Governing Bodies
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-and-safety-on-educational-visits/health-and-safety-on-educational-visits>

Reviewed: August 2019

Next review: August 2020