



# IPSWICH SCHOOL

## **POLICY ON HEALTH AND SAFETY ON ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE SCHOOL (EDUCATIONAL AND RECREATIONAL OUTINGS AND EXPEDITIONS)**

This policy is in support of the School's strong belief in the value of learning outside the classroom in all its forms, from academic fieldwork to sports tours, adventurous activities, volunteering, language and cultural experiences, whether they are local low risk trips or long haul expeditions. Staff are encouraged to be involved in all such experiences when they can, working within the framework of this policy to ensure that all trips are safe, clearly communicated and presenting value for money. Experienced trip leaders are encouraged to include younger colleagues to be part of their staff teams as part of a staff development cycle that future proofs the appetite for learning outside the classroom.

The Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC, currently the Head of Sixth Form) works with the Educational Visits Administrator (EVA, currently the School's SSI and H&S and Compliance Officer) to support all trip leaders in their approval and planning of trips, and to ensure the safety and compliance of all offsite education.

Various governing and advisory bodies (government and NGO) provide vital guidance and experience on offsite education for schools, including The Association of Advisers for Outdoor Learning and Educational Visits (<https://oeapng.info/>) and the Government's guidance on Health and Safety on Educational Visits (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-and-safety-on-educational-visits/health-and-safety-on-educational-visits>), much of which has been used to inform school policy and practise in this area.

For activities with **low** or **no** significant risks (**Type A Visits** - e.g. walking in parks, field studies in benign situations), the EVC must 'assess as competent' any teacher who leads a visit. All permanent members of the School's teaching staff will be deemed to be competent unless otherwise informed. Newly qualified teachers or other teachers new to the profession will need to seek guidance from the EVC.

For activities involving some higher risk activities (**Type B Visits** - e.g. residential visits, walking in non-remote country, camping, low-level initiative challenge), the leader will need to have been specifically inducted/trained in the activity or location by a suitably qualified, competent or experienced leader. These categories will cover the majority of School visits.

For more demanding activities (e.g. caving, climbing, trekking, water sports [sailing, canoeing, kayaking, rafting and windsurfing, but not rowing or on inland waters where nearest land is within 50 metres], exchange visits), the leader will need to have attended a recognised course of training (i.e. Mountain Leader) or recorded relevant experience or have had his/her competence assessed by an appropriate technical adviser, depending on the activity.

A party leader will usually have already been 'second-in-command' on a similar trip, and such trips should aim to include a junior member of staff in such a developmental professional role whenever possible.

Outings and expeditions are an important part of the co-curricular life of the School, and it is hoped that the policy outlined below will not constrain them. The aim of the policy is to ensure that the duty of care for its pupils placed upon the School is fulfilled, that parents and guardians are aware of the School's regulations and procedures, and that the position of members of the School staff is safeguarded. The policy is based on best practice established over many years by colleagues at the School and other HMC schools and is provided as a framework for the guidance and support of those organising future activities. The School policy is designed to be at least as robust as those imposed by Local Authority maintained schools.

*Colleagues should be aware that further useful advice in relation to particular types of activities and the risks involved is provided by the HSE and DfES:*

- [Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits: a Good Practice Guide 2018](#)
- Health and Safety: Responsibilities and Powers (DfES/0803/2001).
- Standards for LEAs in Overseeing Educational Visits. Part 1 of a 3 Part Supplement to Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits. (DfES/0564/2002)
- [Standards for Adventure. Part 2 of a 3 Part Supplement to Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits. \(DfES/0565/2002\)](#)
- [A Handbook for Group Leaders. Part 3 of a 3 Part Supplement to Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits. \(DfES/0566/2002\)](#)
- The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010 (Review Jan 2013)
- British Standard 8848 Guidance for Overseas Adventures and Activities.  
[Staff Handbook .Gov](#)

## **Approval**

All group visits and outings require the approval of the Head Teacher (Prep), EVA (Senior School Day trips) or the EVC (Senior School Residential), although the prior consent of the Head of the Preparatory School or the Senior School Deputy Head (Academic) will be required where teaching time is due to be missed. It will be assumed that, on balance, the benefits of the activity will be greater than the costs of the absent time. Visits by individual pupils from the Senior School to universities and attendance at courses and for interviews may be approved by the Head of Sixth Form.

### ***Type A - Outings during the week in term time not involving overnight absence and not including a hazardous activity***

Activities in this category which take place in the Ipswich area during School hours, such as a visit to a Museum, do not need prior approval from Senior School parents. The Prep will always seek permission. Activities outside Ipswich require the approval of the EVA and at their discretion the need to submit a letter (IS Post) to parents seeking approval.

### ***Type B - School Trips or Expeditions which either:***

- take place during the holidays, half-term or a weekend
- involve one or more nights away
- Involve a potentially hazardous activity such as hill walking, climbing, potholing, skiing, sailing, canoeing, windsurfing, parachuting etc.

Activities in this category require the leader to seek the approval of the appropriate EVC who may confirm with the School's Educational Visits Advisor (EVA) the arrangements for accommodation and the ability of the provider, where appropriate, to provide the activities on offer. In order to do this, form **EVI I Form** will need to be completed at least *four working weeks* before authorisation is required. *Without the submission of this form, permission for any trip falling into the categories listed above will **NOT** be granted.*

The EVC will also require a letter giving full details of the trip/expedition to be sent to parents or guardians via IS Post for return at least seven days in advance. Planning for an overseas expedition will probably need to start up to **a year** in advance. Staff should consult the checklist in the relevant Staff Handbook. Any trip or expedition in this category involving a potentially hazardous activity must be approved (both in principle and in the *details* of activities undertaken and of supervision) by the appropriate EVC. Trips of this kind will normally only be approved if booked through a licensed provider. If a teacher intends to organise a hazardous activity through a provider *not* approved by a certificating authority such as ATOL, the EVC/EVA should be notified of this *prior* to seeking approval for the visit.

In such cases, the member of staff will need to assume *full* responsibility for checking the safety record of the provider. Such an undertaking should not be made lightly and *never* without the prior approval of the EVC/EVA.

### **Planning, Supervision and Preliminary Visits**

- When a particular type of outing or visit has not been undertaken before, the leader must either take appropriate professional advice or make a **preliminary visit**. For a visit abroad the leader should already have been on such a visit or journey, except in the case of visits run by reputable tour operators. For hazardous pursuits the leaders must have the appropriate qualifications or experience.
- In all cases, the party leader must be clearly nominated; he/she is responsible for ensuring that all supervisors know the extent of their responsibilities.
- The party leader must be a member of staff, although other adults who are deemed competent to instruct and lead pupils on the activity, may act as additional supervisors. Legislation requires a *Disclosure* from the Disclosure and Barring Service to be obtained on additional supervisors in all cases.
- Once the trip is deemed viable and approval from the relevant EVC has been received, the trip leader can launch the trip. For Senior School, once the trip leader has all the pupils names, they are required, as part of the planning process, to liaise with the following to discuss any Behavioural and/or Medical issues that would prevent them travelling:
  - Matron
  - Head of Section
  - Deputy Head Pastoral
  - EVC
- Visits of two days or more with boys and girls in the group should normally have at least one leader of each sex. If any leader cannot be a member of staff, this should be approved by the EVC. If no leader of one sex is available, then the visit must have the approval of the Headmaster, DSL or Head of the Prep and the agreement of the parents of the pupils of the unrepresented sex must be obtained in writing.

## **Supervision Ratios**

The HSE states 'that ratios are not prescribed by Law' and that they should form part of the School's own policy and be part of the risk assessment process. The ROSPA guidelines refer to the Secondary Heads Association (SHA) that recommend the following guidelines:

The ratio will depend on a number of factors:

- The age, sex and ability of the pupils
- The number of pupils involved
- Pupils with special educational or medical needs
- Their previous experiences of being away from school/home and of the activities involved
- The degree of responsibility and discipline shown by the group
- The type of visit and the nature of the activities involved
- The amount of risk
- The location and travel arrangements
- The time of year
- The experience and quality of the supervisory staff available
- Requirements of the organisation or location to be visited
- First aid cover.

They warn that '**Ratios in themselves do not guarantee safety**'. In all cases, the duty remains with the Headmaster and/or leader to ensure adequate supervision for the particular group and for the particular activity.

## **Senior School**

The Secondary Heads Association (SHA) guidance on staff to pupil ratios (**minimum requirements**):

- 1:10 for trips abroad with minimum of 2 adults of opposite sexes if the group is a mixed party
- 1:15 for other residential visits with minimum of 2 adults of opposite sexes if the group is a mixed party
- 1:20 for day visits outside the walking distance of the school with minimum 2 adults of opposite sexes if the group is a mixed party
- 1:25 for a short local visit (perhaps during a lesson) where one teacher might be sufficient even for a mixed party.

Additional consideration must be given to staff ratios on transport for ALL trips, including fixtures. For example, if several vehicles are travelling in convoy, you could allow a coach to travel with only one staff member + the hired driver. For smaller trips & fixtures travelling by minibus, you should consider a second member of staff in case of incident, hospital case etc.

## **Prep School**

We operate a staffing ratio of at least 1:8 for all off-site visits involving children in the Prep and this is often more generous depending on the venue and/or the nature of the visit. The ratio of adults to children would be higher for Early Years Foundation Stage pupils.

There is always at least one Teacher, one of whom will have been designated in charge of the visit. At least one of the supervising staff will always be qualified in paediatric first aid for the Early Years Foundation Stage and a staff member with a first aid qualification for all other Prep trips. We frequently invite parents to volunteer to help with off-site visits. At least one school mobile phone is always taken by the Trip Organiser on the trip.

### **Unsupervised Periods**

Visits may only include a period of unsupervised time if that time has a specific purpose and if the participants are fully briefed in advance as to the purpose and the rules for using this time. These rules will vary within the discretion of the leader, according to the age of the pupils and the activities undertaken. For example, pupils in Year 10 might be permitted to undertake a survey questionnaire in Ambleside for an hour provided they were in groups of two - but not in London.

Certain activities, for example, the Year 8 visit to Cumbria, CCF and Duke of Edinburgh award expeditions, may require different supervision arrangements; these need to be agreed in advance with the EVC/EVA.

A risk assessment *must* be carried out; the EVA has specimen forms and can give guidance. Copies and a verbal briefing should be given to all teachers involved. If a visit is being booked with a tour or outdoor pursuits operator, the group leader should obtain *written* assurance that the operators have assessed the risks and have appropriate safety measures in place.

Consideration should be given to arrangements for sending pupils home early in case of unacceptable behaviour and staff should tell parents if they will be expected to fund the early return of a pupil.

Pupils should be properly prepared and briefed beforehand. In particular they must know what is expected of them in terms of behaviour, and safety and emergency procedures.

Even when using a Centre or a company to organise a trip or expedition, or when the group is under instruction by a member of a Provider's staff, *teachers* retain ultimate responsibility for pupils at all times and a member of staff must be on duty/available at all times.

If travelling abroad, one of the adults should have a working knowledge of the language of the visited country, or access to a tour guide who can assist with translation.

### **Welfare, Insurance, Emergencies, Accidents and Near Misses**

On a residential visit or journey abroad, one of the adults should be responsible for welfare matters, including **first aid**, administration of pills or medication, etc. Leaders should consult Matron or the School Doctor about appropriate First Aid equipment.

For Senior School, on all term-time visits, a complete list of participants should be emailed to all senior teachers and posted on the Common Room notice board and remain there until after the return of the visit. The notice should include the venue of the visit and, wherever possible, a contact telephone number.

For residential visits, copies of the above information together with details of travel, train or flight times and the location of hostels or camp sites must be separately given to the EVC and the named member of staff who has agreed to act as emergency contact. Parents must be informed of arrangements for contacting the party.

Details of insurance cover for pupils and teachers on outings and expeditions should be checked with the Director of Finance and Operations. The School has a blanket policy covering staff and pupils on trips in this country and abroad, details of which can be obtained from the Director of Finance and Operations. *Additional* cover may be needed where hazardous pursuits such as potholing or scuba diving are involved.

Trips leaders should exercise caution when asked to sign "Indemnity Waivers" of any description. Advice should be sought from Insurers and the Director of Finance and Operations if this is proposed by the Tour Operators.

The Director of Finance and Operations will advise as to the premium to charge pupils when calculating trip costs, using the 'Planning a Budget' Spreadsheet.

Abroad, pupils should carry a note in the relevant foreign language for use if they get lost, asking the reader to reunite them with the group and including the group leader's name and duty contact's telephone number. Leaders should know the location and phone number of the nearest British Embassy or Consulate.

All injuries of a serious nature, and 'near misses', should be reported, as soon as possible, to the EVC/SMT members on duty during the trip. On return to School the Accident Report and Near Misses form should be completed and given to the EVC immediately. The EVC will make sure that:

- appropriate action can be taken to reduce the likelihood of such an event happening in the future;
- In the event of a serious accident, the Accident Report is given to Matron when School restarts.
- These should also be recorded on the Post Trip Report (PTR).

### **Trips Payment**

The wording for all trips needs to be consistent. needs to be consistent, especially regarding cancellations.

**Pre-season trips** These will need to be managed like any other trip. A List of pupils to be billed will need to be shared, in advance, so that a payment can be obtained, or a payment plan agreed. New pupils will need to be told of the no refund as per the current payment policy.

Caveat - Ipswich School will refund if they don't get in due to grades etc. The same may also apply to current pupils but we will not make this public in advance.

**Sports fixtures - all short notice trips will require payment via BACs**

## **Payment wording for all trips for current pupils:**

The cost of this trip will be £\*\*\*\*\* and in order to secure a place for your child, we will require a **non-refundable deposit** as a BACS payment of £ \*\*\*\*\* by the \*\*\*\*\*. Unless an alternative arrangement has been made, the remainder of £\*\*\*\*\* will be added to your school bill.

Please note, that by consenting to your child's place on the trip and the associated payment, if your child no longer wishes to attend, the charge will still be made. A refund would only be considered, where there is a waiting list for places and a replacement can be found, or when a pupil is considered medically unfit to travel and this is confirmed in writing by a medical professional for medical reasons other than an infectious disease.

*Reviewed July 2025*

*Next Review July 2026*

*Additional Information:*

[\*EVII\*](#)

[\*SS Residential Checklist\*](#)

[\*SS Day Trip Checklist\*](#)

[\*Alcohol Policy\*](#)