



Trips and Visits Policy

Purpose:

To ensure that all visits and journeys are carefully planned compliant with appropriate Health & Safety legislation provide a valuable learning experience appropriately costed.

Method:

This policy covers all activities undertaken by the school by which students are taken off-site for any reason. This includes day visits, residential visits, field studies, exchange visits, and other overseas journeys.

As the purpose of the visits and trips is to provide a rich, learning experience for the students, the following guidelines support the planning and implementation of educational visits organized at The International School of Egypt.

Roles and responsibilities relating to educational visits:

The Principal should ensure that off-site activities comply with the procedures in this policy.

- Support staff development of leadership competence through continuous professional development.
- Appoint party leaders and additional staff who are sufficiently experienced and competent to assess and manage the risks with regard to the group and planned activity.
- Ensure that risks have been assessed, significant risks recorded and appropriate safety measures are in place and that all parties are aware of the assessments and ensure that all staff understand and comply.
- The final planning checklist is completed and all supporting documents are completed before the journey takes place.
- Formal approval is given to each journey or visit.

The College Counsellor should:

- Approve delegated visits.
- Ensure that competent people are assigned to lead or otherwise supervise a visit.
- Support the party leader with advice and guidance on generic risk assessments.
- Review and approve the risk assessment produced by the party leader and team for each visit. Organise the emergency arrangements and ensure there is an emergency contact for each visit.
- Keep records of individual visits.



- Review systems and, on occasion, monitor practice.
- Ensure that all coaches, busses or other means of hired transport used have the appropriate safety accreditation and have seatbelts fitted.

The Trip or Visit Leader

- The party leader has overall responsibility for the supervision and conduct of the visit or activity and should be approved by the Principal at least.
- S/he should be an experienced member of staff.
- Obtain the approval of the Principal before any off-site visit or activity takes place.
- Assess the reasonably foreseeable risks involved and draw up or amend as appropriate any previously recorded risk assessment.
- Oversee the safe conduct of each visit, paying particular attention to on going risk assessments and changing circumstances.
- Ensure a clear rationale for staff helpers and try to ensure cover is kept at a minimum with staff choice.
- Ensure that all other members of staff and voluntary helpers are aware of their responsibilities and have the appropriate training and experience to undertake their assigned roles.
- Consider the planning checklist to ensure that all procedures have been followed.
- Inform parents about the visit and gain their written consent.

Additional members of staff and chaperones:

- Chaperones act as employees of the school whilst on approved off-site activities.
- Members of staff and volunteers make up the team for each visit and must be actively engaged in the process of managing the programme and they must be given written instructions to ensure that they are familiar with procedures/protocols.
- Chaperons must have a local police check prior to the trip.

All members of staff should:

- Assist the party leader to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all the young people on the visit.
- Be clear about their roles and responsibilities whilst taking part in the visit or activity.



Students

Whilst taking part in off-site activities, students also have responsibilities about which they should be made aware by the party leader or other members of staff, for their own health and safety and that of the group.

Students should:

- Not take unnecessary risks.
- Follow instructions of the party leader and other members of staff.
- Behave sensibly, keeping to any agreed code of conduct.
- Inform members of staff of any significant hazards.
- Any student whose behaviour may be considered to be a danger to themselves or to the group may be stopped from going on the visit.
- Understand that exact rules of behaviour as in school apply to conduct on school trips and visits.

Parents

Parents have an important role in deciding whether any visit or off-site activity is suitable for their child as they should:

- Inform the party leader about any medical, psychological or physical condition relevant to the visit.
- Provide emergency contact numbers.
- Provide the party leader with arrangements to resume care of their child should this be necessary.
- Sign the consent form.

Students must not be taken off-site if parents have not signed a form.

Planning off-site visits

Whether the visit is to a local park, museum, swimming pool, or includes a residential stay, it is essential that careful planning takes place. All visits and journeys should have clear learning objectives including a rationale for staff accompanying. Planning also involves considering the dangers and difficulties which may arise and making plans to avoid them.

The Event Coordinator is responsible for planning all off-site visits. In practice, the detailed planning is delegated to the organiser of the visit or the group leader, but the Principal must be satisfied that the person planning the visit is qualified to do so and has the necessary experience.



First Aid

First Aid provision should be considered when assessing the risks of the visit. For adventurous activities, the party leader should consider having at least one trained first-aider in the group for ensuring that appropriate first-aid support is available at the centre. The group leader should have a working knowledge of first aid and all adults in the group should know how to contact emergency services.

For visits abroad, the party leader must ensure that s/he is aware of how to contact emergency services in that country.

The minimum first aid provision is: a suitably stocked first aid box; a person appointed to be in charge of first aid arrangements. First aid should be available and accessible at all times. If a first aider is attending to one member of the group, there should be adequate first-aid cover for the other students. The Principal should take this into account when assessing what level of first-aid facilities will be needed. The contents of a first aid kit will depend on what activities are planned.

Supervision and staff/student ratios

It is important to have a sufficient ratio of adult supervisors to students for any off-site visit.

The factors to take into consideration include: sex, age and ability of group; special needs students; nature of activities; experience of adults in off site supervision; duration and nature of the journey; type of any accommodation; competence of staff, both general and on specific activities.

There should always be enough supervisors to cope effectively with an emergency. When visits are to remote areas or where they involve hazardous activities, the risks may be greater and supervision levels should be set accordingly. The following guidelines give suggested ratios, but are subject to change depending on the activities undertaken and the age of the students:

- For day visits – 1:15 (maximum). 1:12 is the ideal.
- For overnight visits and outdoor activity based visits: 1:10. For all overseas visits: 1:10

All adult supervisors, including school staff must understand their roles and responsibilities at all times. In particular, all supervisors should be aware of any students who may require closer supervision, such as those with special needs or those with behavioral difficulties. Teachers retain responsibility for the group at all times.

For the protection of both adults and students, all adult supervisors should ensure that they are not alone in a one to one situation with a student. Whatever the length and nature of the visit, regular head counting of students should take place.

The group leader should establish rendezvous points and tell students what to do if they become separated from the party.



Preparing Students

Providing information and guidance to students is an important part of preparing for a school visit. Students should have a clear understanding about what is expected of them and what the visit will entail. Students must understand what standard of behaviour is expected of them and why rules must be followed. The lack of control and discipline can be a major contributory factor when accidents occur. Students should also be told about any potential dangers and how they should act to ensure their own and other's safety.

The same policy applies to drugs, alcohol and banned items on trips as in school. Any students found with such on a trip will be immediately sent home. On overseas trips, parents will be called to collect their son/daughter. Students found with said items will face appropriate disciplinary action as per the in-school policy.

Participation

Students should be assessed to ensure that they are capable of undertaking the proposed activities. During the visit they should not be forced into activities they fear. Students whose behavior is such that the group leader is concerned for their, or others' safety, should be withdrawn from the activity. On residential visits the group leader should consider whether such students will return home early.

Information to students

It is for the party leader to decide how to provide information, but they should be satisfied that the students understand key safety information.

Students should understand:

- The aims and objectives of the visit / activity.
- Background information about the place to be visited.
- How to avoid specific dangers and why they should follow rules.
- Why safety precautions are in place.
- Why special safety precautions are in place for anyone with disabilities.
- What standard of behaviour is expected from students.
- Who is responsible for the group.
- What to do if approached by a stranger.
- What to do if separated from the group.
- Emergency procedures.
- Meeting procedures.



Transport and students:

- Students using transport on a visit should be made aware of basic safety rules including: Arrive on time and wait for the transport away from the road, track, etc. do not rush towards the transport when it arrives.
- Wear seatbelts and stay seated while travelling on transport.
- Make sure bags do not block aisles on the transport and never attempt to get on or off the moving transport.
- Never throw things out of the transport vehicle's windows.
- Never get off a vehicle held up by traffic lights or in traffic.
- Never run about while transport is moving or pass someone on steps or stairs.
- Never distract or disturb the driver.
- Stay clear of automatic doors / manual doors after boarding or leaving the transport.
- After leaving the vehicle, always wait for it to move off before crossing the road.
- If feeling unwell while travelling, tell a teacher or the person who is otherwise responsible.

Students with special educational and medical needs

The Principal will not exclude students with special educational or medical needs from school visits. Every effort should be made to accommodate them whilst maintaining the safety of everyone on the visit. Special attention should be given to appropriate supervision ratios and additional safety measures may need to be addressed at the planning stage.

Child Protection issues:

Where any students are travelling about whom it is known there are child protection issues relating to their emotional stability, or relationships with others, consideration should be given to informing the party-leader of any issues, particularly on residential journeys. The Principal should make a judgement on this issue, dependent on considerations of the child's emotional state and the individual's right to privacy.

Communicating with Parents / Guardians

Parents need to be aware that the teachers on the visit will be acting in their place and will be exercising the same care that a prudent parent would.

The following information on matters that might affect students' health and safety is useful to parents, and will be included in letter to parents / guardians prior to a visit:

- Dates of the visit.
- Times of departure and return to school.
- Parents should give approval in writing.
- Details of accommodation with security and supervisory arrangements on site.
- Names of leader, or other staff and of other accompanying adults.



- Visit's objectives.
- Details of the activities planned and of how the assessed risks will be managed.
- For overseas trips, insurance (including Covid related Insurance) taken out for the group as a whole in respect of luggage, accident, cancellation, Covid and medical cover.
- Clothing and equipment to be taken.
- Money to be taken.
- The information to be given by parents and what they will be asked to consent to.

Residential visits

Parents' meeting: For any overnight or residential visit, it is essential that the party leader holds a meeting for parents, at which they are given all the details of the journey and the opportunity to ask questions.

Contact details: The party leader should ensure that s/he has a list of contact details for parents while they are away. S/he should also have contact details for two members of the Senior Leadership Team, who are likewise given contact details of the participants on the trip. Party leaders should also consider the wisdom of using a 'contact-tree' for speed of passing on information.

Hostels and Hotels: The school will bear in mind the following:

The group leader should:

- Ideally have adjoining rooms with staff quarters next to the young people's – endeavouring to obtain a floor plan of the rooms reserved for the group's use in advance.
- The immediate accommodation area should be exclusively for the use of the group.
- Access by staff to student rooms must be available at all times.
- Separate male and female sleeping areas for students and adults.
- Ensure that the whole party is aware of the lay-out of the accommodation, its fire precautions / exits, its regulations and routing, and that everyone can identify key personnel.
- Security arrangements – where the reception is not staffed 24 hours a day, security arrangements should be in force to stop unauthorised visitors.
- Ensure that locks / shutters etc. work on all the rooms used by the group.
- Storage of clothes, luggage, equipment etc., particularly safekeeping of valuables.
- Adequate lighting – it is advisable to bring a torch.
- Provision for sick, disabled students or those with special needs.
- Safety in rooms (electrical connections, secure balconies).