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# Mill Hill

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# Educational Visits Policy

November  
2019

### Key Points of the MHSF Educational Visits Policy

<b>Purpose</b>	To ensure that the Foundation has regard to and is compliant with the statutory framework. The policy also informs Governors, staff and parents of pupils of the procedures to be followed in the planning, managing, running and evaluating of Educational visits across the Foundation.
<b>Planning Visits</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Trips should be planned in conjunction with the Foundation's Educational Visits Policy and the individual school's guidance relating to School trips.</li> <li>b) Trips must be authorised by the appropriate Head of the School (via The Educational Visits Co-ordinator and the established protocol) before any trip is advertised or discussed in a wider context.</li> <li>c) Emergency contacts must be confirmed for parents, trip staff and school based staff before trip departure.</li> <li>d) All educational trips must ensure they follow the guidelines outlined in the Foundation's Safeguarding Policy at all times.</li> <li>e) Special consideration must be given to adventurous activities (particularly those involving water) with particular attention given to the staffing, external providers (including relevant certification/affiliations), equipment and Risk Assessment, well in advance of the aforementioned briefings.</li> <li>f) Normally Educational Visits should start and finish at school. Under some circumstances some pupils may be able to start or finish trips at different locations/times, but these requests must be received in writing and be authorised by a member of Senior Staff.</li> <li>g) All residential visits require: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Specific pupil contracts</li> <li>b. Parental consent</li> <li>c. Pupil, staff, parental and EVC meetings</li> </ul> </li> <li>h) For Exchange and Homestay visits, each person over 16 who will be present in the house during the visit must undergo a DBS check. Reciprocal checks must be made in the relevant country.</li> </ul>
<b>On the trip</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) The School Office must have an up to date list of pupils attending any visit immediately before departure.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>b) All members of staff should carry a critical incident guidance card and follow the advice given should an incident occur.</li> <li>c) Additional pupil briefings will occur during residential trips to discuss general logistics and critical incident responses (e.g. fire drill/act of terrorism)</li> <li>d) Risk Assessments must be ongoing and need to be adapted as a result of changing circumstances. The trip leader is ultimately the member of staff 'with responsibility' during the trip, irrespective of seniority of trip colleagues.</li> <li>e) Trips are run in line with the individual School's Expectations and Standards/Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy. Any issues relating to behaviour must be reported immediately to a member of Senior Staff.</li> </ul>
<b>Evaluation of Trips</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Any incidents or near misses must be reported along with a trip evaluation which must be completed for all trips.</li> </ul>

*The above Key Points are a synopsis and are not intended to replace the policy. The full policy must be read and followed in the event that it needs to be applied. If the Key Points are found to be in conflict with the wording of the full policy, the policy takes priority.*

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## **The Mill Hill School Foundation Educational Visits Policy**

### **Introduction**

1. The Court of Governors of The Mill Hill School Foundation [the 'Governors'] recognise the value to pupils of educational visits. Such visits should:

- enhance pupils' understanding of curricular activities (for example language or history studies);
- provide opportunities to practise skills (for example relating to sports);
- develop pupils' social skills (for example meeting pupils from other countries and cultures).

2. The Governors also recognise and accept that such visits present challenges to the health and welfare of pupils. Educational visits will be planned and operated in accordance with these guidelines so that everyone involved understands his or her responsibility to ensure that pupils can participate fully in educational visits in reasonable safety.

3. The School's planning and running of Educational Visits will have regard to the ten important areas listed below:

- a) Responsibility for visits, including pupils' behaviour
- b) Planning visits, including risk assessments and first aid
- c) Supervision, including ratios and vetting checks (for example, DBS checks for volunteers on overnight stays)
- d) Preparing pupils, including special and medical needs
- e) Communicating with parents, pupils and staff
- f) Planning transport
- g) Insurance
- h) Types of visit
- i) Visits abroad
- j) Emergency procedures, including contact details and permission for emergency medical treatment if the parents cannot be contacted.

4. This Policy must be read and complied with in conjunction with each Foundation School's individual Educational Visits School Trips guidance/handbook.

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5. This Policy applies to the four schools in the Foundation and to all pupils including those in the EYFS.

## **Responsibilities**

### **1. Employers**

1.1 Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 etc, employers are responsible for the health, safety and welfare at work of their employees. Employers are also under a duty to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of anyone else on the premises or anyone who may be affected by their activities. This includes everyone involved in off-site visits (teachers, volunteers, helpers and pupils).

The Court of Governors is the employer of staff at The Mill Hill School Foundation.

1.2 The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992, made under the 1974 Act, require employers to:

- assess the risks of activities
- introduce measures to control those risks;
- tell their employees about these measures.

### **2. Employees**

2.1 Also under the Health and Safety legislation, employees must:

- take reasonable care of their own and others' health and safety
- co-operate with their employers over safety matters
- carry out activities in accordance with training and instructions
- inform the employer of any serious risks

These duties apply to all School visits. Teachers and other staff in charge of pupils also have a common law duty to act as any reasonably prudent parent would do in the same circumstances.

2.2 Although the employer is responsible for health and safety, decisions about visits are usually delegated to the Head of the School. The Head's agreement must be obtained before a visit takes place.

### **3. Governing Body**

3.1 The Court of Governors will satisfy themselves, as far as is reasonably practicable, that the Head has effectively implemented this Policy and ensured that risk assessments have been carried out, that appropriate safety measures are in place and that training needs have been addressed. This will be undertaken by an Annual Report from each School's Educational Visits Co-ordinator to the Pastoral Committee of the Court of Governors

3.2 The Governors delegate to the Head the following responsibilities to:

- ensure that the visit has a specific and stated objective
- ensure that the Head/Group Leader shows how their plans comply with regulations and guidelines, including the school's health and safety policy document
- ensure that they are informed about less routine visits well in advance
- assess proposals for certain types of visit, including visits involving an overnight stay or travel outside the UK

#### **4. Head**

4.1 Where the Head wishes to appoint an Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC), to act on behalf of the Head, the employee should be specifically competent. The level of competence required will relate to the size of the school and the types of educational visits proposed. Evidence of competence will be through the experience of practical leadership over many years of outdoor education and the completion of training in risk assessment and a thorough knowledge of this part of the Policy. Whilst the administration of such tasks can be delegated overall responsibility for Health and Safety cannot.

4.2 If the Head takes part in the visit as a group member/supervisor, he or she will follow the instructions of the Group Leader who will have sole charge of the visit.

4.3 The Head will also ensure that:

- a detailed risk assessment has been completed and appropriate safety measures are in place
- any relevant qualifications claimed by the Group Leader or other relevant members of the group have been checked and verified
- there is adequate and relevant insurance cover
- he or she has the address and phone number of the visit's venue and a contact name (if appropriate)

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- a suitable member of staff has been appointed as the EVC and that the designated person meets their Employer's requirements, including undertaking EVC Training as recommended or required
  - sufficient time has been assigned to staff to organise activities and visits properly
  - a succession planning culture is in place to ensure sustainable activities and visits and the development of competent leaders and EVCs
  - the school has an Emergency Plan for off-site visits, including procedures to ensure that parents are appropriately informed in the event of a serious incident
  - serious incidents are reported to the employer as required by the employer's guidance, meeting the requirements of RIDDOR
  - Near misses are reported via the Foundation reporting system.
  - For Exchange and Homestay visits, each person over 16 who will be present in the house during the stay/visit must undergo a DBS check. Reciprocal checks must be made in the relevant country.

## **5. The Educational Visits Co-ordinator.**

5.1 The responsibilities of the Educational Visits Co-ordinator are as follows:

- to have attended EVC training as recommended or required by the employer
- to co-ordinate Educational Visits with Foundation schools across the annual calendar to avoid clashes with other School activities and to ensure an even spread of visits, as far as possible, across the School. (At Belmont this is the responsibility of the Deputy Head Operations)
- to check that all educational visits comply with the School's Educational Visits Policy and follow the guidance for the organisation and running of an educational visit specified in the accompanying Handbook, working with Group Leaders to ensure that the School's expectations are met
- to assess the educational value of visits based on post trip evaluation (this may be in written format depending on individual school's guidance) in conjunction with the Group Leader, and agree upon whether a trip should be repeated
- to review the School policy and guidance handbook on educational visits annually and update, as appropriate, to meet current national guidelines or changes to agreed practice specifically at Mill Hill and to ensure that Group Leaders are aware of

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changes in legislation or 'best practice' that may affect the planning and organisation of educational visits

- to review systems and monitor practice and make recommendations for change, where appropriate
- to identify staff training needs relating to the organisation of educational visits and, if appropriate, organise appropriate training for Group Leaders and other adults accompanying visits
- to ensure that medical and first aid issues are addressed
- to ensure that individual activities and visits are reviewed and evaluated and that this process includes reporting of accidents and incidents, complying with Employer requirements and Reporting Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR)
- to ensure that policies and procedures are reviewed regularly. A review should follow any serious incident or systems failure
- to ensure that there is an establishment procedure for recording "near accidents/near misses", including any resulting learning points and action
- to establish 24/7 Emergency Contacts for every visit and that Emergency Procedures are in place

## **6. Group Leader**

6.1 One teacher, the Group Leader, will have overall responsibility for the supervision and conduct of the visit and will have regard to the health and safety of the group. The Group Leader will have been appointed or approved by the Head or the Governing Body. The Group Leader will:

- obtain the Head's prior written agreement before any off-site visit takes place and, as appropriate, the completion of any other forms in accordance with their School's Educational Visits/School Trips Policy
- follow the relevant regulations, guidelines and Foundation and/or School policies, as set out in this Policy and their School's Educational Visits/School Trips Policy
- undertake and complete the planning and preparation of the visit including the briefing of group members and parents, including complete a comprehensive risk management procedures for all activities to be undertaken on the trip
- ensure that the School has the most up to date information in regard to

- pupils taking part in the trip and methods of communication
- ensure there are contingency arrangements in the event of unfavourable weather conditions, transport breakdown, other failure or in the event of a pupil having to be sent home in accordance with their School's Educational Visits/School Trips Policy
  - be aware of insurance procedures as set out in their School Educational Visits/School Trips Policies
  - ensure there are adequate safeguards so that this will not compromise group management, if the staff team includes someone with a close relationship to a member of the group
  - ensure that child protection issues are addressed (eg best safeguarding practice is followed and adults are appropriately vetted and checked)
  - ensure that informed parental consent has been obtained as necessary
  - make sure there is access to first aid at an appropriate level. In the case of trips involving pupils at EYFS, a paediatric First Aider is present;
  - evaluate all aspects of the visit, both during and after the event
  - report any accidents, incidents or near misses
  - ensure that recruitment checks are in place for all persons involved, working with the Designated Person for Safeguarding Lead as required

## **7. Teachers and Non-Teacher Adult Volunteers**

7.1 Teachers and Non-Teacher Adult Volunteers on school-led visits act as employees of the Governing Body, whether the visit takes place within normal working hours or outside those hours, by agreement with the Head of the School.

7.2 Teachers and Non-Teacher Adult Volunteers (i.e. persons over the age of 18 years who are not employees of the School but who accompany or take part in trips and visits) whether or not acting as a supervisor will assume a duty of care towards Foundation employees, pupils, other children and Non-Teacher Adult Volunteers who are on the trip or visit. They will do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group and act as any reasonable parent would do in the same circumstances. They will comply with the instructions of the Group Leader who will have sole charge of the visit and the implementation of the detailed Risk Assessment for the trip. They will have read the detailed Risk Assessment for the trip before departure of the trip or visit and comply with it.

7.3 The use of Teacher and Non-Teacher Volunteers on school-led visits will comply fully with The Mill Hill School Foundation recruitment and safeguarding policies.

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## **8. Non-Teacher Adult Volunteers**

8.1 Non-Teacher Adult Volunteers will follow the instructions of the Group Leader and teacher supervisors and help with control and discipline. A Non-Teacher Adult Volunteer should not be left in sole charge of pupils unless/except where either:

- an enhanced DBS disclosure check and other requisite compliance checks in accordance with the ISI guidelines have been completed and received by the School and is considered to be satisfactory and it has been previously agreed as part of the Risk Assessment for the trip or visit that the Non-teacher adult volunteer may be placed in sole charge of pupils;

or

- in exceptional circumstances that may be determined to be an emergency by the Group Leader or a teacher supervisor and when appropriate authority has been sought and obtained from the Head or member of the Senior Management Team emergency contact, a Non-teacher adult volunteer may be placed in sole charge of pupils;
- Non-Teacher Adult Volunteers must report to the Group Leader or teacher supervisors any concern about the health or safety of pupils at any time during the visit;
- be aware of potential conflicts of interest if their own children are members of the group and discuss this beforehand with the Group Leader.

8.2 Non-Teacher Adult Volunteers who accompany or take part in trips and visits which involve an overnight stay must have an enhanced DBS disclosure check and other requisite compliance checks in accordance with the ISI guidelines which have been completed and received by the School prior to the departure of the trip or visit and is considered to be satisfactory and included in the detailed Risk Assessment for the trip or visit.

8.3 Trip organisers should bear in mind the lengthy process and time required (which is normally around 4 or 5 weeks and may be a matter of months) to obtain a satisfactory enhanced DBS disclosure.

## **9. Responsibilities of pupils**

The Group Leader will make it clear to pupils that they must comply with their School Rules which govern the trip and any other duties or responsibilities given in their School's

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Educational Visits/School Trips Policies. A pupil whose behaviour may be considered to be a danger to himself or herself or to the group may be stopped from going on the visit. In addition to any formal sanction that may be imposed, the School reserves the right to withdraw a pupil from any activity/trip where there are concerns about a pupil's trustworthiness. In such circumstances, there will be no refund due of monies paid towards the activity/trip.

## **10. Parents**

10.1 The Group Leader will ensure that parents are given sufficient information in writing and, if appropriate, they are invited to any briefing sessions (residential trips), so that they have full information about the visit and are able to make an informed decision on whether their child should go on the visit. This should include proposals for alternative activities where, for example, adverse weather conditions prevent the intended activity taking place. Reasonable adjustments will be made for disabled children.

10.2 The Group Leader will also tell parents how they can help prepare their child for the visit, the arrangements for sending a pupil home early (for which parents will normally be required to meet the costs of such arrangements) and arrangements for communicating with parents (including emergency arrangements). See the relevant School's Educational Visits Handbook.

## **11. Learning Difficulties, Disability and Medical Needs/Conditions etc.**

11.1 The Mill Hill School Foundation welcomes pupils with disabilities and learning difficulties. The Foundation maintains and drives a positive culture towards inclusion of disabled people and those with learning needs in all the activities of the Foundation and will not treat a pupil less favourably on these grounds without justification. Each School will make reasonable adjustments for pupils with any type of disability, learning difficulty or medical need/condition to enable their participation on educational visits, whilst maintaining the safety of everyone in the group.

11.2 Special needs of any kind, including such medical conditions as sleepwalking and epilepsy, will be taken into consideration in the risk assessments and planning undertaken in advance of the trip or visit and appropriate measures to address the risk identified.

11.3 Where reasonable adjustments are not possible to enable a pupil with a disability or learning difficulty or medical need/condition to participate in a trip or visit, that pupil might not be permitted to take part in that trip or visit.

## **12. Risk Management Procedures**

12.1 Risk assessment is an essential part of fulfilling health and safety responsibilities. Risk assessments must be completed for all activities undertaken on the trip, the outward and homeward journey and any periods of free time. See the relevant School's Educational Visits Handbook

**Last review:** Pastoral Committee November 2019

Approved By resolution of the Pastoral Committee of the Court of Governors



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[millhill.org.uk](http://millhill.org.uk)

**Mill Hill School  
The Ridgeway  
Mill Hill Village  
London NW7 1QS**

**020 8959 1221  
[millhill.org.uk](http://millhill.org.uk)**