

Presdales School



'Achievement for All'

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Introduction

The staff and trustees of Presdales School acknowledge the benefits and added value gained from visits and activities which take place outside the normal curriculum. The school offers students the opportunity to take part in a range of activities which will support and enrich the aims of the curriculum. These activities include:

- sporting fixtures
- out of hours clubs
- local visits
- day visits
- residential visits
- overseas visits
- adventurous activities

Scope and Remit of the Policy

It is a legal requirement that employees and other adults associated with Presdales School, who take responsibility for students participating in learning and recreational activities in environments that are different from where they are usually based, must work within the requirements of this policy. This includes off-site activities and visits, as well as some outdoor on-site activities. The policy provides the key reference for sound planning for such activities in the following locations:

- the school grounds
- the local environment
- places further afield e.g. visits to local libraries, theatres and museums etc
- residential venues
- learning ventures abroad

and involves any one of the following:

- direct supervision of students undertaking experiences beyond the boundary of their normal operational base;
- direct supervision of students undertaking experiences that fall within the remit of Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC);
- facilitating experiences for students undertaking experiences beyond the boundary of their normal operational base;
- deploying staff who will supervise or facilitate experiences of students undertaking experiences beyond the boundary of their normal operational base.

Staff must ensure that students are supervised in accordance with the contents of this policy, regardless of whether or not the activities take place within or outside of normal working hours, including weekends and holiday periods.

Guidance and Related Policies

The school purchases Offsite Visits support from Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) and uses the HCC Evolve online system to facilitate the efficient planning, management, approval and evaluation of visits. This policy is based on the following guidance:

OEPC National Guidance (<http://oeapng.info>)

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Behaviour Policy
- Charging and Remission Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy

Statutory Framework

1. Under health and safety law, the employer in an establishment is responsible for the health, safety and welfare of their employees and anyone else on their premises or who may be affected by their activities.
2. As the employer, the Board of Trustees is responsible for the actions of its employees whilst acting in the course of their employment; this includes the safety and well-being of students in its care and volunteers assisting in the delivery of educational visits.
3. Department for Education health and safety advice on legal duties and powers for local authorities, headteachers, staff and governing bodies can be found at www.education.gov.uk/schools/adminandfinance/healthandsafety.
4. The “Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001” requires that schools do not discriminate against students for reasons relating to their disabilities and that “reasonable adjustments” are made so as to ensure that disabled students are not substantially disadvantaged in comparison with students who are not disabled.

Roles and Responsibilities

The safe and successful running of trips, visits and activities is dependent upon the sound knowledge and experience of those parties who have legal responsibility for students when they are off-site. These include:

- the Board of Trustees
- the Headteacher
- the Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC)
- the group leader
- members of staff accompanying the trip

Board of Trustees

Under Health and Safety law the Board of Trustees, as the employer, is responsible for the health, safety and welfare of the academy’s employees and anyone else on the premises or who may be affected by the activities of the academy. The Board of Trustees is responsible for the actions of its employees whilst acting in the course of their employment. By association, this includes the safety and well-being of students in its care and volunteers assisting in the delivery of educational visits.

The Board of Trustees must ensure that:

- the school has guidance in place
- appropriate risk management procedures are in place
- policies are in place to cover visits, inclusion and charges and remission
- an Education Visits Coordinator has been appointed
- appropriate approval procedures are in place in the school

Headteacher

Although the employer retains responsibility for health and safety, the consideration and approval of offsite visits and activities has been delegated to the Headteacher who will ensure that Board of Trustees guidance is implemented.

Before a visit is advertised to parents the Headteacher must approve the initial plan and, subsequently, the completed plan and risk assessments for the visit before departure. Before approving a visit the Headteacher must be satisfied that:

- the visit is planned in accordance with employer guidance
- the visit leader is an employee who is competent to lead the visit
- the number and competence of accompanying staff is appropriate
- suitable safeguarding measures are in place
- sound and effective 24-hour emergency support procedures are in place
- appropriate arrangements are made for the medical and special educational needs of students and staff
- appropriate insurance cover is in place
- adequate risk management and contingency arrangements are in place
- appropriate procedures are in place in case of a major incident
- the aims, educational objectives and benefits of the activity are clearly identified and consideration has been given to best value

Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC)

To help fulfil its health and safety obligations for visits, the Headteacher has nominated the School Business Manager as the Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC).

The EVC will:

- take the lead on developing and reviewing establishment procedures
- attend regular training and organise the training and induction of visit leaders and supporting staff
- support the Headteacher with approval and other decisions, including assessing the competence and confidence of staff
- ensure that 24-hour emergency arrangements and emergency contact information for all participants are in place
- monitor visit planning, including financial, travel, accommodation and itinerary arrangements
- provide guidance to visit and activity leaders
- ensure that safeguarding procedures have been followed

- ensure that medical and first aid issues are addressed
- ensure that visits and LOtC activities are reviewed and evaluated; including the reporting of accidents and incidents

Visit/Activity Leader

The visit leader has overall responsibility for the planning, management, supervision and conduct of the visit and must be an employee. The leader must:

- follow employer and national guidance and school policies and procedures
- ensure that the activity is properly planned, including appropriate assessment of foreseeable risks and the identification of effective control measures and precautions
- ensure that the roles and responsibilities of other staff and students are clearly communicated, ensuring effective supervision.
- make appropriate and adequate preparations for emergencies in conjunction with the EVC and ensure that accompanying staff are familiar with these procedures.
- arrange for clearly understood delegation to another member of staff in their absence
- ensure that they are fully aware of students' special educational, medical or dietary needs, and where there is any ambiguity, seek clarification from parents
- ensure that accompanying staff are fully aware of students' special educational, medical or dietary needs
- ensure that an individual risk assessment is completed for any student with school healthcare plan and that permission to travel is obtained from a medical professional where appropriate
- carry out continuous risk management during the visit
- communication with parents – sharing important information regarding the trip

Adult Volunteers

The school will usually use employees to accompany visits but if volunteers take part they must ensure that they:

- understand and agree to the expectations of them
- understand their relationship to the students, visit leader and staff
- recognise the limits of their responsibilities
- follow instructions from visit leaders and staff
- are not left in sole charge of students unless this has been agreed and risk assessed.
- have an appropriate DBS certificate for residential trips
- raise concerns for student welfare with the visit leader

Students

Whilst taking part in a school trip, students are required to adhere to the Code of Conduct set out in the Behaviour Policy. In addition, students should be made aware that they too have responsibilities for their own health and safety and for that of the group. Students should:

- follow the instructions of the group leader and other members of staff
- dress and behave responsibly and sensibly
- be aware of anything that might hurt or threaten anyone in the group and report to the group leader
- not take unnecessary risks
- if abroad, be sensitive to local codes and customs

Parents

Parents and guardians should be aware of the following:

- their right to full information
- their need to provide full information about their child, including medical conditions
- the requirements for parental consent (where applicable)
- the need for parents and students to have a proper understanding of behavioural expectations and sanctions
- the need to provide 24-hour emergency contact information

Planning and Procedures

Detailed guidance for the planning school trips is included on the google drive under Finance forms and then TRIPS. The extent of planning required is related to the complexity of the visit, based on STAGED:

Staffing, Timings, Activity, Group, Environment, Distance

When planning overseas trips reference should be made to Foreign Office guidance regarding travel to specific countries.

Risk Assessment

Risks are expected to be reduced to an acceptable or tolerable level, and not necessarily eliminated. Planning should achieve a rational balance between potential adverse risks and the intended benefits and outcomes of the activity.

The visit leader will identify the risks from any activity that is under their control and take appropriate steps to ensure all participants are safe. Good practice precautions and safety measures will be taken and this will be recorded in a risk assessment.

A selection of generic risk assessments is available in Word format from the Health & Safety pages on the Grid and for use on 'EVOLVE'. Whilst not exhaustive, the control measures contained within this selection are probably sufficient to cover most eventualities likely to be encountered in the course of most offsite visits and LOtC activities.

From time to time, EVOLVE may change their reporting criteria at which point, the procedures of each trip will be updated to ensure that we are compliant with the update risk assessments.

Staff are encouraged to compile their own "event-specific" risk assessments which can then be reviewed and re-used as required.

Planning that includes adventurous activity commonly involves delivery by an external provider and the provider will have responsibility for risk assessing and managing the activity. As such, the provider's risk assessment is not the concern of the establishment leader, does not need to be requested from the provider, and does not need to be attached to 'EVOLVE'.

‘Plan B’ arrangements

Alternative arrangements should be included within the planning process where appropriate, for example, where weather conditions or water levels might be critical, or where an overcrowded venue might necessitate an alternative option. Where appropriate, all alternative activities should be fully considered and risk assessed beforehand.

Preliminary Visits

Whenever reasonably possible, it is good practice for the Visit Leader to make a preliminary visit to a venue or provider beforehand in order for them to familiarise themselves with the layout and surroundings, and any site-specific procedures or issues which may have an impact on the visit or members of the group.

Within the UK, the highest priority for preliminary visits will be where no serving member of staff from the establishment has visited before or when the Visit Leader has no experience of the venue/activity. For overseas visits, advantage should be taken of any offers by tour operators for preliminary visits.

Participants

It is good practice to involve participants in the planning and organisation of visits. This will encourage participants to make more informed decisions, become more ‘risk aware’ and hence at less risk. They will also have greater ownership of the event.

Outcomes

Clarity regarding the intended outcomes of the visit will help to ensure that the potential benefits can be achieved. Up to four ‘intended’ outcomes may be recorded on ‘EVOLVE’ during the planning process, for subsequent evaluation.

Work that takes place outside the classroom can provide a very powerful means of developing learning in all curriculum areas, and raise attainment. Experiential learning can also provide opportunities for development in other areas, including:

- Relationships
- Emotional & spiritual
- Cross curricular
- Individual
- Teamwork
- Environmental

Preparatory work should take place in advance of the visit where appropriate. This, in conjunction with activity that will take place during the visit, should feed into any follow-up work.

The website [‘High Quality Outdoor Education’](#) can be used as a tool by visit leaders to assist in both identifying outcomes and in the evaluation of the learning taking place.

First Aid

It is not always necessary that a qualified First Aider accompanies an offsite visit or LOtC activity. First aid issues for any LOtC activity should be considered as part of the risk management process and the exact requirements should be determined by ensuring that first aid support is available at an appropriate level. What is “appropriate” will be determined by:

- the nature of the activity
- the nature of the group with particular training required for certain medical conditions, eg: diabetes.
- the likely injuries associated with the activity

- the extent to which the activity will isolate the group from normal ambulance support, or a known point where a qualified first aider will be available

A very basic level of first aid support must be available at all times. This will require that one or more of the staff leading the activity:

- know how to access qualified first aid support
- have a working knowledge of simple first aid and are competent to use the first aid materials carried with the group
- For some activities (most commonly in defined adventure activities) there is a good practice expectation that requires those leading such activities to hold a current first aid “qualification”. To be a “qualification”, the first aid course must include a formalised assessment process; otherwise any certification will have the status of a certificate of attendance. In practical terms, the course will be a minimum of 16 hours.
- It is a legal requirement that all minibuses carry a first aid kit

Insurance

The school purchases school journey insurance from the DfE Risk Protection Arrangement. For travel within the European Union (plus Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland), all participants must hold a valid GHIC (Global Health Insurance Card).

Inclusion

This school endorses the following principles:

- A presumption of entitlement to participate
- Accessibility through direct or realistic adaptation or modification
- Integration through participation with peers

Under the Equality Act 2010, it is unlawful to discriminate against disabled participants because of their disability, without material or substantial justification. Visit Leaders are required to make reasonable adjustments to avoid participants being placed at a substantial disadvantage.

However, the Disability Discrimination Act does not require responsible bodies to place employees or participants at inappropriate risk if a health and safety issue arises. It is also the case that the adjustments made to include disabled students should not impinge unduly on the planned purpose of the activity. Expectations of staff must be reasonable, so that what is required of them to be able to include a given young person is within their competence and normal work practices.

External Activity Providers

Where external contractors are involved in organising all or part of the visit, the contract will be made with the school on behalf of the students. All payments for the visit will be made through the school accounts.

The Visit Leader will make appropriate checks before committing the school to the contract. This will include seeking assurances about health and safety, and any accreditation and licensing.

Parental Consents

Written consent from parents is sought for students taking part in the off-site activities organised by the school even when these activities take place during school hours and are a normal part of students’ education. Parents will be informed in writing if students are being taken off-site. Students taking part in sports fixtures are required to inform their parents in advance and ensure they are aware of expected finish

times and arrangements for picking up students. Details of fixtures and expected finish times will be posted on the school web-site.

Written consent will also be requested for activities that need a higher level of risk management or those that take place outside school hours. Parents will be fully informed of the activities and arrangements for such visits. For all residential visits parents will be invited to a briefing meeting where they can ask for clarification of any aspect of the itinerary and organisation of the visit.

Behaviour

The school has a clear code of conduct for school visits based on the school 'Behaviour Policy'. This code of conduct will be part of the condition of booking by the parents and students will be required to sign a behaviour agreement before the trip departs. Students, whose behaviour is such that the Visit Leader is concerned for their safety, or for that of others, can be withdrawn from the activity. The Visit Leader will consider whether such students should be sent home early and parents will be expected to cover any costs of the early journey home.

Students whose behaviour or attendance in school is less than satisfactory and gives cause for concern may be excluded from taking part in school trips. The decision to exclude individual students from a trip for either of these reasons is the responsibility of the Visit Leader and the Headteacher, supported by pastoral leaders.

Staffing and Supervision

Staffing

The school recognises the key role of accompanying staff in ensuring the highest standards of learning, challenge and safety on a school visit. Pre-employment checks, including DBS checks, must be in place.

Staff are encouraged and supported to develop their abilities in organising and managing visits. There is a system within the school to allow less experienced members of staff to work alongside more experienced colleagues on visits. The selection of staff for offsite visits will be a key priority in the initial approval of any proposed visit. Staff will be suitably qualified and experienced for proposed activities.

The appointed visit leader will be fully supported in the tasks required to arrange the visit. This will include, as necessary, making time to conduct an exploratory visit if necessary, briefing teachers and/or other staff, accessing training courses, reviewing and evaluating the visit and working with the EVC to undertake planning and risk assessments.

Visit staff will not be under the influence of alcohol or other substances which might impede their ability to recognise hazards or respond to emergencies.

Supervision

The school must ensure that there is an appropriate level of supervision at all times for all visits and that such supervision is 'effective'. This must have been approved by the EVC and Headteacher and, where applicable, in accordance with Board of Trustees policy.

The EVC and Headteacher will make a professional judgement regarding the number and suitability of staffing on an individual visit basis after consideration of the following factors:

- the type, level, and duration of activity;
- the nature and requirements of individuals within the group, including those with additional needs;
- the experience and competence of staff and other adults;
- the venue, time of year and prevailing/predicted conditions;

A useful 'starting point for consideration' is 1 adult: 10 students.

Members of staff who are assigned to support the special needs of an individual cannot be included in the overall staffing ratio. Their responsibility should not include the wider group.

Particular consideration should be given to the additional implications that may arise if staff are to be accompanied by family members (or partners) on visits.

Competence

Competence is a combination of experience, training/qualifications and common sense. The competence of the visit leader is the single most important contributory factor in the safety of participants. Consideration will be given to the following when assessing the competence of a member of staff to lead a visit:

- experience of leading or accompanying similar or other visits
- competence in planning and managing visits
- the leader's reasons for undertaking the visit
- the ability to manage the pastoral welfare of participants
- sound decision making abilities
- knowledge and experience of the participants he/she intends to supervise
- experience of the environment and geographical area chosen
- if appropriate, personal level of skill in the activity, and fitness level
- knowledge of all relevant guidelines and the ability to act on these

Remote Supervision

Young people must be supervised throughout all visits. At times they may be unaccompanied by a member of staff or other responsible adult, e.g. D of E expeditions, 'down time' in a shopping mall, etc. This is known as 'remote' supervision.

'Remotely supervised' activities can bring purposeful educational benefits, and the progression from dependence to independence is to be encouraged.

In addition to considering the benefits of the activity, staff should also ensure that reasonably practicable safety precautions are taken.

The decision to allow remote supervision should be based on professional judgement taking into account such factors as:

- prior knowledge of the individuals (including their maturity and levels of responsibility);
- venue and conditions;
- the activity taking place;
- preparatory training;
- the competence of the supervising staff;
- the emergency systems in place.

Approval of Visits

Approval is delegated to the Headteacher for all visits and the following types of visit are automatically notified to the Hertfordshire County Council on Evolve:

- Overseas (anywhere that involves crossing a substantial area of open sea, including Northern Ireland, the Isle of Man, the Hebrides and the Channel Islands)
- Those involving one or more adventurous activities to be led by a member of establishment staff.
- Regardless of whether a visit should be notified to the LA or not, there should be a clear, unambiguous audit trail for arrangements with clear evidence of approval. Such evidence will usually be recorded on EVOLVE but where this is not the case a signature of endorsement on manual trip records or lesson plans will suffice.

The process for approval has three main stages:

- Visit/activity proposed and planned by Visit Leader and accompanying colleagues;
- Arrangements scrutinised by EVC until satisfied to recommend approval;
- Arrangements re-scrutinised by Head and, when satisfied, approved.

An offsite visit or LOtC activity should not proceed without clear evidence of approval.

Emergency Procedures

For all out of hours and residential trips a member of SLT will be nominated as the 24-hour emergency contact. A pack containing all information relevant to the trip and the participants, including medical and emergency contact details, will be left with the nominated emergency contact and on the school Google network.

The school keeps a number of mobile phones specifically for use on school trips and the trip leader should ensure that a phone is reserved in the Finance office and taken on the trip.

In the event of any problems which might arise the trip leader or other staff member must contact the nominated member of SLT acting as emergency contact for the visit. This might be a problem of a pastoral nature or a serious accident or incident.

A serious accident or incident is defined as: an accident leading to a fatality, serious or multiple fractures, amputation or other serious injury; circumstances in which a party member might be at serious risk; serious illness; or any situation in which the press or media are involved. The key priorities are:

- to ensure care of the group
- to ensure safety from further danger
- to arrange search, rescue, medical care or hospitalisation as necessary
- to ensure the welfare of all concerned

Next Steps

- in case a serious incident, criminal offence or fatality, to notify the local police
- to inform nominated member of the SLT – ensure you have the telephone number on you at all times
- information required: what has happened, to who, where, when, what has happened since, telephone number where you can be contacted
- to retain all equipment involved in an unaltered fashion

Warnings and Advice

- do not let party members (staff and students) telephone home until after contact has been made with the school
- never admit liability of any sort
- do not allow anyone to see any party member without an independent witness being present
- no one, unless they are in a relevant official capacity, such as local police, emergency services or accompanying school staff, has the right to see anyone who does not wish to see them
- if someone tries to force a confrontation, do not say anything and call the police
- be as compassionate as possible with anyone involved
- keep a written record of all that happens

Transport

Coaches

Whilst UK legislation ensures that coach companies are fit for public use, the facilities available on coaches may vary. Reputable coach companies will be used by the school.

Minibuses

Pre 1997 licence holders will participate in the Hertfordshire Driver Assessment Scheme which enables them to a drive the minibus under the D1 category

Post 1997 licence holders may drive a minibus provided:

- Drivers are aged 21 years or over
- They have held their category B driving licence for at least two years
- A full D1 PCV licence is held
- The minibus is being used by a non-commercial body for social purposes, but not for hire or reward
- Drivers are not being paid to drive the minibus, other than out-of-pocket expenses
- The minibus does not exceed 3.5 tonnes (or 4.25 tonnes if specialised equipment for the carriage of disabled passengers is included) gross vehicle weight
- No trailer is towed

Public Transport

For public transport within the Greater London area contact 'Transport for London', who offer special arrangements for establishment parties on London buses, Underground, Tramlink, and Docklands Light Railway, to cultural destinations. See [Transport for London](#) Tel. 020 7918 3954.

Swimming

The school acknowledges the immense educational benefits that swimming activities can potentially bring to young people, and fully supports and encourages swimming activities that are correctly planned, managed, and conducted. In addition to considering the benefits of the activity, staff should also ensure that reasonably practicable safety precautions are taken.

All swimming activities and venues must be included within the visit plan, and life-guarding arrangements checked in advance. This is particularly important in respect of visits abroad, where for example, a hotel pool may be available.

Particular consideration should be given to the following factors:

- Unknown locations and hazards, especially overseas
- Changing environmental conditions
- Supervisor complacency & lack of transferable knowledge
- Adherence to local advice
- Preparation and knowledge of young people, i.e. is it a planned activity?

Young people must be supervised by a competent adult at all times whilst undertaking swimming activities.

Swimming Pools (life-guarded)

UK Swimming Pool safety is guided by various Health and Safety at Work Acts and Regulations. Pool operators have a duty to take all reasonable and practicable measures to ensure that teaching and coaching activities are conducted safely.

For public life-guarded pools abroad, the establishment's staff must seek assurances that appropriate lifeguard cover is in place prior to participants entering the water.

Unless suitably qualified, the school's staff should not have responsibility for life-guarding. However, they do retain a pastoral role for participants at all times either through direct or 'remote' supervision.

For swimming lessons, the LA establishment should ensure the swimming teacher in charge or other pool employees/responsible adults supervising the participants are qualified according to current guidelines.

Hotel (and other) swimming pools

Swimming Pools without life-guards

Visit Leaders should check the life-guarding position in advance. If life-guarding arrangements are not provided at the pool then the visit leader will bear the full responsibility for ensuring swimming safety.

Staff must be aware of the procedures in the event of an emergency, and who at the venue will provide back up. Staff should also know if they have exclusive use of the pool, as other pool users may increase the supervision role of your lifeguard.

If a young person in the party holds an appropriate qualification then their role should be emergency lifeguard action, but supervision should remain the responsibility of school staff.

Open Water Swimming

LA notification is required via EVOLVE.

The designated lifeguard must be dedicated exclusively to the group, and the location used must fall within the RNLI/RLSS definition of a 'safer bathing area'. Local advice must always be sought.