



Rugby School  
THAILAND

## Educational Visits Policy & Handbook

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**Date Published:** May 2020

**Next Review:** May 2021

*The health, safety and well-being of young people are of paramount importance to all the adults who work at Rugby School Thailand. Children have the right to protection, regardless of age, gender, race, culture, sexual orientation, or disability. They have a right to be safe in our school. Members of staff in the school have a legal and moral obligation to safeguard and promote the welfare of the pupils, taking all reasonable steps to protect them from harm whether from physical injury, abuse, neglect, emotional harm or from anything that interferes with their general development.*

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## **Aims of the Policy**

- i. To enable RST to offer a broad and ambitious range of valuable off-site visits for all pupils
- ii. To facilitate the accurate planning and safe execution of all off-site visits
- iii. To ensure that all risks associated with any off-site visit are assessed and mitigated and that all members of the RST community are safeguarded throughout

## **Introduction**

Experiential learning beyond the classroom is central to Rugby School Thailand's philosophy to educate the whole person. Participants (both pupils and staff) enjoy significant benefits including:

- i. Personal and social development such as self-confidence, communication skills, independence, resilience, teamwork and leadership, including the confidence to stay away from home
- ii. Enriching knowledge, skills and understanding of curriculum areas through bringing subjects to life away from the classroom
- iii. Developing the attributes necessary to contribute to the 21<sup>st</sup> century global society

All staff are encouraged to support educational off-site visits and to develop their professional skills through participation in them with a view to ultimately leading trips of their own. No amount of planning can guarantee that a visit will be totally incident free and it is beyond the scope of this handbook to try to cover every eventuality. What it does provide is clear guidance and measures so that off-site visits can be planned accurately and executed safely without over burdening staff. There will always be the need for all staff on an off-site visit to exercise their professional judgement in considering how they react to a situation.

The Trip Leader should use this handbook to help plan and execute any off-site visit. The 'Running a Trip' step chart in the Off-sites Visits folder should be followed carefully although the full procedure will not always be necessary depending on the nature of the trip. Equally, it is not possible to provide guidance that covers in detail every eventuality and situation which may arise. If unsure, contact the EVC for advice and guidance. At Rugby School Thailand the Educational Visits Coordinators (EVC) are Tom Spreyer for Senior, David Dawson for Prep and Mark Symmonds for Pre-Prep. The EVC acts on behalf of the Heads to help the School fulfil its health and safety obligations for visits. The EVC assists Trip Leaders in the planning and management of educational visits.

## The Thai Legal Framework

### **The Occupational Safety, Health and Environment Act, A.D. 2011**

Employers are responsible for the health, safety and welfare of their employees. Employers shall have safety procedures in place and provide health and safety training to employees prior to commencing work, including when employees' job duties change, with regards factors that may be harmful to the health, safety and welfare of employees.

Employers shall arrange to have safety officer personnel, a working unit or group of individuals, to monitor health and safety matters in the workplace.

Employees are obliged to report the Provincial Office of Labour Protection and Welfare any work-related accidents.

### **The Public Health Act, A.D.1992**

Requires employers to have a Public Health permit.

### **The Announcement of the Ministry of Labour Protection and Welfare on the Reporting of Work Related Disaster and Serious Injury A.D. 2011**

Employers are required to report to the Provincial Office of Labour Protection and Welfare any work related accidents. This includes serious accidents that occur on school off-site visits.

Immediate verbal report and written report with details must be submitted within seven days for incidents resulting in a fatality, disasters associated with fire, explosion, chemical leaks leading to the disruption of operations.

Claim documents for the Workmen's Compensation Fund must be submitted to the Provincial Office of Labour Protection and Welfare within seven days for any accident resulting in three or more days of hospitalisation.

*Note, the above applies only to work related incidents.*

## Principles of UK Law Adopted as Best Practise by RST

RST seeks to operate to UK standards as far as is practicable. The following is thus included as a guide for best practise: it does not replace Thai law.

### **UK Common Law**

There are long established and important common law precedents for those acting in "*loco parentis*" to exercise the same care as would a reasonable parent. In the case of pupils on educational visits, this responsibility falls to all of the accompanying school staff.

### **The Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 1996**

Persons in control of outdoor activity centres must hold a licence. These regulations apply wherever the facilities are supplied in return for payment. **RST requires that evidence of licenses and suitable qualifications are obtained from all activity providers used, regardless of their location. Trip Leaders**

**should use the 'Third Party External Provider Form' in the Off-Sites Visits folder to collate details about potential providers.**

### **Liability**

So long as teachers follow the policies and procedures laid out in the Educational Off-Site Visits Handbook, they will usually not be personally liable. However if the Trip Leader departs significantly from the agreed itinerary (e.g. spontaneously decides to take pupils white water rafting) without consent or consideration or risk management, then s/he is likely to become personally liable. All decisions must be backed up by a risk assessment.

If a trip package is bought for a visit then the operator takes on certain liabilities however, RST staff still have duty of care. If RST puts a package together then they take on greater liability.

**To meet the requirements of duty of care on any educational off-site visit, all RST staff must:**

- i. identify and assess risk
- ii. familiarise themselves with risk management procedures
- iii. communicate and carry out the risk management procedures
- iv. continue to assess risk during the trip and use their professional judgement to make suitable adjustments as required
- v. ensure satisfactory supervision is carried out

### **Planning a Trip**

Before any school trip is embarked upon there are principles of safeguarding that must be met to ensure appropriate leadership, planning and safety arrangements are in place.

### **Leadership**

The quality and competency of leadership is vital when planning trips. The Trip Leader's competency is assessed by the EVC. The Trip Leader has overall responsibility for the health and safety, supervision and conduct of the group. For trips outside of Thailand an Assistant Trip Leader is required.

### **Reconnaissance**

Where feasible, an exploratory visit is recommended to evaluate the venue or activity for suitability, including risk assessment and risk management measures.

### **First Aid**

For residential trips, at least one member of staff should be a trained first-aider. For all adventurous or residential trips an appropriate first aid kit should be taken (available from the Health Centre).

## Staffing

The Trip Leader should appoint accompanying staff in consultation with the EVC and, if there are cover implications, Deputy Head Academic. When selecting accompanying staff, skills, experience and relevant qualifications should be considered, e.g. DofE or First Aid trained. Accompanying staff should supervise the party in accordance with instructions given by the Trip Leader. They should support the Trip Leader by assisting with the supervision of pupils and adhering to School policies and procedures.

A mixed group (boys and girls) should be supervised by male and female staff, unless the EVC gives permission to do otherwise. Parents/carers must be informed in advance of residential trips if male and female staff are not available to accompany a mixed group.

## Staff Pupil Ratio

There are no ratios prescribed by legislation but there must be reasonable supervision based on sound judgement, taking into account the nature of the trip, the number, age, gender and experience of pupils and the experience and expertise of staff. The tables below serve as a guideline only. Staffing for each off-site visit will be considered on a trip by trip basis.

<b>Rugby School Thailand Staffing Guidelines: non-residential trips</b>			
<b>Type of off-site visit</b>	<b>Staff: Pupil ratio</b>		<b>Notes</b>
	<b>Prep</b>	<b>Senior</b>	
<b>School Sports Fixtures</b>	1:12 plus floating	1:15 plus floating	Minimum two members of staff with one 'floating' and not part of ratio.
<b>Mainly static, indoor activities</b>	Y4-6 - 1:10 Y7-8 - 1:15	1:15	
<b>Open air activities / busy areas</b>	Y4-6 - 1:8 Y7-8 - 1:12	1:15	
<b>Activities needing close supervision e.g. Field trip in remote areas</b>	Y4-6 - 1:6 Y7-8 - 1:10 plus floating	1:10 plus floating	Minimum two members of staff with one 'floating' and not part of ratio.

<b>Rugby School Thailand Staffing Guidelines: residential trips</b>			
<b>Type of off-site visit</b>	<b>Staff: Pupil ratio</b>		<b>Notes</b>
	<b>Pre-Prep/Prep</b>	<b>Senior</b>	
<b>School Sports Tournament</b>	1:10 plus floating	1:10 plus floating	Minimum two members of staff with one 'floating' and not part of ratio.
<b>Academic/cultural trip</b>	Pre-Nursery Nursery Rec - Y2 Y4-6 - 1:6 Y7-8 - 1:10 plus floating	1:3 1:4 1:6 1:10 plus floating	As above
<b>Outdoor activities</b>	Pre-Nursery Nursery Rec - Y2 Y4-6 - 1:6 Y7-8 - 1:10 plus floating	1:3 1:4 1:6 1:10 plus floating	As above
<b>Ski trips</b>	Y4-6 - 1:6 Y7-8 - 1:10 plus floating	1:10 plus floating	Skiing led by instructors

For higher risk activities (e.g. water sports) suitable qualifications are required. Whilst qualified instructors may supervise specific activities at centres, responsibility for pupil welfare remains with the Trip Leader and assisting school staff.

It is advisable to have two members of staff accompany a trip. This is mandatory for overnight and overseas trips and other trips with higher risk activities.

**Staff Pupil Ratios in Pre-Prep**

Pre-Prep do not have separate ratios for off-site visits but use classroom ratios as the basis for considering the staffing of trips on a case by case basis.

From Statutory Framework for the EYFS: Section 3.22

For children aged two: (Pre-Nursery)

- i. there must be at least one member of staff for every four children
- ii. at least one member of staff must hold a full and relevant level 3 qualification
- iii. at least half of all other staff must hold a full and relevant level 2 qualification

For children aged three and over: in independent schools (including in nursery classes in free schools and academies), where a person with Qualified Teacher Status, Early Years Professional Status, Early Years Teacher Status or another suitable level 6 qualification, an instructor, or another suitably qualified overseas trained teacher, is working directly with the children:

- i. there must be at least one member of staff for every 13 children or one for every eight if not a qualified teacher
- ii. at least one other member of staff must hold a full and relevant level 3 qualification

For children of Reception age:

- i. for classes where the majority of children will reach the age of five or older within the school year, there must be at least one member of staff for every 30 children

### **Extra Assistance and Volunteers Remote Supervision**

RST does not use volunteers to help staff educational off-site visits.

### **Remote Supervision**

An aim of trips is often to encourage independence and trips may thus involve remote supervision where staff are not present at all times. The Trip Leader should assess whether pupils are suitable to be supervised remotely. Parents/carers should be made aware of whether an off-site visit will include remote supervision. The Trip Leader remains responsible for pupils throughout. Pupils should be provided with emergency contact details and clear guidance on conduct and permissible activity.

### **Thai Ministry of Education Requirements for all Residential Trips Outside of Chon Buri Province**

For such trips, the Trip Leader must work with the Thai Principal and relevant school secretary to prepare documents for the Chon Buri Ministry of Education, who will consider whether to grant permission for the trip to go ahead. Without a letter of permission from the Ministry of Education, the trip cannot run. The Ministry of Education must receive all documentation at least 30 days prior to the trip's departure.

Documents for submission to Ministry of Education at least 30 days prior to departure:

- ii. Outline of the educational purpose of the trip in English and Thai (use completed TAF-res form)
- iii. Participant list: name, gender, Nationality, ID number, passport number (for foreign trips)
- iv. Letter from relevant Headmaster confirming Trip Leader is employed by RST (relevant Head's PA will assist)
- v. Full itinerary of the trip
- vi. Copies of all parental consent forms (google forms will export responses to a spreadsheet that can then be printed to meet this requirement)
- vii. Insurance details for the trip
- viii. Cover letter for document pack (provided by Thai Principal)

Within one week of the trip's return:

- i. Trip Leader to provide Thai Principal with a brief report on the trip (use post trip report that must be written for school)
- ii. Thai Principal will provide a further cover letter and submit to Ministry of Education

## **Risk Assessment**

### **Risk Assessment & Management**

An essential element of learning beyond the classroom is to exercise pupils' sense of adventure and immersion, but not at the expense of putting them at unacceptable risk. The task of all adults involved with off-site visits must be to contain risks to acceptable levels.

This is achievable by considering:

- i. the type of activity and the level at which it is being undertaken
- ii. the benefits and rewards in relation to risk
- iii. the trip location, weather conditions, forecast and timings
- iv. the competence, experience and qualifications of supervising staff
- v. the age, experience, skills, fitness and temperament of pupils
- vi. the ratio of staff to pupils
- vii. safety equipment and instruction
- viii. parental consent (e.g. consent to swim)
- ix. emergency procedures including communication, first aid and fire safety
- x. code of conduct for pupils and staff
- xi. roles and responsibility of staff

Before writing a risk assessment, a Trip Leader should consult the RST safeguarding policy.

Risk assessment is carried out by the Trip Leader, but it is good practice to involve other staff and pupils where appropriate. The risk assessment will be checked by the EVC prior to departure. Reasonably foreseeable hazards should be considered and reasonably practical plans made to avoid unacceptable risk and minimise other risk.

Assessing and mitigating risk is a dynamic process. It does not end with the writing of the Risk Assessment before the trip departs but should continue throughout the trip and be shared with staff and pupils. Examples of dynamic risk assessment include modifying activities as a result of deteriorating weather or reviewing the use of public transport in a city upon encountering unexpectedly large crowds.

The risk assessment process should include:

- i. identifying reasonably foreseeable risks / hazards including safeguarding concerns
- ii. identifying risk management measures including emergency procedures
- iii. communicating with staff and pupils (including alterations)
- iv. implementing the measures
- v. ongoing risk assessment and making modifications as required
- vi. reviewing and reflection

First aid provision forms part of risk assessment. On residential trips, a member of staff should be first aid trained. Minibuses used by RST (whether School owned or from a contractor) are required to carry a first aid kit.

Generic risk assessments in the Off-site Visits folder can be used as a basis on 'lower risk' trips (e.g. cinema visit) but specific risks should be addressed. The Off-site Visits folder also contains a Risk Assessment resource bank to assist Trip Leaders.

Risk assessment information must be shared with staff and pupils during the trip briefing.

Where an operator is used to provide services (e.g. transport, accommodation), the Trip Leader should obtain the operator's risk assessment, standard operating procedure (SOP) and management information. The Trip Leader retains responsibility for the risk assessment of the trip and the welfare of the group.

## **Writing a Risk Assessment**

### **Identify Hazard areas:**

- i. Give a suitable sub-heading e.g. *coach journey, hotel stay, museum visit*.
- ii. On subsequent lines identify the specific hazards within this aspect of the trip e.g. road traffic accident, fire in hotel.

### **Risk Level:**

Estimate the risk level without the benefit of any control measures.

- i. **HIGH** - near certain that harm is likely and will result in serious injury/damage.
- ii. **MEDIUM** - harm will probably occur resulting in injury/damage.
- iii. **LOW** - unlikely that harm will occur and would result in minor injury/damage.

#### **Precautions required to reduce the risk:**

High and medium risk levels require control measures to reduce the risk to as low as is reasonably practicable e.g. remain seated, wear seatbelts, do not distract the driver, experienced driver, first-aid kit available etc.

#### **Revised risk level:**

Re-assess the risk level considering the effect of the control measures.

#### **Generic Risk Assessments**

The Off-sites visits folder on Google Drive includes a 'Generic Local' risk assessment, which a Trip Leader may use and adapt for short local, non-adventurous off-site visits, e.g. cinema in Pattaya. There is also a 'Generic Regular' risk assessment for RST staff who regularly lead local, non-adventurous off-site visits. It is written particularly with boarding staff in mind.

If an off-site visit includes an adventurous element, e.g. go-karting, or travel to an event outside of the Pattaya area, an individual risk assessment must be completed for that trip.

If a trip becomes involved with an incident, it is good practice for the Trip Leader and other accompanying staff to record events as soon as possible. Example Incident Logs are available in the Off-site Visits folder.

#### **Trip Transport**

Transport is one of the riskier parts of a trip and requires particular attention. Safety points to consider and to remind pupils about when using transport (e.g. coach, minibus) include:

- i. ensure the vehicle is roadworthy before the journey
- ii. do not enter vehicle until instructed
- iii. wear seatbelts and stay seated whilst travelling
- iv. be aware of emergency exits and equipment
- v. do not tamper with safety equipment
- vi. do not block aisles
- vii. do not distract the driver
- viii. pupils briefed to tell a member of staff if they feel unwell
- ix. disembark from the vehicle safely, looking out for vehicles and pedestrians

The Trip Leader should make the group aware of hazards associated with:

- i. crossing roads
- ii. rest stops e.g. at service stations
- iii. ability to 'roam' on trains and ferries

Staff should remind pupils and check that seat belts are fastened before departure.

### **Activities involving water or occurring near water**

Activities involving water, or activities (including transport) occurring in the vicinity of water, inherently involve a greater level of risk. These areas require particular attention within the Risk Assessment and the management of risk. Swimming should be clearly identified as part of trip planning within the itinerary and not a spontaneous decision. Parents/carers must be informed of the specific nature of the planned activity involving water.

For all activities in water, swimming ability of all participants must be known to the Trip Leader. If pupils use an unsupervised pool, it is essential that at least one member of staff is named the designated lifeguard(s). This should be their only responsibility during the activity.

Further information is available on swimming and water safety within the Outdoor Education Advisory Panel UK National Guidance:

- <https://oeapng.info/7x-swimming-pools/>
- <https://oeapng.info/7o-natural-water-bathing/>
- <https://oeapng.info/7i-group-safety-at-water-margins/>

### **Pupil Suitability & Behaviour**

The Trip Leader should assess the suitability of pupils to undertake the trip. This should be done in conjunction with relevant House staff in Senior or Form Tutors in Prep and prep-prep, along with the Health Centre.

Pupils whose behaviour is such that the Trip Leader is concerned for their safety and/or that of others, should be withdrawn from the activity. Serious misbehaviour may result in a pupil being sent home early at the parent/carer's expense. Such a decision would be made after consultation with SMT and communication with parents/carers. Serious misbehaviour on an off-site visit may lead to a pupil being prohibited from participating in future trips, either on a temporary or permanent basis, depending on the severity of the offence.

## **Pupil Briefing & Supervision**

Pupils should be thoroughly briefed before a trip regarding:

- i. the aims and objectives of the trip
- ii. background information about the location (culture, customs and language)
- iii. specific hazards and safety precautions;
- iv. standard of conduct required
- v. routines and procedures (e.g. medical, emergency)
- vi. supervising staff and their roles
- vii. information regarding travel (e.g. prohibited items) and accommodation
- viii. contacting staff

If pupils are to be remotely supervised (e.g. Duke of Edinburgh expedition), the Trip Leader should brief the pupils carefully and ensure that:

- i. Pupils are competent to undertake the trip (e.g. map reading & first-aid training)
- ii. equipment, clothing and provisions have been checked as suitable
- iii. pupils are fully briefed (e.g. about the weather forecast, terrain, route, hazards, remaining with their group)
- iv. Pupils know the emergency procedure and have emergency contact details

## **School Mobile Phones**

Trip Leaders will be issued with school mobile phones, which should be used to contact pupils or parents/carers if required. RST staff should not use their personal mobile phones to communicate with pupils, whether on an off-site visit or at any other time. Group leaders should collate mobile phone numbers of pupils, particularly where there is remote supervision, so that pupils can be contacted directly regarding trip matters. Such numbers and groups must be deleted at the end of the trip.

## **Reporting Safeguarding Concerns on an off-site visit**

Any safeguarding concerns that come to light during an off-site visit should immediately be shared with the Trip Leader, who will then contact the DSL. If the DSL cannot be reached then the Trip Leader should contact the relevant Head. If they are not available, the Trip Leader should contact the relevant EVC. The school contact who is reached (most likely the DSL) will then advise the Trip Leader on the best course of action.

## **Reporting Accidents, Incidents and Near Misses on an off-site visit**

Reporting accidents, incidents and near misses are very important in enabling RST to identify where and how risks arise and adjust procedures to avoid similar accidents or incidents occurring in future. All off-site accident/incident/near miss reports will be discussed at the Health and Safety Committee, which will then make recommendations.

A near miss is exactly what it suggests and must still be reported. For example, if a pupil is almost struck by falling debris but is fine, school must nonetheless be informed.

Whenever an accident or incident has occurred on a visit, the Trip Leader must report it using the Accident/Incident/Near Miss form in the Off-sites Visits Google Drive and submit it to the Health and Safety Officer and EVC within 48 hours of the trip returning to school. In the most severe cases, (e.g. life-threatening injury) the Headmaster, relevant EVC and Health & Safety Officer should be informed as soon after the incident as possible.

### **Social Media on off-site visits**

RST encourages staff participating in off-site visits to share appropriate photographs and anecdotes with the RST community via agreed social media channels. The Trip Leader will nominate a member of staff to manage a trip's social media output. This must follow the protocols laid out in the RST Social Media policy. Trip Leaders and nominated staff must familiarise themselves with this policy prior to departure and are strongly advised to take advice from the Head of Marketing and relevant DSL on best practice.

### **Post Trip Procedures**

Post trip procedures will vary depending on the type of trip and whether any accidents/incidents/near misses or other unforeseen events occurred. Within one week of the trip's return, all post trip procedures should have been carried out, although serious incidents must be reported much more quickly in line with this handbook.

Within one week of the trip's return the Trip Leader should:

- i. Share any safeguarding concerns with the DSL in person as soon as possible
- ii. Ask suitable pupil/s to write a report for school magazine
- iii. Liaise with Marketing about sharing trip via RST social media channels
- iv. Return contingency to CFO along with receipts covering any expenditure if applicable
- v. Return First Aid kits to Health Centre if applicable
- vi. Report any accidents, incidents or near misses to the Health & Safety Officer and, if appropriate, Health Centre
- vii. Complete the Post Visit Report if trip is residential
- viii. Liaise with Thai Principal for the submission of post trip documentation to the MoE

## **Residential trips**

### **Accommodation & Briefing**

The safeguarding of all members of the party should be at the forefront of the Trip Leader's mind when organising accommodation. The following factors should be considered:

- i. pupils should have rooms near staff
- ii. there should be separate male and female sleeping and bathroom facilities
- iii. there should be separate bathroom facilities for pupils and staff
- iv. the accommodation provider can cater for the specific needs of pupils and staff (e.g. food allergies, special needs)
- v. the accommodation provider has suitable fire safety and security arrangements in place (e.g. lockable bedrooms)
- vi. the accommodation provider has checked the suitability of their staff to work with young people and can provide documentation to prove that this is the case
- vii. Specific hazards related to the accommodation (e.g. balconies, ground floor rooms)

On arrival at the accommodation the Trip Leader should go through arrangements with the provider and become familiar with the procedures, layout, with a particular focus on hazards and emergency procedures. The briefing to staff and pupils should include information about:

- i. the accommodation layout, its fire regulations, exits and emergency procedures (many providers will carry out a fire drill soon after the group arrives)
- ii. specific hazards (e.g. balcony access)
- iii. security and safety
- iv. how and where to contact centre staff, including during the night
- v. daily routine including bedtime arrangements
- vi. feeding arrangements including special dietary requirements
- vii. provision for pupils with specific needs
- viii. medical and first aid arrangements
- ix. 'down time' arrangements - permissible activities, boundaries, group sizes, timings, signing-in/out procedure;
- x. Co-education arrangements

## **DofE International Award Expeditions**

### **Accreditation of provider**

When planning an outdoor education trip, the Trip Leader should research the suitability of the centre and check that facilities and provision meet the group's needs and expectations. It may not be feasible for the Trip Leader to carry out a preliminary visit but the Trip Leader has a duty of care to ensure that the accommodation and activity providers meet acceptable standards, through questioning and information gathering. In particular, the Trip Leader must check and obtain evidence (e.g. copy of the badge / certificate) that the activity provider meets acceptable standards and has suitable accreditation, confirming that quality and safety has been externally assessed and accredited.

If a provider does not hold a suitable accreditation, then the Trip Leader should speak to the EVC and carry out further checks by questioning and information gathering. Areas to consider include insurance, compliance with legal requirements, staff competence/qualifications/experience, suitability of staff to work with young people (police checks), safeguarding, equipment, use of vehicles, first-aid, emergency procedures and accommodation. The OEAP provide a useful, editable form to use to vet providers without accreditation: <https://oeapng.info/8q-provider-questionnaire>

### **Responsibilities**

Providers are responsible for assessing and managing the risk associated with their provision; the Trip Leader is responsible for determining the learning outcomes, which should be discussed with the provider when planning the programme. When school staff are involved in a supervisory role alongside the provider's staff, it should be clearly established who has responsibility for which aspect of the session and for which pupils. The Trip Leader and accompanying school staff retain responsibility for the safety of pupils unless temporarily delegated to a suitably qualified and experienced instructor, whilst the group undertake a potentially hazardous activity. Should the centre/provider run an activity in a way that causes concern, school staff should intervene at an early stage.

The OEAPNG provides useful guidelines that Trip Leaders should consider before undertaking such an activity with a group: <https://oeapng.info/downloads/4-4h-preliminary-visits-and-provider-assurances/>

### **Safety management of DofE International Award expeditions**

The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award Thailand Office has no direct involvement in the delivery of DofE programmes, including expeditions (referred to as Adventurous Journeys in the International Award). It has issued an Operator's License to Rugby School Thailand to deliver its programmes.

The Master in Charge (MiC) of DofE manages the Award programmes and liaises with the DofE International Award. The MiC DofE is responsible for ensuring that the programmes are operated in accordance with the School's Educational Off-sites Visits policy as well as DofE requirements.

The Trip Leader for a DofE Adventurous Journey will usually be the MiC DofE. It is their responsibility to ensure the health and safety of groups and supervising staff and to manage emergency situations that may arise. The Trip Leader must have the competence to make critical judgements about the ability of the expedition groups to operate on their own.

## **Supervising during DofE Adventurous Journeys**

To complete their Award, DofE participants are expected to complete an adventurous journey where the group operates independently. For this to happen, participants must first acquire the necessary skills and knowledge, with the appropriate level of experience, confidence, physical ability and judgement. Each group should be able to contact first aid support, have first aid materials and be competent to look after themselves until help arrives.

Supervising staff must exercise careful judgement before withdrawing direct supervision. During practical training, e.g. the practice adventurous journey, each group should be led or supervised by a suitably competent leader. During the final assessment, it may be appropriate for the Trip Leader, using a team of assistants, to oversee several groups. The Trip Leader continues to be responsible, even during remote supervision.

Since on an adventurous journey the Trip Leader and other staff will not always be with groups, they should work together to determine the nature and extent of supervision required to ensure that supervision remains effective.

Decisions must consider:

- i. the experience and competence of the group (including any special needs)
- ii. the experience and competence of other RST staff as assistant supervisors
- iii. the effectiveness of communications in an emergency
- iv. the weather (both current and forecast)
- v. the nature of the expedition
- vi. the location (e.g. remoteness) and terrain

Pupils should familiarise themselves with the layout of the accommodation, including for exits, and report any hazards or faulty equipment in their rooms

### **Further Guidance on Trips Abroad**

It is good practice to have at least one member of staff who can communicate effectively using the relevant language and who has a good understanding of the local culture. An assistant Trip Leader should be appointed to assist with leading overseas trips and to gain experience in order to lead future trips.

When determining staffing ratios, additional risks with being overseas should be considered. Staff may need to undertake training prior to the trip. Parents must be provided with detailed information (including supervision arrangements) so they can make informed decisions when consenting. A parent briefing is good practice, particularly on extended trips, or trips in remote or challenging environments. It is important that parents/carers are aware of the need to disclose information about their child's wellbeing or health that could affect them during the trip.

Some countries have an immigration requirement for a passport to remain valid for six months beyond the date of entry to or return from to the country. A visa may also be required to enter particular countries. The Trip Leader should check visa requirements with the tour operator, or contact the Embassy, Consulate or High Commission of the country to be visited.

A photocopy of passports and visas should be kept at school and on the trip, but separate from the original documents.

Travel and medical insurance is provided by the school and may also be provided by the tour operator. The Trip Leader should check that all aspects of the trip are covered. Some activities are listed as exclusions in the School's Insurance Policy and must not be undertaken.

The Trip Leader must establish if vaccinations are required by consulting the Health Centre. Required vaccinations should be listed in the initial letter to parents as a stipulation of participation in the trip. The Risk Assessment should refer to specific health hazards (e.g. prevalent disease, altitude sickness) of the trip location and activities being undertaken.

### **Using a Tour Operator & Self-organised Tours**

School tour/trip operators offer co-ordinated programmes combining travel, accommodation and activities to match the trip's aims and learning outcomes. Tour Operators must be able to meet RST's safeguarding expectations by being able to share their safeguarding policy and evidence that their staff have a current police check.

Whilst using such an operator removes much of the organisational work, the Trip Leader must liaise closely with the operator so that the itinerary is tailored to meet the requirements and desired outcomes of the trip. There must be a clear understanding of who is responsible for particular aspects of the tour.

### **Self-organised Visits**

Self-organised visits are likely to allow for greater control over the visit programme and greater potential for involvement of pupils in the planning and preparation. Self-organised trips can be far more cost efficient and rewarding than using a tour operator, but also considerably more work.

## **Terrorist Attacks and other Major Incidents**

### **Terrorist Threat**

School groups are not at greater risk to the threat of terrorism than the general population but they can be caught up in incidents or post-incident disruption. The direct effects of terrorism are difficult to counter but enhanced trip planning can help avoid situations and improve response to an incident, mitigating the trauma of the incident.

### **Response to an incident**

In the event of a security incident during a trip:

- i. Staff should try to keep everyone together whilst moving away quickly. In the rare event of a firearms or weapon attack, follow the Stay Safe principles: RUN (to a place of safety), HIDE (not confront) and TELL (the police). Staying low, whilst moving covertly behind solid barriers provides better protection.
- ii. Once everyone is accounted for away from the incident, seek advice from the authorities (e.g. the police) before using transport or organising alternative return transport.
- iii. The Trip Leader should notify the school as soon as practicable, noting the whereabouts and condition of the group, along with other contact numbers for staff present;
- iv. The school will activate its critical incident plan and contact parents.

### **Emergency Procedures**

#### **Emergency procedures framework during the visit**

*These procedures are for guidance and may need to be adapted to suit the situation.*

- i. Establish the nature and extent of the emergency
- ii. Make sure all involved are accounted for and safeguard members of the group.
- iii. Remove all pupils, if necessary, to a safe space.
- iv. If there are injuries, establish their extent and administer appropriate first aid if you have been trained and feel capable. Be aware of consequences that might follow were you to give incorrect treatment. Have regard to your own safety. Call the appropriate emergency services and anyone who needs to know of the incident.
- v. Advise other staff present of the incident and of actions taken. Decide if appropriate who is in charge and responsibilities to be undertaken by each adult member of the group.
- vi. If staffing allows:
  - a) An adult should accompany any casualties to hospital.
  - b) Remaining pupils should be adequately supervised and arrangements made for an early return to base.
  - c) If relevant, arrange for one adult to remain at the site of the incident to liaise with the emergency services until the incident is over and all pupils are accounted for.

- vii. Contact the RST school contact. If no response contact the reserve school contact. The school contact will alert the Headmaster (or, if absent, the designated deputy) who will take charge of the situation and activate the emergency plan. The RST school contact needs to know:
  - a) nature, date, location and time of the incident
  - b) names of person/s involved and details of their injuries
  - c) names of others involved so that parents/carers can be reassured
  - d) actions taken so far
  - e) actions yet to be taken (and by whom)
  - f) telephone numbers for future communication
- viii. Control access to phones and social media until a senior member of staff has contacted parents/carers and others directly involved. Give full details of the incident including:
- ix. No member of staff or pupil should discuss matters with the media – in particular under no circumstances should the name of any casualty be given to the media. Media enquiries should be referred back to the Headmaster. Do not admit liability.
- x. The Trip Leader should, at the first opportunity, make notes on the incident, as should other people involved. A record should be kept of the names and addresses of any witnesses or people involved. Ensure that accident/incident/near miss forms are completed as soon as possible. It may be appropriate to take photographs (e.g. of position of vehicles in a road traffic accident).
- xi. **Neither blame nor legal liability should be discussed.**
- xii. If parents/carers cannot be contacted quickly members of the senior staff team may need to give medical consent in *loco parentis*.

For further guidance on managing emergency situations, see Emergency Action Checklist in the Off-site Visits folder.

### **Personal Data & PDPA**

Information and records containing personal data must be processed in compliance with Personal Data Protection Act (PDPA). In particular:

- i. they must be stored securely
- ii. there must be clear reason for keeping them
- iii. they must not be kept for longer than necessary

For example, unless there has been an accident or incident, parental consent and medical forms should only be retained until the visit has ended and then be deleted and destroyed. Trip Leaders must follow the school's guidance about the processing and retention of personal data. When personal data are taken on a trip, they must be kept secure irrespective of how the data is carried or shared.

In order to protect personal data it is good practice to store hard copies of trip information in a locked bag. If the lock is broken by unauthorised persons or the bag is lost, a data breach must be reported to the Operations Manager.

## **Financial Matters**

The purpose of these procedures is to ensure that there is adequate control over income and expenditures relating to off-site visits and to protect both the School and parents/carers from potential loss.

Trip Leaders should negotiate with the tour operators and other providers to gain value for money for parents/carers. The trip needs to consider the reliability and reputation on the operator and providers, alongside the quality of provision. This means that the lowest price might not always be the best option. The Trip Leader needs to clarify which services are being provided to avoid 'hidden costs'. All financial agreements and charging for activities / services must be confirmed in writing.

All co-curricular trips should be self-financing with the total cost to parents/carers covering all expenditure. The exception to this are 'trips week' trips, which are financed from the residential budget. Small scale academic trips will usually be covered by fees unless there is a significant cost. A prospective Trip Leader should seek clarification from Finance as part of trip planning.

The Trip Leader should calculate the total trip cost considering all expenses including the cost of trip staff (within the expected staffing ratios). A contingency amount should be added to account for any extra cost incurred during the trip. Parents/carers should be made aware that the cost may vary depending on the number of participants (e.g. travel costs).

An initial deposit payment should be paid to secure a place on the trip. Deposit payments are normally non-refundable if a pupil withdraws from the trip if a replacement cannot be found or if any additional charges are incurred. All subsequent payments should be made prior to the trip departing.

All trip payments need to be made in advance of the trip.

During the trip, the Trip Leader, or another member of staff assigned this task, should keep a detailed record of expenditure along with receipts. It is vital that expenditure is within the funds available. After the trip, the Trip Leader should submit a record of expenditure along with receipts to the CFO.

## **Step by Step Procedures for planning and running any Off-Site Visit**

Trip Leaders should follow the Running a trip Step Guide in the Off-Site Visits folder with advice from the relevant EVC.