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# THE RIVERBANK SCHOOL



## Trips policy



## Introduction

At the RiverBank School we believe in giving our students a balanced educational experience, combining academic excellence with promoting the all-round personal development of each child. We believe that children learn in many ways and that exposure to exciting and challenging experiences outside the classroom is key to ensuring that children can maximise their personal development, as well as gaining the leadership skills necessary to be successful in the 21st Century. We therefore believe that there is a need for our students to learn both within and outside the classroom. To achieve this goal, we organise a range of educational trips for students of all year groups, both locally and internationally.

## Aims of this policy

- To ensure that students are safe when embarking on any school trip.
- To provide the necessary information for the planning and conduct of trips.
- To clearly state the procedures for any trip involving students.

## Procedures

All Riverbank School excursions should have a clear educational objective. The list of possible objectives is extensive and could include:

- A link to the curriculum.
- A link with an extra-curricular activity.
- A visit to a site of cultural, scientific or historical interest.
- Community service or a leadership project.
- Experience of a different region or country.

## Steps in planning for an excursion:

1. Teachers who wish to take a group of students on an excursion must first seek the consent of their section head before proceeding with planning. The section head will then seek the approval of the Head of School for the trip to go ahead.
2. The teacher, hereafter referred to the “trip leader”, having received provisional approval, will prepare a logistical plan for the trip. This will include:
  - The specific dates and times.
  - The specific location(s) to be visited.
  - The specific points for collection and drop-off.
  - All necessary arrangements for transport, feeding and accommodation
  - The names of participating staff, including medical and security staff. For all trips, there must be a minimum ratio of ONE member of staff to EIGHT students, not including medical and security staff. If female students are participating in the trip, there must be at least one female staff member present (this can include a member of the medical staff).
  - An estimate of the numbers of students expected to participate in the trip.
  - A budget plan, giving a detailed breakdown of costs.



3. The above trip plan must be approved by the section head before proceeding further with planning.
4. The trip organiser will prepare a letter to parents of students who are eligible to go on the trip. The letter should:
  - Explain the purpose of the trip.
  - Give an overview of the trip programme, including a timetable of dates, times and other relevant points.
  - State clearly any costs to be incurred by parents.
  - Identify any health and safety considerations.
  - State any special requirements for students to take part, such as documents for overseas trips, amount of money to be brought, or clothing for a particular activity.
  - Require the parents to sign a consent form and health declaration for students to join the trip. The form will emphasise the need for parents to state any medical conditions which may affect their children whilst on the trip, along with any requirements for medication.
  - Give deadlines for consent and payment.
  - Provide contact details for the trip organiser.

### Risk Assessment

A full risk assessment must be conducted prior to any excursion and used to complete the standard risk assessment form. Some key points that should be noted:

- Wherever possible, the trip organiser should physically visit the proposed location(s), check out all the venues, places and equipment that the students will use, and identify any potential risks of health and safety concerns.
- In planning for the trip, the trip organiser will state the steps to be taken to minimise each of the risks identified.
- The section head must sign the risk assessment before the trip can go ahead. If, in the view of the section head, the risks identified are beyond what is reasonable, they will refer the matter to the Head of School for a final decision on whether the trip can go ahead.
- It is recognised that there may be circumstances, such as overseas trips, where a physical risk assessment cannot be done. In such cases the trip organiser should conduct thorough research of intended locations, including seeking advice from tour operators working in the country to be visited. The risk assessment form can then be completed using the information obtained.
- Where a location has been visited previously and a risk assessment conducted within the previous **two years**, the section head may determine that a physical risk assessment does not need to be done. However, the risk assessment form should still be completed.

### The Conduct of Trips:

The **trip organiser** has overall responsibility for ensuring that the trip proceeds safely and according to plan. He or she will:

- Take all decisions relating to the trip.
- Be responsible for managing all financial aspects of the trip, including keeping receipts of all financial transactions.
- Be the sole person communicating with parents except regarding medical issues.



The assigned **medical officer** will:

- Bring a first-aid kit and keep it with them at all times during the trip.
- Attend to any medical needs of students or staff that arise during the trip.
- Be responsible for calling parents to inform them of any medical issues that arise.

**Students** will:

- Wear school uniform when on a school trip, unless they have been instructed to dress otherwise for a designated activity.
- Bring only permitted items and the specified amount of money.
- Be required to behave in accordance with the usual expectations of the school. The school behaviour policy will be applied in dealing with any instances of inappropriate behaviour.

## Communication with parents during trips

The trip leader will have the phone numbers of parents of students attending the trip and will contact them if the need arises. Students are not allowed to bring mobile phones on school trips.

## Overseas Trips

Overseas trips require special planning and are subject to various organisational challenges. For this reason, the following principles will be applied to overseas trips:

1. Planning for an overseas trip must start at least one year in advance of the trip.
2. Parents must be given a minimum of three months' notice prior to an overseas trip.
3. Parents will normally be required to pay a substantial deposit when they register their children for a trip. It must be made clear that in the event that they later withdraw their children from the trip, the deposit will not be refunded.
4. The trip leader, in collaboration with the admin department, is expected to manage applications for visas necessary for travel to specific locations. However, the school is not responsible for obtaining passports, vaccination certificates or other required documents.