Manchester Grammar School
Educational Visits Policy

PREAMBLE

1. The School has a long and distinguished tradition providing educational visits, including camps, treks and field days, and is keen for that tradition to continue.

2. However, whilst the School wishes its pupils and staff to fully participate in and enjoy the benefits of educational visits, it is also very mindful of its moral and legal duties to ensure their health and safety.

3. This policy is designed to ensure that the School fulfils its duties in this respect and, further, that educational visits approved by the Manchester Grammar School have proper regard to the June 2013 DfE Guidance 'Health and safety: Advice on legal duties and powers For local authorities, school leaders, school staff and governing bodies'.

4. Members of staff who organise and participate in educational visits must follow the arrangements set out in this policy and, more importantly, the more detailed guidance set out in Part II of the Staff Handbook. This document sets out in much more detail the procedures, etc which are designed to support this policy.

STAFFING REQUIREMENTS

1. Staffing requirements (taking into consideration such items as: linguistic skills, first aid qualifications, experience, technical training and qualifications) must be established before a visit is advertised to pupils and parents. See also para. 35.

2. The Group Leader needs to be the most competent and experienced person available.

3. Additional staffing considerations apply when inhospitable terrain is to be visited or activities near water are envisaged.

4. Further, there are specific guidelines to be observed for water and adventurous activities. These have significant implications for the recruitment of competent staff. In such cases the Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) must be consulted before the visit is advertised.

5. Group Leaders must consult the EVC whenever staff on a visit might include volunteers and/or individuals employed by other organisations. Separate procedures form part of the risk assessment in these cases and are designed to ensure that the School complies fully with its own Child Protection Policy and its wider duties under DCSF Guidance Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education.

SUPERVISION OF PUPILS

6. All staff members involved in the educational visit (whether or not they are accompanied by their spouses, partners, children or friends, must fully share of supervision of the party as determined by the Group Leader.

7. Group Leaders must also ensure that they have recruited sufficient staff before advertising their educational visit. Guidance on this point is set out below.

Date Policy Effective from: Michaelmas 2013
Manchester Grammar School
Educational Visits Policy

8. For Junior Section day visits in the Manchester area, where there are clearly no risks of injury greater than during a combination of classroom based activities and bus transport to school:

- 1 adult to every 6 pupils in school year 3.
- 1 adult to every 10-15 pupils in school years 4 to 6

9. For Senior School day visits in the Manchester area, where there are clearly no risks of injury greater than during a combination of classroom based activities and bus transport to school:

- 1 adult to every 15-20 pupils in school years 7 onwards.

10. For visits abroad involving overnight stays:

- A minimum of 1 adult to every 10 pupils in school years 7 onwards.
- A staff-pupil ration of 1:8 can be regarded as desirable, with a minimum of three adults in most cases.

11. Where Group Leaders wish to depart from these ratios, they must discuss this with the EVC.

12. Where staff spouses, partners or friends are present on the educational visit, they must be supernumerary to that ratio because they do not have the protection of the School's liability insurance. In consequence, they should not be asked to take direct responsibility for the activities of members of the party.

SOCIETY AND FORM EXCURSIONS

13. Society or Form educational visits are a routine part of School life and are generally held in the afternoon: field excursions may occupy a whole day. Permission should be obtained from the Surmaster.

14. The Catering Manager must always be informed if a party is likely to miss lunch.

15. Details of an impending educational visit should be posted on the Common Room notice-board in good time. It is each pupil’s responsibility to obtain permission from those among his teachers whose lessons he will miss. Such permission should not be normally refused.

16. On visits to factories, galleries, etc., school uniform must be worn: on field excursions clothes of a suitable kind may be worn.

OBTAINING APPROVAL FOR OTHER EDUCATIONAL VISITS (RISK ASSESSMENTS)

17. Before educational visits of other types are advertised, and before any plans are made to take a party of pupils on such visits, the EVC’s approval must be obtained.

18. At present the application for approval takes the form of a risk assessment. The nature of the risk assessment is set out in the Preliminary and Final Overnight Visit Forms and the Day Visit Form, which must be completed by the Group Leader and handed to the EVC according to arrangements made by him. Copies of all three forms can be found in the alcove in the Common Room Office.

19. The exception to these procedures is for educational visits to the Owls’ Nest, which has its own separate proposal and risk assessment forms.

Date Policy Effective from: Michaelmas 2013
Manchester Grammar School
Educational Visits Policy

20. Before approval is granted, an appropriately qualified and competent person will evaluate the Group Leader’s risk assessment. This process will typically include the following:

- The suitability of the Group Leader and other staff members
- Whether the arrangements follow best practice for the activities involved
- Whether the plans follow MGS Guidelines, especially those relating to water-based, adventurous and other hazardous activities.

21. At the same time, however, it is important to remember that risk assessment does not end when the visit begins. Consequently, the Group Leader must put in place arrangements to ensure that the process of risk assessment is ongoing throughout the duration of the visit. This is particularly so where the visit involves activities near water, water-based or adventurous activities or includes an overnight stay or travel abroad.

AFTER APPROVAL HAS BEEN OBTAINED

22. Once approval has been obtained, the Group Leader must consider the cost of the visit, including ‘hidden extras’, and how to access funding in an emergency.

23. Group Leaders must also ensure that a signed and completed MGS Consent Form has been obtained for all pupils intending to participate on the visit.

24. The disciplinary records of pupils in the party should be checked with the relevant Head of Year or Section. Group Leaders have the right to refuse to take a pupil on their educational visits. However, where they intend to exercise this, they should first consult with the relevant Head of Section. This is especially so where the matter relates to concerns over a pupil’s health.

25. Where relevant, passport and visa requirements must be ascertained. Where these apply, parents should be informed well in advance on the visit.

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

26. In addition to items referred to elsewhere in this policy, Group Leaders are responsible for ensuring that parents are provided with necessary information on items such as:

- Dates and cost including, where relevant, a detailed itinerary
- Departure and arrival home times
- Advanced health protection
- Insurance cover
- Passports and visas
- Rules of behaviour, including the investigation of and response to serious breaches of School Rules
- Advanced reading list (if a cultural visit)
- Emergency contact procedures
- Kit/luggage lists
- Advice about pocket money
- Currency/Travellers’ Cheques information
- Details of arrangements for free time
- Regulations concerning duty-free purchases

27. The nature and timing of the dissemination of this information will vary from visit to visit. However, an overseas visit should probably entail a meeting for parents and pupils, during which information may be given and questions answered.
Manchester Grammar School
Educational Visits Policy

28. Group Leaders are strongly advised to make a very clear statement of the standards of conduct they expect from pupils during the visit. In some cases, they may wish to obtain written parental endorsement of their rules.

29. Serious breaches of School Rules during visits will be investigated and dealt with as soon as is practical. A record of such breaches will be maintained by the EVC. Where the alleged breach is very serious, the Group Leader must consult the relevant member of the Senior Management and Leadership Team (SMT).

PUPIL HEALTH

30. Group Leaders must ensure that pupils and staff are fully briefed on vaccinations and other health precautions.

31. In addition, where travel to an EU country forms part of the visit, all participants must be advised on obtaining a European Health Insurance Card.

32. Group Leaders must make appropriate arrangements with the Medical Room staff to take a first-aid kit and other emergency medical supplies. They must also consult with the EVC over the appropriate number of qualified first aiders in the party.

33. It is particularly important that Group Leaders ascertain whether any pupil is: currently receiving medication for chronic conditions such as asthma and diabetes; has a serious medical problem such as allergic reactions, epilepsy or haemophilia; or has special dietary requirements. Where there is evidence of a significant medical problem, the Group Leader should consult Medical Room staff.

SUPERVISION

34. The Group Leader is ultimately responsible for supervision of pupils. However, this task will, of necessity, be shared with other staff members. When drawing up detailed supervision arrangements, it is good practice for the Group Leader to:

- Allocate supervisory responsibility for named pupils
- Ensure that each adult knows the names of the pupils for whom they are responsible
- Ensure that each pupil knows which adult is responsible for them
- Ensure that all adults understand that they are responsible to the Group Leader for the supervision of the pupils assigned to them and
- Ensure that all adults and pupils are aware of the expected standards of behaviour.
- Circulate the Medical Risk Assessment and Emergency Contact numbers to all Supervisors.

35. In addition, it is also good practice for each supervisor to:

- Consult the Medical Risk Assessment issued to them prior to the start of the visit.
- Receive any medical training necessary such as Epipen training.
- Carry a list/register of all group members
- Directly supervise pupils, particularly when they are mingling with the public and may not be easily identified
- Have the means to contact the Group Leader/other supervisors if needing help
- Be alert to new and changing risks

Date Policy Effective from: Michaelmas 2013
Manchester Grammar School
Educational Visits Policy

- Continuously monitor the appropriateness of the activity, the physical and mental condition and abilities of the group members and the suitability of the prevailing conditions
- Clearly understand the emergency procedures and be able to carry them out and
- Have appropriate access to First Aid.

36. Group Leaders should also ensure that each pupil is fully aware of the supervision arrangements which apply, when and how to report concerns that a member of the party might be missing and have clear instructions what to do if they become separated from others.

37. Group Leaders will also make appropriate arrangements for: head counts, a ‘buddy’ system and, where necessary, remote supervision and supervision during ‘down time’.

38. Supervision arrangements must also take into account the fact that members of staff cannot simultaneously supervise and drive pupils.

**NIGHT TIME SUPERVISION**

39. Where a visit involves at least one overnight stay, Group Leaders should ensure that the nature of the accommodation affords appropriate levels of child protection, security and staff access to pupils at all times.

40. In addition, it is essential that all staff and pupils know the emergency procedures/escape routes in the event of a fire.

**INSURANCE**

41. Travel insurance is provided by the School. Group Leaders must consult with the Bursar to ascertain precisely what is covered under the policy and how this might be charged for.

**EMERGENCY CONTACTS**

42. Group Leaders should arrange an emergency contact with a member of the SML, who will be in or around Manchester for the duration of the visit. Details can be discussed with Cath Berry. The Home Agent of Visits abroad will by Default be the Bursar, Gillian Batchelor.

43. The advice of the emergency contact must be sought whenever emergency medical treatment is required and the pupil’s parents cannot be contacted.

44. Emergency contact procedures, including telephone numbers, should be established with parents.

**TRANSPORT**

45. All transport used in the course of a visit must comply with para. 29 of the current ‘Terms and Conditions’ attached to the Parent Contract, i.e. it must be driven by a responsible adult who is suitably qualified and insured to drive that particular vehicle.

46. Where a vehicle is being hired, it is the responsibility of the Group Leaders to satisfy themselves that it is roadworthy and otherwise fit-for-purpose.
Manchester Grammar School
Educational Visits Policy

47. Where a School minibus is being used, the Group Leader must ensure that drivers are aware of and follow the comprehensive MGS guidelines which have been drawn up by the EVC. These guidelines cover: minibus drivers, including the list of approved drivers, staffing arrangements, planning, driving hours and rest periods, the physical condition of drivers on the day of travel and sundry other items, including management of pupils, maximum loads and the reporting of faults.

48. Every aspect of these Minibus Guidelines applies to hired minibuses, hired cars, the School car and staff cars, whenever the latter are being used to transport pupils in the course of an educational visit.

DE-BRIEFING

49. When you return from your tour/visit, you are asked to give ECFC a short report. This information will be retained and filed for consultation by future Group Leaders.