



THE SCHOOL JOURNEY ASSOCIATION

Organising Educational Visits

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PLANNING A VISIT

Outline proposal to headteacher and/or governing body, seeking approval in principle.
Proposals should include:

- Visit's objective
 - Likely date, duration, venue.
 - Pupil group, staffing.
 - Resources, estimate of costs.
- (Proposals for longer visits may need to be made before the start of the relevant academic year).

Planning

Contact SJA or venue. Is it suitable for the group?
What are the transport options?
Who would lead the group and who would help to supervise it?
Who would pay for the visit?
Risk assessment, exploratory visit

Submit completed Organisation of School Visit to the Headteacher

Visits

Adventurous/
Hazardous Activities – residential home/abroad
Submit Organisation of School Visit to Local Authority

Obtain approval for the visit and parental consent for visit

Final preparation

Information to and from parents
Briefing meeting for pupils/parents

Go on visit, monitoring the risks at all times

Evaluate

Introduction

The Government (Sept 2001) now supports the role of adventure as part of active education especially in learning to manage risk. Thus pupils may no longer take risk unknowingly but need to learn to manage them. Before this can happen risk needs to be assessed by competent persons.

Schools and other service providers have a strong tradition in providing its young people with a wide variety of off-site activities in a range of different environments. Such opportunities enrich the education process for participants and enhance the quality of experience provided through schools, services for looked after young people and the work of Youth Organisations.

Every year many educational activities are undertaken by young people. The duration of these activities varies from a day to extended residential journeys at home or abroad. The range of these activities is similarly wide; from sporting events, field studies or historical visits, to language exchanges, urban and rural surveys to adventurous activities as orienteering, camping, canoeing, sailing, climbing caving and skiing.

These visits bring the work of establishments alive and have huge benefits in encouraging young people to learn, providing an ideal vehicle for personal development and learning life skills and risk management. The value of such experiences is acknowledged by Department for Children Schools and Families (DCSF) in the overall development of young people.

This guidance is issued to all organisations wishing to organise visits through School Journey Association (SJA). It is issued to help support all staff involved in the approval, organisation and planning of off-site visits in order that young people may contribute to and benefit from well organised, safe and enjoyable activities.

Planning, Organisation and Review of an Educational Visit

The following notes are intended as indicators of good procedural practice which should be of value to visit leaders. Used as a checklist they may save considerable time during the planning process. The principles underlying this advice are intended to be relevant to any visit away from the establishment site. It is obvious that not all issues will be pertinent to every visit and visit leaders will need to be selective, depending on the nature of the proposed activity.

Before the visit

A systematic approach

Planning needs to be systematic, consistent and appropriate to the visit. A check list is attached to this document. This is recommended as a basis for the planning process.

A major feature of planning relates to risk assessment. The analysis used in risk assessment can help to highlight potential hazards and put in place appropriate controls. To gain maximum benefit, risk assessment should be applied at the outset and fine-tuned as the project unfolds.

Purpose of the visit

Planning should be seen as the key to a successful visit. The aims and objectives of the visit should be clearly identified at an early stage. These should be relevant to the young people and their needs, taking account of age, ability, previous experience and resources available. Clear, appropriate objectives will contribute significantly to young peoples' safety and well being as well as to the visit outcomes. They will ensure:

- An appropriate structure and discipline to the visit;
- Maximum young people motivation;
- A choice of environment and activity appropriate to young people, maturity and experience
- Consideration of appropriate training, staffing and resources.

Approvals

Approval in principle should be sought from the Headteacher and or Education Visit Co-ordinator (EVC), at the planning stage and before financial commitment is made.

All activities that take place off the establishment premises require approval of the Governing Body or appropriate body.

Notification to the Local Authority (LA) is required for all visits/journey involving potentially hazardous/adventurous activities and for residential visits.

Establishments involved in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award should in the first instance inform the LA and then inform the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Office with notification forms, route plans and tracings.

Preliminary Visit and Research

A preliminary working visit, by the visit leader at least, is considered highly desirable on both planning outcomes and safety grounds. It should be considered as an important part of the planning process.

In some cases a preliminary visit is essential. Such cases will include:

- Field studies, farm visits, ski trips, industrial visits and adventurous activities;
- Visits led by inexperienced staff;
- Visits to unfamiliar terrain or location, especially where the activity is to be staff led;
- Work with very young children or those with special needs
- Visits to location where there may be special hazards

Whether or not a visit is made all means of researching the area should be explored. Sources of information include; district councils, tourist offices, National Parks' information services, other establishments who have used the centre and other local authorities.

In situations where an advance visit is not possible, every effort should be made on arrival to check that prior assumptions about the area are accurate. Depending on location this check may need programming and staffing.

A preliminary visit should seek to:

- check appropriateness of the venue to young peoples' needs and the objective of the visit;
- check for potential hazards and provide the opportunity for a 'Site Specific risk Assessment'
- check timings (length of walks, tides etc);
- establish local contacts
- check accommodation, including washing and toilet facilities, heating and lighting, storage space available for personal belongings and sufficient room between bunks and beds, especially for fire risks and evacuation;
- establish appropriate escape routes in case of emergency;
- agree in advance, between visit leader and group leader and centre staff the division of supervisory responsibility. It must be remembered that instructors are responsible for the safe running of the activity. The visit leader and group leaders remain responsible for young peoples' general welfare.
- obtain information on local services (doctors, dentists, hospital, telephone, toilets)
- ascertain an appropriate emergency action plan

Understanding the Risks in Off-site visits

All staff, whether in full or part-time employment, who are responsible for looking after others have a duty of care in common-law. If persons in their care are under the age of 18 they are said to be 'in loco parentis' and are expected to exercise the same degree of care as a reasonable, prudent and careful parent.

Because teachers are trained, professional people, courts have tended to expect them to exercise a higher standard of care than that which might be expected from an ordinary parent. Whilst the principle of 'loco parentis' does not apply to students over 18 lecturers and youth workers are expected to exercise a similar duty of care.

The duty of care extends to all who work and assist in a voluntary capacity. However, the court may not always expect the same level of competence from a voluntary helper as from those who are professionally employed. Nevertheless, a voluntary helper may well be a highly competent person and the establishment would be involving them because of this and not simply their availability.

Activities that take place on a routine or regular basis are just as likely to result in an accident as occasional or "one-off" activities. Repetition of activities, whilst usually leading to improved organisation, can result in a false sense of security, complacency and lack of vigilance. The same high levels of supervision and vigilance are necessary in all activities regardless of their nature, frequency or duration. Once the responsibilities of being "in loco parentis" have been assumed they cannot be set aside until the children have been returned to the care of their parents or guardians.

Risk Assessment

Risk Assessment (RA) is an essential element of every off-site visit or journey. It is nothing more than careful examination of an activity in order to identify what could cause harm to the people involved, establishing the likelihood of the harm occurring and checking to ensure whether or not sufficient precautions are being taken to prevent it.

It is the visit leader's responsibility to complete the risk assessment. However, RA should be viewed as a process that all members of a visit, including young people, should be involved in.

All significant hazards should form part of a risk assessment and the importance of this cannot be overstated. It will be necessary to consider RA for all visits.

It is not necessary for visit leaders to undertake the risk assessment of activities run by external providers; however, it is essential to seek assurances that providers have undertaken risk assessment and copies should be obtained. If the provider is on the Local Authority (LA) approved suppliers data base this will already be carried out by the LA.

Although establishments are purchasing services from a provider they are still required to undertake a Risk Assessment for their management of young people during the visit as they hold the overall responsibility for the young people.

Undertaking a Risk Assessment

A risk assessment for a visit need not be complex but it should be comprehensive.

It does not generally require technical formulae or professional health and safety expertise but special information for some visits may be necessary, and Headteachers should ensure that the person assessing the risks is competent to do so.

A formal assessment of the risks that might be met on a visit should have the aim of preventing the risks or reducing them. Young people must not be placed in situations that expose them to unacceptable risk. Safety must always be the prime consideration. **If the risks cannot be contained then the visit must not take place.**

The risk assessment should be based on the following considerations:

- What are the hazards?
- Who might be affected by them?
- What safety measures need to be in place to reduce risks to an acceptable level?
- Can the visit leader put the safety measures in place?
- What steps will be taken in an emergency?

The following factors are important when assessing the risks:

- the type of visit/activity and the level at which it is being undertaken;
- the location, routes and modes of transport;
- the competence, experience and qualifications of supervisory staff;
- the ratio of teachers and supervisory staff to young people;
- the group members' age, competence, fitness, temperament and the suitability of the activity;
- the special educational and medical needs of the young person;
- the quality and suitability of available equipment;
- seasonal considerations, weather and timing;
- emergency procedures. How to cope when a young person becomes unable or unwilling to continue;
- the need to monitor the risks throughout the visit;
- the need to monitor the young people at night.

Recording Risk Assessment

The person carrying out the risk assessment should record it and, from the outcome, formulate a set of procedures for the safe management of the visit. (Attached proforma)

These procedures must be agreed and shared with all staff on the visit, thereby enabling them to avoid or reduce risks.

The Headteacher and Governing Body should also be given a copy so that approval, as necessary, can be given with a clear understanding that effective planning has taken place. For all visits/journey involving potentially hazardous/adventurous activities and residential visit the LA must also be provided with the information.

Staffing

All visits and journeys involve considerable responsibility on the part of staff and, in the case of overnight stay, require a duty of care for young people for 24 hours every day.

To facilitate this responsibility the Visit Leader and the Education Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) must

- obtain the necessary approval for the visit
- obtain LA approval for all visits/journey involving potentially hazardous/adventurous activities and residential visit;
- ensure that parents and young people are clearly aware of the implications of the visit and that parental approval has been obtained;
- ensure that the overall party size be restricted to that which is manageable in the circumstances. Large parties often create special supervisory problems and should be sub-divided for activity purposes, wherever possible;
- ensure that staff have specific abilities to cope with all planned activities;
- ensure that all staff who will be expected to drive mini-buses are appropriately qualified and prepared to undertake this role;
- determine aims for the visit which are commensurate with the needs of young people, as described in the purpose of visit;
- consider carefully whether his or her personal abilities and those of accompanying adults are appropriate to the visit;
- ensure there is adequate first aid cover and knowledge is appropriate for the visit

It is desirable for mixed parties of young people to be accompanied by adults of both sexes. This is increasingly important for Upper Key Stage 2 and secondary age children and essential for secondary residential visits. If possible two adults should accompany a group so that if one adult is ill or has to deal with an emergency the other adult can assume responsibility. For residential visits this is essential.

The ratio of staff to young people recommended for different types of visits will vary. It is expected that for all visits/journey involving potentially hazardous/adventurous activities and residential visits that a minimum ratio will be one teacher/trained visit leader to maximum 10 young people. This is a **MINIMUM** supervisory ration; actual ratios of staff to young people will normally be in excess of this, but will depend on a variety of factors:

- group age and size;
- nature of visit;
- time of year, e.g. Winter sports, field trips
- group and staff experience.

The judgement as to the final staff ratio is part of the risk assessment process.

The use of establishment staff other than teachers, suitable parents or other adult helpers should be considered. Adults other than staff based at the establishment, can make a valuable contribution to the success of the visit, provided that:

- they have the competence to take on the roles and responsibilities required;
- each individual is approved by both the Headteacher and the visit leader;
- they have been carefully briefed on the scope of their responsibilities;
- volunteers are chosen for the specific contribution they can make.
- they have received CRB clearance for the educational establishment

These adult helpers may be included in the staff – young people ration provided they are acceptable to the Headteacher in the role, which they will be required to fill.

Headteacher/EVC should be aware of the potential for conflict if a parent of one of the young peoples on the visit is included as a volunteer helper.

Costing and Finance

The financial implications of the venture require detailed consideration at an early stage. Where the visit is being organised through an external provider (SJA) there may simply be an all-in charge per person to consider. Even in this situation it is worth checking that the individual needs of young people are included in the all-in charge

Ventures organised by the establishment will have many cost components.

These should include:

- travel
- access and entry charges
- refreshments en route
- excursions;
- accommodation;
- food;
- site fees;
- insurance;
- equipment and specialist resources
- pocket money.

Unexpected expenditure may be required and it is wise to arrange for contingency sum, normally through the establishment or club fund. Appropriate insurance will normally cover eventual repayment of these monies but on-the –spot payments may be required. On foreign visits these sums can be substantial.

The nature of the visit will determine what proportion, if any, of the cost of the visit may be charged to participants under the Charging Regulations

Even the simplest venture requires the precise records of income and expenditure.

Insurance

Visit Leaders should obtain details of any personal insurance cover provided by for example, a tour operator (SJA) and parents should be informed of this cover. It is strongly advised that they are each provided with a copy of the schedule.

Parental Information and consent

Day visits involving, for example, adventurous activities, a full day away from the establishment, special lunch arrangements, special clothing requirements, travel and possible costs, all require written information for parents and in the case of activities involving an element of danger their written agreement.

Journeys abroad or extended residential stays in Britain require full and detailed written information for parents. Such information should be comprehensive whilst retaining an appropriate amount of flexibility to cope with change of circumstances.

It is important that this information should identify:

- expected standards of behaviour and conduct of young people
- general arrangements for the supervision of young people including any circumstances in which young people may be left unaccompanied,

Information should be sent as far in advance of the journey as practicable and be followed up by a parents' meeting to clarify details

Include the following information:

- dates and times of departure and return;
- destination with full address;
- activities planned;
- significant findings from the risk assessment;
- name of travel company and method of travel;
- cost and what it does and does not cover;
- advice on pocket money and allocation/care on journey;
- methods of payment and cancellation arrangements/penalties;
- insurance cover, what it covers – be unambiguous (a photocopy of the schedule is useful);
- accompanying staff;
- emergency contact arrangements;
- items prohibited on journey;
- a request for written information regarding special medical problems and their treatment/medication, consent for emergency medical treatment and details of special dietary requirements;
- personal clothing list;
- code of conduct with details relating to standards of behaviour including rules on smoking and alcohol drinks
- the nature of supervision must be made clear. Parents should be aware if there are proposed times when children will not be directly supervised.

Disability and Access issues

Students with special needs or disabilities require additional consideration; their inclusion may have staffing and programme implications. Some or all of the following consideration may apply:

- environmental factors may increase the 'risk' level above that applying to other members in the group;
- a higher level of staffing will normally be needed and it may be necessary to include specialist staff to facilitate access and provide adequate supervision, communication and encouragement;
- whilst travelling, arrange more frequent stops, employ extra supervision and be particularly vigilant over travel sickness;
- medication and diet requirements should be known and monitored;
- check on the suitability of buildings and terrain for those with physical disabilities and high risk behaviours;
- ensure the activities offered are appropriate to the student and take into account wider access needs, students with certain conditions may require additional or alternative activities
- students who experience serious medical conditions or extremely challenging behaviours associated with their conditions may require an individual risk assessment to be undertaken.

Establishments should, at the planning stage, involve parents in any discussions about the inclusion of young people in a visit who have serious medical conditions or extremely challenging behaviours. After appropriate risk assessment and discussion with parents the establishment should decide if the visit is suitable to meet the needs of the young person.

Programme

A detailed programme should be established with adequate and effective supervision.

'Free time' has the potential for incident and should be limited or structured in accordance with the age and maturity of the young people and the location of the visit.

Be aware of being diverted unnecessarily from the planned programme, do not be led astray by group enthusiasm into unplanned situations. Departure from the programme should only be made after full consideration of the safety and off-site implications.

In this context it is useful to have an alternative programme, planned in advance and commensurate with the purpose of the visit, to cope with unforeseen circumstances.

Medical Arrangements

Special medical requirements of individuals should be known and catered for.

First Aid knowledge in the group and equipment carried should be appropriate to the nature of the visit.

The location of professional medical help should be known to all staff and to group members when appropriate.

In large groups it is helpful, especially on camps and overseas visits, to include an adult with appropriate first aid skills or nursing skills. They should have a minimum of emergency first aid.

Visits to remote areas require sound, up to date knowledge of first aid and emergency treatment.

Particular health risks associated with the proposed location e.g. water contamination, should be considered and appropriate action taken.

Safety Issues

General safety issues for consideration are:

- areas, times and activities of potential risk;
- standards of behaviour and conduct;
- organisation (communication, meeting times, group movement skills);
- supervision arrangements;
- duty rotas;
- emergency procedures and first aid arrangements;
- implication of weather change.

The special risks associated with transport, particularly by minibus or private car, need special consideration.

Communication

It is essential that a nominal roll of parents of all party members, including next of kin of supervisory adults, be left at the establishment with two named members of staff. These staff are to act as Emergency Contacts, and must be accessible by telephone at all hours, for the duration of the visit.

These Emergency contacts must be provided with the home telephone numbers of the Headteacher and a nominated Deputy and that of the relevant Education Officer, for daytime access, and the Council Control number for out of hours contact.

All accompanying adults should carry a copy of these details at all times

Large groups should consider establishing a network of parental contacts to speed communication.

Effective communication between staff and young people when on the visit is crucial to the proper management of the off-site experience. It is also a major bearing on the safety and well being of young people. Arrangements appropriate to the nature of the visit should be made to ensure efficient communication e.g. regular meeting times, notice board, briefings.

Clothing and Equipment

Clothing, footwear and equipment appropriate to the visit should be considered at the early planning stages.

Unsuitable clothing can markedly detract from the off-site value of the visit and may prove hazardous in exposed situations

A detailed kit list should be sent to parents well before departure. For adventure activities, operation in remote areas or in adverse weather conditions these items must be checked before departure.

In remote situations spare clothing and group emergency equipment appropriate to the nature of the environment must be carried.

Mobile Phones Protocol

Although mobile telephones can provide a vital link between young people and their parents, they can also create difficulties particularly camera 'phones. There have been occasions when young people have taken indecent photographs of other young people. Mis-use of a 'phone in this way could lead to a young person being sent home.

All establishments should have a policy for the use of mobile telephones by young people.

They are generally advised that access will be limited and controlled.

Risk Assessment and Risk Management Record			
School/Unit/Project			Location/Purpose
Visit Leader		Reference Number	Date(s)

Identify significant hazards – assessing the risk	Control measures – managing the risk
Group	
Transport	
Activity Arrangements	
Environment	
Alternative Plans	

Signed: Visit Leader: _____ Date: _____

During the Visit

This document embodies all the guidance for teachers about items for which they are responsible during the visit. It assumes all the preparations recommended in other SJA papers have been carried out satisfactorily but repeats some for obvious reasons. It forms a basic guide for all members of a group and should be used to inform them of their responsibilities during the visit. The feedback form is appended. It is very important that this is filled and sent back afterwards, Thank you

Before Departure

Health Protection.

All pupils and staff should visit their doctor at least 4 weeks before travelling, to obtain any immunization required.

School party leaders should assure themselves that their pupils are in a fit state of health to travel and have not recently run the risk of infection. Very young pupils, pupils who have special dietary requirements or problems which can cause distress to Hoteliers or other groups should not be brought without prior agreement. Dietary or similar problems should be brought to our attention when the nominative list is sent. Pupils should be warned against excessive sunbathing (skin cancer).

Luggage and Clothing

Please bring the absolute minimum. There will be occasions when you will have to carry your case some distance. Discourage pupils from bringing steel framed ruck sacks and attachable wheel frames on suitcases as they will not pack away easily in trains, coaches or boats and can be dangerous. It is essential to take toilet necessities, including towel and soap, especially for an overnight journey. Warm clothing may be needed at Easter for any location. Good walking shoes are essential at all times. School leaders are greatly helped in identifying and controlling their parties if outdoor school uniform is worn for the journey.

Pocket Money

Leaders are responsible for ensuring that unwise spending or eating does not lead to difficulty or illness of pupils with unpleasant consequences to others.

Journey to Airport or Port

Coaches can be delayed by traffic conditions leading to failure to connect with the boat or plane. Adequate time must be allowed to cope with congestion, especially on motorways and urban areas.

Be prepared for travel sickness and beware of the risk of losing valuable documents, e.g. passports.

For long journeys, arrange appropriate refreshment stops and ensure adequate supervision. Count the children before departing.

At the Airport

Schools should assemble 2 hours before the time of departure unless otherwise instructed.

At the Port / Departure Terminal

Schools should assemble 45 minutes before the time of departure unless otherwise instructed.

On The Journey

On the ferry.

- Identify yourself and your group to the Purser at the Information Desk immediately on embarkation;
- All in the group must have been briefed about
 - (a) What to do in the case of an emergency;
 - (b) The location of 'muster stations';
 - (c) Becoming disoriented on board;
 - (d) Feeling unwell.
- At least one member of staff should stay in a fixed base location throughout the crossing for pupils to report at regular intervals;
- Under no circumstances should a group be left on its own for the duration of the crossing
- Under no circumstances should young people be allowed on deck by themselves;
- Groups should not be allowed on deck during the hours of darkness or in poor weather
- Pupils should not be allowed to rush around to the annoyance of the other passengers.
- Young people under 17 are not allowed to buy tobacco, cigarettes or alcoholic drinks, even as gifts; those under 18 should not be allowed to buy alcoholic drinks from the bar.

Eurotunnel.

The coach driver's instructions must be followed at all times. A crossing takes about 40 minutes. Vehicles are loaded into carriages and their windows must be opened during the journey for safety reasons. Photographs must not be taken on board because the flash can trigger the fire detector systems and may lead to evacuation of the shuttle. Passengers must follow instructions given on the shuttle broadcast system and Eurotunnel radio as well as those displayed on the screens in the carriage or given by the staff. They must stay in their vehicles during loading and unloading and may only leave during the journey to stand beside the vehicle and not walk around it. Emergencies will be handled by the driver and shuttle staff.

On the train.

On the Continent, station platforms are low and carriages are entered at either end by steps which are steep and narrow. The party leader will be in charge of tickets etc. Railway authorities may insist that each passenger has personal identification. [See note on passports] Teachers must ensure there is no chance of cards getting lost as the loss may mean payment of a fare which cannot be reclaimed.

Food En Route.

Meals can be purchased on ferries. But it is unwise to assume that it will be possible to purchase additional refreshments whilst on a train or at any passing stops. Rolls or sandwiches, fruit, drinks of good quality should be brought in sufficient quantity for consumption on the outward journey, especially overnight. Pupils must be warned to drink only bottled water and never from taps found on the trains or station platforms. For the return journey plan provision before leaving to ensure all have adequate supplies and retain some foreign currency for emergencies.

Litter

- Railway carriages on long distance trains inevitably become littered with rubbish. This is unpleasant to travel with on the later stages of the journey, and leaves a bad impression.
To cope with this problem we suggest that schools carry a number of plastic bags which can be left behind tidily at the end of the journey and make all pupils aware of their responsibility.
- On coaches, be very alert over litter at all times, otherwise relations with the driver can deteriorate.

Extra Expenses

SJA provides:

- transport between London or agreed town and excursions as booked;
- suggestions for free time at a minimum of expense;
- the usual taxes and service charges, unless otherwise stated.

Wines and drinks are extras and the individual concerned is responsible for immediate payment for these services.

At a Port or Frontier.

Formalities at the main channel ports have become simpler. Customs examinations are rare except on return to U.K. or travelling beyond the E.C. Passports, however, are often carefully scrutinized. On trains, pupils should remain in their seats during examination. When **crossing a frontier on foot and at a port it is advisable for the party to approach in the following order:**

- **Adult in charge with collective passport.**
- **Pupils on the collective passport, in order of names, each carrying their personal Identity Card.**
- **Pupils carrying individual passports.**
- **Other adults in the party.**

The school leader hands the collective passport to the Officer and assists in checking and identifying the members of the party. (A copy of the list needs to be available). Sometimes immigration officers insist on keeping a copy of the collective passport. It is wise to be prepared by taking 4 or 5 photocopies of the collective passport: NEVER hand over the original.

Customs

When crossing a frontier by train, passport and customs examinations take place on the train. On a ferry, passports may be inspected on board - be alert for Tannoy announcements. In case of doubt, consult the purser. Customs officials expedite business if their requests are promptly complied with.

On return to UK, duty has to be paid on excess items, and concessions made to adults (especially on "duty free") are not granted to pupils in a school party who are under 17.

School leaders are responsible for the conduct of their parties in this connection. Please see that each child completes a list for all purchases made abroad, quoting prices; these will not always be asked for, but should your school be chosen for a check this will save a great deal of trouble.

HM Customs have asked that all items purchased by any individual abroad be packed in one case.

On the coach.

The chief risk is that for some reason relations with the drivers are not good. Unfortunately things can go wrong even with drivers who have been highly praised by some previous school clients. Check first that the driver's programme is the same as yours.

Please remember that long-distance tours can be very exhausting even for experienced drivers, especially if there is an overnight drive or traffic is heavy. Drivers need to have time for themselves. Most drivers, if they are shown consideration, will be very helpful. Please avoid:

- allowing pupils to leave litter, kneeling on seats or to being rowdy in the coach;
- delays to departure times, as this will mean restricting pupil's free time;
- making last minute alterations to schedules unless the drivers are agreeable.
- insisting that the drivers discuss the programme with you at times which are inconvenient to them;
- assuming drivers will act as additional members of staff! (We are sorry that this warning has to be given).

Keep the drivers' welfare in mind at all times; for example, if they are given unsatisfactory accommodation, please assist them in informing the S.J.A. as quickly as possible.

Local Excursions taken and not paid for in advance must be paid for at the time.

Accommodation

On Arrival

Introduce resident staff and give briefing to young people relating to:

- toilets and other immediate required facilities;
- room/tent allocation;
- luggage arrangements;
- facilities;
- routines, rules, duties, responsibilities;
- expectations of behaviour;
- security and fire routine and drill;
- recreation facilities.

Where problems are perceived with the arrangements, an objective discussion and co-operative approach with the management will normally be most effective. Talk through issues, rather than complain.

Fire

We recommend that you follow the ABTA Code of Practice: "All accommodation must have means of escape in the event of a fire, acceptable to the local fire authority; instructions for the evacuation of the premises must be clearly and concisely displayed - and if not, or not in English, must be explained in detail by the party leader to all members of the party, as soon as practicable after arrival. The party leader should immediately conduct each group of pupils along the whole of the emergency route from their rooms; any snags discovered must be discussed with the management."

On arrival the accommodation should be checked thoroughly to ascertain: the availability of warning alarm procedures, and location/use of equipment, evacuation procedures and emergency exits.

Rules with regard to smoking, matches etc should be established; smoking in bedrooms, other upstairs rooms and corridors or tents is prohibited.

Rules relating to the locking of rooms overnight will need consideration. It may generally be wiser to insist that rooms remain unlocked; however consideration should be given to young people and staff room allocation and access by the general public.

There should be no difficulties as SJA use only hotels which have a local fire certificate. In the event that some of these recommendations should prove impracticable, the party leader should approximate as closely as possible the ABTA's intentions. Please report any problems encountered to us, for the benefit of future parties.

Foreign Food.

To avoid pupils reacting negatively to unfamiliar food, see note on "Diet" in our Policy.

Bedrooms

Teachers are advised to check all rooms for damage on arrival and immediately report any found to the Hotel management as it is too easy for pupils, who have caused damage, to claim that the damage was already there. However if damage is caused, it should be reported immediately and, if requested, paid for immediately. A receipt should be obtained if you intend to claim from insurers.

Behaviour.

A "Code of Conduct" issued to pupils prior to the visit frequently avoids issues.

SJA confines its activities exclusively to Educational Groups and offers them exceptional advantages so we feel justified in expecting high standards of behaviour and good manners. We believe that complaints which have arisen are chiefly due to lack of supervision on the part of the accompanying teachers and we reserve the right to refuse future bookings from school parties which have proved to be inadequately supervised.

Group control should be maintained at all times; it is better to be over-directive initially, one can always relax. Control is facilitated by:

- clear , unambiguous instructions with regard to where, how and when;
- a regular roll-call or head-count (perhaps in small groups), especially at key points during the day;
- some means of group identification (SJA hats & badges);
- a recognised recall system;
- issuing each child with a card giving accommodation address and a request for assistance in the language of the country (especially useful for younger children);
- positioning an adult-at-head and tail (especially important) of any line of young people, and at intermediate points where necessary;
- teachers, in charge of parties, planning thoroughly including all free time, particularly the evenings;
Free time arrangements need supervision, the level of which is dependent on age and maturity and the circumstances. Leaders should know the whereabouts of the group (within stated limits) and the young people should have no doubts about (i) rules, (ii) sanctions, in the event of misbehaviour. Free time needs organizing. Young people and staff organized games, competitions etc are important in avoiding boredom and consequential behavioural problems. Young people in the older age ranges many reasonably expect and will appreciate less formal arrangements of free time. However, behavioural expectations, sanctions and rules regarding alcohol should be established and adhered to. Never allow young people to go off alone. Insist on minimum group size and the need for mutual support
- young people never being left unattended in the place of residence; at least one teacher should remain with them during the evenings;
- young people not being allowed to smoke, consume alcohol or drugs nor bringing anything dangerous, such as a knife, with them;
- young people not congregating in each other's rooms/tents; this may lead to exuberance and consequent damage;
- ensuring that there is no jumping up and down or "rocking" of bunk beds as this can easily lead to an accident or damage;
- not allowing running in corridors and on stairs so that there is no noise between 10.30 p.m. and 7.30 am and the privacy of other residents is respected. Young people should be reminded that they are guests and need to behave accordingly;
- young people not playing with lifts, or using them unless accompanied by an adult.

Establish a daily routine with regard to briefings which should include:

- Potential dangers;
- Safety rules (give reasons)
- Expected conduct;
- Rendezvous points;
- Action in the event of being separated or in an emergency
- Clothing, food and weather

Risks, Emergencies and Accidents.

Western Europe.

The risks are much the same as in the UK. The major causes of death are traffic accidents. Swimming accidents are also common among travellers. However:-

- **Mosquitoes** There may be plenty. They will not be infected but cause nasty bites. Carry appropriate medication.
- **Ticks** Tick-borne encephalitis is a risk in forested parts of Austria, Germany & Scandinavia; avoid uncovering areas of skin and wear trousers, socks and shoes in forests.
- **Sun** In summer, heat and sun can be a problem: carry a correct grade of sun cream; wear loose clothing, wide-brimmed hats & sun-glasses. Pupils will readily over-expose themselves.
- **Rabies** is common on the Continent, but less so in Spain, Italy and Greece.

Do not touch, let alone stroke animals, even pets.

- **Water and food** The dangers, though not common are:

WATER - if you see the locals drinking bottled water at table, do the same.

ICES - ice cream is often left to melt and then refrozen. Avoid less reputable establishments.

FRUIT/SALADS avoid less reputable establishments

SHELL FISH best avoided unless cooked or if you have recently checked the establishment.

Eastern Europe

To the risk in Western Europe add: - polio, diphtheria, hepatitis 'A' get immunized prior to departure

In these countries drink only bottled drinks.

Warnings

- Climbing (and walking on other than recognised paths) is not insured. Be aware of that risk.
- There must be no swimming without supervision. Remember that insurers will not cover deliberate exposure to hazards.
- Pupils should not leave their hotels without the knowledge of the teacher in charge of the party, and in no case should they be allowed out singly.
- Breakages and damage in hotels and elsewhere are the responsibility of the individual, and no liability will be accepted by SJA or its honorary leaders and organisers.
- Abroad, traffic drives on the RIGHT so crossing roads or getting off coaches can **not be done instinctively and needs supervision.**

Emergencies

Groups must arrange telephone contact routines with SJA and their school in case there is an urgent need to communicate with the UK during out-of hours times. If you need to communicate urgently with SJA you should contact one of the following

- a) During office hours: - the person in the SJA whose number appears on your itinerary.
- b) Outside office hours: - the SJA emergency **only** telephone number which you will be given.

Accidents: - especially in case of Transport accidents, the Group Leader or Deputy must take **complete charge** and remain in close contact with SJA.

Avoid giving information to the Press/TV - refer them to SJA or to ABTA (0207 627 2440).

If the emergency lasts more than 24 hours SJA will send someone to help.

SJA Responsibilities for Educational Visits

Introduction

Most of our accommodation has been inspected by the School Journey Association and agents. Using guidelines of the Standard Vetting Procedure, our accommodation conforms to standards required. Group leaders may pre visit SJA accommodation for which 1 night's stay, if applicable, will be paid

This guidance lists the items that are checked by SJA members and staff. Health & Safety, Security, Comfort, Competence of Staff, Suitability of Resources, etc. The list enables clear standards to be set both for the statutory checks and to provide the best value for educational visits. When abroad, where the regulations may be inconsistent, SJA will apply its own judgement and if things are not satisfactory will negotiate with the manager to reach a satisfactory solution before groups are booked.

This part of the SJA Client Safety Policy gives firstly, details of the items which are to be checked for Health & Safety reasons, and then goes on to the other matters. It excludes companies booked directly by schools, e.g. activity visits or exhibitions, who have a separate regulatory system. However, SJA does assist schools, where possible, with such matters.

Though SJA will check as above, all school party leaders should check the following items as part of the school risk assessment as on occasions hotels change provision without informing the customer.

Accommodation

Fire.

Where national fire safety standards are lower than in the UK, it may prove difficult to persuade hotel managers to install, for example, fire detectors and fire doors which they are not obliged to have. In such cases school leaders will be informed as early as possible.

Hotel Managers should:

- Know how to reduce the risk of fire;
- Provide fire doors to restrict the spread of fire and smoke;
- Have a means of warning occupants of the outbreak of fire;
- Have provided adequate, clearly marked, means of escape;
- Have adequate means of extinguishing fires;
- Inform each group of the hazards and **carry out a fire drill on arrival**
- Ensure hotel staff are adequately trained to cope with emergencies.

Balconies.

Should be sound in structure and have guard rails of suitable height and construction to prevent falling over or through.

Glass.

Areas of glass should be marked with stickers on the glass or on the floor. School leaders should be advised of any hazards.

Lifts

Points to look for are:

- lifts with all solid sides;
- maximum loading displayed;
- emergency communicator inside the lift;
- a sign outside the lift stating that it should not be used in case of fire;
- NO SMOKING signs displayed.

In any case our instructions to school leaders have always asked them to discourage pupils from using lifts unless accompanied by an adult.

Swimming Pools.

Safety measures would include before a visit assessing whether the standard of the pool was adequate;

The pool should have:

- clear water, allowing the bottom to be seen;
- frequent, visible and meaningful depth markings;
- NO DIVING reminders where water depth is less than 1.5 metres;
- clearly displayed opening hours; access sealed off when pool is closed;
- a means of summoning assistance in emergency;
- on arrival the management should give information regarding the safety drill and supervision of the pool for groups.
- Lack of adequate risk management leading to drowning is a major cause of accidental death. Schools will be informed that if they plan to use a swimming pool, where qualified lifeguards are not present, at least one school staff member, who must be a qualified life saver, should supervise the use.
- A full assessment of the water confidence and ability of pupils; use of buoyancy aids; competent and sufficient supervision for the specific environment, pupils, and level of activity is needed.
- The school's assessment should include a local ruling about the circumstances in which swimming or paddling may or may not be permitted as a marginal activity.
- Then during the activity monitoring of the conditions and supervision must be at the highest level. As with any other water based activity.

Travel

Travel entails risks of injury in a road traffic accident. Staff supervision levels must be satisfactory; and, if needed, knowledge of foreign law. Pupils are also at risk as pedestrians so need close supervision using ferries, airports, trains, underground/metro systems etc.

Coach Travel

SJA will ensure that companies used have:

- appropriate certification, licenses, insurance, clean records;
- records showing vehicles are serviced regularly and fitted with road speed limiters;
- a good understanding (management and drivers) of the complex driver's hours regulation.
- qualified (PSV) drivers with experience of school tours and, if required, the continent;
- vehicles with clearly marked and easily opened emergency exits, fire extinguishers and first aid equipment, with drivers qualified to use it;
- a commitment to give each group a safety talk at the start of the journey;
- at least comply with legal requirements re seat-belts, etc.

Ferry travel

SJA will ask ferry companies to designate a muster area for each group. We give appropriate instructions to school leaders about behaviour and about contacting the purser.

AIR TRANSPORT

This is governed by stringent International Conventions.

EXCURSIONS ~ Adventure Activities.

Group leaders will be advised of known potential hazards.

Health

The onus is clearly on the client, school staff and pupils, who should be consulting their own G.P. and Department of Health. (There is an ABTA Healthline). They should be advised to insure, and warned of common risks in Europe (a) Legionella in big hotels (Spain, Italy, Greece, Turkey) (b) Diarrhoea (c) Sunburn (Skin cancer)

Emergency Procedures

SJA Office

All SJA staff are cognisant of the procedures. Records are kept of rehearsals and improvements.

Schools

School Leaders are advised that at least one staff member of a group should have a first aid qualification and should carry a first aid kit appropriate for the trip. We can advise on the contents of such kits.

C.R.B. Checks.

After making enquiries of the Disclosure Service, Criminal Records Bureau and Child Protection Unit of DCSF, S.J.A. has adopted the following procedures in regard to criminal record checks.

"Whether to check a recruit depends upon the work to be done and is at the discretion of the employer. A check is advised when a recruit's duties bring him/her into regular contact with young people. Within accommodation pupils will always be under the direct control of their teachers and since the hotel staff do not come into regular contact with pupils no check is needed."

However, when visiting hotels etc. SJA members will enquire about the management's recruitment procedures and satisfy themselves that these are adequate. The management's responsibility to ensure that their staff are suitable to work amongst children, although not with them, is tacitly assumed but the requirements of the CRB checking system will be explained during any SJA visit. It will be explained that if a member of staff does carry out duties which require them to interact with the children that exception will necessitate a check being made.

The coach drivers, as the people in charge of their vehicles, will generally be checked by their employers because of these normal duties.

The SJA will approach any other companies in the same manner.

Monitoring.

Spot checks on coach companies and accommodation are made and documented.

Reports are requested on accidents, minor injuries and near-misses, as indicators of areas of risk; the Tour Consultants keeps the Board of Management fully informed of anything that might require action.

A feedback form is issued to school group leaders which needs to be completed and returned at end of visit.

Adventure activities. Centres licensed under the government's "Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 1996" office "AALA" can be considered safe in the leading, instructing and equipping of the activities stipulated on the licence. These will have been inspected. LAs should understand the status of AALA and ensure that suitable assessment of other aspects of the school's planning for a visit is carried out - for example, accommodation catering, transport, activities not stipulated on the licence*. For non-licensable adventure activities, proof of competence from a National Governing Body award of the relevant sport or assessment by a technical adviser may be sufficient.

**SJA prepares generic risk assessments covering the above items. Generally it takes responsibility for any issue which can be dealt with before the event, provided it forms part of the trip booked through SJA. Any issue which cannot be covered is discussed with the School.*