



Cheltenham College Welfare, Health & Safety on School Trips and Off-site Activities Policy

Introduction

The College places a high value on fieldwork, excursions, visits and other organised trips: they are of enormous benefit. It is a central part of the ethos of the College to provide the opportunity for educational visits and school excursions. Pupils' physical and moral safety is of paramount concern.

The College accepts that trips, visits and outdoor activities cannot be completely without risk but it requires that those staff in charge, take all reasonable precautions to protect the health, safety and welfare of pupils and staff, and minimise the risk of untoward or dangerous situations (in accordance with DCSF Guidance *Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits*).

All staff wishing to plan a major overseas or UK based trip (usually in holiday time) must submit their application to the Director of Activities in the previous academic year and decisions will be made on the suitability and the range of trips offered in conjunction with the Deputy Head (Pastoral) [DHP]. These trips are then communicated to parents on a central list in advance of the next academic year and are also entered into the College Calendar. UK based trips during term-time require the approval of the Deputy Head (Academic) if lessons are going to be missed but overall responsibility for pupil welfare on trips remains with the Director of Activities and the DHP. These too are entered onto the College Calendar.

All trips are monitored and controlled via the College's Trips Manager database that ensures appropriate Risk Assessments are developed when a trip is registered. All contact details of trip leaders are in place in case of an emergency. Trips Manager is designed to take account of a wide range of trips from away fixtures on a Saturday to trekking in Nepal. This data is always available at College to assist in the management of any emergency that might arise. Trips Manager also allows staff to access relevant medical data and registered doctor details for those pupils attending the trip who have medical concerns or issues.

All games fixtures require the approval of the Director of Sport and are entered into the College Calendar. All away fixtures are subject to the same process of risk assessment and control, via the College's Trips Manager database, as any other off-site activity.

The majority of trips make use of College's own transport fleet or their approved coach companies e.g. Eagle Line. If alternative transport is required then appropriate further checks will be made to ensure the Health & Safety of pupils and staff. The use of all major transport types is built in to the Trips Manager Risk Assessment process. The College transport fleet is subject to rigorous checking and maintenance and while many staff are qualified to drive College vehicles, all are trained in the appropriate use of College vehicles.

Trips and Visits

The College regularly takes pupils on day trips to historic sites, museums, galleries, natural features etc. to support the curriculum in History, Art History, Geography, English, Biology and Classics and many other subjects. There are regular theatre trips for pupils of all levels.

Some pupils take part in language exchanges in France, Germany and Spain. Pupils from these schools are accommodated in the homes of host families, whose children make reciprocal visits when the families of College pupils accommodate them.

There are Geography field trips, overseas History, Art, History of Art and Religious Studies trips from time to time. There is a year-round weekend programme of activities and games fixtures as well as an active community programme involving pupils from neighbouring schools. The choirs make regular concert tours to Europe and the US and other music groups perform regularly across the UK. There are also post-GCSE trips for Year 11 pupils and regular annual expeditions to Kenya and Nepal for Year 12 pupils. Rugby, netball, cricket, hockey, squash and rackets teams go on tours to South Africa, Australia, and Malaysia etc. on a rotational basis. We have an active Travel Award programme for year 12 pupil supported by the Cheltonian Endowment Trust (CET) where independent, educational projects are supported. As pupils travel independently here the College works closely with and advises parents on the necessary arrangements.

There is an active Duke of Edinburgh Award programme from Year 9, involving a range of outdoor activities, services and skills. Many pupils take their Bronze Award, and many of the Year 12 and 13 pupils pursue the more advanced Gold Award, which involves a residential project and a variety of expedition options supported by College staff. The Skill section of the Award is supported by the College system of Monday Clubs and the Service element by our Wednesday activity programme. All Year 9 pupils partake in 'Third Form Challenge' (3FC) an outdoor pursuits based team-building programme, involving regular visits and trips off site.

The Combined Cadet Force (CCF) is compulsory for all pupils in Year 10, and from Year 11 is optional with opportunities to take part in activities in the Royal Navy, Army and Royal Air force sections, through weekend exercises, adventurous training and military camps.

There is more about the trips, visits and activities that are available to each year group on the web site, in the prospectus, and specifically through letters, and at parent/pupil briefings before major trips take place.

Trips abroad bring with them specific problems relating to pupil safety and welfare and all staff involved are given appropriate support and guidance to ensure that they are prepared for all likely hazards. This support is typically provided through experienced staff accustomed to such trips and the advice of the Director of Activities.

Information on planned trips and activities

The College calendar lists the trips and visits due to take place over the coming term together with a list of planned home and away sports fixtures. Details for the coming academic year are sent to all parents in advance with details of approximate cost. This is designed to help parents plan holidays and financial commitments and ensures trips don't clash, as far as possible.

- Family and friends are welcome at all matches, both home and away.

- If a pupil is going to be out of school during the school day in order to visit a local museum, theatre, nature reserve or historic site, the College always seeks parental permission if the visit involves an extra charge or there is an overnight stay.
- The College sends details of planned trips and activities in advance to all parents of pupils of the relevant year group or cohort. For the more extended trips, parents are invited into the school for a full briefing before pupils depart.

For all overseas and UK trips pupils are fully briefed on behaviour, safety, expectations and medical and emergency procedures before and during off-site trips. Risk Assessments for each sport identify key issues for communication with pupils for away fixtures.

Consent

The College requires parents' specific, individual written consent if pupils are on a trip or visit that involves an overnight stay, an overseas visit or extra cost. The College cannot take a pupil without a completed and signed consent form, including emergency contact details. This form is sent in advance, with full trip details, and must reach the school at least 3 working days before the start of the trip. Such consent includes the authorisation for the provision of emergency medical treatment if required.

Safety

Safety is top priority for the College. The College expects the support of parents in ensuring that pupils follow the instructions given either by a member of staff, or by a qualified instructor, and uses the proper equipment. The College reserves the right to send pupils home early at their parents' expense, if they decline to follow reasonable instructions given for their own safety or do not follow the College's rules, regulations and policies.

All off-site activities, matches and trips require the completion of appropriate risk assessment procedures via Trips Manager. Typical staff: pupil ratios would be 1:6 for overseas expeditions and outdoor pursuits activities and 1:15 for other offsite visits which are UK based such as sports teams and educational visits to museums and theatres. For mixed gender groups staff of each gender are required.

It is College policy to ensure that all staff in charge of trips are suitably experienced and trained for the nature of the trip concerned. All staff or volunteers accompanying a trip are subject to appropriate CRB checks and staff remain responsible for pupil behaviour at all times. The College Behaviour Policy and the 'Book of Rules' remain in place on all trips. Appropriate first aid guidance (in line with the College's First Aid Policy) is provided to staff and 'activity-suitable' First Aid kits are supplied by the College Medical Centre.

Insurance

The School arranges insurance cover to ensure that school trips are adequately protected from losses through cancellation, delayed departure, lost luggage, medical and associated expenses, personal accident and personal effects. All overseas trip organisers are required to consult with the Deputy Bursar, whilst planning a trip, to ensure that any potential exclusions, such as winter sports and hazardous activities, are suitably covered.

September 2010

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