

"In a Nutshell" – Residential Visits and Outdoor Education - including School Trips Abroad (SW14)

Staff organising such visits are trained in leading and organising school trips. They also have a good level of child protection awareness and training, and ensure that they feel competent to deal with the issues that may arise. School trips can be:

1. Field visits or trips where the school itself organises the accommodation and supervises the children throughout the visit.

Organising staff need to arrange/ensure:

- Appropriate, rigorous risk assessments, documentation and procedures in line with Health and Safety Executive best practice.
 - A code of conduct, agreed with parents, pupils and staff, stating action to be taken should it be breached, setting out expected standards of behaviour and including rules on personal safety, balancing this need with the intention that pupils gain maximum cultural, social and educational benefits.
 - Appropriate pupil accommodation, providing a level of privacy reflecting age and gender, and appropriately located staff bedrooms for supervision and access in case of emergency.
 - Both organised activities and leisure time must be adequately supervised; pupil free time is not free time for staff.
 - On trips during school holidays with older pupils, greater informality is appropriate. However staff must exercise due care not to be over-familiar with pupils – see SW10 Staff Code of Conduct.
2. Outdoor education courses run by external centres - where the children stay in accommodation provided by the centre, and are mainly under the direction of the staff.

Here the school has the duty to ensure that the Centre has clear child protection, security and health and safety procedures and risk assessments in place. These should always be sought out and reviewed carefully. Staff should, however, remain vigilant: for situations not covered by procedures, or where they don't seem adequate or correctly applied.

3. Trips abroad, such as class exchanges and Class 12 trips.

A similar level of provision as for 1. above.

Even with appropriate preparation, a child protection incident may still occur or be suspected, in which case:

- Contact the trip emergency contact/School Coordinator/Child Protection Team.
- Contact relevant police service in the area where the alleged offence took place.
- Contact parents of those directly involved, in line with child protection procedures. The School Coordinator/Child Protection Team will contact other parents in line with advice from the relevant authorities, leaving the staff on the trip free to support the pupils there.
- Delays in contacting parents are to be avoided wherever possible, as they can compound the situation; appropriate sharing of accurate information is critical.