



**Bishkek
International
School**

Educational Visits Policy

Reviewed by the Management Board: August 2017
Previous Review: August 2016

Approved by the Governing Board: August 2017

Preface

Policies, Handbooks and Regulations

This policy is one of several policies, procedures and related documents that guide operations at ESCA – Bishkek International School (BIS). The full list of relevant documents, prepared by the Management Board and approved by the Governing Board, comprises:

Policies:

1. Vision, Mission and Development Policy
2. Admissions Policy
3. Inclusive Education Policy
4. Language Policy
5. Academic Honesty Policy
6. Assessment Policy
7. Health & Safety Policy
8. Child Protection Policy
9. Educational Visits Policy
10. Ethics Policy
11. Accounting Policy

Handbooks:

1. Staff Handbook
2. Parents & Guardian Handbook
3. Student Handbook

All Governing Board members and all staff must be aware of each of these documents and their contents. All policy documents and handbooks are available to students and parents/guardians via the BIS website or provided in PDF form to parents/guardians on request.

All policy documents and handbooks are reviewed and revised by the Management Board every year, normally in April/May for approval by the Governing Board in June for the following academic year. All students, parents and staff are invited to send comments and suggest any changes to the Management Board at any time before the end of April each year for consideration for policies/handbooks for the next academic year.

Overall Governance of BIS is guided by the legal Charter of the Public Foundation ‘ESCA - Bishkek International School’ and various internal regulations. These are:

1. Legal Charter of ESCA-Bishkek International School
2. Regulations of the Governing Board
3. Regulations of the Parents Association
4. Regulations of the Advisory Council

International Baccalaureate

BIS is an International Baccalaureate World School, offering the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (DP), and is an official candidate school for the Primary Years Programme (PYP) and the Middle Years Programme (MYP). IB World Schools share a common philosophy and commitment to high quality, challenging, international education that BIS believes is important for our students. For further information about International Baccalaureate, see www.ibo.org

International Baccalaureate mission statement

“The International Baccalaureate aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect. To this end the organization works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment. These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right”

International Baccalaureate Learner Profile

The aim of all IB programmes is to develop internationally minded people who, recognizing their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help to create a better and more peaceful world.

The IB learner profile represents 10 attributes valued by IB World Schools. We believe these attributes, and others like them, can help individuals and groups become responsible members of local, national and global communities.

1. **Inquirers:** Develop a natural curiosity that allows them to become lifelong learners.
2. **Knowledgeable:** They explore ideas of importance and dig deep into its meaning creating a balance of their learning.
3. **Thinkers:** They apply thinking skills that allow them to tackle complex problems in creative ways.
4. **Communicators:** They understand and can articulate information in confident, creative ways, including a second language.
5. **Principled:** Students are honest, fair, just and full of integrity. They strive to solve their own problems and to take responsibility for their own actions.
6. **Open-minded:** Students understand and embrace other cultures. They recognize and celebrate their own backgrounds and learn tolerance for others.
7. **Caring:** Students actively care about others and participate in active service.
8. **Risk-Takers:** Students are brave in the face of new challenges. They strive to take on new roles and to defend their own beliefs.
9. **Balanced:** Students understand the need to be emotionally, physically and mentally balanced. They strive for this in themselves and others.
10. **Reflective:** Students reflect on their own learning. They are able to adjust for weaknesses and strengths.

Contents

1	INTRODUCTION	1
2	RESPONSIBILITIES	1
3	TRIP PREPARATION	1
3.1	STAFFING	1
3.2	SUPERVISION RATINGS	2
3.3	APPROVAL PROCEDURE AND CONSENT	2
3.4	RISK ASSESSMENT	2
3.5	FIRST AID	3
3.6	OTHER PREPARATION	3
3.7	EXTENDED TRIPS - ADDITIONAL PREPARATION	4
3.8	VISIT ORGANIZATION	6
4	PREPARING THE PARTICIPANTS	7
4.1	TRIP ITINERARY	7
4.2	STUDENT BEHAVIOUR	7
4.3	BRIEFING STAFF	8
4.4	STAFF AND STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY	8
5	EMERGENCY PROCEDURES	9
6	EDUCATIONAL VISIT EVALUATION	9
8	ANNEXES	1
8.1	ANNEX 1: TRIP AUTHORIZATION FORM	1
8.2	ANNEX 2: STANDARD RISK ASSESSMENT FORM	2
8.3	ANNEX 3: STANDARD PARENT/GUARDIAN CONSENT FORM	3
8.4	ANNEX 4: GUIDELINES FOR GROUP LEADERS	4
8.5	ANNEX 5: CHECKLIST FOR TRIP ORGANIZERS	14

1 INTRODUCTION

At BIS we believe that learning outside the classroom is an essential component of our curriculum. Our educational trips have a clear purpose offering our students unique opportunities to develop their resourcefulness and initiative, to extend their learning and to spend time together in an informal environment. Each student should be taken on at least one educational trip or outing during the autumn and summer terms.

It is the School's duty to ensure that all educational visits are safely managed and that the health, safety and welfare of students, staff and volunteers are maintained. This document provides advice and guidance covering essential procedures for trip preparation and supervision and alerts staff to potential dangers, however it is impractical to cover all contexts and eventualities; therefore staff must also consider the relevant sections of the Health and Safety Policy and assess the specific risks of each visit in order to minimize risk.

Planning, organizing and supervising any school trip is a challenging experience which can be demanding. The assessment of risks involved is essential and a requirement to reduce the risks to students so that they may benefit from the learning experiences presented by a trip.

Managing all the members of the group, achieving the objectives of the trip, making sure that everyone takes full part, maintaining discipline and ensuring the safety of all involved is a full time responsibility.

Sound planning and detailed preparation are essential for a successful trip.

2 RESPONSIBILITIES

The Governing Board ensures that appropriate safety measures are in place and that training needs have been addressed in terms of school policy.

An Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) is appointed by the Management Board. The Educational Visits Coordinator is normally the Director of Studies, but may be another member of staff, as approved by the Management Board.

The Chair of Management Board ensures that if the Educational Visits Coordinator's role and responsibilities are designated to another member of staff, that member of staff is appropriately experienced and suitably trained to undertake the role.

The Educational Visits Coordinator has delegated responsibility to authorize all off-site School visits and to ensure that all trips are prepared and conducted in accordance with the required standards.

The individual Trip Organizer has overall responsibility for the supervision and conduct of the visit and continues to monitor the arrangements to ensure the ongoing health and safety of the group. The Trip Organizer is responsible for seeking approval and advice from the EVC, assessing the risk levels of the trip and making the necessary safety arrangements.

The Trip Organizer will designate one member of staff to be the Group Leader of the trip. This individual should be on call at all times during the specified period and should not drink alcohol or be otherwise unavailable to drive or make important decisions. The Trip Organizer and any Group Leader must read and follow the Guidelines for Group Leaders in Annex 4 of this document.

3 TRIP PREPARATION

3.1 STAFFING

The School recognizes the key role of accompanying staff in ensuring the highest standards of learning, challenge and safety on a school visit. The selection of staff for educational visits is a key priority in determining the initial approval of any proposed visit. Where it is appropriate the School will ensure that

Child Protection training and screening is available for volunteer adults assisting with educational visits e.g. overnight stays. Accompanying staff and adult helpers must have the appropriate skills.

3.2 SUPERVISION RATIOS

It is important to have a high enough ratio of adult supervisors to students for any visit. Various factors should be taken into consideration such as the age of the group, the nature of the activities, the duration and nature of the journey and the medical needs of any students within the group.

A minimum of 2 staff must accompany any group of students, unless agreed otherwise by the EVC. An example of a trip where 2 staff might not be required would be a public trolleybus ride into Bishkek with a small group of senior students.

For day trips, a ratio of 1 member of staff per 15 students must not be exceeded, with a minimum of 2 staff for every trip. For Years 1 to 4, a minimum ratio of 1 member of staff for 10 students, with a minimum of 2 staff for every trip. For Preschool, a minimum ratio of 1 member of staff for 8 students, with a minimum of 2 staff for every trip.

For residential trips, a ratio of 1 member of staff per 10 students must not be exceeded, with a minimum of 2 staff for every trip, and both male and female staff members if the student group is mixed gender.

3.3 APPROVAL PROCEDURE AND CONSENT

For any visit, a preliminary discussion must be held with the EVC and subject to satisfactory submission of a draft outline for the educational visit, preliminary approval will be given to continue. Outings should be planned as far in advance as possible, in order to facilitate associated arrangements and to ensure availability of staff, transport and to avoid clashes.

Budget and Visit Approval

Any off-site trip must be approved by the EVC at the planning stage. Approval will cover: objectives; responsibility; location; timing; participants; and cost. The standard Trip Authorization Form is given in Annex 1. The budget cost for a trip must include cost for any member of staff attending the trip.

Parent/Guardian consent

Written parental consent must be sought by the Trip Organizer confirming that they have understood the purpose, estimated cost and arrangements for the visit and give permission for their child to go on the visit. Parents are also requested to provide up to date emergency contact and medical information so that the appropriate first aid arrangements can be put in place. Any letters sent to parents should be on school headed paper, correctly dated with clear instructions regarding meeting deadlines such as payment. Copies of all correspondence should be handed to the EVC and also retained by the Trip Organizer.

Parents/guardians must be notified at least 3 school days in advance of any off-site trip and consent forms must be returned at least 1 school day before the trip. Students for whom no written consent has been received cannot to be taken on the trip. These are minimum times. Notification and consent should normally be done before these deadlines. For example overnight trips may require notification weeks or months in advance.

Students may not go on a visit if the signed consent form (or equivalent written confirmation) has not been received.

3.4 RISK ASSESSMENT

The Trip Organizer must carry out a risk assessment covering all aspects of the proposed trip which must be approved by the EVC. For all routine trips, completion of the standard Risk Assessment Form in Annex 2 is required. More hazardous and/or overnight trips require a more detailed Risk Assessment.

Risk Assessment involves:

- Identifying possible hazards at all stages of the trip. These will variously encompass issues of supervision, transport, accommodation, security, hazardous and other pursuits, first aid and medical factors and contingency plans in the event of, say, losing contact with a student.
- For each identifiable area, staff should calculate the risk level and then introduce or be mindful of control and/or contingency measures. In the event of an incident, staff will be expected to demonstrate that they acted in accordance with procedures considered in advance as part of the Risk Assessment process.
- Considering the special risks for any member of the group who has a disability, medical condition or specific educational need. Needs should be known from parental consent forms and/or from the school doctor/nurse.
- Assessing travel requirements taking into account all the relevant factors such as distances to be travelled and likely weather conditions and appropriate arrangements are made to ensure optimal safety conditions for travel.

A 'dynamic' risk assessment will be continued by the Group Leader throughout the trip to ensure that hazards are monitored and appropriate safety measures are put in place. It is the responsibility of the Group Leader to ensure that all accompanying staff are familiarized with the risk assessment and to continue to brief staff throughout the trip.

3.5 FIRST AID

First aid requirements form part of the risk assessment carried out by the Trip Organizer. As a minimum a suitably stocked first-aid box and a person appointed to be in charge of first aid arrangements will be in place for every trip. Increased levels of first aid cover will be dependent upon the nature of the trip and the students taking part. A visit rated as overall low risk will only require one first aid trained staff member.

Students with serious medical conditions such as anaphylaxis, or insulin dependent diabetes will require a higher level of first aid competence during the trip.

Activities which are potentially hazardous or remote from medical assistance will also require a higher level of first aid competence namely a certified trained First Aider or the school doctor/nurse.

3.6 OTHER PREPARATION

Canteen Notification

If the visit involves a change to meal arrangements, kitchen staff must be notified at least 1 day before the trip if students will be late for their meal. If meals will be cancelled or picnic lunches are required, the kitchen must be notified at least one week in advance.

Administration Notification

A list of students actually on the trip and the trip itinerary must be given to the BIS Reception and to the Director of Studies on the day of the visit. The student list must be a detailed list of those actually on the trip, taking account of absences on the day so that we have an accurate picture of the position in case of emergencies such as fire or sudden illness.

A list of students who will be absent from school should also be placed on the staff notice board as early as possible for the information of other teachers.

Other Advance Arrangements

- If students are due back from visits after 16.30, adequate provision must be made in advance for their journey home.

- Teachers who will be absent on the visit must leave work for classes or students left behind, and exchange any duties if necessary.
- Any staff participating on a trip must accompany the group on the transport provided.
- Staff taking students off site must be in possession of a functioning mobile telephone.
- It should be made clear to students involved in a visit that they have the responsibility to make up any work they have missed as a result of their absence from normal lessons.
- Students may be withdrawn from the visit if their behaviour in advance of the visit is unacceptable.

3.7 EXTENDED TRIPS - ADDITIONAL PREPARATION

Extended trips require careful and detailed planning. Key areas for attention are:

Money

Dealing with money can be one of the most difficult tasks. It will be necessary at the outset to make an estimate of the total cost and a date by which different payments should be made

A detailed trip budget should be reviewed and approved by the school accountant before approval by the EVC. Budgets must include contingency funds for unexpected events.

Any payments or payment commitments that are non-refundable (e.g.: airline tickets, visa fees) must be clearly identified in communications with parents. Parents must sign to acknowledge that payment is non-refundable before BIS makes any payment on their behalf.

All cash must be collected and controlled by the Accounts Department, not the staff member organizing the visit. All movement of cash must be registered and controlled.

During the visit, the Group leader should update the budget every day to show expenditure and track against plans to facilitate decision making. Always make sure that you have access to emergency funds for your travel.

Decide how the participants are going to deal with their own spending money. Are you going to act as banker, or are they going to take responsibility for it themselves?

Documentation

On arrival, check all official documentation carefully, not just tickets but insurance cover documents, itineraries and receipts. When travelling abroad, passports, and possibly visas, will be necessary. It is the parent's responsibility to check that these are correct and current, but they need to be checked nonetheless.

Group leaders should have the following documents in their personal possession, readily accessible, on the outward journey.

- Tickets for the outward and return journey.
- Passports & Visas.
- Medical certificates and doctors letters where appropriate.
- Insurance Policy, plus name, telephone/telex/fax number of issuing agent
- Personal driving license (international if necessary).
- Nominal roll of the group, including home contact telephone numbers of parents/guardians.
- Personal credit cards for use in emergency.
- Cash, including small change in the currency of your destination.
- Copies of the itinerary.

- Precise name, address and contact numbers of the destination and all the carriers. (Obtain the 24 hour emergency numbers).
- Baggage receipts from your carrier.
- Sufficient baggage labels for your return.
- Copies of parental consent forms (Annex 4).
- A copy of this policy guidance if required.

On arrival at your destination the documents should be lodged safely, preferably in the safe deposit facility at the hotel:

Medical treatment

Group Leaders may be approached for medical advice and aid. There are strict rules about what can be administered and by whom:

- Check parental consent form (allergies and relevant medical history) and keep detailed notes of the treatment given: medicine, dosage, date, reasons and effect on the patient.
- Make sure that whoever administers treatment knows what they are doing.

First Aid Pack

A first aid pack is essential and should be part of the leader's hand luggage at all times. The pack may contain

- Plasters.
- Crepe bandage.
- Antiseptic cream and liquid.
- Burn cream (also suitable for blisters).
- Insect repellent and sting sooth.
- Scissors.
- Tweezers.
- Travel sickness bags (Freezer bags with ties are ideal).
- Antiseptic wipes.

Prescribed Medicines

Leaders may be required to take charge of prescribed medicine for a group member. Leaders must ensure they are fully briefed on the medical condition, the symptoms, dosage times, reason for prescription and care of the medicine (does it need refrigeration as is the case for Insulin). The medicine should always be in the correct bottle and that it is clearly labelled. Never carry medicines in main luggage as this will delay access to them or, at worst; the luggage is mislaid along with the medicines. Note that when travelling through customs prescribed medicines will be of interest to customs officials. A note from the patient's doctor explaining what the medicines are and when they are needed may prevent difficulties.

Medical Insurance and Pre-Existing Medical Conditions

Either as a group or individually, each member, including supervisors must have adequate medical insurance cover. Some insurance policies exclude provision of cover for a medical condition which was known to exist when the insurance was affected.

Insurance Essentials

Before departure the whole group must be properly insured. There are some important aspects to ensure are included:

- Cancellation of the trip due to illness or death.

- Curtailment of the trip for one or more participants due to illness of themselves or a relative at home.
- Delays to journeys, especially for reasons of adverse weather or industrial action. It may be necessary to feed and accommodate the whole group at short notice.
- Failing to meet outward transport. Adverse weather, traffic jams or mechanical breakdown can lead to missed connections. Check that cover extends to both private transport and private coach hire.
- Adequate baggage cover for each traveller.
- Personal Items: Some items may need to be separately insured.
- The small print on the policy must be read with care as there are a number of exclusions.

Communications

The Group Leader is responsible for sending an email or sms or Whatsapp communication at least once a day to all parents/guardians of students on an extended visit with copy to the Director of Studies and Head of School. The communication route may be via another staff member designated by the Head of School to be responsible for dissemination to all parents/guardians. Whatever communication arrangements are made, they must be failsafe to avoid unnecessary concerns by parents/guardians.

3.8 VISIT ORGANIZATION

The purpose of the trip should be made clear to all concerned. It will be necessary to ensure that the destination is suitable. Reconnaissance is important, though it is not always possible.

A repeat visit to the same destination with different groups makes organization easier. Involving students in trip preparation helps to reinforce a disciplined approach. A balanced itinerary which pleases all those involved requires good communication and negotiation skills and practical confirmed arrangements.

The organizer must be aware of, and operate within, the law. On international trips there will be at least two different legal systems to consider. For example, permitted or required contents of a First Aid pack may differ from country to country.

Selecting the Destination

The popularity and likely numbers of other visitors at your chosen destination may affect the planned learning experience and this factor needs to be considered.

Travel Plans

Only reputable companies should be used for transport. Be aware of travelling time and take into account the need for breaks in the journey. Allow more time than will actually be needed, particularly if someone else is responsible for transport. For international travel be aware of time differences which may affect the amount of time available at the end of the journey. There may be a choice between public and private transport.

Choice and Use of Transport

Option	Considerations
Parents' Cars	Staff must check the authorization slips in the office before allowing any child to travel in another parent's car. Check that students are wearing seat belts and are not put in the care of a driver known to be irresponsible or put in an unsuitable or un-roadworthy vehicle. Travel outside the city at night-time is not approved except for exceptional situations which are specifically cleared by the Management Board.
Hired Coach/Bus	At the time of booking state the size of the coach you require and any extra facilities you require: microphone, toilet, video etc. Check that the contract specifies vehicle

Option	Considerations
	<p>requirements and company liability.</p> <p>Travel outside the city at night-time is not approved except for exceptional situations which are specifically cleared by the Management Board.</p> <p>A checklist on use of buses/coaches is given in the Health and Safety Policy</p>
Boat/Ship	<p>Ensure you leave enough time to arrive at the port at the stated time. Always agree a rendezvous point with the students and make sure it is <i>manned</i> for the duration of the crossing by one of the supervisors. Make sure all participants are aware of the ship's emergency procedures. You may want to agree a procedure of your own for the group but this must not conflict with that laid down by the carrier.</p>
Airline Flight	<p>Check if any of the participants have problems with flying and determine the legitimacy of their claim. Check if anyone has a medical condition that maybe exacerbated by flying and that they have their required remedies to hand during the flight. Notify the airline if you are carrying any medication that may need refrigeration.</p>
Train	<p>Make sure you know about connections or train changes that have to be made and allow plenty of time. A large school group can be intrusive to other passengers, so good discipline is essential. One responsible adult should be in each compartment occupied by members of your group.</p>

4 PREPARING THE PARTICIPANTS

4.1 TRIP ITINERARY

For overnight trips, it is important to brief the students and parents well in advance and to explain fully the reasons for the visit and the proposed itinerary. The itinerary must state that it is subject to change if circumstances dictate and that a risk assessment has been carried out and appropriate control measures introduced.

Full written copies of the itinerary must be available for all concerned: students, parents (in some cases 2 sets), host organizations, colleagues, Director of Studies and Head of School. Take spare copies with you on the trip.

The itinerary document should include:

- Who is taking part.
- Activities taking place.
- All relevant dates.
- All key timings.
- Exact locations (hotels details should include full addresses, telephone, telex and fax with international dialling codes where appropriate.)
- Clothing and equipment list.
- Number and names of all supervisors and hosts.

4.2 STUDENT BEHAVIOUR

For all visits the students should be adequately briefed about the aims, expectations and codes of conduct for the visit. Students should be engaged in evaluating the risks of the tasks they are about to undertake. In all cases parents and students should be made aware of the standards of behaviour expected and the sanctions which may be used in cases where the standards are breached. In all cases the parent consent form requires that parents agree that the School reserves the right to send their child home at the parents' expense if they jeopardize their own safety, the safety of others or the good name of the School. For residential visits it may be appropriate to require parents and students to sign a Code of Conduct

Agreement.

Trip Organisers have a right to refuse to take a child who constitutes a risk to the safety of others. However, it is expected that such decisions would be taken in consultation with the EVC.

4.3 BRIEFING STAFF

You may be held responsible for an accident which occurs even when the students are under the supervision of a volunteer helper. Brief all such helpers and escorts in writing before accepting them on the trip. Ideally, they should be present at the student briefing before departure.

All supervisors must be aware of their function as role models. Their behaviour must be beyond reproach at all times and must be seen to be so by the students. Group members should know at all times where they can locate a responsible supervisor. For instance, if a group is shopping a place must be agreed where one of the supervisors can be found.

4.4 STAFF AND STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY

Allocating Staff Responsibility

The Group leader is responsible overall for the group at all times. In delegating supervisory roles to other adults in the group, it is good practice for the group leader to:

- allocate supervisory responsibility to each adult for named students;
- ensure that each adult knows which students they are responsible for;
- ensure that each student 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 students assigned to them;
- ensure that all adults and students are aware of the expected standards of behaviour.

Supervisor Responsibility

Each supervisor must:

1. have a reasonable prior knowledge of the students including any special educational needs, medical needs or disabilities;
2. carry a list/register of all group members;
3. directly supervise the students (except during remote supervision) – particularly important when they are mingling with the public and may not be easily identified;
4. regularly check that the entire group is present;
5. have a clear plan of the activity to be undertaken and its educational objectives;
6. have the means to contact the group leader/other supervisors if needing help;
7. have prior knowledge of the venue – the group leader should normally have made an exploratory visit.
8. anticipate a potential risk by recognising a hazard, by arriving, where necessary, at the point of hazard before the students do, and acting promptly where necessary;
9. 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;
10. be competent to exercise appropriate control of the group, and to ensure that students abide by the agreed standards of behaviour;
11. clearly understand the emergency procedures and be able to carry them out;
12. have appropriate access to First Aid;

Student Responsibility

Each student should:

1. know who their supervisor is at any given time and how to contact him or her;
2. have been given clear, understandable and appropriate instructions;

3. rarely if ever be on their own, and never on their own for anyone in Year 6 and below;
4. alert the supervisor if someone is missing or in difficulties;
5. have a meeting place to return to, or an instruction to remain where they are, if separated;
6. understand and accept the expected standards of behaviour.

Courtesy to Others

Anyone who comes into contact with the group is to be shown the utmost courtesy. Couriers, guides and any others who have given up their time for the school deserve the group's full attention. Hosts merit recognition and thanks for their help and co-operation and are usually very appreciative of an on-the-spot *thank you* in front of the group. Where appropriate, a letter of thanks from BIS should be sent upon completion of the visit.

5 EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

The Trip Organizer must ensure that full details of the visit are retained at school by key personnel who can be contacted if there are changes of plan or if there is an emergency.

The Trip Organizer and staff must be familiar with and act in accordance with the 'Emergency Procedures for Group Leaders' in Annex 4 to this document. Staff must ensure that they keep emergency contact details for students and staff with them at all times, and that they have the correct insurance information readily available.

In the event of emergency School staff will:

- ensure that the group are all present and accounted for
- seek immediate medical attention for any casualties
- ensure that any casualty going to hospital is accompanied by a member of staff
- maintain adequate supervision for the remaining group members
- notify the police and or the relevant Embassy as appropriate
- keep the emergency school contact informed of the nature, date and time of the incident, location, names of casualties and details of their injuries, names of others involved so that parents can be reassured

And in accordance with Emergency Procedures for Group Leaders the School staff will:

- know that no-one in the group should speak to the media. All media enquiries should be handled by the designated BIS media spokesperson.
- names of those involved in the incident should not be given to the media as this could cause distress to their families.
- record accurately as soon as possible all relevant facts and witness details and preserve any vital evidence.

Parents are to be provided with the contact details of the Trip Organizer and for residential trips, the contact details of members of the BIS Management Board.

6 EDUCATIONAL VISIT EVALUATION

The school recognizes that every educational trip requires considerable time and effort to organize, and there are associated costs such as lessons missed and staff cover required. For this reason the Trip Organizer is required to state the purpose of the visit at the outset when seeking initial approval. The Organizer is also required to evaluate the trip on return and submit the evaluation to the EVC. A termly summary of off-site visits that have taken place is provided by the EVC to the Health & Safety Committee and the Management Board will provide the Governing Board with an overview of school visits that have taken place.

7 ANNEXES

7.1 ANNEX 1: TRIP AUTHORIZATION FORM

This form must be given to the Educational Visits Coordinator as far in advance as possible. Any request submitted less than 5 days in advance will be rejected.

Planned Visit Location:
Planned Dates and Times:
Trip Organizer (name):
Group Leader (if different):
Other Staff involved:
Planned Participants (Group and Approx. Number):
Educational Objectives:
Special Catering Needs (specify):
Transport required (specify):
Staff cover required in BIS:
Impact on other BIS activities:
Approximate costs in total:
Approximate cost per child
Proposed source of funding:
Trip Organizer signature:
Date:
EVC Approval Signature:
Date:

7.2 ANNEX 2: STANDARD RISK ASSESSMENT FORM

Known Hazard For	Who is at risk	Precautions in place	Further actions needed
This Group: (e.g, child with epilepsy)			
This Activity Location:			
This Travel Plan: (e.g. bus, train)			

PREPARED BY:

DATE:

APPROVED BY EVC:

DATE:

7.3 ANNEX 3: STANDARD PARENT/GUARDIAN CONSENT FORM

Dear Parents,

I am writing to inform you that **xxxxxYearGroup** will be undertaking an Educational Visit to **xxxxlocation**

The purpose of this visit is to **xxxxxx**

Date of Excursion: **xxdate**

Destination : **xxdestination**

Departure time from BIS : **xxtime**

Time of Return to BIS : **xxtime**

Transport: **xxtransport**

Staff in charge of supervision and learning: **xxnames**

For this visit, please make sure that your child has

- **xx**
- **xx**
- **xx**
- **xx**

Please complete the permission slip below and return it to **xperson by xxdate**

Signed Consent

Child(ren) Name(s) _____

Parent Name _____

- I give permission for my children to go on the Educational Visit with BIS to **xxlocation**
- **I agree to pay the cost of this visit of xxSom**
- I confirm that my child does not have any special medical or dietary needs that have not been notified to BIS previously.
- In the event of a medical emergency, I give permission for my child(ren) to receive medical treatment as is deemed necessary by the medical authorities present.
- I accept that BIS is not liable for any accident or incident that might occur during the Educational Visit that is not directly attributable to the action (or lack of action) of BIS staff.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

7.4 ANNEX 4: GUIDELINES FOR GROUP LEADERS

These Guidelines are adapted from a section of the UK Government *Good Practice Guide on "Health & Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits"*

SUPERVISION

Responsibilities

The Group leader is responsible overall for the group at all times. In delegating supervisory roles to other adults in the group, it is good practice for the group leader to:

- allocate supervisory responsibility to each adult for named students;
- ensure that each adult knows which students they are responsible for;
- ensure that each student 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 students assigned to them;
- ensure that all adults and students are aware of the expected standards of behaviour.

It is good practice for each supervisor to:

- have a reasonable prior knowledge of the students including any special educational needs, medical needs or disabilities;
- carry a list/register of all group members;
- directly supervise the students (except during remote supervision) - particularly important when they are mingling with the public and may not be easily identified;
- regularly check that the entire group is present;
- have a clear plan of the activity to be undertaken and its educational objectives;
- have the means to contact the group leader/other supervisors if needing help;
- have prior knowledge of the venue – the group leader will normally make an exploratory visit;
- anticipate a potential risk by recognising a hazard, by arriving, where necessary, at the point of hazard before the students do, and acting promptly where necessary;
- 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;
- be competent to exercise appropriate control of the group, and to ensure that students abide by the agreed standards of behaviour;
- clearly understand the emergency procedures and be able to carry them out;
- have appropriate access to First Aid;

Each student should:

- know who their supervisor is at any given time and how to contact him or her;
- have been given clear, understandable and appropriate instructions;
- rarely if ever be on their own;
- alert the supervisor if someone is missing or in difficulties;
- have a meeting place to return to, or an instruction to remain where they are, if separated;
- understand and accept the expected standards of behaviour.

Head counts etc.

Whatever the length and nature of the visit, regular head counting of students should take place, particularly before leaving any venue. It is good practice for all supervisors to:

- carry a list/register of all students and adults involved in the visit at all times;
- ensure that students are readily identifiable, especially if the visit is to a densely populated area. Brightly coloured caps, T-shirts or a school uniform can help identify group members more easily;
- avoid identification that could put students at risk e.g. name badges (though it may be useful to provide students with badges displaying the name of the school or hotel and an emergency contact number, or a note in the language of the country being visited);
- ensure that all students are aware of rendezvous points;
- ensure that all students know what to do if they become separated from the group.

'Buddy' system

Each child is paired with a buddy. Each regularly checks that the other is present and is OK. A variant of this is the 'circle buddy' system – the students form a circle at the start of the visit so that each student has a left side buddy and a right side buddy. He or she will check on these when asked. Thus two students cannot vanish together and not be missed (as might happen with paired buddies).

Remote Supervision

Supervision can be close or remote but is always 24 hours:

- close supervision occurs when the group remain within sight and contact of the supervisor;
- remote supervision occurs when, as part of planned activities, a group works away from the supervisor but is subject to stated controls (e.g. during certain expeditions). The supervisor is present though not necessarily near or in sight, but his or her whereabouts are known;
- down time (or recreational time) – for example during the evenings – may involve close or remote supervision, but should not be unsupervised - the supervisors continue to be in charge;
- it is essential that everyone involved in the visit understands the supervision arrangements and expectations.

When supervision is remote:

- groups should be sufficiently trained and assessed as competent for the level of activity to be undertaken, including first aid and emergency procedures. Remote supervision will normally be the final stage of a phased development programme;
- students will be familiar with the environment or similar environments and have details of the rendezvous points and the times of rendezvous;
- clear and understandable boundaries will be set for the group;
- there must be clear lines of communication between the group, the supervisor and the school. Do not rely exclusively on mobile phones;
- the supervisor should monitor the group's progress at appropriate intervals;
- the supervisor will be in the expedition or activity area and able to reach the group reasonably promptly should the group need support in an emergency;
- there should be a recognisable point at which the activity is completed;

- there should be clear arrangements for the abandonment of the activity where it cannot be safely completed.

Rearranging Groups

Potential danger points can occur when rearranging groups. In particular:

- when a large group is split into smaller groups for specific activities;
- when groups transfer from one activity to another and change supervisor;
- during periods between activities;
- when small groups re-form into a large group.

It is therefore important that the supervisor:

- clearly takes responsibility for the group when their part of the programme begins, particularly making certain that all group members are aware of the changeover;
- clearly passes on responsibility for the group when their part of the programme is concluded, together with any relevant information ensuring that the group members know who their next leader is.

Preparing the Visit Report

The Group Leader should note down the lessons learned every day (good points and improvement points), to reduce the likelihood of lessons being forgotten and make the final evaluation report easier to write.

Down Time

Group leaders should ensure that students continue to be properly supervised during downtime before, between and after activities, including the evenings on residential visits. A group occupied in study or activity is far safer than a group left to its own devices in an unfamiliar environment. Too much unstructured free time in a residential programme can allow time for mischief, bullying, homesickness and wandering off from the body of the group.

It is good practice to:

- ensure that all staff and students understand the standards of behaviour that apply at all times, not just during activities;
- ensure that handover between activities is properly supervised, with a named supervisor responsible for the group if there is down-time between activities;
- ensure that all supervisors understand that their supervisory role continues in the evening – however hard a day it has been, that it is not a time to relax in the bar or in front of the TV;
- use down-time in the evening or at the beginning of the day to brief the group on the planned activities for the day to come, e.g. the planned learning outcomes, specific health and safety issues, meal and break times etc.;
- use down time after activities for individual reflection on personal learning outcomes, and group discussion about the highs and lows of the day;
- apply the advice contained in “Remote Supervision” above, adapted as necessary, if it is felt reasonable to allow students some time without close supervision;
- occupy the group with mildly active, non-academic activities in the evening, e.g. craft activities, environmental activities, quizzes, team challenges, led-walks.

Night Time

Group leaders should ensure that:

- the group's immediate accommodation is exclusively for the group's use;
- teachers (of both genders where appropriate) have sleeping accommodation on the same floor immediately adjacent to the students' accommodation;
- there is a teacher present on that floor whenever the students are there;
- child protection arrangements are in place to protect both students and staff;
- where hotel/hostel reception is not staffed 24 hours a day, security arrangements should be in force to stop unauthorised visits;
- in the absence of 24 hour staffing of reception, external doors must be made secure against intrusion and windows closed as necessary to prevent intrusion;
- where possible, internal doors are lockable but staff must have reasonable access to the student accommodation at all times;
- where students' doors are locked, teachers have immediate access, as necessary, to a master key;
- all staff and students know the emergency procedures/BISpe routes in the event of a fire. Where windows and doors are locked against intrusion at night, ensure that alternative BISpe routes are known and that all fire doors function properly.

Don't be lulled into a sense of false security by local assurances, such as "no need to lock doors in this part of the country". The presence of the group may attract unwelcome attention that is unusual in the locality.

Travel

A driver cannot safely drive and supervise children at the same time. Group leaders should ensure that:

- transport by road has seat belts and that the students wear them;
- there is adequate supervision at all times when travelling;
- supervisors are reserved seats that allow them to supervise properly
- students are supervised when boarding and leaving;
- extra care is taken when leaving a vehicle in a country that drives on the right as some doors may open onto the road side;
- standards of behaviour are met, and in particular that drivers are not distracted
- smoking/alcohol etc. bans are observed;
- students are occupied on long journeys – this will help the journey pass quickly;
- evacuation procedures are clearly understood by everyone, luggage is securely stored and emergency exits are kept clear;
- there are adequate rest stops for drivers;
- head counts are carried out when the group is getting off or onto transport.

ONGOING RISK ASSESSMENT

Risk assessment does not end when the visit begins. Changes to the itinerary, changes to the weather, incidents (whether minor or major), staff illness – all or any of these may bring students face to face with unexpected hazards or difficulties and give rise to the need to re-assess risk.

The group leader (and other adults with responsibility) prepares ongoing risk assessments while the visit is taking place. These normally consist of judgements and decisions made as the need arises. They are not usually recorded until after the visit. They should be informed by the generic and visit or site specific risk assessments

It is good practice to have briefings each night to take stock and assess the circumstances for the next day, and to spend time early the next morning explaining arrangements to the students.

Check the local weather forecast

- to inform decisions on appropriate clothing;
- to be aware of whether water activities might be in areas prone to flash floods, high winds etc.;
- to be aware of whether trekking or climbing at altitude might be subject to dramatic changes of weather; potential for fallen trees, avalanches etc.

Seek local knowledge of potential hazards, e.g.

- tides;
- rivers/streams prone to sudden increases in flow;
- difficult terrain;
- crossing points for road, rail or water;
- unstable cliffs.

Plan B

- good forward planning will always include alternative plans in case the itinerary needs to be changed;
- a flexible itinerary can allow activities from later in the visit to be substituted for earlier activities if those are prevented by unexpected circumstances;
- group leaders faced with potential difficulties will feel more confident to change the itinerary if a pre-assessed alternative is available;
- regardless of whether alternatives have been pre-assessed, always take time to reassess risks if the itinerary changes;
- on arrival at an alternative site or activity that has not previously been risk assessed, we recommend that the group leader should risk assess the situation before allowing the students to disembark from the transport;
- an unknown location might involve hazards not covered in the original risk assessment, for example if the original intention to visit a land-only site has to be changed at short notice to a lake or seaside location.

Behaviour problems, illness or injury

- poor behaviour may be reduced by ensuring that all students are signed up to agreed standards of behaviour before (or at least at the beginning of) the visit;
- educational visits can be a good opportunity for school staff to get to know students away from the confines of the school. But the group leader should resist any temptation to accept lower standards of behaviour. The different hazards that students may be exposed to away from the school will require them to observe standards of behaviour that are at least as high as, or higher than, in the classroom;
- if one adult has to give prolonged attention to one group member, the group leader should reassess the supervisory roles of the other adults to ensure that all members of the group know

who is responsible for them. Activities may need to be amended until the other adult returns all of his or her attention to the group;

- group leaders should trust their own knowledge of the young people and use their own professional judgement;
- this may include challenging an activity leader where the group leader's knowledge of the group is superior, or intervening to prompt a change of plan.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Preparation

By their nature, emergencies are usually unexpected. But careful emergency planning can mitigate the trauma of being caught up in an emergency. It is good practice for the group leader to:

- agree an emergency action plan, which includes 24-hour (i.e. constant cover) contact points at the school and clear roles for the group leader, school contact, Director of Studies and Head of School e.g. managing media interest, supporting parents of an injured student, transport arrangements etc.;
- ensure that all members of the group know what action to take if there is a problem;
- hold evening briefings with supervisors to discuss issues for the next day;
- spend time early the next morning explaining arrangements to the students;
- hold, or ensure that other adults in the group hold, up-to date competence in first aid and other life saving competence as necessary for the activities;
- ensure that the first aid kit is properly stocked and accessible;
- ensure that all students' medical needs (e.g. asthma, diabetes, anaphylaxis) are known and that staff are competent to handle them;
- be aware that some diseases are more common in some countries and know what preventative action to take and what to do if a group member becomes infected;
- recognise that many of the health problems of students on longer visits are caused by lack of food, of liquid or of sleep;
- if appropriate, advise group members about the dangers of over-exertion in the heat and of dehydration, which can cause headache, dizziness and nausea;
- in warm climates, keep fluid levels high, take extra salt and wear loose, lightweight clothing – preferably made of cotton or other natural fibres – and use suitably factored sun protection creams and sun hats/glasses;
- ensure that drivers take adequate rest breaks on long journeys;
- ensure that all students understand and follow the code of conduct;
- practice emergency drills e.g. evacuation of mini-bus;
- know the contact numbers of relevant Embassies or Consulate;

Emergency procedures framework during the visit

If an emergency occurs on a school visit the group leader should maintain or resume control of the group overall. The main factors to consider include:

- establish the nature and extent of the emergency as quickly as possible;
- ensure that all the group are safe and looked after;
- establish the names of any casualties and get immediate medical attention;

- ensure that a teacher accompanies casualties to hospital with any relevant medical information, and that the rest of the group are adequately supervised at all times and kept together;
- notify the police if necessary;
- ensure that all group members who need to know are aware of the incident;
- ensure that all group members are following the emergency procedures and the roles allocated to them – revise procedures and re-allocate roles as necessary;
- inform the school contact and provider/tour operator (as appropriate). The school contact number should be accessible at all times during the visit;
- details of the incident to pass on to the school should include: nature, date and time of incident; location of incident; names of casualties and details of their injuries; names of others involved so that parents can be reassured; action taken so far; action yet to be taken (and by whom);
- school contact should notify parents, providing as full a factual account of the incident as possible;
- notify insurers, especially if medical assistance is required (this may be done by the school contact);
- notify the relevant Embassy/Consulate if appropriate;
- ascertain phone numbers for future calls. Try not to rely solely on mobile phones;
- write down accurately and as soon as possible all relevant facts and witness details and preserve any vital evidence;
- keep a written account of all events, times and contacts after the incident;
- complete an accident report form as soon as possible;
- no-one in the group should speak to the media. Names of those involved in the incident should not be given to the media as this could cause distress to their families. Refer media enquiries to a designated media contact at the school;
- no-one in the group should discuss legal liability with other parties, nor sign anything relating to accident liability without clear advice from the school;
- keep receipts for any expenses incurred – insurers will require these.

ADVICE ON SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES

Beach visits

The group leader will consider the following when assessing the risks of a coastal activity:

- tides and sandbanks are potential hazards; timings and exit routes should be checked;
- group members should be aware of warning signs and flags;
- establish a base on the beach to which members of the group may return if separated;
- look out for hazards such as glass, barbed wire and sewage outflows etc;
- some of a group's time on a beach may be recreational. Group leaders should consider which areas of the terrain are out of bounds, and whether the risk assessment allows swimming in the water;
- cliff tops can be highly dangerous for school groups even during daylight. The group should keep to a safe distance from the cliff edge at all times – a “buffer zone” between the students and the hazard. Be aware that cliff falls can mean that cliff paths stop abruptly at the cliff edge;
- group leaders should not normally allow students to ride mountain bikes on any route that is near a sheer drop e.g. coastal path or canal towpath. If the risk assessment indicates that the risk could be managed adequately, then there should be a small known group of skilled and experienced riders accompanied by appropriately qualified staff;

- the local coastguard, harbour master, lifeguard or tourist information office can provide information and advice on the nature and location of hazards.

Swimming in the sea or other natural waters

Swimming and paddling or otherwise entering the waters of river, canal, sea or lake should never be allowed as an impromptu activity. The pleas of children to be allowed to bathe – because it is hot weather, for example, or after a kayaking exercise - should be resisted where the bathing has not been prepared for. In-water activities should take place only when a proper risk assessment has been completed and proper measures put in to control the risks. The activities should be formal and supervised.

It is good practice that, wherever possible, group leaders seek out recognized bathing areas that have official surveillance i.e. qualified lifeguard cover. But, even then, group leaders should be aware that students might mingle with members of the public and be lost to view. Students should always be in sight and reasonable reach of their supervisors.

The group leader should:

- be aware that many children who drown are strong swimmers;
- ascertain for themselves the level of the students' swimming ability;
- check the weather;
- be aware of the local conditions – such as currents, weeds, rip tides, a shelving, uneven or unstable bottom – using local information from the lifeguard, coastguard, harbourmaster, police or tourist information office;
- beware of rocks, breakwaters and other potential hazards;
- look out for warning signs and flags: a red flag means it is unsafe to swim; yellow flags mean that lifeguards are on patrol in the area between the flags; a black and white flag means it is an area used by surfers and not suitable for swimming;
- designate a safe area of water for use by the group;
- brief the group about the limits of the swimming area;
- avoid crowded beaches where it is harder to see students;
- be aware of the dangerous effects of sudden immersion in cold water;
- be aware of the dangers of paddling especially for young students;
- ensure that students have not eaten (at least half an hour) before swimming;
- ensure the activity is suitable for the students, especially any with special needs or disabilities;
- adopt and explain the signals of distress and recall;
- ensure that buoyancy aids, lifejackets etc. are used where appropriate;
- carry out regular head counts;
- be aware that it is not always possible to tell when someone is in difficulties.

Supervisors should

- have clear roles – at least one supervisor should always stay out of the water for better surveillance, even where lifeguards are on duty;
- take up a best position from which to exercise a constant vigilance;
- divide their careful watching between staff who stand in the sea and look landward towards the group and staff who stay on land and watch the group from that vantage point;
- give the children their full, undivided attention;

- always follow the advice or directions of a lifeguard;
- never swim themselves unless it is to help a child in distress;
- not join in any of the children's games;
- ensure that no child is allowed to wade out or swim further than his or her waist height;
- nevertheless, be aware that it is possible to drown in one's own depth, and to act immediately when a child appears to be in difficulties;
- ensure that children leave the water immediately if they get too cold, especially if toes and fingers look blue or feel numb - could suggest the onset of hypothermia;
- recognize that a child in difficulty is unlikely to wave or shout – all of their energies will be in trying to keep afloat.

It is good practice for the group leader, or another designated adult in the group, to hold a relevant lifesaving award, especially where lifeguard cover may not be available.

Farm Visits

Group Leaders should check the provision at the farm to ensure that

- eating areas are separate from those where there is any contact with animals;
- there are adequate clean and well-maintained washing facilities;
- there is clear information for visitors on the risks and the precautions to take.

Ensure that

- there is adequate trained adult supervision wherever children can come into contact with animals and need to wash their hands;
- all children wash their hands thoroughly immediately after touching animals and before any eating or drinking;
- shoes are cleaned and then hands are washed on leaving the farm.

Never let students:

- place their faces against the animals;
- put their hands in their own mouths after touching or feeding the animals;
- eat or drink while going round the farm;
- eat or drink until they have washed their hands;
- sample any animal foodstuffs;
- drink from farm taps (other than in designated public facilities);
- touch animal droppings - if they do then wash and dry hands;
- ride on tractors or other machines;
- play in the farm area, or in other areas that are out of bounds such as grain storage tanks, slurry pits etc.

VISIT EVALUATION REPORT

Trip Details

Purpose: XX

Destination: XX

Dates: XX

Staff involved: XX

Students: XX

Summary

XX

Lessons Learnt

- XX

Incidents

XX

1. XX
2. XX

7.6 ANNEX 6: CHECKLIST FOR TRIP ORGANIZERS

Trip Organizers must:

- 1. Read and understand the Educational Visits Policy
- 2. Complete the Visit Authorization Form (Annex 1)
- 3. Complete the Risk Assessment Form and get it approved (Annex 2) or a more detailed Risk Assessment for residential trips, as decided by the Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC).
- 4. Visit the site in advance when completing the Risk Assessment, except for known locations where advance visit is not required, as decided by the EVC.
- 5. Ensure first aid provision
- 6. Ensure Parental notification as far in advance as possible, with appropriate information on dates, times, costs
- 7. Hold a meeting with parents in case of a residential trip
- 8. Ensure Parental consent (Annex 3)
- 9. Ensure that all transport, accommodation and places of interest are booked in advance
- 10. Give copies of all relevant documents to BIS Reception and the EVC
- 11. Liaise with BIS Accountant regarding payments for the visit
- 12. Know the emergency procedures and be prepared to implement them
- 13. Meet with staff and student participants to ensure they know what is expected from them
- 14. Ensure that staff supervision ratios are correct
- 15. Ensure that staff and students fulfill their responsibilities
- 16. Make the Visit a success for everyone involved**
- 17. Complete a Visit Evaluation report and give it to the EVC within 5 days of completing the visit