

Educational visits policy

This policy applies to the whole school and is published to parents

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Author: Michael Pitkethly



Objectives

The Royal Grammar School (RGS) seeks to enrich the educational experience for all students in all year-groups by providing a wide range of trips and visits, including:

- Curriculum-related visits (e.g. to a theatre production, art gallery or historic site)
- Overseas educational visits (e.g. to the Battlefields, Rome and Pompeii)
- Extra-curricular activities (e.g. debating)
- Adventure activities (e.g. camping, rock climbing, World Challenge)
- Sports-related trips and tours (including ski trips).

Information regarding trips

RGS will, so far as is practicable:

- At the start of the school year (and on the School's website) make available to all students and their parents a list of all planned trips
- Make available details of each proposed trip to the appropriate groups of students
- Provide for participants and their parents all relevant details, including travel arrangements, regarding a particular trip.

Good practice for trip management

RGS seeks to apply best practice in the management of all trips, including:

- A comprehensive RGS approval procedure for all trips which embraces all relevant regulations
- As a first priority ensuring the safety and welfare of all trip participants, including all relevant health and safety and safeguarding arrangements – though it should be noted that risk is an essential element of some trips (e.g. adventure activities and contact sports), in which case all practicable steps will be taken to minimise the risks
- Careful choice of activities and destinations
- Using appropriately qualified and experienced trip leaders and staff
- Careful choice of tour-operators and third party providers of activities
- Having in place appropriate arrangements to deal with emergency situations
- Financial procedures to ensure good value for money
- Ensuring that all parties involved have all the information required and are aware of their own responsibilities with regard to ensuring a safe and enjoyable trip for all staff and students participating.

Trip leaders and staff

RGS seeks to ensure that:

- The trip leader and all staff travelling on the trip have the appropriate experience and, where appropriate, specific training and/or qualifications for the particular trip
- The staff:student ratio is appropriate for the age of the participants and the nature of the trip
- All staff involved have the means of contacting each other, a member of the Senior Leadership Team and the home contact at all times during the trip
- For trips involving at least one overnight stay, a member of staff is appointed and briefed as home contact to deal with any emergency or unforeseen circumstance.

Participants

RGS seeks to ensure that:

- So far as is practicable, all students will have the opportunity to take part in a trip for which they are the appropriate age and have the appropriate skills/abilities/interests
- All trip participants, including staff, have an appropriate level of health and fitness for the trip, checked by means of a medical questionnaire/consent form for each participant
- All those intending to take part in a trip are fully aware of the nature of the trip, what they should gain from it and what will be expected of them
- Arrangements will be made to include participation of students with disabilities and special needs, so far as is practicable and without putting them or other participants at risk.

Parents

- RGS will advise parents well in advance (normally by means of a letter) of any trip involving their child(ren) which will start and finish wholly within one school day
- For trips longer than the school day, or for a trip where participants have to be collected from a venue other than the school, RGS will ask parents to give written consent for their child(ren) to participate
- For all trips involving at least one overnight stay, a medical/consent form (disclosing all known existing conditions) will be required, signed by the parent of each participant
- RGS will ensure that parents have all relevant information regarding a trip, including details for making contact in case of an emergency
- Parents will be encouraged to:
 - Take an interest in the destination of the trip and find out more about it with their child(ren)
 - Impress upon their child(ren) the importance of following instructions and rules for the trip so that they maximise the benefit and enjoyment while minimising any risk

- Ensure that they follow all joining instructions and, where appropriate, ensure that their child(ren) has/have a currently valid passport, EHIC and spending money/foreign currency.

Travel and accommodation

- Where travel and/or accommodation is provided by a third party, RGS will only use reputable companies (e.g. ABTA/ATOL bonded)
- Third party providers of activities are required to provide their evidence of their licence to operate and their own safety procedures
- For travel by RGS minibus, all staff authorised to drive minibuses sign a declaration that they are fit to do so and have a RGS minibus handbook including a full range of information for safe use of the vehicles
- There are a few trips for very small numbers where travel may be by car, in which case the same principles apply as for minibuses.

Emergency procedures

RGS makes arrangements to deal with emergencies and unforeseen events on trips, including:

- Providing information on emergency contacts and procedures for all staff
- Appointing of a member of staff as home contact for each overnight trip
- Where necessary, liaising with insurers and third parties operating trips.

Financial and insurance arrangements

- RGS seeks to make sure that all trips are adequately funded and provide good value for money by a range of measures including:
 - Approval at an early stage of a detailed cost plan
 - Agreeing the minimum and maximum number of participants for the trip's viability
 - Ensuring that all aspects of the trip are appropriately funded, including a contingency sum to cover unforeseen events or emergencies
 - On extended trips, ensuring that staff have access to funds while away.
- Where parents are required to meet or contribute to the cost of the trip, they will receive clear details of the costs and when payments are required. Where a deposit is non-returnable and/or there are other points at which cost are non-returnable, these will be made clear at the time payment is requested.
- RGS holds a block insurance policy which covers all trips world-wide on a 24/7 basis, details of which can be provided on request. For some pre-existing medical conditions insurance cover is not provided under the School's block insurance policy. In these circumstances parents will be asked to provide their own specific insurance cover. Some expeditions, such as World Challenge, require special insurance, which is included in the charge for the expedition.

Following a trip

- All staff involved in the trip will be required to destroy all the personal details for participants which they have carried during the trip

- The School's Senior Leadership Team receives feedback from trip leaders and:
 - Reviews the annual programme of trips
 - Updates the trips approval procedure as necessary
 - Seeks to ensure that staff planning future trips learn from experience of previous trips and, if necessary, adjust their plans accordingly.