



Trips & Visits Policy

This policy has been produced for GEMS FirstPoint School, when 'The School' is referred to in this policy it is solely GEMS FirstPoint School that is being referred to.

Review Cycle	1 Year
Last Review	November 2023
Next Review	November 2024



Purpose

At GEMS FirstPoint School we believe that off-site educational visits are essential to our students learning and feel that they provide invaluable experiences within our curriculum, across all year groups. Visits help to develop a student's investigative skills and longer visits encourage greater independence. We provide a diverse range of visits for both educational value and enrichment of our students.

Visits may fall into the following categories:

- Regular visits- These are visits that are conducted on a regular basis such as weekly sports fixtures.
- Local Visits- These visits are within the local area and the risk is not above that which the children would be exposed to daily.
- Residential visits- These are visits which feature an overnight stay away from home.

Aims

Through this policy we aim to:

- Ensure that students stay safe and healthy on school visits.
- Ensure that trips are planned appropriately with the student's best interests at heart.
- Ensure all stakeholders understand their responsibility in relation to the smooth running of trips.
- Give guidelines to manage situations that could arise on trips.

Consent for visits

GEMS FPS requires parents (or those with parental responsibility) to complete a specific consent form online prior to any activity/visit. At FPS, we pride ourselves in ensuring parents are fully aware of all expectations, itineraries and the purpose of each visit. Therefore, alongside the parental letter outlining the trip and any payment details, this form will also be sent to confirm parents are happy for their child to attend the trip and any additional requirements they have for their child (dietary needs etc.). All consent forms are to be kept on the child's file with the Head of Year / Year Leader.

The only exception to this will be repeat trips such as sports fixtures. In this situation, the PE department will send a letter at the start of each season to all parents of children selected to represent the school. This will also include a consent form but for the entire season. It is then the parents' responsibility to inform the staff member in charge of the team if their child is unable to make a fixture.

It is the group leader's responsibility to ensure consent has been granted for every child taking part in an educational visit prior to leaving the school premises.

Roles and responsibilities

The Role of the Local Advisory Board is to:

- Satisfy themselves that risk assessments are being carried out for visits.
- Ensure that appropriate safety measures are in place.
- Review the policy annually to ensure information is up to date.

The role of the Principal/Vice Principal/ Assistant Principal / Trip Lead for FPS is to:

- Ensure adequate support is provided to all staff conducting educational visits.
- Be available in the case of an emergency.
- Ensure there is adequate and relevant insurance cover.
- Confirm the date and enter into the school diary, ensuring adequate cover where needed.



The role of the Assistant Head Teacher i/c Trips / Trip Lead for FPS is to:

- Ensure the risk assessment has been completed and appropriate safety measures are in place including:
 - Adequate first aid provision is available,
 - Arrangements have been made for the medical and special educational needs of all students,
 - Adequate child protection measures are in place,
 - Appropriate ratio of supervisors to students,
- The group leader is adequately competent and familiar with the visit.
- Ensure all staff are trained competently in conducting a visit.
- Approve trips taking place.
- Question group leaders to ensure the visit has been carefully planned.
- Provide advice and guidance where needed.
- Actively source new locations for Educational Visits.

The role of the Group Leader

One teacher, the Group Leader, should have overall responsibility for the supervision and conduct of students during the visit this includes the health and safety of the group at all times. The Group Leader should have been appointed or approved by the Principal.

The responsibility of the leader is to:

- Obtain prior approval from the Principal / Head of School and Assistant Principal i/c Trips / Trip Lead for FPS before any visit takes place.
- Follow guidelines in both this policy and risk assessments.
- Undertake and complete a risk assessment, this could include conducting a pre-visit of the location; this includes ratios, first aid, child protection and contingency plans.
- Ensure consent forms are valid for every child.
- Ensure all teachers, supervisors, parents and students are fully briefed on the visit prior to leaving School.
- Ensure the group leader, group supervisors and nominated School contact to have the names of all the adults and students travelling in the group, and the contact details of parents and the teachers' and other supervisors' next of kin.
- Complete an evaluation of the visit.

The role of other teachers on visits is to:

- Follow the instructions of the Group Leader and help with control and discipline.
- Consider stopping the visit or the activity, notifying the Group Leader, if they think the risk to the health or safety of the students in their charge is unacceptable.

The role of support staff, parents and carers acting as supervisors is to:

- Ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group.
- Follow the instructions given by the group leader/ School staff.
- Speak to the group leader / School staff if concerned at any point during the visit.

The responsibility of the students is to:

- Follow instructions from the group leader, School staff, supervisors including those at the venue of the visit.
- Dress in School uniform (unless directed otherwise).
- Behave in a sensible and responsible manner.
- Avoid unnecessary risks; looking out for anything that may hurt or threaten the group and communicating this to the group leader/ supervisor.

The role of the parent is to:

- Provide the group leader with emergency contact details.
- Sign the consent form (one-off or repeated).

- Communicate information to the group leader regarding their child's emotional, psychological and physical health.

Behaviour

Any students whose behaviour may be a danger to themselves or to the group may be stopped from going on the visit. The curricular aims of the visit for these students should be fulfilled in other ways wherever possible. Parents should be able to make an informed decision on whether their child should go on the visit. Any child who does not attend a visit should still attend School. The Group Leader should ensure that parents are given sufficient information in writing and are invited to any briefing sessions. The Group Leader should also tell parents how they can help prepare their child for the visit by, for example, reinforcing the school's behaviour expectations. The school reserves the right to prevent any child taking part on a school trip or visit if it believes the child to be a health and safety risk. A child may also be withdrawn from a trip at any point if there are behavioural issues that are a health and safety risk. Trips are open to all students who meet and exceed the school's expectations regarding behaviour, attendance, punctuality and attitude to staff and students.

Planning

Whether the visit is to a local park, museum or theme park, or includes a residential stay, it is essential that formal planning takes place. This involves considering the dangers and difficulties which may arise and making plans to reduce them. The planning of a trip is the responsibility of the group leader but must be signed off by the Trip Lead for FPS /Assistant Principal i/c Trips and the Principal or Head of School.

Planning a trip involves several stages and these are outlined with timings below:

- At least 6 weeks before trip- speak to the Trip Lead for FPS / Assistant Headteacher i/c Trips and check availability of dates.
- Submit a completed educational visit request form submitted to the FPS Trip Lead / Assistant Headteacher i/c Trips prior to booking venue/travel.
- Once approved the Trip Leader arranges for the venue and travel to be booked. The MSO should be notified to support with this.
- At least 5 weeks before the visit- group leader to conduct pre-visit (if possible) and complete Risk Assessment to be stored on the cloud for future visits.
- At least 4 weeks before - Parent letters to be sent out and consent obtained.
- At least 2 weeks before, all monies to be collected.
- 1 week before – cover request form for accompanying staff in accordance with staff: student ratio.
- 1 day before – trip lead to collect money from finance (if applicable), collect first aid kit and print bus lists/seating plans, registers.
- On the day - brief all staff on risk assessment and ensure all emergency details are shared.
- 1 week after the trip - complete an evaluation of the Educational Visit.

Risk assessment

The purpose of a risk assessment is to formally assess the risks that students and teachers might be met with on a visit and to put measures in place to ensure that staff, students and volunteers are not placed in situations which expose them to an unacceptable level of risk. Safety must always be the prime consideration. If the risks cannot be contained, then the visit must not take place.

An assessment should be completed by the Group Leader well before the visit and should be approved by the Assistant Principal i/c Trips. It is based upon 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 Group Leader put the safety measures in place?
- What steps will be taken in an emergency?



The risks recorded in the assessment are only those that are outside of the risks the students come across in everyday life, such as trips and slips.

The person carrying out the risk assessment should record it and give copies to all teachers/supervisors on the visit, with details of the measures they should take to avoid or reduce the risks. As well as this, a copy should be filed by the Trip Lead for FPS / Assistant Principal i/c Trips.

Frequent visits to local venues such as sports venues may not need a risk assessment every time. Nevertheless, it is essential not to become complacent.

Whilst a risk assessment can allow group leaders to be equipped with prior knowledge it is essential that they and other supervisors monitor the risks throughout the visit and take appropriate action as necessary.

The Group Leader should take the following factors into consideration 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 ratios of teachers and supervisory staff to students.
- The group members' age, competence, fitness and temperament and the suitability of the activity.
- The special educational or medical needs of students.
- The quality and suitability of available equipment.
- Seasonal conditions, weather and timing.
- Emergency procedures.
- How to cope when a student becomes unable or unwilling to continue.
- The need to monitor the risks throughout the visit.

If possible, the Group Leader should undertake an exploratory visit to:

- Ensure at first hand that the venue is suitable to meet the aims and objectives of the school visit.
- Obtain advice from the manager.
- Assess potential areas and levels of risk.
- Ensure that the venue can cater for the needs of the staff and students in the group.
- Become familiar with the area before taking a group of young people there.
- Obtain a risk assessment from the venue being visited.

Other factors which should form part of the planning stage include:

- The facilities/equipment the group will need to take on the visit.
- The facilities/equipment to be provided at the venue.
- Staff training needs
- The designation of someone to record the details of the visit.
- Transport arrangements
- Communication arrangements
- Supervision ratios
- Contingency measures for enforced change of plan or late return
- Information to parents
- Preparing students
- Emergency arrangements.

Ratios

- It is important to have a high enough ratio of adult supervisors to students for any visit. The factors to take into consideration include:
 - Sex, age and ability of group
 - Students with special educational or medical needs
 - Nature of activities
 - Experience and competence of adults in off-site supervision



- Duration and nature of the journey
- Type of any accommodation
- Requirements of the organisation/location to be visited.
- Competence and behaviour of students
- First aid cover 1:100.

Staffing ratios for visits are difficult to prescribe as they will vary according to the activity, age, group, location and the efficient use of resources. The following ratios should be adhered to, although extra supervisors are always better:

Age of children	Ratio (adult: pupil)
FS1	1:5
FS2	1:8
KS1	1:8
KS2	1:10
KS3+	1:10

Any adult who is allocated 1:1 with a child **must not** be included in the ratio.

Group Leaders should assess the risks and consider an appropriate safe supervision level for their particular group. In addition to the teacher in charge, there should be enough supervisors to cope effectively with an emergency. With this in mind, it is advisable to have a spare adult that is able to assist in an emergency, so that no adult is left alone with a single child.

When visits are too remote areas or involve hazardous activities, the risks may be greater and supervision levels should be set accordingly. The same consideration should be given to residential visits. All trips and visits with mixed groups will need both a male and female teacher.

Parents/Volunteers

Where there is more than one teacher/supervisor a Group Leader should be appointed who has authority over the whole group. If more than one School is involved an overall Group Leader should be identified, usually the person with the most experience in leading such visits.

Where a high adult: student ratio is required, it is not always feasible to use School staff alone. Parents/volunteers may be used to supplement the supervision ratio. They should be carefully selected and ideally, they should be well known to the school and the student group. Parents/ Volunteers must have had level 1 safeguarding training and must have submitted a copy of a Police Clearance Certificate and therefore be on the school's approved volunteer list.

Headcounts

Whatever the length and nature of the visit, regular head counting of students should take place, particularly before leaving a venue. Headcounts should be made prior to boarding and exiting transport, for example, counting the children before getting on a bus and counting again once they come off the bus. All supervisors should carry a list of all students and adults involved in the visit at all times. Students, particularly in FS2 to year 3, should be easily identifiable, especially if the visit is to a densely populated area. Children should be encouraged to wear School uniform or wear School colours. They may also wear trip fluorescent jackets. The Group Leader should establish rendezvous points and tell students what to do if they become separated from the group.

Transport

The group leader needs to ensure that suitable transport arrangements are made. If any of the group use a wheelchair, the Group Leader should ensure that transport used has appropriate access and securing facilities. All students taking part in the trip or visit must travel with the group. Students are not permitted to join the trip part way through.



Seat belts

All minibuses and coaches must be fitted with a seat belt for each child. The seats must face forward, and seat restraints must comply with legal requirements.

Supervision on transport

The level of supervision necessary should be considered as part of the risk assessment for the journey. The Group Leader is responsible for the party at all times including maintaining good discipline.

Factors that the Group Leader should consider when planning supervision on transport include: Level of supervision that will be necessary on double-decker buses/coaches - one supervisor on each deck should be appropriate in normal circumstances.

- Pedestrian crossings and traffic lights or footbridges should be used to cross roads, whenever possible.
- Safety on buses, trains, ferries and boats – the Group Leader should make clear to students how much or little freedom they have to ‘roam’. Misbehaviour is the main cause of accidents to children on such means of transport. Appropriate supervision and discipline should be maintained at all times. Students should also be made aware of what to do in an emergency and where emergency procedures are displayed.
- Safety of students whilst waiting at pick-up and drop-off points and when getting on or off transport. Students should be made aware of safety rules and expected standards of behaviour.
- Safety of the group in the event of an accident or breakdown - the group should remain under the direct supervision of the Group Leader or other teachers wherever possible.
- Headcounts, by the Group Leader or another delegated teacher or supervisor, should always be carried out when the group is getting off or onto transport.
- Responsibility for checking that seat belts are fastened.
- Group members should be made aware that travel sickness tablets should only be administered to a student with previous authorisation from the parents.

First Aid

First aid should form part of the risk assessment. Before undertaking any off-site activities, the Principal or the Group Leader should assess what level of first aid might be needed. On any kind of visit, the Group Leader should have some knowledge of first aid and ensure that an adequate first-aid box is taken. For all visits it is mandatory for at least one of the group’s supervisors to be a fully trained first-aider and for all trips to have the required First aider/participant ratio (1:100). It is essential that provisions for first aid are made and all adults in the group should know how to contact the emergency services.

The minimum first-aid provision for a visit is:


- A suitably stocked first-aid box (Provided by FPS medical team for each First Aider attending the trip).
- A person appointed to be in charge of first-aid arrangements.

Other considerations when considering first-aid needs should include:

- The numbers in the group and the nature of the activity.
- The likely injuries and how effective first aid would be.
- The distance of the nearest hospital.

Financial Planning & Charging

The nature, length, cost and the number of students attending a trip will dictate the payment structure. Payments for trips should be made entirely to the accounts office who will maintain records of all payments made. Where this is the case a full list of participating students and schedule of payment plans given to parents must be submitted to the accounts office. No trip should lose money for the school. A contingency of at least 5% should be maintained for emergencies and unforeseeable costs. Trip leaders are expected to follow up on outstanding payments based on information from the accounts office. If cash is required for a trip (for example to pay for entry to an exhibition) please ensure that at least ten



days' notice is given. For foreign currency fourteen days' notice is required. Please ensure that all original receipts are maintained and handed over to the Accounts Department once the trip has taken place. An agreement regarding the terms, conditions and cancellation policy should be obtained from the Travel Agent/Service provider for all international trips.

Health & Safety

Equal opportunities

Every effort should be made to ensure that School journeys and activities are available and accessible to all who wish to participate, irrespective of special educational or medical needs, ethnic origin, sex, religion etc. All young people should be encouraged to participate in as wide a range of activities as possible. If a visit is to cater for students with special needs, a suitable venue should be selected.

Insurance

For abroad visits or visits using an outside tour operator, students, must have insurance provided by the operator. All details of the insurance must be held by the Group Leader and the Assistant Head Teacher i/c Educational Visits.

Information to parents

All parents/ carers should be informed of any visit taking place at least one week before.

Before residential visits, or when the students are to engage in adventure activities, parents should be encouraged to attend a briefing meeting where written details of the proposed visit should also be provided. There should be alternative arrangements for parents who cannot attend or who have difficulty with communication in English.

Parents need to be aware that the teachers and other adult supervisors on the visit will be exercising the same care that a prudent parent would. The following information on matters that might affect student health and safety should be given to parents:

- Dates of the visit
- Visit's objectives
- Times of departure and return - parents must have agreed to meet their child on return.
- The location where the students will be collected and returned.
- Mode(s) of travel including the name of any travel company.
- The size of the group and the level of supervision
- Details of accommodation with security and supervisory arrangements on site
- Details of provision for special educational or medical needs
- Procedures for students who become ill.
- Names of leader, of other staff and of other accompanying adults
- Details of the activities planned and of how the assessed risks will be managed.
- Standards of behaviour expected and general group discipline including prohibited items. This information may take the form of a code of conduct which parents should sign.
- What students should not take on the visit or bring back
- Clothing and equipment to be taken; money to be taken.
- The information to be given by parents and what they will be asked to consent to
- Details on the cost of the visit.

Emergency procedures

Teachers in charge of students during a visit have a duty of care to make sure that the students are safe and healthy. They also have a common law duty to act as a reasonably prudent parent would. Teachers should not hesitate to act in an emergency and to take life-saving action in an extreme situation.

Emergency procedures are an essential part of planning a school visit. If an accident happens, the priorities are to:

- Assess the situation

- Safeguard the uninjured members of the group
- Attend to the casualty
- Inform the emergency services and everyone who needs to know of the incident.



Who will take charge in an emergency?

The Group Leader would usually take charge in an emergency and would need to ensure that emergency procedures are in place and that back up cover is arranged. The Group Leader should liaise with the representative of the tour operator if one is being used and inform the school contact.

Pre-arranged School home contact.

The school contact's main responsibility is to link the group with the school, the parents and the Executive Head Teacher/ Head Teacher and to provide assistance as necessary.

The named person should have all the necessary information about the visit.

Emergency procedures framework

All those involved in the school trip, including supervisors, students and their parents, should be informed of who will take charge in an emergency, the named back up cover and what they are expected to do in an emergency.

Emergency procedures framework during the visit

If an emergency occurs on a School visit 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 for them
- Ensure that all group members who need to know are aware of the incident and that all group members are following the emergency procedures
- Ensure that a teacher accompanies casualties to hospital and that the rest of the group are adequately supervised at all times and kept together
- Notify the police if necessary
- Inform the School contact. 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)
- Notify insurers, especially if medical assistance is required (this may be done by the school contact)
- Notify the provider/tour operator (this may be done by the school contact)
- Ascertain telephone numbers for future calls. Mobile phones, though useful, are subject to technical difficulties, and should not replace usual communication procedures
- 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
- 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. Media enquiries should be referred to the School Principal
- No-one in the group should discuss legal liability with other parties.

Emergency procedures framework for school base

Prior to the visit, the name and School and home telephone numbers of a school contact should be identified. It is advisable to arrange a second School contact as a reserve. Steve Farish (Vice Principal & Designated Safeguarding Lead) can be contacted on 0569620047. In a serious emergency the school must report the crisis to Santosh Hadinaru (Health and Safety) who is the lead point of contact at corporate office level and will communicate any incidents across the silver tier of the corporate crisis management structure and up to gold if necessary.



The main factors for the school contact to consider include:

- Ensuring that the Group Leader is in control of the emergency and establishing if any assistance is required from the school base
- Contacting parents. Details of parents' contact numbers need to be available at all times while the group is on the visit. The school contact should act as a link between the group and parents. Parents should be kept as well informed as possible at all stages of the emergency.
- Liaison with Local Advisory Board. The school contact should act as a link between the group and Chair of Governors and arrange for the group to receive assistance, if necessary
- Liaison with media contact. If a serious incident occurs, the school contact should liaise with Jonathan Bramley jonathan.bramley@gemseducation.com / Mob: +971527579993 who will manage the media.

After a serious incident

It is not always possible to assess whether group members not injured or directly involved in the incident have been traumatised or whether other students or staff in the school have been affected. In some cases, reactions do not surface immediately. In this situation it can be helpful to use in School support services and to seek professional advice on how to help individuals and the school as a whole cope with the effects of a tragedy.

Responsibilities

The people responsible for trips and educational visits are as follows:

Name	Role
Mr David Wade	Principal
Mr Steve Farish	Vice-Principal
Miss Laura Nulty	Assistant Head Teacher Secondary
Miss Emily Gallone	Assistant Head Teacher Primary
Mr. Manoj Mathews	MSO Officer