



school year 2025-26

Policy on Residential School Trips

Support for Pupils with Significant Educational Needs

Purpose

This policy establishes guidelines for the participation of pupils in primary school residential trips where a child's educational, behavioural, or medical needs may present substantial challenges for staff. It ensures safety, clarity of responsibilities, and transparency of costs when additional parental support is required.

1. Scope

Applies to all school-organised trips involving at least one overnight stay, where the child's needs require support beyond what school staff can reasonably provide.

2. Identification of Pupils Requiring Parental Support

The identification of pupils who may require parental/guardian support during school trips to ensure pupil safety and effective participation is carried out through a meeting of the pedagogical team, with reference to the following criteria:

- Medical conditions requiring specialised care or regular intervention.
- Behavioural or emotional needs necessitating continuous one-to-one adult supervision.
- Significant communication or developmental needs that may impact safety, supervision, or effective participation in the visit.
- Acknowledged difficulties on previous educational visits that could not be adequately managed on site by teaching staff.

Where the need for parental support is identified, the pedagogical team shall present this requirement to the N/P Cycle Director. The Director shall make the final decision, taking into careful consideration all relevant assessments and outcomes, and shall authorise the teachers to proceed with arrangements, including convening the parent/guardian to establish the formal agreement.

3. Parental Involvement

- **Trips with one overnight stay:** parental presence shall be recommended, but shall not be automatically required, except where the pupil has specific needs during overnight stays or exhibits unpredictable responses in situations outside their usual routine.
- **Trips with more than one overnight stay:** parental presence will generally be required if the above criteria (section 2) apply.

4. Travel and Accommodation for the Parent/Guardian

- **Travel:**

- The parent/guardian should travel by their own vehicle to allow immediate departure if the child cannot complete the stay.

- The parent/guardian is responsible for their own travel arrangements and costs unless otherwise agreed.
- **Accommodation:**
 - The parent/guardian will have separate room within the accommodation/host facility, or a family arrangement agreed in advance with the class teacher.

5. Communication with Travel Agency and Host Facility

When booking the trip, the school will:

- Inform the travel agency that a parent/guardian will be attending as part of the group for specific pupil support needs.
- Request that any additional costs (e.g., extra room, or activity adaptations) are identified and included in the initial quotation (if applicable) and contract.
- Ensure that the itinerary accommodates both the child's inclusion in educational activities and the parent's role.

6. Early Return Procedures

If a pupil's needs make it unsafe, impractical, or highly distressing for them to continue the stay, the decision to implement an early return shall be determined primarily by the professional judgement of the class teacher and/or trip leader, acting in the best interests of the pupil and the wider group.

In such cases:

- The parent/guardian must arrange the immediate return using their own vehicle or another means of transportation agreed with the school team prior to departure.
- The school, through the class teacher/trip leader, will ensure a safe and orderly handover, which includes:
 - Agreeing the details of the early return directly with the parent/guardian.
 - Coordinating with trip staff to collect the pupil's belongings.
 - Recording the departure time, reason for the early return, and all relevant details in the trip log.
 - Informing the school management.

7. Costs and Responsibilities

- **Parent/Guardian:** covers own travel, accommodation, meals, and any specific costs related to their presence.
- **School:** covers standard costs for the child and maintains responsibility for supervision and educational content.
- **Travel agency/host facility:** must provide accurate breakdown of any extra costs arising from parental attendance.

8. Pupil Participation and Contingency Arrangements

The scope and duration of a pupil's participation in a residential trip may be determined prior to departure and, where necessary, shall be limited to specific days only, to ensure the pupil's wellbeing, safety, and effective participation.

Where parental attendance is not possible, alternative support arrangements shall be considered on a case-by-case basis, subject to the availability of suitably qualified and designated personnel.

In the event that neither parental participation nor dedicated support staff can be provided, the school shall agree with the parents/guardians that the pupil will not participate in the residential

trip. In such circumstances, the pupil shall continue to attend school and shall have access to their assigned support teacher(s). Where appropriate, the pupil may be included in selected learning activities within a class from a higher or lower level of their language section, according to individual needs and educational considerations.

9. Procedural Guidelines for Teachers (Checklist)

Teachers, support staff, and trip leaders shall follow these steps to implement the policy effectively:

1. Assessment and Identification

- Teachers shall participate in the pedagogical team meeting to review pupils' individual needs against the criteria outlined in Section 2 and 3.

2. Parental Support Recommendations

- Recommend parental presence where criteria are met.
- Document recommendations to present to the N/P Cycle Director.

3. Agreement with Parents/Guardians

- Prepare a formal agreement with the parent/guardian outlining:
 - Roles and responsibilities during the trip.
 - Travel and accommodation arrangements.
 - Scope of support required and any limitations/contingency arrangements.
 - Procedures for early return, if applicable.

4. Trip Planning and Coordination

- Coordinate with parents, support staff, travel agency, and host facility.
- Ensure the itinerary accommodates both pupil participation and parental support.

5. During the Trip

- Monitor pupils and provide required support.
- Liaise with the parent/guardian when present.
- Implement early return procedures if the pupil's needs make continuing the stay unsafe, impractical, or highly distressing.

6. Documentation and Reporting

- Record all arrangements, incidents, observations, and decisions in the trip log.
- Report deviations, pupil distress, or additional support requirements to the Director and relevant staff.

7. Post-Trip Review

- Participate in a post-trip evaluation of parental support effectiveness and pupil participation.
- Use findings to inform future planning and identification of pupils needing additional support.