



**THE COMPLETE
EDUCATION SOLUTION**

CREATING UNIQUE JOURNEYS FOR LIFE AND LEARNING

Health & Safety on Educational visits Policy

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Thomas Keaney'.

Thomas Keaney, CEO and Schools' Proprietor

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This policy applies to all The Complete Education Solution
(TCES) schools and services

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Introduction

Trips and visits form an important part of the curriculum for pupils at TCES Group schools. It is an opportunity for pupils to engage in both physical and academic activities that should suitably challenge them and provide them with a range of fulfilling experiences. Before the school decides to arrange an educational visit or trip, it is good practice to consider precisely what educational objectives it wishes to achieve, and then, how a visit might help to achieve them. In order to promote safe practice, the Head Teacher will need to challenge the educational objectives that have been stated for a visit.

Risk assessment and risk management are legal requirements. For educational visits they involve the careful examination of what could cause harm during the visit and whether enough precautions have been taken or whether more should be done. The aim is to make sure no one gets hurt or becomes ill. The control measures should be understood by those involved. Risk assessments should explicitly cover how special educational needs and medical needs are to be addressed. The programme of a visit, as set out in the risk assessment and the consent form, should not be deviated from and should include details of contingency measures – plan B.

The Health & Safety Executive has produced a leaflet “5 Steps to Risk Assessment” (<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg163.pdf>) as a simple guide. It recommends that risk assessments be recorded and reviewed.

Planning

It is important for all TCES employees to be aware that pupils away from mainstream schools can easily become isolated from the local community. Therefore staff should actively encourage community involvement for pupils if they are emotionally able to cope with the activities offered within the locality. A nominated coordinator should investigate and develop links with all potential activity providers within the community setting.

There is an allocated budget enabling staff to plan activities and outings for pupils in the school as part of the curriculum. Activities need to be carefully planned to balance realistic activities and leisure pursuits in line with those a pupil would normally receive in a mainstream school. Two high cost trips in one week would be beyond the limits of a mainstream school budget and therefore not a realistic choice. The value of any activity should also balance sport and physical activity with more academic activities.

If a trip or activity involves a residential aspect, then it must be planned and agreed with the Schools’ Proprietor before any information is sent to parents. Such a trip will

require, for example, more detailed medical information on a pupil and Central Services will be able to provide guidance on these issues.

Supervision

The School needs to decide on staff-pupil ratios for trips. Ratios should be considered in respect of the sex, age and ability of the pupils, whether any of the pupils have special needs, the nature of the trip and activities, the experience of those accompanying pupils and the duration of the trip.

All staff should know or have a list of all the pupils on the trip. If staff have specific responsibility for a smaller group of pupils, they must know this in advance as should the pupils. All staff must ensure they are aware of any specific responsibilities, while on the trip.

There will be no instances of "remote supervision" of pupils unless this has been subject to a risk assessment approved by Central Services.

Informing parents

The Trip Organiser must ensure parents/carers are given as much information as possible about the nature of the trip and the activities that are likely to be on offer. Parents should be informed in writing of any offsite activity or visit unless it is a regular part of the school curriculum which parents have already been informed about through the school prospectus or a letter. Seeking annual consent for such routine visits may be appropriate. Non-routine trips or activities will require an additional individual consent form including medical consent where appropriate.

Parents/carers may raise concerns about particular aspects of the trip and may need reassurance on safety issues. For longer trips it is useful to invite parents to a meeting to address these issues.

The following written information, with regard to the pupil's health and safety, should be given to the parents depending on the nature of the visit:

- 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 pupils will be collected and returned.
- Mode(s) of travel including the name of any travel company.
- Including any times when remote supervision may take place.
- Details of accommodation with security and
- Supervisory arrangements on site.

- Details of provision for special educational or medical needs.
- Procedures for pupils 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 in respect of, for example, alcohol, sexual behaviour, smoking and general group discipline including prohibited items. This information may take the form of a code of conduct which parents should sign.
- What pupils should not take on the visit or bring back.
- Details of insurance taken out for the group as a whole in respect of luggage, accident, cancellation, medical cover, any exceptions in the policy and whether parents need to arrange additional cover.
- 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.

Water activities

Next to road travel, taking pupils to coastal areas or rivers is considered the most hazardous activity. The following must be adhered to in all such trips:

- Check the staff to pupil ratios advised by your local LEA.
- Check if any pupils cannot swim and increase the number of times you do head counts.
- Check weather conditions and changes in conditions throughout the duration of the trip.
- Make sure that supervisors are aware of the specific precautions needed on trips to coastal areas and rivers.

Swimming and paddling or otherwise entering the waters of river, canal, sea or lake should never be allowed as an impromptu activity. Requests by pupils to be allowed to swim because, for example, it is hot weather, or after a kayaking exercise; should be resisted unless this has been planned for in advance. 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, Trip Organisers seek out recognised bathing areas that have official surveillance i.e. qualified lifeguard cover. However staff should be aware that pupils might mingle with members of the public and be lost to view. Pupils should always be in sight and reasonable reach of their supervisors.

Farm Visits

There is evidence of a link between farm visits and infection in children. This means that some simple and sensible precautions should be taken.

Trip Organisers 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.

First aid

This should form part of the risk assessment. Before undertaking any off-site activities the Head Teacher or the Trip Organiser should assess what level of first aid might be needed. On any kind of visit a staff member should have a good working knowledge of first aid and ensure that an adequate first-aid box is taken. For adventurous activities, visits abroad or residential visits it is sensible for at least one of the group's teachers to be a trained first-aider. All adults in the group should know how to contact the emergency services. 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.
- A suitably stocked first-aid box.
- A person appointed to oversee first-aid arrangements.

First aid should always be available and accessible. The Health and Safety executive recommends the following minimum contents for a travelling first-aid box where no special risk has been identified:

- A leaflet giving general advice on first aid.
- Six individually wrapped sterile adhesive dressings.
- One large sterile un-medicated wound dressing approximately 18 cm x 18 cm.
- Two triangular bandages.
- Two safety pins.
- Individually wrapped moist cleansing wipes.
- One pair of disposable gloves.
- A Resusciate (for hygienic mouth to mouth resuscitation) would also be useful.

Travel

Trip Organisers should ensure that travel arrangements are subject to a risk assessment. Road travel is considered the most serious hazard on any school trip. The following should be considered:

- Buses and taxis are hired from reputable companies and are safe.
- Buses and coaches must have seatbelts, which will be worn.
- Staff using their own vehicles have adequate insurance cover and ensure the car is roadworthy.
- Pupils must be supervised throughout the period of travel.
- Drivers should never be expected to supervise.
- What are the contingency arrangements in the event of vehicle breakdown? If hiring a vehicle the hiring company should provide such contingency.

All minibuses are required by law to carry a first aid kit.

Preparing pupils

Talking to pupils about the proposed trip is essential. Pupils may have very individual concerns about the trip or specific aspects of the trip. Stress the importance of safety to all pupils. Explain why you are going to do things like head counts, checking equipment, asking them to be quiet while you give instructions, etc.

Emergency planning

Using the completed risk assessment try to ensure that emergency plans are in place in case of the following on all trips:

- injury
- illness
- bullying or abuse between pupils
- pupils going missing
- pupils making disclosures of abuse

Supporting staff

The Trip Organiser must make sure staff are able to take breaks if they need to. Escorting and supervising children offsite brings its own stresses and staff can feel overwhelmed by the responsibility.

For some staff it may be a new experience and to have pupils under their care and control for possibly 24 hours can be particularly trying, especially if they are expected to manage particularly unruly pupil(s).

Considerations during all outings and trips

In most circumstances, outings are expected to be arranged for small groups so that attention is not drawn to pupils because they are in a public place in large groups.

The following procedure is designed to give staff clear guidance when they are arranging such outings. It does not include any day to day outings that may occur as part of a pupil's personal behaviour plan, e.g. walking to local shops etc. but does cover those trips that may involve a number of hours or a day away from the school.

Making arrangements

When making arrangements for a trip, staff must ensure the following as part of the risk assessment process:

- All pupils' parents/carers are consulted about the trip and a consent form is signed. If the pupil is subject to a Care Order the consent must be received from the Social Services department.
- Staff are identified to go on the trip, particularly if special skills or knowledge are required.
- The Head Teacher/Project Manager must be informed in advance of the plan to go on the outing.
- A mobile phone is available and ready for use.

The outing

- It is the responsibility of all staff to ensure that the pupils involved enjoy themselves and benefit from the outing. However, one person's enjoyment should not be to the detriment of other pupils or the general public.
- A record of all expenditure incurred during the outing must be kept and given to the line manager on return.
- Pupils should be encouraged to spend their money responsibly. They must not be encouraged to buy goods/presents for staff.

Return from the outing

On return from the outing, staff must ensure:

- They write about the outing in the pupil's daily record sheet.
- All money spent is reconciled.
- Any accident and/or incident forms are filled in.

- The Head Teacher/Project Manager are made aware of anything serious that may have happened during the outing.

Emergencies

If an emergency occurs on a school trip, the main actions to consider are:

- Establish the nature and extent of the emergency as quickly as possible.
- Ensure that the entire group is 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 is adequately supervised at all times and kept together.
- Notify the police if necessary.
- Notify the British Embassy/Consulate if an emergency occurs abroad.
- Inform the school contact. The school contact number should be accessible at all times during the visit.
- Write down accurately and as soon as possible all relevant facts and witness details.
- Keep a written account of all events, times and contacts after the incident.
- Complete an accident report form as soon as possible, if appropriate.
- No-one in the group should speak to the media.

Accidents

In case of accidents, the following procedures should be followed:

- Call an ambulance for any injuries that cause concern. An ambulance must always be called if there is an injury to the head.
- If a pupil is injured, they should be accompanied at all times.
- If appropriate and feasible apply first aid treatment.
- Contact the school as soon as possible. Give a clear account of what has happened, what you have done and what you intend to do.
- On return to the school, all the relevant paperwork must be completed before leaving the premises.

Breakdown

In the case of a mechanical breakdown rendering the a vehicle transporting a group of staff and pupils un-roadworthy, a member of staff must notify the school immediately and implement contingency arrangements made during the planning of the trip.

Dealing with absconding from an outing

If a pupil goes missing during the course of an outing, then an immediate search of the surrounding area should be undertaken. Subtle questioning of other pupils on the outing may yield helpful information. If, after approximately 30 minutes, or at the point when the rest of the group is about to return to the school, whichever is sooner, there is no sign of the missing person, a telephone call back to the school should be made alerting the Head Teacher/Project Manager to the situation – sometimes pupils make their way back independently.

To prevent further disruption, the rest of the group should be returned to the school leaving one member of staff, with a mobile, if staffing levels permit. If, after a period of another 30 minutes, there is still no sign of the missing person, a further call should be made back to the school asking that the Unauthorised Absence procedure be initiated. The member of staff should then return to the school.

Activities and the management of risk

There are three main considerations when activities are being planned.

Suitability:

The Head Teacher needs to be satisfied that the activities are suitable for the pupils e.g. on outings, at activity centres, on trips away or at other schools or organised by outside instructors invited in. This requires such factors to be taken into account as: the age, number, competence, behaviour, skills and mix of young people, and to recognise that what may be suitable for one group of pupils of a similar age may not be suitable for another. It also requires the Head Teacher to keep reviewing the suitability of the activities in practice, and to make changes if they appear to be becoming unsuitable for any reason – something that has never caused a problem before, or with other groups, may well start doing so.

Assessing, Planning and Preparation:

The Head Teacher needs to take positive steps to minimise the risks to pupils, staff and other people from the activities organised. Possible risks need to be identified and action taken to counter them as well as not taking (or letting pupils take) unnecessary or unreasonable risks (always taking their age, abilities and characteristics into account). Guidance on carrying out risk assessments is given below. Head Teachers need to make sure that something that is suitable for older pupils or for pupils who have reached a level of skill or responsibility does not present any significant risks to younger or other pupils. Account should be made, in minimising risks, that pupils may go into places or try activities that are attractive even if they have been told not to.

Proper safety precautions must be taken for any activity where a risk is identified. The responsibility ultimately rests on the Head Teacher but needs to be exercised by the person in charge of the activity (whether a staff member or not) and every member of staff or helper involved.

Competence:

The Head Teacher needs to be satisfied that every member of staff, helper or instructor (including any outside instructor invited in) is competent to supervise or instruct in the activities entrusted to their supervision or instruction. The Head Teacher needs to be sure that the staff, helpers and instructors are therefore suitably responsible people, are properly skilled or qualified at the activity itself and can lead or supervise that activity safely (which may require more knowledge and skill than simply being good at the activity themselves).

When activities that involve a significant risk are considered (i.e. a risk of injury, illness or death), as well as ensuring that staff are competent for such activities, Head Teachers need to check that those leading the activity concerned hold the relevant qualification to supervise or instruct pupils in that activity. A recognised national body or association will usually govern such activities and you should check with that body what qualifications are needed to supervise or instruct young people taking part in the activity and ask the relevant staff or instructors to show you proof of that qualification. DfES guidance lists national bodies for commonly encountered activities.

The Head Teacher also needs to be satisfied that if young people are to take part in an activity involving a significant level of risk they are going to be instructed or supervised by suitably qualified people. Where the national body for the activity concerned specifies the number of qualified instructors or supervisors required this should be met. The Head Teacher should only organise activities that require special equipment, clothing or safety precautions if these can be provided. Qualified instructors should know what special provisions are needed and their advice must be followed, and never require them to provide or give instruction in an activity without the required clothing, equipment or precautions. Note that extra precautions may be needed for young people that adults may not require, and that the precautions and equipment may need to be different if the young people taking part are unskilled novices rather than young people skilled in the activity. Again, the national body for the activity concerned can usually advise.

The assessment of risk:

Risk assessment for educational visits can be usefully considered as having three levels:

- **Generic activity risk assessments**, which are likely to apply to the activity wherever and whenever it takes place.
- **Visit/site specific risk assessments** which will differ from place to place

- and group to group.
- **Ongoing risk assessments** that take account of, for example, illness of staff or pupils, changes of weather, availability of preferred activity.

Generic Activity Risk Assessments:

These are Companywide assessments usually provided by Central Services. If such an assessment is not available i.e. it has never been required before, the LEA will often provide good guidance as a model of practice. School staff will not normally prepare them unless they have accumulated specific experience or have an expertise. The Head Teacher should check any generic risk assessment prepared externally (by an activity or expedition provider, tour operator, or National Governing Body) or by a member of school staff.

Examples:

- Travel entails a risk of injury in a road traffic accident. Control measures would include qualified driver; number of drivers; maximum periods of driving; appropriate seat belts provided and worn; evidence of vehicle maintenance, appropriate supervision levels; and, if appropriate, knowledge of foreign law, experience of driving abroad and with left-side controls. Pupils are also at risk as pedestrians from traffic. (Also travel as in using ferries, airports, long haul coaches, trains, underground/metro systems etc);
- Adventure activities. Centres licensed under the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 1996 can be considered safe in the leading, instructing and equipping of the activities stipulated on the licence. These will have been inspected. The Head Teacher has no need to risk assess that part of any visit. They will wish to assess other aspects of the school's planning for a visit - for example, accommodation catering, transport, activities not stipulated on the licence. For non-licensable adventure activities, proof of competence from an NGB award or assessment by a technical adviser may be sufficient.

Visit/Site Specific Risk Assessment:

These are undertaken by the school for each venue and are amended as necessary for different groups. They should be prepared or agreed by someone trained and competent to assess risks.

Visit and site specific risk assessments should inform school based policies and procedures.

Examples:

- Medical needs of pupils. Control measures include ensuring the Trip Organiser is aware of the known health problems of the group; sufficient medication is provided; there are sufficient adults competent in dealing with the medical problems in the group; and there are contingency measures in place for the group to be adequately supervised if an adult has to accompany a pupil to hospital.
- Behaviour of pupils. Control measures include a code of rules and behaviour, agreed as far as practicable with pupils; rules for supervision (including model behaviour and example set by adults); and competence of supervisors to ensure disciplinary standards.
- Weather etc. Control measures include obtaining local intelligence of tides; potential for flooding or flash floods; likelihood of sudden weather changes in mountains; streams that can change from benign to torrents in a short time etc; planning the itinerary to take the possibility of change into account; suitable clothing; ensure pupils understand the risks and the reasons for the control measures, and having a plan B pre-assessed in case plan A has become too hazardous.
- Crossing roads, railways, rivers etc. Control measures include local intelligence; information on where the controlled or otherwise less dangerous crossing places are located; ensuring appropriate levels of supervision and that pupils are aware of, and comply with, the rules.
- Group management decisions. Control measures include establishing meeting and collecting points; code of rules and behaviour agreements; cultural considerations such as dress codes, holy days; induction requirements for support staff etc.

Ongoing Risk Assessments and Reassessments:

The Trip Organiser, or other adults with responsibility, should reassess risks while the visit is taking place. Ongoing risk assessments normally consist of judgements and decisions made as the need arises. They should be informed by the generic, and visit or site specific, risk assessments and take account of local expertise on e.g. tides, potential for flooding etc. They are not usually recorded until after the visit and should be reviewed to inform future planning. Examples of the need for ongoing risk assessment:

- Changing weather, tiredness or illness within the group, behaviour, issues with other groups at same venue etc. Control measures would often include deciding to change to the pre-assessed plan B or swapping activities on the itinerary so that the activity can be carried out on a different day.
- Emergencies. Control measures would include establishing the nature and extent of the emergency as quickly as possible; ensuring that all the group are safe and looked after; establishing whether anyone has been hurt and getting immediate medical attention for them; ensuring that all group members who need to know are aware of the incident and that all group members are following the emergency procedures; ensuring that if a teacher accompanies casualties to hospital, the rest

of the group are adequately supervised at all times and kept together; and informing the emergency contact in the school.

- Trip Organisers are always in charge. They should trust their own knowledge of the pupils and use their own professional judgement. This may include challenging an activity leader where the Trip Organiser's knowledge of the group is superior, or intervening to prompt a change of plan, including stopping an activity if it has become too hazardous.

Carrying out a risk assessment:

A risk assessment is a careful examination of what, in the activity, premises, outdoor areas and outings, could cause harm to pupils, staff or other people, so that it can be weighed up whether enough precautions have been planned or should more be done to prevent harm. You should positively "hunt out" foreseeable risks and put in place reasonable steps to avoid or minimise them. The process is a safeguarding tool and the written records of it may be vital in demonstrating how you have considered and minimised risks, should a pupil suffer harm on while in your care.

1. Identify and list all the hazards to pupils and others that you can foresee. In doing this for premises, you need to tour all areas of the premises and outdoor areas, noting in writing any existing or new possible hazards to pupils. Bear in mind that children can often discover hazards that are not immediately apparent to an adult. If appropriate it may be an idea to take a responsible pupil with you on your tour. In identifying hazards for your activities, go through all your planned programmes, again ideally with someone else, and write down all the foreseeable hazards and risks you can identify e.g. what the pupils will be doing, where they will be doing it, equipment or materials they may be using, what the staff will be doing and what may happen if the children misbehave, go where they should not, or fail to follow staff rules or instructions. Identify any particularly risky times or places as well as considering the activities themselves, and consider risks to pupils not taking part in activities (e.g. walking to and from activities or just "wandering around"), as well as those taking part. Use the experience of similar activities run before by the school or other schools, particularly where an accident or a "near miss" took place. Do not assume that something that has not caused problems before or with a different group of pupils cannot do so in the future. Take the advice of any specialist leaders or instructors you will be using. Consider the age, number, skills, mix and characteristics of the pupils and staff in deciding what might be a hazard.
2. Identify who might be at risk for each hazard.
3. Write down exactly what accident or harm each of your listed hazards might foreseeably lead to. There may be more than one for each hazard on the list. Write against each foreseeable accident or harm what you estimate the level of risk of that accident or harm actually happening to be, e.g. "very likely to happen",

“likely to happen” or “unlikely to happen”, and have a category for recording the worst that you could foresee as happening, if things went badly wrong, under “worst risk”.

4. Decide what steps you can take to minimise each of the risks you have identified (note the word is “minimise”, and not “eliminate” – reasonableness and care are expected, not total absence of all risks). You should not, however, provide activities or use accommodation or facilities which present an unreasonable risk to pupils or staff. Possible actions to minimise risks might include removing hazards altogether, measures to prevent pupils from contact with those hazards, increased staff supervision, training and instruction, procedures such as regularly monitoring particular activities or areas, use of different equipment or materials, provision of safety measures such as protective clothing, safety equipment, safety mats, relocation or separation of particular activities, and changing your activity programme.
5. Write your action plan to take all reasonable steps that you have identified to minimise risks, allocating tasks clearly to people who need to carry them out. Take the action required in good time, and check and record that action has been taken.
6. Decide how the staff should respond if the identified accident or harm happens, despite your action to minimise the risk, including how to respond to each item on your “worst risk” list happening. This is, effectively, your local “disaster plan”, and how you respond to serious incidents in order to prevent further harm and minimise the effects for individuals of what has happened, including obtaining medical help promptly, is as much a part of your responsibilities as are protective measures.
7. Regularly assess that the risk-minimising steps are being carried out, and reassess the hazards at regular intervals to see whether your actions to minimise risks need changing or strengthening, or if any new risks have emerged (the pupils may have discovered some since your initial assessment). If so, carry out the above assessment and action steps for the new risks.

Child protection issues:

Risk assessments in respect of child protection should consider the adults who will be accompanying pupils, the adults that they will meet at centres they visit and or places they will stay and the risks posed by individual pupils to others and themselves.

Parents sometimes volunteer to accompany pupils on day trips. It would be unreasonable and impractical to expect parents to undergo CRB checks for these occasions. However, the school does need to consider how volunteers are used and a

risk assessment should include that no volunteer, without a CRB, be left alone with pupils.

Where the trip involves an overnight stay, volunteers must be asked to undergo a CRB check or they may not take part.

Centres providing activities for children should be asked to provide evidence that their staff have been checked. Centres open to all members of the public should be asked what safeguarding policies they have in place. Pupils should not be left unsupervised in any centre that is not able to provide evidence of appropriate checks.

Some pupils will be known to pose a risk to other pupils. Where it is known that a pupil poses a risk of significant harm, an individual risk assessment should be carried out. While it is recognised that an individual young person may benefit from being included in a trip, very careful consideration needs to be taken to the risk to others. This is particularly important if the trip involves overnight stays. The risk assessment must consider whether the pupil posing a risk can be adequately supervised for the duration of the trip. In some cases, the school may decide that a pupil cannot go on a trip. Where this is the case the pupil and their parents will be properly informed of the decision and the reasons for it.

In the event of an incident, disclosure or suspicion of abuse, the staff member must report the matter immediately to the Trip Organiser. The Company Child Protection policy must then be followed.