

St Olave's Grammar School



SCHOOL JOURNEYS, EDUCATIONAL VISITS & ACTIVITIES

The School and Governing Body recognise the benefits gained by students taking part in school journeys, educational visits and activities. In particular, it is understood that such activities provide opportunities for students to undergo experiences not readily available within the classroom.

- **School Journey** – defined as an off-site activity that requires an overnight stay and takes place out of school hours.
- **Educational Visit** – defined as an off-site activity that does not require an overnight stay, is within school hours or is a requirement of the curriculum.
- **Activity** – defined as an event that has been arranged in-house and remains on site or a sporting activity either on or off site

Note: Regular sporting fixture or events and other activities such as chess matches follow a different procedure. Risk assessments for each sport and activity are held by the school and there is an expectation that student required for an on or off site fixture would be available to represent the school and would notify parents/carers of the details of the fixtures as advised by the member staff in charge.

School journeys, educational visits and activities (hereafter referred to as 'trips') are subject to a range of laws and staff should be clear about their responsibilities. Members of staff intending to organise a trip are required to read and follow this policy.

A **risk assessment** will be carried out as part of the planning process. Such assessments will vary in detail from activity to activity, with higher-risk activities requiring more careful consideration, **such as students swimming in a swimming pool, lake or the sea.** These can be seen by parents on request.

The Group Leader will draft **letters** to be sent to parents. In addition to informing parents of the details of the trip, the letter will also clearly explain the cost of the proposed activity. The school may charge for some costs but not others; therefore, voluntary contributions may need to be sought from parents. No student can face discrimination if their parents decline to contribute and so it must be made clear what will happen to the trip if insufficient contributions are received.

The School may charge for activities that are deemed to be **optional extras**. Optional extras are defined as:

- Board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit.
- Education provided outside of school time that is not (a) part of the National Curriculum; (b) part of a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school; or (c) part of religious education.

For example, the School can charge parents the full cost of a sports tour that occurs during a school holiday but could not charge for costs associated with a fixture within the school day. The School may charge for the costs associated with an evening trip to the theatre but not if students are watching the play as a requirement of their studies for an examination, even if such an activity fell outside of the normal school day. The School may charge for the board and lodging associated with a residential fieldtrip but, as the activity relates directly to the qualification being studied, could not charge for other costs. The school may however request voluntary contributions to cover costs in all situations where it cannot levy a charge.

Costs should be broken down into costs for which a charge can be made (**chargeable costs**) and those that cannot (**voluntary costs**); so that it is clear to the parents which charges are optional. Any chargeable costs must not exceed the actual per pupil cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating. No element of subsidy can exist in the chargeable element in respect of other pupils whose families are unable to meet the full costs involved. The Group Leader will ensure in the documentation sent home that individuals who may find themselves in this position know how to apply for financial support from the school.

For Pupil Premium students, the chargeable cost will be covered by the school. Parents who may find full chargeable costs difficult (for example, parents receiving Income Support, Jobseeker's Allowance, Support under part VI of the immigration and Asylum Act 1999 or Child Tax Credit but not Working Tax Credit) are invited to request financial assistance in writing to the trip organiser. Consideration of financial support will be given on a case-by-case basis by the Senior Leadership Team.

Since April 2003 the eligibility criteria that entitle families to an exemption from paying for the cost of board and lodging on residential visits have been aligned with free school meals eligibility criteria. All parents have the right to claim free board and lodging if they are receiving these benefits.

School policy is that in the event of a surplus remaining at the end of the trip, amounts under £10 will not be refunded. The retained surplus remains in the School Voluntary Fund for the benefit of the whole school and to cover any administration costs. Amounts in excess of £20 per student will always be refunded. Amounts

between £10 and £20 per student will be refunded if this amount represents at least 10% of the cost of the activity.

Parental agreement to meet the costs of a trip will be obtained before making bookings and other financial commitments. For expensive trips, payments by instalments may be appropriate on the understanding that all payments are made in full prior to the date of the trip. If deposits are being paid to a supplier or organisation, it will be explained to the parents whether their deposit is refundable or not.

The School's preferred method of payment is the on-line system (sQuid). Due to financial regulations, students must be responsible for their own pocket money.

Activities occurring within the school day and on the school site do not require written parental permission. Neither do activities that form part of the school's regular curricular or extra-curricular commitment. It is required however to ensure that written parental permission is sought whenever the students are being taken off-site on a trip that occurs annually or at irregular intervals.

All residential trips will have a **Parents' Briefing** before departure. This provides an opportunity for the Group Leader to provide more details on the activity and establish expectations for the trip. It is required that the Group Leader ask the parents and the student to sign a document explaining the **rules and regulations** of the trip and to collect updated **medical and contact information**. For international residential trips, Group Leaders may also ask parents to provide written permission before departure to expedite the re-issuing of a passport should a student happen to lose theirs en route.