

References: 1999-D-85

Orig.: FR

Version : EN

"Guidelines" for school trips organized by the European Schools

**Approved by the Board of Governors on 27 and 28 April
1999, in Berlin**

1.0 Definition

- 1.1 School trips, i.e. any journey lasting more than one day and hence involving a change of residence, are an essential aspect of the multicultural education and training provided in the European Schools. They are a means whereby pupils acquire new knowledge and experience new situations. They lead to the forging of stronger relationships among pupils and between pupils and teachers and to the simultaneous development of a feeling of European solidarity, through better understanding of their own culture and of foreign cultures.
- 1.2 School trips are school activities. They must therefore have a clear connection with the pedagogic and/or didactic objectives of the teaching and be prepared and followed up in class. They are organized in a class and/or a subject context (e.g. L II, L III, History, Geography, etc). Trips of a purely tourist nature may not be organized.
- 1.3 Pupils are expected to go on a maximum of two or three school trips as defined above during their entire secondary school career.

2.0 Organization

- 2.1 The Schools take sole responsibility for the organization of school trips.
- 2.2 As a proposal, the Education Committee, following consultation between teachers, parents and pupils, defines the general arrangements for each school trip, including its length and the costs entailed. It should also consider whether the objective aimed at cannot be achieved by selecting a destination located closer to the School.

The costs involved should not be a reason for a pupil's being unable to go on a school trip; if necessary, it is up to the School to help the organizers to find the funding required, on the clear understanding that there is no specific budget heading available for this purpose;

Where a trip lasts more than one school week (the two weekends at each end can be used for the outward and return journeys), the excess part of the trip must fall in the holidays.

- 2.3 Pupils and their parents/guardians should be notified of the planned trip in good time to enable them to meet the expected costs.
- 2.4 Approval for school trips is given by the Director on the basis of a request submitted in good time beforehand. The Director will check in particular whether the activity involved is consistent with the school's education and training task. He/She will ensure that the general arrangements and the funding, as proposed by the Education Committee, give the required guarantees.
- 2.5 Contracts with companies providing transport and accommodation are drawn up in the School's name and not in the organizer's own name or in the name of parents/guardians.

3.0 Teachers' participation

- 3.1 Although voluntary by definition, going on school trips forms part, as such, of teachers' statutory official duties. The Director authorizes the teachers concerned to travel in an official capacity. He/She must also give his/her permission for other accompanying adults (e.g.: colleague or parent) to travel. It should be clearly understood that the granting of permission to travel does not imply that the School will reimburse the travel and subsistence expenses of the teachers in question.

- 3.2 During school trips pupils and teachers are covered by the School's civil liability insurance. No insurance covers criminal liability. Should an accompanying adult incur criminal liability, the School defrays the cost of legal aid, provided that the act committed does not adversely affect the School.

4.0 Pupils' participation

- 4.1 Pupils are obliged to go on school trips. In special circumstances this obligation may be waived.
- 4.2 In preparing the trip every effort should be made to consider the difficulties which disabled pupils might experience.
- 4.3 Pupils who are given special permission not to go on a school trip are expected to attend lessons in other classes. Where this is not possible they should instead be set school work related to the subject.

5.0 Parents' contractual obligations

- 5.1 Prior to the signing of contracts at the latest, a written declaration should be obtained from all parents/guardians in which they agree to allow their child(ren) to go on the trip and undertake to defray the costs entailed. The School should also inform parents/guardians of the need to take out, or to have already taken out, travel insurance for their child(ren). Other types of insurance can be envisaged if necessary (illness, repatriation, cancellation).

- 5.2 Parents/guardians are required to give a written undertaking to the School that their children will adhere strictly to the measures taken and the code of conduct adopted to protect pupils. They are also required to inform the School prior to departure of any health problems which their children may have.

6.0 Supervision, discipline and safety

- 6.1 The nature and scale of supervision should be geared to the length of the trip, local circumstances and the specific features of the group of pupils (number of pupils, age, sex, degree of maturity, special needs).

The supervisory responsibility of the organizer may also be delegated in part to other accompanying adults (teachers, instructors or parents).

The ratio of accompanying adults to pupils should normally be one to fifteen but may differ in line with pedagogic requirements and the legislation of the country in which the School is situated.

The organizer and all other accompanying adults should stay in the same accommodation as the pupils. In the case of international meetings or events, the host family will provide supervision.

- 6.2 The rules of discipline in force in the European Schools obviously continue to apply throughout a school trip. Pupils should be reminded prior to departure that it is the Schools' public image which they will be projecting, all the more reason, therefore, for their behaviour to be beyond reproach.

In the event of failure to abide by these rules, the organizer will take whatever measure he/she deems appropriate, reserving the right, if necessary, to have recourse to further procedures (Discipline Committee, for instance), once the trip is over. If he/she decides, in view of the extreme seriousness of the incident, to send a pupil home, this may only be done on the express condition that:

- the School and the parents/guardians have been informed beforehand,
- arrangements have been made for a duly accredited accompanying adult to assist the pupil.

It should be clearly understood that the parents/guardians concerned will be required to defray any additional expenditure incurred resulting from such a decision.

- 6.3 It is not normally permissible for pupils to travel in private cars, because of the risks involved. Departures from this rule may only be authorized by the Director, in duly substantiated special cases. The taking out of passenger insurance is required in such cases.

Hitchhiking is forbidden.

- 6.4 Activities involving a greater safety risk (swimming, bathing, hiking in high mountain regions, skiing, water sports, etc.) should be prepared with particular care.

The accompanying teachers must include at least one person with the professional qualifications and experience required to be able to deal with the specific requirements of the situation. In order to avoid accidents, all participants should be made aware of the code of conduct and safety rules to be followed.

- 6.5 The same comments as those made in 6.2. regarding discipline matters apply to the procedure to be followed in the event of accident. It is essential for the organizer to inform the School or the parents/guardians immediately of what has happened.

7.0 Preparation and follow-up

- 7.1 The organizer and any other teachers from the School involved in the trip should ensure that it is prepared in detail (library research, talks, etc.) in their classroom teaching, tying it in very closely with the syllabuses in force. Similarly, and in the same spirit, they should arrange follow-up activities (reports, slide shows, video films, etc).

- 7.2 The organizer, assisted by the other organizers, must write a detailed report on the trip, highlighting the knowledge and experience gained by the pupils. A copy of this report should be sent to the Board of Inspectors, via the Office.