



Blatchington Mill School

POLICY & PROCEDURES FOR WELFARE, PROCESSES AND HEALTH & SAFETY ON SCHOOL TRIPS

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OBJECTIVES

The school places a high value on fieldwork, excursions, visits and organised holidays. Such trips are of enormous benefit. It is a central part of the ethos of the school to provide the opportunity for educational visits and school organised experiences beyond the school buildings.

Students' physical, emotional and moral safety is of paramount concern. The School accepts that trips, visits and outdoor activities cannot be completely without risk but it requires that those staff in charge take all reasonable precautions to protect the health, safety and welfare of students and staff, and minimise the risk of untoward or dangerous situations (in accordance with DCFS Guidance Health and Safety of students on Educational Visits)

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Every effort will be made to ensure that school journeys, visits and activities are available and accessible to all for whom the trip is relevant; irrespective of sex, race, age, sexuality, gender identity, religion and disability.

Students with learning difficulties and disabilities, special educational and medical needs: Wherever it is feasible, Students with learning difficulties and disabilities should be included, whilst maintaining the safety of everyone in the group. Any problems/limitations should be considered at the planning stage and when carrying out the risk assessment. Special attention is made to supervision ratios. Each leader, for information, should hold details of the student/student's special needs. The group leader should discuss the visit with the SENCO and parents/carers of those children with special needs to ensure sufficient support is in place for each child and the teacher. When deciding if a trip is possible for a student with special needs their safety will be the immediate deciding factor. Beyond this will be an evaluation of the viability and cost. The intent with any trip is that students have a common experience.

INITIAL INFORMATION AND PRE-PLANNING

Wherever possible, trips should be included in the calendar at the beginning of the school year and should also be available on the school website, allowing parents and carers to plan which trips are likely to be best for their children, and to plan for any expensive trips which they may wish to commit themselves and their children to while at Blatchington Mill.

MINIBUSES

Trip organisers (this includes the Trip Leader and the Educational Visits Coordinator) are responsible for booking minibuses.

For all but short journeys (less than an hour), it is strongly recommended that there should be two drivers.



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The driver should ensure:

- the vehicles are fit for use. Therefore, before departure basic checks on the vehicle ought to be carried out: lights, tyre pressures and wear, fluid levels (oil, brakes, radiator, and windscreen washer); wipers and horn.
- that all passengers have correctly adjusted and fastened their seatbelts.
- that all doors are properly closed before departure (but unlocked).
- loose items, bags etc, are safely stowed at floor level and not blocking exits.
- speed limits are adhered to at all times.
- that the bus is left in a clean and tidy state.
- any incidents/accidents/vehicle faults are reported to the appropriate person on returning to school.

CONTINGENCY FUND

A *small* contingency fund should be built into all school trips.

COSTINGS & FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

We add a 10% charge to cover insurance on residential trips and 5% charge for insurance on day trips.

All participants pay the deposit in full. Timescales can be discussed with families for whom this is difficult.

We do not charge Pupil Premium (PP) students for board and lodging on residential trips. For reference, see our [Charging and Remissions Policy](#).

Financial support is available for families of students who are eligible for free school meals, if a request for support is made and the student is not recorded as eligible then we will use the same criteria. Details of qualifying benefits are shown on the Brighton and Hove website [B & H Free School Meals](#) .

We will consider other applications for financial support on a case by case basis and will review recommendations from Pastoral Teams in the school.

For students who are Pupil Premium , which means those eligible for Free School Meals plus a number of others, the deposit must be paid and the cost of any trip will be reduced beyond this:

- For residential trips; the charge to the family will be 50% of the balance (after the deposit) of the remaining cost of the trip **or** the balance of the cost once the board and lodging expenses have been removed; whichever is the lower cost. This calculation will be completed by the EVC. Letters introducing trips will have the cost for non-PP students and PP students listed separately for clarity.
- For day trips, PP students will be charged 50% of the total trip cost. As with residential trips, this will be clearly identified in the letter to parents/carers.

There are also three further sources of possible financial assistance.



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The Hedgcock Bequest is a very small annual grant made available to the Local Authority for distribution to schools in respect of applications from Headteachers for support of Students in difficult financial circumstances, to enable them to participate in educational activities from which they would otherwise be excluded. Families should look ahead and plan for any trips their child/children may wish to attend, they must then contact the BMS Educational Visits Coordinator to put forward their case in order for the school to apply on their behalf. The school can only apply once a year, this is usually between October and December and is subject to availability every year. In years where no family puts their child forward, the school may well choose to apply for a student deemed to have some disadvantage.

Brighton & Hove City Council administers various other Educational Trust Funds, which can provide some financial assistance towards the cost of study trips. [The Communities Fund](#) It is worth families also accessing these. As a school we will ensure this information is available on the school website trips page.

On occasions, though rare, we offer some help with trips from within the school. Matters of this nature must be passed through the BMS Educational Visits Coordinator who will forward your request to members of the Senior Leadership Team.

LETTER TO PARENTS/CARERS

Letters will be sent ONLY to the relevant students for the trip. For example if a trip is for Business and/or IT GCSE students, the invite letter will not be sent out to the whole year group.

There are standard letters for both day and residential trips which contain the following information:

- Where/why the trip has been arranged: if it is to be aimed at a particular set of students (e.g. sports team, BTEC, GCSE Geographers etc) then this should be made clear in the letter.
- The letter should also include date and length of trip.
- Accommodation details, where relevant.
- Cost (payments can be made on Pay 360).
- Travel arrangements.
- Excursions/activities.
- A deadline date when payments are required. It should also be stated that deposits **may not** be refunded unless a replacement student can be found, less any external admin costs that may be incurred (see further details below re deposits).
- Name of Trip Leader and any further organising staff.
- Reply slip to show interest or to book their place: if it is a non-residential trip, request confirmation that emergency contact details and medication information are up to date on SIMS Parent (Day trips). Residential trips require a full medical/consent form.
- If the trip is abroad it is good practice to request a student's name as stated on their passport.
- If abroad, remind families that most countries require a passport to be valid for at least 6 months after the return date, so this should be checked as soon as possible
- If a day trip, that school uniform should be worn and if a packed lunch/money required. If a student has free school meals, packed lunch can be ordered from the canteen – 48 hours notice required.
- The letter will also emphasise that students whose behaviour in school has created problems may not be permitted to participate in the trip.



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Before advertising your trip and distributing letters, the letter must be checked through with EVC.

DAY TRIPS : An Initial Offer Letter will now go out to all parents/carers via email where possible which will clearly state when the payments are being collected with a close date clearly stated.

If a trip has a limited number of spaces, the trip will always be launched on the basis that forms have to be handed in at specified times and when a trip is oversubscribed, names will be chosen through a computer based random allocation. Forms will be submitted online via the Google Form in each trip introductory letter. In exceptional circumstances, a paper copy will also be available - and can be accepted by the EVC.

5% of places on any trip may be directed by the Head of Year to students in need.

Payments will be made through Pay360. In exceptional circumstances the receipt of cash can be arranged.

Day Trips ONLY (there is a separate system for Residentials – see below)

If a student has been assigned a Reserve Place Only on one trip, this does not make them a priority for any future trips. *Each trip is dealt with in isolation of any other*; bar consideration of the SOT List.

N.B. Parental/Carer permission for all trips must be given in writing or by e-mail: verbal permission is not acceptable.

DEPOSITS AND PAYMENT RETURNS (Residential Visits ONLY)

An Initial Offer Letter will go out to all parents/carers via email which will clearly state when the expression of interests are being collected and, in case of successful application, the expected payment schedule.

When the deadline for expression of interest submission is reached, the full list of students will be submitted to the Trip Leader and Head of Year for approval.

Once the list is approved the confirmation letter will be sent out along with the confirmed payment schedule.

In case the deadline for payments are not met, the school can offer the place to the next student on the reserve list.

Students who are not allocated places on a trip will be informed by letter as well as the students who have been successful. Parents/Carers have an option to request their son/daughter's name to be removed from the reserve list.

Where a residential trip is oversubscribed, the same process as day trips will apply. See above.

There may also be a discretionary maximum of 5% of places taken for students identified by the Head of Year and Trip Leader for students in need, or who have missed out on previous curriculum *residential* trips having been on the reserve list. Generally, when looking at missed opportunities for trips previously, students will be considered who were on the Reserve list - and we will look at trips of the same nature. Eg. Languages trips altogether, or PE trips together.

This is different to Day Trips, where each trip is taken in isolation.

Withdrawals from the trip :



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Should a parent/carer choose to withdraw their son/daughter 12 weeks or less prior to departure of a residential trip, it will not be possible to return any of the monies paid to date and the family could also be liable for any outstanding balance.

This includes the son/daughter being removed from the trip due to unsatisfactory behaviour. (This will not be the same should a student be withdrawn for a medical reason; but this would require a supporting letter from the child's Doctor).

Students who have a behaviour record that the school perceives as a concern may be placed on a contract - to encourage an improvement in behaviour and also support the staff taking the students on the trip. Areas which may then form part of a contract between home and school may be

- Improving behaviour
- Improving attendance
- Improving uniform

When a student is placed on a contract, whether on the trip list or the reserve list, the intention is for that student to improve thus ensuring their attendance and appropriate behaviour on the trip. The targets for each bespoke contract are set with the intention of the child being able to achieve them. However there is always a risk that a child might not fulfil the terms of the contract. If this is the case they will be removed from the trip – and if a replacement cannot be found, the family may well have to pay for the trip in full. The school will endeavour to replace the student who has been removed from the trip and keep the costs to the family as low as possible.

It should be clear in the information given out to parents/carers in the trip booklet and the presentation evening (for both see later) that these situations may arise.

In extremis, a student may be removed from a trip through their behaviour, without a contract being issued.

The EVC must be informed in writing (bmsevc@blatchingtonmill.org.uk) should the family wish to withdraw their child from a residential trip.

- If a student is removed from a trip due to behaviour concerns, the parent/carer is still liable for the full cost incurred by the school for this particular student's place.
- If a student is removed for medical reasons, with the appropriate medical certification, we will do all within our powers to retrieve payments made by the family for the trip.
- If a student is removed from the trip by parents/ carers for other reasons, each case will be dealt with individually. **School must be informed in writing.** There will be no guarantee that any of the payments made will be returned; in fact there may still be further charges. However as a school we will endeavour to keep these as low as possible for the family.
- The Trip Leader and EVC will always try and fill any spaces that are vacated.

STUDENTS OFF TRIPS (SOT) LIST

This is held by the EVC with input from previous Trip Leaders and Heads of Year. It identifies clearly the names of students who are to be either prohibited from going on a trip, or who can only attend subject to a contract being signed by the Trip Leader, the Student and Home. The list also states how long a student should be



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subject to these restrictions. The list is also available and up to date on the Trips Front Facing (G Drive) for staff only to access. Any student who is placed on this list must be informed by the Trip Leader who has placed them on it. There is a standard letter to be sent home for this purpose. If a student is to be placed on the list it must be in consultation with the Deputy Head. Any queries regarding this can be passed to RK, as SLT Educational Visits Coordinator.

RISK ASSESSMENT/HEALTH & SAFETY

It is essential that a Risk Assessment is prepared for any off-site activity, which must be approved and countersigned by EVC/RK. It is the trip organiser's responsibility to ensure a Risk Assessment has been prepared and given to the EVC/RK to check, it is also the Trip Lead's responsibility that all accompanying staff know any emergency procedures/ contact numbers. It is likely that, on drafting the RAs, there will need to then be a meeting with RK to discuss them. Trip Leads must ensure they allow enough time for this. We have template RAs that can be adapted for each individual trip.

Since September 2009, the Local Authority will only accept risk assessments for residential or hazardous activities through Brighton and Hove's online notification and approval system for off-site activities 'EVOLVE' which is completed by the EVC and then signed off by the SLT EVC.

The official RIDDOR accident form for all injuries beyond a scuff or scrape will be provided as a blank hard copy by the EVC from the Finance Office in the Initial Trips Pack: the Brighton & Hove Health and Safety Incident Report (HS2) forms are held in the school Medical Room for other cases where Students or staff are injured during a school visit.

Any queries or concerns regarding Health and Safety issues should be directed to Sarah Hextall, Business Manager.

FIRST AID

A First Aid kit should be taken on all trips and the school keep a couple of such kits in the Medical Room: these should be collected before the visit and returned afterwards. Details of any equipment used during the visit should be given to the Medical Room to allow for replacements to be bought.

Staff should not administer any kind of medication (other than paracetamol) on school trips unless it has been provided by the student's parent/carer. Paracetamol can **only** be administered when we have **written permission** from the parents/carers as part of the trip consent on SIMS Parent. In the case of students who need medication, staff must check with parents/carers whether they wish the staff to keep and administer it (always get this permission in writing) or whether the students are competent to administer it themselves. In either case a record must be kept by staff of the drug name and dosage.

In hot countries care should be taken to ensure that students are protected from the harmful rays of the sun and from the effects of dehydration.



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The exact circumstances of any accidents, injuries or illnesses must be carefully recorded, as well as the RIDDOR completed by the Trip Leader on the trip's return.

SCHOOL MOBILE PHONES

There are mobile phones/chargers available for use by staff on school trips. These should be collected from and returned to the EVC. The Trip Leader must check all the relevant information has been uploaded to SIMS Activities prior to the activity taking place. The EVC will download any photographs taken on the trip, then take the phone to Network Services for cleansing. Network Services will then return the phone to the EVC.

STAFF ON TRIPS

All trips should be led by an experienced member of staff.

As a general rule, staff/student ratios should be 1 member of staff to 15/20 Students. For residential mixed groups there must be both male and female members of staff. We allow one extra member of staff on residential trips to ensure that ratios are correct even when a student has to be taken to hospital/doctors etc.

Once a trip has been agreed, the names of accompanying staff must be agreed with the Diary Committee. The implications for cover costs could change dramatically depending on who accompanies school trips and visits: a number of non-teaching staff have traditionally accompanied school trips and this should be continued and encouraged.

INSURANCE

The School ensures that appropriate insurance cover is in place, although some trips may have separate cover through a Tour Operator, for example the Ski Trip. The trip leader must make themselves aware of the procedure on insurance policy in the event of a claim. Parents/carers should be offered a copy of the insurance policy at a parents/carers' meeting and this will form part of the literature booklet.

Within the trip literature booklet will be a recommendation that should students take their own mobile phones. These will not be covered by the school insurance and parents/carers should ensure that they have personal insurance to cover any loss/damage etc. Families should also be advised to check roaming costs in the destination country.

PARENTS/CARERS' MEETINGS – Residential ONLY

For all residential visits (with the exception of Duke of Edinburgh expeditions) there should be a parents/carers' meeting built into the planning for the trip. An Internal Set-Up form must be completed for this meeting and approved by Facilities and then Diary Committee before any letters can be sent out to parents/carers advising them of this Information Evening.



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The purpose of the parents/carers' meeting is to give further information to students and parents/carers a few weeks before the visit. For trips organised with a commercial travel company, a representative of the company should ideally be present at this meeting.

An information booklet of all the literature involved in a residential trip must be provided for parents /carers and be available in (electronic) PDF form.

Parents/carers' meetings should cover the following details:

- Accompanying staff
- Travel arrangements and journey times
- Insurance
- Accommodation address and telephone number
- Advice re clothing, luggage, pocket money, valuables, safety and behaviour, customs and excursions
- Student mobiles should have data roaming switched off if travelling abroad, or families aware of any charges that may be incurred
- Telephone chain/emergency contact numbers. The school emergency contact number is 01273 221200. This number will divert directly to an SLT mobile for the member of staff who is on duty during the trip. This member of staff is to be named to families, with the explanation that they are not on the trip itself

Parents/carers should be told what is expected of the students in terms of behaviour during the trip. In the event of students behaving badly, parents/carers should be informed that the school will take further action by, for example, charging for any deliberate damage, or not allowing students to attend further school trips (see SOT List information above). Parents and carers must also be informed that in extreme cases of poor behaviour (or certain other eventualities), they may be expected to go and collect their child mid-trip; at their own cost. All these details should be laid out in the Trip Booklet given to the parents/carers on the night, or emailed to them if they do not attend. An electronic copy will also be available.

MEDICAL/CONSENT FORMS

It is important that students and parents/carers confirm that their child's medical records and their own emergency details are up to date on SIMS Parent, before a trip.

Separate parental/carer permission is also required for certain other activities, e.g. unsupervised time, swimming etc. Consent forms must also request the swimmer's abilities. Again we have template letters that can be adapted – available from the EVC.

Permission must also be sought for photos to be taken. These photos may form part of the trip twitter etc and could be posted (with all permissions) on the school website thereafter. Photo permission will form part of the consents and there will be a list of agreement and non-agreement available to inform the Trip Leader before a trip.



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For European trips, students should take with them a **Global Health Insurance Card (G.H.I.C.)**. These can be applied for via <https://www.gov.uk/global-health-insurance-card>. Whilst in the USA students will require an ESTA which can be obtained from <https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov/>.

Most countries require a passport to be valid for at least 6 months after the return date. Some countries do not count any extra months added on after the initial 5 or 10 from the passport's start date. Families should be alerted to this in the initial letter detailing the trip.

KIT LISTS

Where relevant, kit lists should be sent out with trip details and in the trip booklet to help parents/carers and Students be properly prepared for any visit.

TWITTER

We encourage the use of a school trip twitter account for residentials. It helps keep families informed. These can be set up very easily via Network Services. It is worth considering longevity when doing so; set up an account that can be used from one year to the next. Avoid the name of the account having a specific year in it.

Each trip will have its own separate twitter account.

The trip twitter account will be under the nomenclature of eg @BMS_Dolawen or @BMS_Skiing

Any photos posted on the twitter account will be of places, and students (without names) for whom we have photo permission.

CONTACT SYSTEMS (NON-EMERGENCY)

The Trip Leader will set SIMS Activities up for all the parents/carers of students attending a particular residential trip so that both the Trip Leader and the SLT EVC Coordinator can communicate quickly and easily with families before, during and after the trip if necessary. This is an extremely useful and effective, efficient method of communication.

Parents/Carers who do not have SIMS Parent will be identified by SIMS and EVC teams and separate contact information provided for Trip Leaders.

EMERGENCY CONTACT SYSTEM/CONTINGENCY PLANS

Thought should be given as to how you would deal with, for example, staff illness on a trip or how you would proceed if a member of staff has to accompany a student home unexpectedly. Discussion with colleagues should allow the trip leader to identify someone who would be available to assist in such an emergency situation. If a minibus driver is required, this obviously limits the choice of helpers. With any residential trips we will allow enough staff to attend to ensure that teacher:student ratios are still appropriate even if a member of staff has to attend hospital etc with a student.



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With COVID ever present, each residential trip will need the Trip Leader to identify staff who are prepared to attend should another member of staff feel ill, either before or during the trip.

Some thought must be given to the way in which trip leaders will contact parents/carers in case an emergency situation arises during a trip. For example, if a student breaks a leg during a skiing visit, or someone has been to hospital you should contact RK (or whoever is the named SLT EVC contact for the duration of the trip) and parents/carers will then be contacted by RK/the staff; not the students. To the whole group this can be done via SIMS Activity send "notification" to all parents/carers.

During term time the school should be informed if there is an emergency and, if the trip is in holiday time, RK as SLT EVC or the identified member of SLT who is available in Hove would be the first to be contacted. They will be given full details of the trip, students taking part and emergency contacts by the EVC. This should be arranged by the trip organiser.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For overseas trips, it is good practice to use panic cards which include details of where the students are staying, emergency contact numbers etc. These could be sent to students electronically, to store on their phones, as well as given out on card.

On trips where staff may be less familiar with some of the children, staff should familiarise themselves with the photos of students attending.

As a precaution, trip organisers taking students on term-time trips, should leave a contact mobile telephone number with the EVC, and take a school mobile telephone. Staff will sign out the Trip Phone/s they are using. Each Trip phone is numbered and the EVC will have a record of who has which - in case of emergencies.

It is the responsibility of the trip organiser to inform Student Services when students are away on a trip during term time: in addition, it is essential to send an email to staff and place a list of absent students in Staff Notices in advance of the trip, giving colleagues sufficient notice (of at least a week) that students will be missing their lessons.

If the trip involves a large number of students out of school during term time, the canteen needs to be informed as a matter of courtesy.

On the return of the trip a member of staff must always be in attendance until the last student has been dismissed with their parent/carer/agreed adult.

It is not acceptable for teachers to authorise students to be absent from school following a trip: if students take time off following a school trip, this will be marked as an unauthorised absence.



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BEHAVIOUR ON THE TRIP

All students should observe the highest standards of politeness, courtesy and conduct at all times. Particular care needs to be taken when on public transport or in residential accommodation. Even out of school time students are representing the school and should do everything in a way that reflects positively on them as well as on the school. The expectations of good behaviour must be explained to students before any trip and reiterated as appropriate.

STUDENTS SENT HOME

It should be made clear to parents and carers in advance that if a student is sent home for misbehaviour – for example if they are discovered to be drinking alcohol/smoking, in possession of drugs or buying dangerous objects (e.g. knives). Then parents/carers will be expected to pay for all costs incurred. If a student is then placed on the SOT list, parents/carers/carers must be informed – detailing why, at what level and for how long. This will be in letter form with a copy placed on record in the Year Office as well as with the EVC.

ACCOMMODATION

For residential trips always check allocated rooms on arrival at your accommodation and make sure that there is nothing unsafe and that you have noted anything that is broken, missing or in any way inadequate. Inform the hotel management at once.

Students **MUST** be shown Fire Escape routes in hotels and guest houses on arrival.

Make sure that the students know where to find a member of staff in the night in the case of any emergency.

Members of staff must check that all students are in their rooms at the appropriate bed-time. The security of their rooms should also be checked and where there are locks these should be used. If students are sleeping in downstairs rooms, windows should be shut.

SUPERVISION OF SWIMMING IN SWIMMING POOLS

Staff must ensure that the Swimming Pool is safe. This would include:

- Are there accurate signs displaying the depth of the pool?
- Are there lifeguards present?
- Is there a poolside telephone and an alarm?
- Is the water clear and regularly tested for cleanliness?
- Is the water less than 1.5 metres deep? If so diving is not to be permitted.

A member of staff must always remain on the side of the pool. There should be a supervision level of at least 1 member of staff to 15 students (with a minimum of 2). Written parental permission must also be received.



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Supervision of Swimming in the Sea or other natural waters

THIS IS POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS. IT SHOULD **NOT** BE UNDERTAKEN UNLESS THERE IS A TEACHER PRESENT ON THE TRIP WHO HOLDS A RELEVANT LIFE GUARDING QUALIFICATION OR THERE ARE LIFEGUARDS IN ATTENDANCE. WRITTEN PARENTAL PERMISSION **MUST** ALSO HAVE BEEN RECEIVED AND THE TRIP LEADER HAS ALSO GIVEN THEIR PERMISSION.

If there is a possibility that the trip may want to go swimming (with life guards present) a risk assessment must be in place prior to the trip's departure and added onto EVOLVE. THE TRIP MUST NOT GO SWIMMING WITHOUT THIS BEING COMPLETED EVEN IF A LIFEGUARD IS PRESENT. The LA may request a copy of the lifeguard's qualifications so Trip Leads should ensure the external provider is able to provide these.

Trip Leaders to be aware that a lifeguard may be trained for lifeguarding in swimming pools, but not the sea – or vice versa. The correct qualification must be confirmed by the Trip Leader.

CANCELLATION OF TRIPS

If a trip is cancelled for any reason, the organiser must ensure that the EVC is informed as soon as possible.

BALANCE SHEET

On return from residential school trips, organisers should produce a simple balance sheet, which matches the costings agreed at the beginning of the trip. **Please remember to attach receipts for all expenditure.** The sheet should also identify any unused contingency.

A list of expenditures, unspent cash and traveller's cheques, receipts, other balance sheet items to all be returned to the EVC within 4 school weeks of the trip's return: Or before the end of the summer term should this be sooner.

The trip must be 'closed' before the end of the academic year for auditing purposes. This will then close the e-workflow.

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