



مدرسة الزهور الخاصة – Al Zuhour Private School

2026-2025



AL ZUHOUR PRIVATE SCHOOL

Educational Field Trips and Excursions Policy and Procedures

Approved by: SLT

Last reviewed on: 2025/5/30

Next review due by: 2026/5/30



Purpose

At AZPS we believe that off-campus educational trips are crucial to the education of our students, and they offer invaluable experience in all year groups across our curriculum. Visits aid in the development of a student's enquiring abilities, and extended visits in particular foster greater independence. For the sake of our students' enrichment and education, we offer a wide variety of visits.

Visits may fall into the following categories:

- Regular Visits: These take place on a regular basis, such as weekly sports or cultural events.
- Local Visits: Outings that take place in the neighborhood, with a risk comparable to what students would encounter on a daily basis.
- Residential Visits: Outings where the students remain overnight, away from home for one or more days and nights.

Aims

Through this policy, we aim to:

- Ensure that students stay safe and healthy on school visits
- Ensure that trips are planned appropriately with the students' best interests at heart
- Ensure that the academic and experiential learning opportunities are clear and supported.
- Ensure all stakeholders understand their responsibility to guarantee the success of trips.
- Give guidelines to manage situations and emergencies that could arise on trips.

Procedures

Consent for Visits

It is the trip-leader's responsibility to ensure consent has been granted for every child taking part in an educational visit **before** leaving the school premises.

This is collected from parents by completion of an online or downloadable consent form attached to the circular notifying about all trips.

Roles and Responsibilities:

The Role of the Local Advisory Board is to:

1. Ensure that thorough risk assessments are being carried out for visits.
2. Ensure that appropriate safety measures are in place.
3. Review the policy annually to ensure the information is up to date.

The role of the Principal, SLT and other nominees, e.g. Heads of Section:

1. Ensure adequate support is provided to all staff conducting educational visits.
2. Be available in case of an emergency.
3. Ensure the risk assessment has been completed and appropriate safety measures are in place including:
 - ❖ Adequate first aid provision is available
 - ❖ Arrangements have been made for the medical and special educational needs of all students.
 - ❖ Adequate safeguarding and child protection measures are in place.
 - ❖ Appropriate student-to-adult ratios. (See below)



- ❖ Adequate leadership (The trip-leader must be adequately competent and familiar with the visit).
- ❖ Ensure all staff are trained competently in conducting a visit.
- ❖ Approve the trips and any additional excursions taking place.
- ❖ Trip-leaders to ensure the visit has been carefully planned.
- ❖ Provide advice and guidance where needed.
- ❖ Actively source new locations for educational visits.

The Role of the Trip-leader

One teacher (the trip-leader) should have overall responsibility for the supervision and conduct of students during the visit this includes the health and safety of the group at all times. The trip leader is the Head of Department / Head of Year/ Assistant Principal/Head of Section who has proposed this trip. Their role is to:

1. Obtain prior approval of the date and venue from the respective Head of Sections.
2. Follow guidelines in both this policy and risk assessments.
3. Undertake and complete a **risk assessment**: this could include conducting a pre-visit of the location; this includes ratios, first aid, child protection, and contingency plans.
4. Ensure every parent has filled out the consent form.
5. Ensure all teachers, supervisors, parents, and students are fully briefed on the visit prior to leaving the school.
6. Ensure the trip-leader, group supervisors, and nominated school contact have the names of all the adults and students traveling in the group, contact details of the parents, the teachers and the other supervisors' next of kin.
7. Complete an evaluation of the trip.
8. Communicate with the medical team for any possible medical high-risk students on the roll.

The role of other teachers (including LSAs and TAs) on visits is to:

1. Follow the instructions of the trip-leader and help with control and discipline.
2. Consider stopping the visit or the activity, notifying the trip-leader if they think the risk to the health or safety of the pupils under their management is unacceptable.

The role of support staff, parents and carers¹, if any, acting as supervisors is to:

1. Ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group.
2. Follow the instructions given by the trip-leader/ school staff.
3. Speak to the trip-leader/school staff if concerned at any point during the visit.

The responsibility of the student is to:

1. Follow instructions from the trip-leader, school staff, and supervisors including those at the venue of the visit.
2. Dress in school uniform (unless directed otherwise).
3. Behave in a sensible and responsible manner.
4. Avoid unnecessary risks: look out for anything that may hurt or threaten the group and communicate this to the trip-leader/ supervisor.

The role of the parent is to:

1. Provide the trip-leader with emergency contact details.
2. Sign the consent form (one-off or repeated).
3. Communicate information to the trip-leader regarding their children's emotional, psychological, and physical health.



Behavior

1. Any students whose conduct can be seen as a risk to either themselves or the group may not be allowed to go on the trip and any excursion.
2. Wherever possible, the educational objectives of the visit for these students should be met in other ways.
3. Parents ought to have the information necessary to decide whether or not their child should accompany them on the trip.
4. If a child misses a visit, s/he should still go to school and engage in teacher supervised learning activities that may be linked to the learning opportunities of the trip.
5. The trip-leader is responsible for making sure that parents receive adequate written information and are invited to any briefings face-to face and/or online.
6. The trip-leader should also explain to parents how they may assist their children to be ready for the excursion by, for instance, reiterating the school's expectations for behaviour.
7. The school has the authority to stop any child from taking part in a school trip or visit if it believes the child to be a health and safety risk.
8. A child may also be withdrawn from a trip at any point if there are behavioural issues that are considered to be a health and safety risk.
9. Trips are open to all students who meet and exceed the School's expectations with regard to behaviour, attendance, punctuality and attitude to staff and students and any ban should only for reasons of health, safety and child protection and not for punitive reasons.

Planning

Whether the visit is to a local park, museum, or theme park, or includes a residential stay, it is essential that thorough planning takes place. This involves considering the dangers and difficulties which may arise and making plans to reduce them. The planning of a trip is the responsibility of the trip-leader but must be signed off by the Head of the Section and senior leaders. Planning a trip involves several stages and these are outlined with example timings below:

1. At least **4 weeks** before the trip- speak to the Head of section and check the availability of dates.
2. Once approved the trip-leader will **arrange for the venue and travel to be booked**. The MSO² and team should be notified to support with this.
3. At least **3 weeks** before the visit- Trip-leader to conduct a pre-visit (If possible) and complete the Risk Assessment form along with the financial plan and budgetary requisition and submit to the Principal for approval and referral to Athena HO.
4. At least **10 days** before - Parent letters to be sent out and consent obtained for children without one-off consent.
5. At least **1 working day** before departure- brief all staff on risk assessment and ensure all emergency details are shared.

One week after the trip, complete an evaluation (www, challenges and next steps) of the Educational Visit in terms of educational value, operational matters, safeguarding and child protection and how the trip can be improved.



Risk Assessment

The purpose of a risk assessment is to formally assess the risks that students and teachers might be met with on a visit and to put measures in place to ensure that staff, students, and volunteers are not placed in situations that expose them to an unacceptable level of risk.

Safety will always be our primary consideration. If the risks cannot be managed so that persons are at significant risk of harm, then the visit must not take place.

An assessment should be completed by the Trip-leader well before the visit and should be approved by the Head of Section/MSO and . It is based upon the following considerations:

1. What are the hazards?
2. Who might be affected by them?
3. What safety measures need to be in place to reduce risks to an acceptable level?
4. Can the Trip-leader put the safety measures in place?
5. What steps will be taken in an emergency?

The risks recorded in the assessment are only those that are outside of the risks the students come across in everyday life, such as tripping up.

The person carrying out the risk assessment should record it and give copies to all teachers/supervisors on the visit, with details of the measures they should take to avoid or reduce the risks. As well as this, a copy should be filed by the MSO.

Frequent visits to local venues such as sports venues may not need a risk assessment every time. Nevertheless, it is essential not to become complacent.

Whilst a risk assessment can allow trip-leaders to be equipped with prior knowledge it is essential that they and other supervisors monitor the risks throughout the visit and take appropriate action as necessary.

The trip leader should take the following factors into consideration when assessing the risks:

1. The type of visit/activity and the level at which it is being undertaken.
2. The location, routes, and modes of transport.
3. The competence, experience, and qualifications of supervisory staff.
4. The ratios of teachers and supervisory staff to pupils.
5. The group members' age, competence, fitness, and temperament and the suitability of any activity.
6. The special educational or medical needs of students.
7. The quality and suitability of available equipment.
8. Seasonal conditions, weather, and timing.
9. Emergency procedures.
10. How to cope when a student becomes unable or unwilling to continue.
11. The need to monitor the risks throughout the visit.

If possible, the trip-leader should undertake an exploratory visit to:

1. Ensure at first hand that the venue is suitable to meet the aims and objectives of the school visit.
2. Obtain advice from the manager.
3. Assess potential areas and levels of risk.
4. Ensure that the venue can cater for the needs of the staff and students in the group.
5. Become familiar with the area before taking a group of young people there.
6. obtain a risk assessment from the venue being visited.



Other factors which should form part of the planning stage include:

1. The facilities/equipment the group will need to take on the visit
2. The facilities/equipment to be provided at the venue
3. Staff training needs
4. The designation of someone to record the details of the visit
5. Transport arrangements
6. Communication arrangements
7. Supervision ratios
8. Contingency measures for enforced change of plan or late return
9. Information to parents
10. Preparing pupils
11. Emergency arrangements

Staffing Ratios

It is important to have a high enough ratio of adult supervisors to students for any visit. The factors to take into consideration include:

1. Gender, age and ability of group
2. Students with special educational or medical needs
3. Nature of activities
4. Experience and **competence** of adults in off-site supervision
5. Duration and nature of the journey
6. Type of any accommodation
7. Requirements of the organisation/location to be visited
8. Competence and behaviour of pupils
9. First Aid cover (including CPR for overnight stays and sports fixtures)

Staffing ratios for visits are difficult to prescribe as they will vary according to the activity, age, group, location and the efficient use of resources. The following ratios should be adhered to, although extra supervisors are always better:

Age of Children	Ratio (Adult: Student)
KG -KG1	1:4
KG2 – G1	1:6
G2 – G5	1:8
G6 – G8	1:12
G9 – G12	1:15

Any adult who is allocated 1:1 with a child must not be included in the ratio. Trip-leaders should assess the risks and consider an appropriate safe supervision level for their particular group. In addition to the teacher in charge, there should be enough supervisors to cope effectively with an emergency. With this in mind, it is advisable to have a spare adult that is able to assist in an emergency so that no adult is left alone with a single child.

When visits are too remote areas or involve hazardous activities, e.g. outward bound and DofE International Award or similar, the risks may be greater and supervision levels should be set accordingly. The same consideration should be given to residential visits. All trips and visits with mixed groups will



need a teacher from each gender.

Parents/Volunteers

1. Where there is more than one teacher/supervisor, a Trip-leader should be appointed who has authority over the whole group.
2. If more than one School is involved an overall Trip-leader should be identified, usually the person with the most experience of leading such visits.
3. Where a high adult to student ratio is required, it is not always feasible to use School staff alone. Parents/volunteers may be used to supplement the supervision ratio. However, this will need approval from HO.
4. Such parents/carers or other well-known adult volunteers require careful selection and ideally, they should be well known to the School and the student group.
5. Parents/Volunteers must have had level 1 SGCP³ training and must have submitted a copy of a
6. Police Clearance Certificate and therefore be on the School's approved volunteer list.

Headcounts

1. Whatever the length and nature of the visit, regular head counting of students should take place, particularly before leaving the venue.
2. Headcounts should be made prior to boarding and exiting transport, for example, counting the children before getting on a bus and counting again once they get off the bus.
3. All supervisors should carry a list of all students and adults always involved in the visit.
4. Students, particularly in KG1 to G2 should be easily identifiable, especially if the visit is to a densely populated area.
5. Children should be encouraged to wear School uniform or wear School colours. They may also wear trip fluorescent jackets or armbands if their uniform is dark.
6. The Trip-leader should establish rendezvous points (RV) and tell students what to do if they become separated from the group. This can mean identifying a clearly visible and named meeting point, which the venue Security can recognize.

Transport

1. The Trip-leader needs to ensure that suitable transport arrangements are made.
2. If any of the group use a wheelchair, the Trip-leader should ensure that transport used has appropriate access and securing facilities.
3. All students taking part in the trip or visit should travel with the group. Students are not permitted to join the trip part way through.
4. However, the Trip-leader can agree to meet a parent/or nominated carer with ID at the venue by prior arrangement and agree a strict pick up time, if the parent carer does not meet the eligibility criteria as a known volunteer. Such arrangements must be approved in advance by the MSO and Athena HO.

Seat belts

1. Bus transportation of whatever size must be fitted with easy-click and quick release seat belt for each child.
2. The seats must face forwards and seat restraints must comply with legal requirements.
3. The correct wearing of seat belts must be checked before departure.
4. Students should not remove seat-belts until they are instructed it is safe to do so.



Health and Safety

Safety of the group in the event of an accident or breakdown

1. The group should remain under the direct supervision of the Trip-leader or other teachers wherever possible.
2. Headcounts, by the Trip-leader or another delegated teacher or supervisor, should always be carried out when the group is getting off or on transport.
3. Responsibility for checking that seat belts are fastened.
4. The school should ensure that staff and students are aware of and practice bus evacuation drills in case of breakdown, collision and fire breaking out while in transit. Such drills should take place in a safe location at or close to school.

First Aid

1. First aid should form part of the risk assessment.
2. Before undertaking any off-site activities, the Principal/SLT, Head of Section or the Trip-leader should assess what level of first aid might be needed.
3. On any kind of visit, the Trip-leader should have some knowledge of First aid, (preferably with valid First Aid certificate), and ensure that an adequate First-aid box is taken.
4. For all visits it is advisable for at least one of the group's supervisors to be a fully-trained first-aiders. If this is not possible, it is essential that provisions for First aid are made and all adults in the group should know how to contact the emergency services.
5. Group members should be made aware that travel sickness tablets should only be administered to a student with previous written authorisation from the parents and signed off by the school doctor with the dosage agreed.

The minimum first-aid provision for a visit is:

1. A suitably stocked and clearly marked First-aid box.
2. A suitably competent First Aider appointed to be in charge of First-aid arrangements.

Other considerations when considering First-aid needs should include:

1. The numbers in the group and the nature of the activity.
2. The likely injuries and how effective First aid would be.
3. The distance to the nearest hospital and the best possible routes to get there.

Information to parents

All parents/carers should be reminded of any trip taking place at least one week before. Further to this, children without consent need to obtain written permission from their parent or carer.

Before residential visits, or when the students are to engage in adventure activities, parents should be encouraged to attend a briefing meeting where written details of the proposed visit should also be provided. There should be alternative arrangements for parents who cannot attend or who have difficulty with communication in English.

Parents need to be aware that the teachers and other adult supervisors on the visit will be exercising the same care that a responsible parent would. The following information on matters that might affect pupil health and safety should be given to parents:

- Dates of the visit.
- Trip's objectives.
- Times of departure and return - parents must have agreed to meet their child on return.
- The location where the students will be collected and returned.



- Mode(s) of travel including the name of any travel company.
- The size of the group and the level of supervision.
- Details of accommodation with security and supervisory arrangements on site.
- Details of provision for special educational or medical needs.
- Procedures for students who become ill or are injured.
- Names of the Trip 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 behavior expected and general group discipline including prohibited items.
[This information may take the form of a code of conduct which parents should sign.]
- What students should not take on the visit or bring back.
- 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.
- Details and breakdown of the cost of the visit.

Emergency procedures framework

All those involved in the School trip, including supervisors, students and their parents, should be informed of who will take charge in an emergency, the named back-up cover and what they are expected to do in an emergency.

If an emergency occurs on a school visit the main factors to consider include:

- Establish the nature and extent of the emergency as quickly as possible.
- Ensure that all the group are 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 are adequately supervised at all times and kept together.
- Notify the police, if necessary.
- Inform the School contact. The School contact number should be accessible at all times during the visit.
- Details of the incident to pass on to the School should include:
 - nature, date and time of incident
 - location of incident
 - names of casualties and details of their known injuries
 - names of others involved so that parents can be reassured
 - actions taken so far
 - actions yet to be taken (and by whom)
 - Notify insurers, especially if medical assistance is required (this may be done by the School contact.)
 - Notify the provider/tour operator (this may be done by the School contact.)
 - Ascertain telephone numbers for future calls. Mobile phones, though useful, are subject to technical difficulties, and should not replace usual communication procedures.



- Write down accurately, and as soon as possible, all relevant facts and witness details and preserve any vital evidence.
- Keep a written account of all events, times and contacts after the incident.

Guidelines for Compliance

According to the guidelines, all documentation must be kept as part of school records for each trip and should be available for inspection by SPEA, or other compliance authority.

These documents include:

- a detailed communication and itinerary sent to parents
- signed copies of parental approval forms
- additionally for overseas trips - copies of the students' and accompanying teachers' passports
- an official letter from the principal to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the school's intended trip to the country concerned.
- Schools must also submit to SPEA details of a contact person (name and number) provided to parents
- a list of students and supervisors on the trip
- the school's local contact in Sharjah which SPEA can reach in case of need. This has to be submitted 3 days prior to the trip.

Key Points for a Risk Assessment for School Trips or Excursions *by phase*.

General Considerations

1. Purpose of the Trip: Clearly define the educational objectives of the excursion, such as enhancing knowledge in a particular subject, fostering teamwork, or providing hands-on experiences related to classroom learning.
2. Location: Gather detailed information about the venue, including maps, emergency contacts, and accessibility features. For example, if visiting a nature reserve, identify safe walking paths and areas where children can explore without risk.
3. Date and Time: Specify the duration of the trip, including travel times, to ensure all participants are aware of the schedule and can plan accordingly.

Risk Assessment Needs by Phase

1. Early Years/KG (Ages 3-5)
 - Supervision Ratios: Maintain a higher adult-to-child ratio (e.g., 1:4) to ensure close monitoring.
 - Accessibility: Ensure the location has safe play areas, such as enclosed playgrounds with soft surfaces, to prevent injuries during play.
 - Safety Gear: Provide appropriate safety gear for activities, such as life jackets for any water activities or helmets for cycling.
 - Emergency Procedures: Establish clear procedures for emergencies, including protocols for child separation (e.g., designating a meeting point) and sudden illnesses (e.g., symptoms of food poisoning). Staff should be trained to recognize signs of distress and respond appropriately.
 - Health Considerations: Identify allergies or medical conditions of children in advance. For instance, if a child has a peanut allergy, ensure that snacks do not contain allergens and have an action plan for allergic reactions.



Lower Elementary (Ages 6-8)

1. Supervision Ratios: Maintain appropriate adult-to-child ratios (e.g., 1:4 KG and 1:5 Elementary) to ensure safety.
2. Activity Suitability: Ensure activities are age-appropriate and safe, such as guided nature walks with clear boundaries.
3. Travel Arrangements: Assess transportation safety, including checking seatbelt use and ensuring child safety seats are used for younger children. For public transport, ensure students understand safety protocols, such as staying together and following adult instructions.
4. First Aid: Ensure first aid kits are available and staff are trained in basic first aid, including how to treat minor injuries and recognize signs of more serious conditions.
5. Behavior Management: Implement strategies for managing behavior during the trip, such as setting clear expectations and using positive reinforcement.

Upper Elementary (Ages 9-11)

1. Supervision Ratios: Maintain adult-to-child ratios (e.g., 1:10) to ensure adequate supervision.
2. Risk Assessment for Activities: Conduct specific assessments for activities, such as hiking, including evaluating trail conditions and weather forecasts.
3. Communication Devices: Ensure staff have means to communicate, such as mobile phones or walk-in-talkies, especially in remote areas.
4. Emergency Contacts: Compile a list of emergency contacts for all students and staff, including parents and local emergency services.
5. Preparation: Brief students on expected behavior and safety protocols, such as buddy systems for staying together.

Middle School (Ages 12-14)

1. Supervision Ratios: Maintain adult-to-student ratios (e.g., 1:12) to ensure safety.
2. Informed Consent: Ensure parents provide informed consent for the trip, including awareness of risks and activities planned.
3. Risk Assessment for Transportation: Assess risks related to transportation, including evaluating the safety of public transport routes or private bus companies. For public transport, ensure students know how to behave, such as remaining seated, keeping bags secure, and being aware of their surroundings.
4. Personal Safety: Discuss personal safety measures, especially in urban settings, such as being aware of surroundings and not sharing personal information with strangers.
5. Incident Reporting: Establish procedures for reporting incidents or accidents, including a designated staff member responsible for documentation.

Senior/High School (Ages 15-18)

1. Supervision Ratios: Maintain adult-to-student ratios (e.g., 1:15) while allowing for some student independence with clear boundaries.
2. Independence: Consider allowing students some independence during excursions, such as exploring a museum in small groups, while ensuring they check in regularly.
3. Risk Assessment for Activities: Conduct detailed assessments for high-risk activities, such as camping or water sports, including evaluating weather conditions and equipment safety



Risk Assessment and Mitigation for School or Public Transport

- Transportation Safety: Assess the safety of the chosen transportation method, whether it's a school bus or public transport. Ensure that vehicles are well-maintained and equipped with necessary safety features, such as seatbelts.
- Supervision on Transport: Designate staff to supervise students during transport, ensuring they remain seated and are aware of their surroundings. For public transport, review the route and stops in advance.
- Behaviour Expectations: Discuss behaviour expectations with students before the trip, including the importance of staying together, not engaging with strangers, and following adult instructions.
- Emergency Protocols: Establish emergency protocols for incidents during transport, such as a medical emergency or a road traffic accident. Ensure all staff are familiar with these protocols and have access to first aid kits.
- Communication: Equip staff with mobile phones or communication devices to maintain contact with each other and emergency services if needed.
- Alleviating Anxiety: Some students may feel anxious about using public transport. Prepare them by discussing what to expect, including how to handle unexpected situations, such as delays or changes in plans.