

Fieldtrips and Offsite Activities' Policy

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Introduction and Scope

In order to give students a varied and rich education, the British International School believes it is beneficial to take them out of the school setting for an extended period so as to allow them to come into contact with different environments, and to encounter new experiences. Fieldtrips and offsite activities (encompassed within this policy as ‘trips’) may take place for curricular, well-being, sporting or other extra-curricular reasons.

By their very nature, trips involve a variety of risks and, therefore, require careful and stringent organisation for which BIS Employees must adequately prepare students and materials. BIS needs to balance the possible benefits of a trip with an assessment of risks and plan accordingly. Employees - as well as other authorised, accompanying adults - associated with any trip must always be aware of the legal and moral responsibilities involved before agreeing to organise, lead or accompany any trip. The relevant Senior Leadership Team members (SLT) must approve any trip in advance as per the timelines listed in this policy.

This *Fieldtrip and Offsite Policy* provides many of the necessary guidelines and offers advice for organising and conducting safe and efficient trips. In addition to the content of this policy, Fieldtrip Leaders (FTLs) are expected to use a high degree of professional judgement whilst organising, leading and accompanying all trips and SLT welcomes suggestions and feedback to help improve this policy.

There are four categories of trip:

Trip Categories	
Lesson Trip	Within the allocated classroom time of a Teacher
Day Trip	During school hours
Extended Day Trip	Departing or arriving outside of normal school hours
Overnight Trip	A trip requiring overnight accommodation

Note: *The British International School is committed to maintaining the highest standards in the area of child protection across all operations, procedures and policies. BIS has a very clear Child Protection Policy addressing the school’s and individual’s responsibilities to protecting the children in our care. If any member of the BIS community has any questions or concerns about our Child Protection Policy and / or how it connects with our Fieldtrip and Offsite Policy, they should contact the school’s Senior Leadership Team.*

Table 1 summarises some of the trip-specific information that the Fieldtrip Leader (FTL) must consider / remember to ensure successfully planned and safely-led trip. The table is an aide-memoire and is NOT comprehensive. In all cases, the FTL must ensure that s/he has read this *Fieldtrip and Offsite Policy*, and ensure that any and all accompanying adults are fully aware of the policy.

Table 1: Planning a BIS trip				
	Lesson Trip	Day trip	Extended Day Trip	Overnight Trip
Parental notifications	Advisable	Yes	Yes	Yes
Parental permission	Advisable	Yes	Yes	Yes
Trip Handbook	No	Discretionary	Advisable	Yes
Risk Assessment	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ratio Nursery	1:3	1:3	N/A	N/A
Ratio KG	1:4	1:4	N/A	N/A
Ratio Yr. 1-3	1:6	1:6	1:6	N/A
Ratio Yr. 4-6	1:6	1:6	1:6	N/A
Ratio Yr. 7-9	1:6	1:6	1:6	1:4
Ratio Yr. 10+	1:6	1:6	1:6	1:4
<i>Ratios: At least two contracted Employees must accompany every category of trip even if the student-adult ratio is met by a single Employee. At least one Employee should be first aid trained where possible. Adult ratio numbers may comprise of Employees and other vetted, associated non-Employees (EG parents) as per SLT authorisation, however; at least 50% of accompanying adults must be contracted Employees. The ratios recorded here do not take into account the needs of Additional Learning Needs students whom may require more concentrated support whilst offsite. The ratios recorded here may be altered at the discretion of SLT.</i>				
Student Code of Conduct*	Discretionary	Discretionary	Advisable	Yes
First aid kit**	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Medical details for all students	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
School phone**	Advisable	Yes	Yes	Yes
Communication schedule	No	Discretionary	Yes	Yes
Petty Cash	Discretionary	Advisable	Yes	Yes

*normal school rules apply also

**one first aid kit and one phone per 35 students

BIS Employees must respect the following guidelines when organising, leading and / or accompanying any trip. Failure to carry out these guidelines may result in the trip being cancelled and / or in some cases; disciplinary action being taken against the Employee for any failings.

Responsibilities of the Fieldtrip Leader

All trips must have a dedicated and identifiable Fieldtrip Leader (FTL). The FTL...

- must be a contracted Employee of BIS, preferably a suitably qualified Teacher, and preferably hold a first aid certificate
- must submit a *Trip Proposal Document (Annex ii)* to SLT, and this must be approved before any commitments are made with students, parents, teachers, or outside agencies
- must confirm with SLT that all activities conform to legal regulations and insurance coverage
- must draw up a budget with the aid of the SLT. The budget will show projected expenses and revenues (where appropriate) and will be submitted to SLT. The FTL will take charge of the petty cash and ensure that receipts are handed in to SLT
- shall draw up and submit a *Risk Assessment Document (Annex iv)* for the trip. Where limitations apply, or advance risk assessment is not possible, these issues must be discussed with the SLT with the aim of developing an agreed strategy for adequate risk assessment
- must accompany the trip. If the FTL's employment with BIS ends before the trip or the FTL is unable to go on the trip for any reason, a new FTL must be named in good time to manage the trip successfully
- has overall responsibility during the trip and is therefore expected to assume leadership throughout the trip. The FTL may delegate responsibilities to accompanying Employees as necessary
- must nominate accompanying Employees and secure their agreement for participation, with the agreement of SLT. This process should also account for the needs of students left at the school
- must organise at least one meeting with the trip team, before the trip takes place, to communicate and agree the proposed responsibilities, duties, contact and non-contact time, and other professional expectations of each member of the team
- will ensure that the minimum student-adult ratio is met
- will ensure, in consultation with SLT, that an agreed number of accompanying Employees should be fluent in the language predominantly spoken in the area of the trip
- should instruct the SLT on all bookings, verification of papers, ETC
- is responsible for all communication with parents / guardians
- must provide SLT with up-to-date details (list of Employees, dates / times ETC)
- will contact SLT immediately in the event of any serious incidents, concerns and / or breach of guidelines / rules
- shall ensure that in the case of accident, theft or other emergency, all accident reports or police statements are made by the appropriate Employee(s)

In addition; for overnight trips, the Fieldtrip Leader (FTL)...

- is responsible for overseeing the organisation of accommodation
- is responsible for putting together a trip handbook for students and accompanying adults, and organising pre-trip meetings for parents and accompanying adults

- should plan appropriate back-up activities in the case of that activity being cancelled (booking problem, poor weather, ETC)
- should ensure the availability of a healthy, balanced, diet for students
- will ensure, in consultation with SLT, that each accompanying adult is provided with an equitable provision of non-contact time
- will compile a list of confirmed accompanying adults, incl. position, and make it available to parents / guardians before the trip takes place

Responsibilities of Accompanying Adults; Employees and Non-employees

For all trips, all accompanying adults...

- must be fully conversant with the BIS *Fieldtrip and Offsite Policy*
- must have access to any additional information sessions or professional training outlining BIS safety standards, expectations and procedures for trips
- should have the opportunity to receive first aid training where possible
- must be given a Trip Handbook when necessary (hard copy or e-document) before the trip, created by the FTL and containing: a student list, parent contact numbers, trip schedule, accommodation and visit details, staff phone numbers, insurance documentation ETC

In addition, for overnight trips, the accompanying adults...

- will be paid an overnight supplement (if a contracted Employee)
- must give emergency contact details to the FTL

NB: SLT reserves the right to refuse any Employee or non-Employee to accompany a trip without reason

Accompanying Adults' Behaviour / Expectations

For all trips, all accompanying adults (Employees and non-Employees) ...

- must model and maintain appropriate professional and mature conduct, consistent with expectations of a school environment
- must not drink alcohol at any time, or smoke in front of students
- must not be in possession of, consume or be under the influence of recreational drugs
- are responsible for the conduct and safe return of all students to the school or the agreed rendezvous site, and must remain with the students until they have been picked up by the authorised person(s)

In addition; for overnight trips, all accompanying adults...

- must knock before opening the door of a student's room
- must only enter a student's room if another adult is present – with at least one of the adults being a contracted BIS Employee
- should take measures to ensure a full night's sleep

- must be aware of emergency procedures in the case of fire or other emergency situation in the accommodation
- should always carry a full list of students and emergency contact details

Student Behaviour / Expectations

- Usual school rules and expectations apply to students on all trips
- Any serious breach of behaviour (smoking, alcohol, violence, aggressive language, breaking curfew ETC) shall be met with appropriate punishment by the FTL in liaison with other accompanying BIS Employees. Any action will also be followed up with appropriate sanctions upon return to BIS. A student action that endangers the safety and / or welfare of him / her self, or of others, is likely to be returned to school / home at the parents' expense
- Specific rules concerning the use of music-playing devices, handheld electronic games, portable computers / tablets, and mobile phones will apply on trips. Before the trip, the FTL will inform students and parents / guardians in writing if and when these electronic devices may be used. Students must switch off any electronic device when requested to do so by accompanying Employees or other designated responsible adults (EG: field centre staff)
- Where deemed appropriate; students and parents / guardians may be asked to sign a behaviour contract as part of a *Student Trip Code of Conduct (Annex i)*, specific to the trip outlining the rules and expectations. The consequences of breaking this contract must be clearly stated

Accommodation for Overnight Trips

- Where possible, the FTL should visit proposed accommodation, and provide a risk assessment, prior to any overnight trip. In this process of selecting and reviewing accommodation, the FTL should ensure that accommodation:
 - is adapted to BIS student groups with distinctly separated rooms / toilets / bathrooms for boys and girls, and children and adults
 - allows for easy and effective supervision by accompanying Employees to ensure the safety and good conduct of all students
- Where it is not possible to visit proposed accommodation and provide a risk assessment prior to a trip, the FTL should meet with SLT to discuss any possible concerns / issues
- After staying in an accommodation, the FTL should report back to SLT outlining the positive and negative aspects of the accommodation, information which will be used in making decisions for future bookings

Transport and Travel Arrangements

- Transport will be booked by SLT under the direction of the FTL. Any changes to dates, departure times, modes of transport ETC must be made in agreement with the FTL

- Copies of student passports must be submitted to SLT for any trip that is outside the borders of Sierra Leone
- The FTL should liaise with the SLT to ensure that all students have the appropriate travel documentation for any trips outside of Sierra Leone. This must be organised at least four weeks before the departure date
- The FTL should ensure with SLT that age-appropriate decisions are made regarding the departure and return times of the all trips. It is not advisable to leave before 7:30 and / or return after 19:30
- The FTL and accompanying adults are responsible for the safe return of all students to the rendezvous site. The FTL and accompanying adults must remain with the students until they have been picked up by the authorised person
- The FTL should ensure that booked transportation options have appropriate safety measures, IE: boat – life jackets, road transportation – seatbelts ETC
- The FTL should ensure that trips are seasonally suitable, especially when considering transportation options, EG: road travel during rainy season (June-October) may not be acceptably safe to some locations

Medical, Accidents and Illness

- Students and parents / guardians are required to provide medical and emergency information details, and ensure the school is aware of any special health conditions and medical needs. The FTL should also ensure that medical information is shared with all accompanying adults, and is available for consultation throughout the trip
- The FTL should confirm with the school that all students have any necessary / appropriate medical insurance
- In case of accident or illness of any kind, the Trip Emergency Contact (TEC) as listed on the *Risk Assessment Document (Annex iv)* must be notified as soon as possible. In the case that no TEC member is reachable, the FTL should contact the parents directly
- It is of utmost importance that any injury or illness, however slight, is attended to immediately by a qualified first aider / medical practitioner or in their absence: the FTL
- Any accident must be fully recorded
- Medicines and first aid shall be administered according to the relevant provisions of the school's policy
- The person immediately responsible for first aid at the scene should decide if the student requires a doctor, or if hospital treatment is necessary. The FTL should ensure that an accompanying Employee escorts the student to the clinic / hospital
- The person immediately responsible for first aid at the scene should only relinquish responsibility for the student to a qualified health professional (EG: doctor) or qualified support staff at the trip centre
- The FTL will pay for any initial doctor's expenses using the petty cash

Communication with Parents / Guardians

- For all trips; notification must be sent to parents / guardians, in good time, notifying them of the details and expectations of the trip. Communications should be approved by SLT

- Details of the trip should be added to the internal school calendar as soon as it has been confirmed
- When necessary; parents / guardians should be notified of the trip and provide written permission for their child(ren) to participate at least one week before the departure date using the *Parental Notification and Permission Document (Annex iii)*. The document should be edited to a specific trip's requirement and provided information could include:
 - dates, times, meeting points, and other essentials including purpose of the trip
 - cost of trip, responsibility of payment and payment deadline(s)
 - agreement to the financial implications of non-participation due to illness or unsatisfactory behaviour (both prior to the trip and on the trip)
 - liability for cancellation costs (by parent / guardian, school or third-parties)
 - the costs of any additional insurance
 - expectations of student behaviour, and the consequences of any breach of school policies, including any specific behaviour contract
 - the consequences of not meeting payment / other schedules

In addition, for all overnight trips:

- Parents / guardians should provide a written undertaking to be available to receive their child(ren) should their child(ren) become ill or be otherwise considered unfit to participate in the trip
- The FTL should organise a meeting for parents at least two weeks prior to departure, to inform parents of the procedures, rules and expectations
- A final, confirmation, letter including dates, times, itinerary, address(es) of accommodation, and emergency contact numbers is communicated to the parents
- All student medical forms must be completed prior to the start of each trip

Risk Assessment

- A risk liability grade must be given using the standard *Risk Assessment Document (Annex iv)* for all trips. The level of risk will range from 5, low risk (academic conferences, arts activities, ETC), to 1, high risk with potentially dangerous activities (mountaineering, water sports, parachuting, ETC)
- A risk assessment for the accommodation centre must also be drawn up on the standard form giving a grade from 5, low risk (used only by BIS students, easy to police, ETC), to 1, high risk possibly due to potential dangers (hotplates / kettles in student room, centre used by other adults, room layout difficult to police by accompanying Employees, ETC)
- Risk assessment grades must be communicated to all accompanying Employees when asked to join the trip
- Any student with potentially high-risk issues (for example, a medical or behavioural concern) should have their participation reviewed by SLT who will make a recommendation for action
- Student records should be available to the FTL prior to the trip, and details of unacceptable student behaviour should be considered in the risk assessment
- All serious breaches of discipline by students on the trip must be recorded
- The FTL has the right to refuse to take a student if s/he believes that that student's participation would compromise their ability to lead the trip

Expectations of the School

- Two members of SLT known as the Primary Emergency Trip Contact and the Secondary Emergency Trip Contact will be contactable during the period of any trip to support the trip team
- The school will react promptly and effectively if the FTL or other Employees seek assistance regarding legal, operational, behavioural and / or medical issues
- The school will work to support any student who needs to return promptly to school at the request of their parent / guardian

Other Considerations

- All documents for a trip should be collected by the FTL but collated, processed, and filed by SLT
- A suitable First Aider or the FTL must check and restock first aid kits before / after each trip
- Insurance must be organised for each trip to cover medical risks and should cover loss of possessions by students and all accompanying adults. The school's coverage will only be effective if a full police report is made for theft. Accompanying Employees should check the school's coverage before taking expensive individual items
- BIS's *Fieldtrip and Offsite Policy* must be available for consultation by the school community
- The FTL and SLT will agree the requirements for third-parties (EG: activity centres) to provide the school with evidence of appropriate operating licences and / or other professional qualifications
- Exceptions to any of the above guidelines (EG: trips using accommodation with host families or specialised activity trips) must be organised with customised regulations specific to that trip (accommodation verification, safety, curfew procedures, staffing, ETC), to be agreed in writing by SLT before bookings are made

Effective / Review Dates

This policy is effective from: 1st September 2023 and supersedes all previous policies regarding fieldtrips and offsite activities.

This policy is due for review and republication on: 1st September 2024.

Annex i - Exemplar Student Trip Code of Conduct - to be modified as appropriate for each trip

Student Trip Code of Conduct	
Trip title:	Bunce Island Historical Tour
Trip type:	Overnight Trip
Trip period:	27.02.2019 – 28.02.2019
Trip purpose:	To learn about Sierra Leone's strategic location and contribution to the Transatlantic slave trade during C16 th -C19 th
Key trip activities:	Cells tour, dock tour, museum tour, traditional entertainment, craft market

The British International School (BIS) wishes to provide its students with a varied and rich education. BIS believes it is beneficial to take students out of the school setting from time to time in order to allow them to come into contact with different environments, and encounter new experiences.

BIS expects all students participating in fieldtrips and / or offsite activities to abide by the usual school rules and expectations as set out in the *School Handbook*, and to conduct themselves with maturity and respect for others as well as for the environment around them. Failure to do so jeopardises participation in future trips.

Given that by their very nature; trips often take place in unfamiliar environments, they pose an increased risk factor. BIS must therefore establish additional, trip-specific expectations of participating students:

1. Students are expected to show the same respect to field-centre staff as they do to school staff
2. Possession and consumption of alcohol, and / or smoking of any kind is not permitted on trips
3. The fieldtrip leader (FTL) has the authority to ensure students observe an evening curfew and to respect time-limits on recreation offered during the day. The FTL will set-out these time limits clearly for students, and students must adhere to these
4. Students are allowed to bring music playing devices, handheld electronic games, tablets, and mobile telephones. Please note that these items are carried entirely at the students' own risk and they may only be used at times designated by the FTL
5. When taking photographs of people they encounter on the trip, students should consider and be sensitive to the feelings of those being captured and when possible; seek their permission. If in doubt students should consult a member of staff
6. Students are not allowed to leave the trip group whilst unaccompanied or without the permission of the FTL
7. Whilst on the boat / bus students are expected to closely follow the instructions of staff. This includes remaining seated and wearing a lifejacket / seatbelt
8. Students who violate rules / expectations or whose actions place themselves or others in danger may be required to leave the trip and return home at their parents' expense. Failing this, students may face suspension on returning to school

Student Behaviour Contract	
<i>Please complete and return to school with your Parental Notification and Permission Document</i>	
Declaration:	In witness of my parent(s) / guardian(s) I understand and accept that attending a fieldtrip requires me to follow the rules and fulfil the expectations of BIS as detailed in the <i>School Handbook</i> . I understand and accept that there are further rules and even higher expectations than usual on fieldtrips (as listed above) and I promise, in order to stay safe; to follow all rules and attempt to fulfil all expectations at all times.
Student Name / Class:	
Student Signature:	
Parent Signature:	
Date:	

Annex ii – Exemplar Trip Proposal Document - to be modified as appropriate for each trip

Trip Proposal			
<i>To be completed by the FTL using the guidelines and requirements of the Fieldtrip and Offsite Policy. Please write 'N/A' for any row that is non-applicable</i>			
Trip title / location:	Bunce Island Historical Tour	Bunce Island	
Trip purpose:	To learn about Sierra Leone's strategic location and contribution to the Transatlantic slave trade during C16 th -C19 th		
Fieldtrip Leader (FTL) / email address:	Jon Doe	jondoe@example.com	
Trip type:	Overnight Trip		
Preferred trip period:	27.02.2019 – 28.02.2019		
Est. collection / drop-off locations:	Drop-off: BIS	Collection: BIS	
Est. collection / drop-off times:	Drop-off: 0730	Collection: 1800	
Transportation intricacies:	Minibus BIS-Kissy Ferry Terminal with SL International Coaches, Public Ferry to Pepel via Tagrin, private boat with VisitSL from Pepel to Bunce. Same on return.		
Accommodation intricacies:	Bunce Guesthouse via VisitSL for 27.02.2019. 5 twin rooms; 1 x teachers, 3 x girls, 1 x boys		
Key trip activities:	Cells tour, dock tour, museum tour, traditional entertainment, craft market		
Risk assessment opportunity:	Provided by VisitSL – needs to be investigated / deemed acceptable by Director. BIS Risk Assessment not done.		
Number and ages of students attending:	7 students, school years 8-10.		
Number of accompanying adults required:	2		
Breakdown of costs per student to parents:	Le. 980,000 all inclusive		
Breakdown of cost per students to school:	Le. 0		
Checklist - underline any and all necessary requirements:	<u>Parental permission slips</u>	<u>Specific code of conduct</u>	<u>Medical details</u>
	<u>Communication schedule</u>	<u>Petty cash</u>	Passports
	Students' own insurance	<u>School phone</u>	

Office Use:	Office Use:
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Annex iii – Exemplar Parental Notification & Permission Document - to be modified as appropriate for each trip

Parental Notification and Permission	
Trip title / location:	Bunce Island Historical Tour Bunce Island
Trip period:	27.02.2019 – 28.02.2019
Trip purpose:	For students to interact with and learn about Sierra Leone’s strategic location and contribution to the transatlantic slave trade during C16 th -C19 th
Key trip activities:	Cells tour, dock tour, museum tour, traditional entertainment, craft market
Cost of trip:	Le. 980,000 per student
Payment schedule:	In full by 01.02.2019
Cost inclusions:	All transport to / from Bunce Island, insurance, overnight accommodation, all meals and snacks

Dear Parents / Guardians,

The British International School (BIS) wishes to provide its students with a varied and rich education. BIS believes it is beneficial to take students out of the school setting from time to time in order to allow them to come into contact with different environments and encounter new experiences. For these reasons your child is being offered the opportunity to attend the above fieldtrip.

Non-refundable payment is due in full by the above date. Should you need to cancel your child’s attendance, or if your child’s health prevents him / her from attending, we’re unfortunately unable to refund any of the payment. This is due to the policy of the tour agency assisting BIS with the trip. Non-refund of payment also applies should your child exhibit behaviour before / during the trip that BIS considers unacceptable and thus withdraws permission of attendance based on that child’s actions.

As per all overnight trips, parents / guardians are required to attend a compulsory Parent / Guardian Trip Meeting at 1530, on 07.02.2019 at BIS. This meeting will cover all aspects and details of the trip and is only for the parents / guardians who have (i) completed and returned the bottom of this form, and (ii) followed the above payment schedule.

Kind regards,

Jon Doe

Class 6 Teacher & Fieldtrip Leader

Parent Notification and Permission	
<i>Please complete and return to school in a sealed envelope addressed to the Principal along with full payment</i>	
Declaration:	I have read and understood the above information and give permission for my child / children named below to attend this trip
Trip:	Bunce Island Historical Tour
Child(ren)’s Name(s)	
Parent’s Signature:	
Date:	
Medical info:	
Emergency contact 1:	
Emergency contact 2:	

Annex iv (page 1 of 2) – Risk Assessment Document for National Trips - to be completed as appropriate for each trip

Risk Assessment (National)

To be completed by the FTL operating within the parameters of the Offsite and Fieldtrip Policy, and submitted to SLT for consideration and sign off

Trip title / location:		Fieldtrip Leader (FTL):		FTL contact details during the trip:	
Assistant FTL:		Assistant FTL contact details during the trip:		Trip type:	
Trip date(s):		Number of minors attending the trip:		Number of accompanying adults:	

Primary Trip Emergency Contact (TEC) at BIS (incl. contact number):		Secondary Trip Emergency Contact (TEC) at BIS (incl. contact number):		Partner / Organising agencies' contact details:	
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Hazardous Situation / Activity	Potential Risk	Control Measures

Annex iv (page 2 of 2) – Risk Assessment Document for National Trips - to be completed as appropriate for each trip

Hazardous Situation / Activity	Potential Risk	Control Measures

Contributors and Action:					
Completed by (FTL):			Signed:		
Date:					
Received by (SLT):			Signed:		
Date:					
Risk assessment grade (circle):	Good assessment of risks carried out and acceptable control measures in place		Further assessment of risks and / or further control measures needed in some areas		Risk assessment quality / control measures deemed unacceptable in ensuring a safe trip
	5	4	3	2	1
Required actions for grades 1-3 before re-consideration by SLT:					