



**College Trips, Educational Visits (EV),  
Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) Policy**

<b>Policy intended for:</b>	Students
<b>Category:</b>	External Visits
<b>Published:</b>	Server, Policy folders at College and Student Accommodation, Staff handbook
<b>Policy Implemented by:</b>	Principal
<b>Policy Monitored by:</b>	Principal, Exams Manager, Director of Studies, Chief Education Officer
<b>Reviewed by:</b>	Principal
<b>Reviewed date:</b>	January 2020
<b>Consultation with:</b>	Senior Leadership Team (SLT)
<b>Record of changes &amp; additions:</b>	Dec 17: Removed Academic from Principal, replaced Academic Director with Operations Manager. Updated dates on post results service) Jan 20: Removed Operations Manager and replaced with Chief Education Officer
<b>Next Review</b>	August 2020

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## 1. Introduction

**1.1** Oxford International College recognises that learning that takes place out of the classroom is a valuable tool in every one of its students' education if conducted within a safe and healthy environment.

**1.2** Oxford International College believes that all students should be able to experience the world beyond the classroom safely, whatever their age, ability, aptitude and circumstances.

**1.3** This policy is informed by the government guidance *Health and Safety: Department for Education advice on legal duties and powers for local authorities, head teachers, staff and governing bodies* (updated February 2014) that summarizes the existing health and safety law relevant to schools and explains how it affects local authorities, governing bodies, Head Teachers and other school staff. It covers activities that take place on or off school premises, including school trips. It replaces a number of guidance documents on health, safety and security in schools, including *Health and Safety: Responsibilities and Powers (2001)* and *Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits (HASPEV 1998)*. There is also a document from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) *School trips and outdoor learning activities: Tackling the health and safety myths*.

Paragraphs 11 and 12 of the Schedule to the *Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010* require independent schools to take into account the guidance in *Health and Safety: Responsibilities and Powers (2001)* and *Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits (HASPEV 1998)*. This advice replaces that guidance for the purposes of the 2010 regulations.

## 2. Statement of Intent

**2.1** It is the intention of the Senior Leadership Team of Oxford International College that all appropriate steps will be taken to meet statutory requirements, recognised codes of practice and guidance notes in establishing a safe and healthy environment on school visits.

**2.2** The overall high quality of planning and leadership on school off-site activities will be evident from the contribution these activities will make to the all-round ethos of the school and the interaction between students, tutors and staff.

**2.3** The Senior Leadership Team will ensure that all members of staff, tutors and volunteers who participate in learning outside the classroom activities have the training, skills and/or experience to organise and manage these activities safely.

**2.4** The Senior Leadership will also ensure that all members of staff know that they have a duty to take reasonable care to avoid injury to themselves and others and to co-operate with the management and with each other to ensure statutory duties and obligations are fulfilled.

**2.5** The college's learning outside the classroom (LOtC) policy can only be successfully implemented with the full co-operation of everyone concerned.

### 3. Aims of the Policy

This policy aims to:

- Set out the Senior Leadership Team's requirements for managing and running learning outside the classroom (LOtC) activities.
- Make clear the aims and objectives that underpin educational visits and off-site activities.
- Give guidance on the procedures for ensuring suitable and sufficient risk assessment.
- Give examples / templates of the documents that can be used in planning and running LOtC activities.
- Indicate who is responsible for what.
- Give examples of the documents that can be used in planning and running LOtC activities.

### 4. Benefits of LOtC/EV Activities

**4.1** Every learning activity outside the classroom/educational visit activity must have clear aims and objectives. The college's general aims and objectives for learning outside the classroom and for educational visits/activities are to contribute to the following benefits:

- Support the college's curriculum.
- Enhance teaching and learning.
- Provide experiences outside the scope of the normal curriculum.
- Enable students to learn a variety of new skills.
- Develop self-confidence, self-reliance, maturity, awareness and a sense of responsibility.
- Encourage students to work cooperatively with others.
- Promote the achievement of short-term goals.
- Reinforce the development of social and personal skills in new situations.
- Encourage self-assessment and the benefits of a healthy lifestyle and personal fitness.

**4.2** In addition, a residential experience may also provide the opportunity to:

- Encourage 'collegiate' spirit.
- Promote and further improve personal physical ability.

**4.3** For each activity/visit the specific aims and objectives should be set out in the proposal form.

**4.4** Curriculum links for educational visits: It is college's policy that each educational visit should also have clear curriculum links, identifiable in the college's curriculum programmes.

## 5. Policy Scope

**5.1** For the purposes of this policy, learning outside the classroom includes:

- The local environment.
- Places further afield.
- Residential venues.

**5.2** This policy does not relate to:

- Work experience, placements and observation
- Sporting activities

## 6. Responsibilities

**6.1** The Senior Leadership Team recognise their responsibility for ensuring that adequate policies and sufficient resources are in place to ensure that the college can fulfil its obligation to keep staff and students safe when off-site

The Senior Leadership Team are responsible for the quality and safety of all school off-site activities and will:

- Ensure that relevant officers and staff are familiar with the requirements of the appropriate legislation and codes of practice.
- Ensure that there is an effective and enforceable policy for the provision of health and safety on educational visits/learning outside the classroom throughout the school, and, that it is implemented.
- Ensure that the school uses an appropriate LOtC/EV management system that allows for SLT approval of specified categories of visit that are regarded as higher risk.
- Determine the charging and remissions policy for the college.
- Periodically review the effectiveness of the policy and ensure that any necessary changes are made; and
- Provide guidance on quality and safety aspects of off-site activities

**6.2** The SLT will ensure that:

- Visits are led by competent staff with support and guidance being given so that they feel able and are willing to undertake learning outside the classroom activities.
- Effective guidelines and risk management are in place to enable learning outside the classroom/educational visits activities to occur, ensuring the safety of both students and staff.
- Safe and healthy working practices are in place that takes account of appropriate statutory requirements, code of practice and guidance.
- Supervision, training and instruction are provided so that all staff and students can undertake college-related activities and visits in a healthy and safe manner.

- Guidance is available on adequate provision of safety and protective activity equipment and clothing, with associated guidance, instruction and supervision.
- Procedures are in place to vet the quality, relevance and safety of each proposed off-site visit.
- Procedures are in place to vet and approve proposed contractors (e.g. tour operators).
- The school can be run efficiently in the absence of staff engaged in the activity or visit.
- The arrangements are in line with any code of practice and guidance provided by the DfE and/or proprietor.

### **6.3** The EV Coordinator/Super curricular Coordinator

**6.3.1** The EVC has responsibility for the day-to-day development and implementation of learning outside the classroom/educational visit procedures and conditions for all staff and students.

**6.3.2** The EVC will:

- Ensure that a structure and procedures are in place to manage learning outside the classroom and educational visits, and that a review mechanism is in place.
- Appoint a suitable senior person to be the LOtC/EV coordinator, to act on behalf of the Head Teacher in ensuring the quality and safety of all the school's educational visits is managed in line with the school policy and ensure that all educational visits follow the agreed procedures.
- Ensure that the LOtC/educational visits coordinator is appropriately trained.
- Personally approve all low and medium risk LOtC activities, and vet high risk visits before passing them to the SLT for approval.
- Determine which low risk visits to approve personally and which to delegate to the LOTCC/EVC.

### **6.4.** The Learning Outside the Classroom Coordinator/Educational Visits Coordinator (LotC/EVC):

**6.4.1** The school recognizes that the LOtC and the EVC may be more than one person

- The LOtC function covers mainly the curriculum management; and
- The EVC function is to ensure the planning and risk management of each activity/visit.

**6.4.2** The functions of the LOtC/EVC will be determined by the Principal / SLT and will include a requirement to:

- Plan and organise learning outside the classroom as a curricular activity.
- Ensure educational visits meet school requirement
- Ensure that pre-visits have taken place wherever feasible, and to advise the SLT in cases where a pre-visit may not be feasible;
- Ensure prospective leaders and staff meet the college's competency requirements in terms of qualifications and/or experience.

- Conduct appropriate due diligence checks of proposed contractors such as tour operators in advance of the visit, specifically ensuring that arrangements exist for the appointment of competent staff and cooperation with school staff;
- Ensure risk assessments meet school requirements.
- Make decisions about the balance of benefits and risks of any LOtC activity.
- Organise appropriate training and induction for staff and students.
- Ensure that disclosure and barring service checks are in place as necessary for all staff and tutors that will have access to students.
- Ensure adequate provision of safety and protective activity equipment and clothing, with associated guidance, instruction and supervision.
- Ensure parents and relevant staff are fully informed on the arrangements for all visits.
- Ensure that for medium and high risk visits a parents' and students' meeting is arranged prior to the visit taking place. At this meeting at least one parent/carer and the student should be expected to attend as a prerequisite to the student being allowed on the trip.
- Ensure parents are informed and give consent.
- Ensure that emergency arrangements are in place for each visit.
- Keep records of visits, incidents and near-accidents (sometimes called near misses).
- Review systems and monitor practice.
- Report as required to the Senior Leadership Team.

## 6.5 Group Leaders

**6.5.1** The leader in charge of any school LOtC/EV activity must be approved by the Senior Leadership Team. They are responsible for planning and preparing the activity, and to prepare any emergency and contingency plans.

The college has delegated the following responsibilities to group leaders:

- To be accountable for and confident to lead the visit.
- To assess the risks of activities and record any significant risks.
- To make measures to control those risks.
- To inform colleagues about the risks.

**6.5.2** All group leaders:

- Will make themselves familiar with the requirements of health and safety legislation and codes of practice, and financial regulations that are relevant to educational visits.
- Will exercise the reasonable duty of care that a careful parent would exercise in the same circumstances.
- Will ensure that appropriate assessments of the benefits and risks of any visit/activity are made in good time.
- Will be fully conversant with the school's off-site activities/educational visits procedures and in ensuring that staff, students and others comply with its requirements.
- Shall inform the EVC or college management regarding any concerns of their own suitability or competence to lead the visit.

- Will ensure arrangements are in place for the effective supervision and safeguarding of students for the entire visit.
- Will define the roles and responsibilities of other visit staff and communicate directly with any contractors.

## 6.6 Other Supervisors

### 6.6.1 All other group supervisors will:

- Do what is reasonably practicable to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group.
- Make themselves familiar with the requirements of the school's health and safety and educational visits policies.
- Be clear about the objectives of the visit.
- Attend briefing meetings.
- Understand the safety management procedures for the visit.
- Undertake any organisational tasks assigned to them that are within their competency.

### 6.6.2 All college staff and tutors participating in group activities must:

- Look after their own and other's health and safety.
- Cooperate with the school management over safety matters.
- Carry out activities in accordance with training and instruction from the college management.
- Inform the management of any serious and immediate risks or systemic faults in risk management.

### 6.6.3 These duties apply to the employee, tutor and employer:

- When the work is during the working day.
- When an employee/tutor has agreed to do something for the employer.
- Earlier or later than the normal working day.
- Take place outside the term dates (during half term or other holidays)

**6.6.4** The duties apply for learning in the grounds or off-site in the UK. On visits outside the UK leaders will be subject to foreign law, but as the overseas visits are planned and prepared in the UK the risk assessments will be subject to UK domestic law.

**6.6.5** All members of staff should be concerned about any serious and immediate risk, and about any systemic shortcomings. If the concerns cannot be settled within the staff leading the activity, all staff will be expected to stop the activity and refer the matter to the LOtC/EVC or Senior Leadership Team.

**6.6.6** The college recognises the right of members of staff to refuse to participate in an activity that they consider unsafe or that they are not suitably competent.

## 6.7 Volunteers

**6.7.1** Any adults on the visit/activity not employed by the college must be clear about their roles and responsibilities during the visit/activity. They must be DBS cleared and approved by the college in line with its policy.

**6.7.2** Adults not employed by the college (e.g. volunteer helpers) acting as supervisors must:

- Do what is reasonably practicable to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group.
- Be clear about the objectives of the visit/activity.
- Attend briefing meetings.
- Not be left in sole charge of students except where it has been previously agreed as part of the risk assessment.
- Follow the instructions of the group leader and college-employed staff, and help with the control and discipline.
- Speak to the group leader or school-employed staff if concerned about the health or safety of students at any time during the visit/activity.
- Never directly supervise a party of more than 10 of any age.
- Never be in a situation remote from the support of the leaders or other appropriate members of staff.

**6.7.3** The college recognises the right of volunteers to refuse to participate in an activity which they consider unsafe or that they are not suitably competent for.

## 7. Management and Procedures

**7.1** It is the responsibility of the Senior Leadership Team to draw up a management plan for learning outside the classroom and educational visits based on the provisions and guidance in this policy and appendices annually.

**7.2** Exploratory Visits: An exploratory/reconnaissance visit must be made by any member of staff who is to lead a group abroad, or on a residential visit or in a location that is not familiar to them.

*The school accepts that for remote expeditions a prior visit may not be possible. In such cases, the Senior Leadership will determine in consultation with the LOtC/EVC whether the risk assessment and proposed risk controls are sufficient.*

### 7.3 Roll Lists

A list of names, contact details, ages and brief medical history should always be carried by the leader. It is also advisable for all other adults to have copies of this information, within the considerations of some information being of a confidential nature.

The roll will also be recorded on the school's health and safety management system and will be made accessible to appropriate senior members of staff.

### 7.4 Supervision

#### 7.4.1 Duty of care

All adults connected with a visit or activity owe a duty of care to the students they accompany in common law.

The duty of care expected is that of a reasonable, prudent and careful parent applying his or her mind to the situation. The duty is continuous during the whole period of the visit and cannot be delegated to anyone else.

#### 7.4.2 Delegating responsibility

The group leader is always responsible overall for the group. He/she may, however, delegate supervisory roles to other adults in the group. When delegating supervisory roles to other adults the group leader should:

- Allocate supervisory responsibility to each adult for named students and ensure that all adults understand that they are responsible to the leader for the supervision of the students assigned to them.
- Ensure that each adult knows which students they are responsible for.
- Ensure that each student knows which adult is responsible for them.
- Ensure that each adult has the means to contact the group leader and/or other supervisors.

**7.4.3** Supervision can be close or remote but *is always 24 hours*, including home-stay visits, but supervisors are not expected to stay awake for 24 hours each day. In order that each adult supervisor gets sufficient rest a duty roster should be arranged. It is essential that everyone involved in the visit understands the supervision arrangements and expectations.

**7.4.4** Close supervision occurs when the group remains within sight and contact of the supervisor. Close supervision means that all supervisors have prior knowledge of the students, including any special educational needs, medical needs and disabilities:

- Carry a list/register of all group members.
- Regularly check that the entire group is present;
- Have appropriate access to first aid.
- Ensure that each student knows what to do if they become separated from the group.

**7.4.5** Remote supervision occurs when, as part of planned activities:

- A group of students work away from the supervisor (e.g. on a Duke of Edinburgh Expedition) but is subject to specified controls as recorded in the risk assessment.
- The supervisor is present but not necessarily nearby or directly in sight.
- The group leader still remains responsible for students during this time, even though they are not in direct contact with them.

When supervision is remote:

- Groups must be sufficiently trained and competent for the level of activity to be undertaken, including how to deal with emergencies.
- Students should understand and accept the expected standards of behaviour;
- Students will be familiar with the environment or similar environments and have details of rendezvous points and times.
- Clear and understandable boundaries must be set.
- There must be clear lines of communication between the students, the supervisor and the school.
- The students should know the whereabouts of the leader/supervisor and should have a means of contacting them.
- A student should never be on his/her own. It is advisable that they be in a minimum group of at least 3 students.
- The supervisor should monitor the group's progress at appropriate intervals.
- The supervisor will be in the activity area and able to reach the group reasonably quickly should the group need support in an emergency.
- There should be a recognisable point at which the remote supervision is complete.

**7.4.6** During night-time residential situations, the security of the group is of additional importance. The leader should ensure that, as far as is reasonably practicable:

- Staff (of both genders where appropriate) have sleeping accommodation on the same floor and as near as possible to the students' accommodation.
- Suitable and sufficient safeguarding arrangements are in place (following appropriate risk assessment) to protect both students and staff.

- Where hotel/hostel reception is not staffed 24 hours a day, security arrangements are in force to restrict unauthorised visitors.
- In the absence of 24-hour staffing of reception, external doors should be secured against intrusion and windows closed as necessary to prevent intrusion.
- Where possible, internal doors should be lockable but staff should have reasonable access to student accommodation at all times.
- All staff and students should know the emergency procedures/escape routes in the event of a fire or emergency evacuation.

## 8. External providers

**8.1** The school will use external providers that have been specifically assessed by the school as suitable to deliver LOtC/EV activities.

**8.2** Wherever possible, the providers should be holders of the 'Quality Badge' obtained through the Council for Learning Outside the Classroom's accreditation scheme.

**8.3** The badge gives assurances of good and safe learning and should expedite the school's internal approval process. Group leaders must still ensure the provider is suitable for the group's requirements.

**8.4** Although detailed risk management questionnaires do not need to be sent to a LOtC Quality Badge provider, they should still cooperate with the school in any pre-visit checks and questions.

**8.5** The school's group leaders are free to use un-badged providers. In this case the leader in liaison with the LOtC/EVC must undertake appropriate risk assessment, and will check what other relevant accreditation the providers hold.

**8.6** In all cases, the group leader must assess any likely risks posed by the members of the group. External providers cannot do this on behalf of the school.

**8.7** Group leaders should check the [website of the Council for Learning Outside the Classroom](#) for details of the badge scheme.

## 9. Adventurous Activities

The college's policy is that activities of a more adventurous nature should be arranged wherever practicable through a specialist provider, and where required by the statutory *Adventurous Activities Licensing Regulations*, a provider who holds a current AALA Licence.

Occasionally a member of staff may have the qualifications and experience to lead a self-organised visit, but approval will only be given by the governing body after the Head Teacher has given his/her approval following consultation with the LOtCC/EVC and group leader.

## 10. Involving Students in the Organisation of LOtC/EV Activities

**10.1** It is the college's view that students are likely to manage risks better if involved rather than if they are just told what to do.

**10.2** As far as is reasonably practicable, relevant students will be involved in the organization of LOtC/EV activities.

## 11. Codes of Conduct

### 11.1. Student Code of Conduct

*A Student Code of Conduct for All out of School Activities* has been formally adopted by the college.

## 12. Risk Management

**12.1** College staff/tutors are expected to follow the government guidance for risk assessment on LOtC/EV activities.

**12.2** Risk assessments should be completed and reflect the level of risk. The government advice is that college staff tutors should use common sense in deciding whether the assessment needs to be written. This school expects all educational visits to have written risk assessments. The Senior Leadership Team, in conjunction with the LOtC/EVC will determine which assessments can be used as generic risk assessments and which are specific and need to be repeated for each visit/activity.

**12.3** A simple 'Risks Assessed. None significant' can be recorded for low level or minor risks.

**12.4** More complex activities may have significant hazards, which staff will have to avoid or overcome with proportionate risk management.

### 12.5 Types of Risk Assessment

**12.5.1.** There are 3 types of recognised risk assessment:

**Generic:** This will usually be prepared by the LOtC/EV and with the approval of the Senior Leadership Team. This covers activities/venues which the school frequently does/uses. Some generic material is available on the LOtC website [www.lotc.org.uk](http://www.lotc.org.uk). Generic risk assessment will always be written and recorded in the management system.

**Visit-specific:** These assessments address the specific visit, the venues used, activities conducted and the needs of your particular group. They might show how an activity can be modified to suit, for example, a disabled student. These will normally be written and will be recorded in the management system.

**On-going:** These assessments will be done during the visit/activity. They will take account of changing environment/conditions/group. An on-going assessment may lead you to turn to a Plan B.

These risk assessments will not usually be written at the time, but what was done should be recorded later in the management system for the benefit of future activities.

### **12.7. Risk-Benefit Assessment**

While assessing the risk, staff should also be assess the *benefits of the activity*. These must then be balanced these against the risks.

Group leaders who are in doubt about the balance of benefit and risk should consult the LOtC/EVC. The LOtC/EVC is empowered to make decisions on the balance of benefit and risk. Where the LOtC/EVC is unsure, they must consult the school's health and safety manager (HSM), who has the delegated power to make such a decision.

## **13. Adult: Student Ratios**

**13.1** The correct ratio for any activity will arise from the risk assessment. The ratio should help leaders safely achieve the objectives of the visit.

The decision should take into account:

- The gender, age, ability, competence and behaviour of the members of the group;
- General and specific competencies of the group leader and supervisors.
- First aid requirements and knowledge of the supervisors.
- Special educational needs and disabilities.
- Duration and nature of the activity, including any journey.
- Ratios of staff supplied by contractors such as tour operators.
- Accommodation.
- Requirements of the venue.

The ratio will be agreed with the LOtC/EVC after the risk assessment has been submitted and before the final planning takes place.

If the proprietor sets a minimum ratio for any activity, the school must adopt that ratio as the minimum.

**13.4** No visit/activity must take place without the risk assessment being signed off by the LOtC/EVC.

**13.5** The Senior Leadership Team has the power to change the ratio after discussion with the LOtC/EVC and group leader.

## **14. Obtaining Parental Consent**

**14.1.** The law does not require parental consent to be obtained for every individual learning outside the classroom activity.

**14.2.** The school will inform parents of the general arrangements for learning outside the classroom via the school brochure.

**14.3.** It is college policy that parental consent must be obtained for:

- Any activity or educational visit which the school has assessed as carrying a significant risk (usually medium and high-risk categories).
- Off-site activities extending beyond the normal start or finish of the school day.
- All activities that will be during any holiday or closure period.
- All activities requiring remote supervision.
- Any activity where the school's duty of care will be exercised by contractor's staff on behalf of the school.

**14.4.** If agreement cannot be reached with any parent who refuses consent the student should be omitted from the activity and a different way found for the learning to be delivered for that student.

### **14.5. Consent for Medical Treatment**

It is college policy that no student will be allowed to participate in a LOtC/EV activity without having parental consent for medical treatment where such treatment is necessary.

## **15. First Aid**

**15.1.** The college will set and review a first aid policy, taking into account any government and/or LA guidance/policy. Group leaders must have due regard to the policy when determining the first aid arrangements for a LOtC/EV activity.

**15.2.** The determination of the first aid provision will be based on a consideration of the following:

- The numbers in the group and the nature of the activity.
- The risk and type of injury that might be incurred and how effective first aid would be in those circumstances.
- The availability of an ambulance service, and the distance to a hospital with accident and emergency facilities.
- Pre-existing medical condition of group memb

## 16. Safeguarding Requirements

**16.1.** These must be considered at an early stage of the planning. All supervisory staff or adult who are employed to instruct students, whether paid or voluntary, must be DBS checked before being allowed to supervise a group.

## 17. Training

**17.1.** The college will ensure that:

- The LOtC/EVC keeps themselves up-to-date with developments in policy and good practice in order to help colleagues to manage risks.
- Group leaders and any other accompanying adults are appropriately trained in health and safety measures.

**17.2** The college will ensure that support staff and non-school employed supervisors are trained appropriately in risk assessment and safety management, and are competent to carry out the supervisory duties.

**17.3** The college is expected to monitor the supervisory competence of all staff including teachers, support staff, trainees and volunteers. The school will arrange through the LOtC/EVC an annual training plan to be agreed with the Head Teacher.

## 18. Finance

The LOtC/EVC or group leader will liaise with the bursar/finance director over the budgeting/estimates/and costings, and the financial arrangements for the activity.

### 18.1 Charging for Activities

Charges will be made in accordance with the college's own charging for activities policy.

### 18.2 Accounts

- A record of receipts and payments should be kept and supported wherever possible by documentary evidence. The records should be available at any time for examination by the Senior Leadership Team or the bursar/finance director and will be reviewed annually by the school's auditors. They should be retained at the school for a minimum period of 6 years;
- For all practical purposes, the college finance office will act as the 'bank' for all visits and activities funds. All income relating to the visit should be passed to the finance office and all payments should be requested from them except in circumstances where accounts have been authorised for the trip by the school bursar.

### **18.3 Insurance Issues**

The college will ensure that appropriate insurance is in place to cover employees/tutors (employer's liability insurance) and the colleges liability to the public (public liability insurance). It shall also ensure that sufficient travel insurance is in place to cover all students for all activities on the entire visit when overseas.

The college will determine whether insurance needs to be taken out by parents for their children and to inform the parents of this necessity and how it is to be arranged.

## **19. Equal Opportunities**

**19.1** In implementing this policy, all staff/tutors must take into account the colleges equal opportunities policies. Organisers and leaders of LOtC/EV activities must make reasonable adjustments to include would-be participants who have a disability.

**19.2** The college will ensure that practical measures are in place to include students with special educational needs or medical conditions where that is possible. They should have, where possible, the same learning opportunities as the others in the group.

## Further information

If you have any questions about College Trips, Education Visits and Learning Outside the Classroom at Oxford International College, please contact:

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