



The Ultimate Guide To Planning Your First School Trip Abroad

2018 Edition



You've had an idea...



The lightbulb is flickering and that spark of genius points to signs reading 'school trip'. While others may share stories of how running a school trip can be a daunting experience, your students and their learning are at the very centre of this idea.

With the benefits of leading an educational tour abroad far outweighing any negatives, here is a guide designed to support you throughout the planning process.

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Section 1. Why Lead A School Trip?

"A school trip with its natural dynamic environment provides a learning venue that matches their natural inclination to know more about things, engages even those with short attention spans and puts the learning subject in context."



These are the words of the School Travel Forum who, on the request of the Secretary of State for Education, were tasked with gathering the benefits of learning outside the classroom. Its findings would not only support the need for a Pupil Premium, but go some way to highlighting the numerous aspects of this multi-faceted topic – school trips abroad.

If you are a teacher, it is likely you have held onto a memory from your own school experience that led you down the path to becoming an educator. As educators, it is the concepts of 'memory' and 'experience' that we are looking to embed in learners; **memories** to retain knowledge and skills built from **experiences**.



Ofsted

Ever since the push for [Learning Outside the Classroom \(LOtC\)](#) was first felt, Ofsted has made a conscious effort to identify how this is supported and implemented by schools. Ofsted's 'How far should you go?' report gathered a series of key findings in support of leading LOtC activities.

Comprising of primary schools, secondary schools, colleges, a special school, and a pupil referral unit, Ofsted concluded that activities outside the classroom, including residential visits, 'led to improved outcomes for students'. This included an increase in achievement, standards, motivation, and behaviour.

While significant results were seen through the integration of LOtC as a key part of long-term planning, noticeable improvements to the students' personal, social and emotional development was also identified.





Learning Outside Of The Classroom

Teachers like to be inventive, it's in their nature. Considering how a topic can best be accessed by all abilities rarely has one all-encompassing answer. However, LOtC offers a new dynamic to learning everyone from your gifted and talented group to your SEN students will benefit from.

There is an element of the learning process that is hard to replicate in a limited environment – experiences.

LOtC as a concept provides students with an experience they are otherwise unlikely to ever experience inside the confines of the classroom or outside of education.

The 2015 report on the evaluation of the Learning Away initiative by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation established some interesting findings relating to the benefits of residential trips:

- **79% of secondary students** indicated the residential had made them realise that what they learn at school is important to them.
- **71% of secondary students** said their teachers had a better understanding of how they liked to learn.

- **87% of secondary students** felt more confident to try new things they would not have done before the residential.

[\(Learning Away, Paul Hamlyn Foundation, 2015\)](#)

The statistics highlighted the impact of LOtC on the learner in the eyes of the students themselves.

Arguably, while it is the teacher who will be assessing the student, it is the student who will be able to give a raw account as to whether they felt the experience has made a difference to their approach to learning.





Benefits For Students & Teachers

While there are inevitably additional learning benefits across subjects, there is an impact on the students' personal development.

Going beyond the boundaries of the classroom not only provides teachers with a greater range of opportunities for developing learning but allows for students to take on experiences they may not otherwise gain within the confines of the classroom.

The school trip abroad is a residential experience where students' true selves appear and the 'school persona', which is typically seen during the nearly 7 hours of time at school, is dropped. Teachers see students come out of their shells and take on a new interaction that sees both sides learn a little more about each other.

This can help teachers back in school tap into interests to ensure learning is accessible as well as learning about the individual's triggers and what may lead to a need to correct behaviour.

New learning environments engage students in the need to adapt behaviours, experience new learning and interact with unfamiliar surroundings.

Taking the students out of the comforts of the classroom begins to set them up to call on new skills of self-management.

This can include:

- Interpreting situations
- Understanding risk
- Resilience of the individual
- Social interaction & understanding
- Confidence to deal with new experiences





“Education is what remains after one has forgotten what one has learned in school.”

- Albert Einstein

The words of Einstein can always lead to a philosophical debate.

In the context of learning, the above quote may lead to questioning what would be the outcome if young learners were exposed to an experience that could shape the learning, comprehension and retention of work in school.

Can **knowledge and skill** truly be engaged and reinforced through a school trip to show the educational value of learning outside the classroom?

[What education does the student receive by taking part in such an experience?](#)

To answer this, the teacher would have to see the student experience the educational tour and identify the outcomes of the trip first hand. For the individual, learning outcomes beyond the curriculum may vary but there are a number of defining qualities teachers can expect students to develop.

[The School Travel Forum](#) highlights 'building positive attitudes which subsequently lead to improvements in achievement and motivation in all areas – including academic'* as one of the benefits to outdoor learning.

It translates learning into fun and means students can benefit from what the teacher wants them to engage with through interaction without labeling it as 'learning'.

Social well-being, improved self-esteem and resilience can all stem from participating in new activities. Skills, including communication, organisation, leadership and teamwork, are called into action.

The experience can also be seen to 'impact positively on children and young people's interpersonal and social skills – effectiveness, communication skills, group cohesion and teamwork'* which are all important as a basis for future learning.



Schools offering educational trips abroad can be seen by prospective parents to provide students with a broader curriculum and opportunities to engage in varied learning.

While school trips abroad inevitably involve additional planning from the teacher leading the trip, the efforts of others within the school need to be acknowledged.

From the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to the school bursar, there is a collective push to get the school trip off the ground. Many parents realise the extra work involved with planning and running a school trip abroad and the impact of the educational experience on the students.

The [benefits of the school trip abroad](#) can therefore not only contribute to raised levels of attainment but the school's standing in the community.

* [The Benefits of Outdoor Learning, 2015, School Travel Forum](#)

* [Rickinson, M, Dillon, J, Teamey, K, Morris, M, Choi, M Y, Sanders, D, and Benefield, P, A Review of Research on Outdoor Learning, Field Studies Council, London: National, 2004](#)





Career Benefits For Teachers Leading Trips

Whether you have been asked to step up and take that responsibility or not, here are some reasons why it may be in your favour to accept the task:

Demonstrate leadership qualities

Taking the initial steps into leading your first school trip is a fantastic way to demonstrate you have the dedication and ability to take on responsibility. By taking a student group outside the four walls of the school, you are placed in an environment where you can [show strong leadership qualities](#). This is not only something your SLT will recognise but peers and future employers will acknowledge and respect.

Further your own professional development

You will [widen your experience and improve your organisational skills](#), while also considering how your students' learning will be placed in context of your itinerary and destination.

Taking on the mantle is a great way to demonstrate to potential employers how you apply curriculum learning outside of the classroom and identify opportunities for student development in new cultures.

Enhancing students' learning and experiences

You as a teacher have an overriding impact on your student. Make it count! You'll be thinking about how you can fine-tune your medium term planning to incorporate an impactful and measurable 'wow factor' that not only presents a new way of learning to your students, but can provide the spark of inspiration to connect students with the subject.

Integrating education and fun

Lead the school trip that reminds students that education isn't a chore. Cultures, languages, science, history and more can't always easily jump off a page or out of an iPad screen.

A huge amount of respect and admiration comes from students when they recognise their teacher is dedicated to providing tangible and exciting learning experiences.

Be known as the 'teacher that travels' in your school!



Section 2. How Do You Pick A School Trip?

This task may *seem* easy. However, without asking the right questions to the right people, knowing what your subject focus will be and where your school will venture to next may require some additional clarification.

Where school budgets may be limited, [Pupil Premiums](#) need to be managed, or socio-economic factors regarding what parents from your school face in being able to fund the trip, there may be need for compromise.

This can come in the shape of linking up with other subject leaders to create a cross-curricular tour. It could also mean compromising on the destination. Instead of studying plate tectonics in Iceland, Lanzarote may be a suitable alternative to meet budget constraints.

The value of experience

Your first port of call may be to seek out the advice of a senior member of staff at school or someone within your establishment who has experience of leading school trips.

Gaining valuable insight into how the school chooses to operate and what trips have been led before can provide you with a greater understanding of how you can identify a suitable

school trip for your students.

It will also tell you what the school will require from you to make the idea a reality. This can include what has and hasn't worked before for your school.

Lessons learned from a teacher with experience leading a school tour can be hugely valuable in gaining advice and having confidence to lead a school trip.



Section 2. How Do You Pick A School Trip?

Support from your peers

Working with other subject leaders can not only be beneficial for recruiting numbers for your tour. Sharing the workload of planning, promoting and leading your group on an educational tour abroad can help relieve any worries you may have of heading up your group by yourself. Including excursions away from your core subject can also provide students with a refreshing alternative. History students heading to the beaches of Normandy will still benefit from experiencing culture at the local market despite possibly not studying French.

Support from your peers can also come in the form of those willing to join you on the trip to aid the group. The number of staff places can vary depending on the size of your group, but it is important you are able to recruit support staff that can meet the demands of the educational tour. This will have to have the buy-in of your SLT who will be determined learning in school is not jeopardised by the use of staff for your trip.

Objectives and goals for your educational tour

As a specialist in your subject area it is likely you have an idea of particular destinations that tie in with your field or locations that you feel will particularly benefit your students' comprehension and future learning. Identifying your primary goals and learning objectives can help narrow your search down.

Working with a trusted school tour operator, you will be able to build upon these educational aims as with expertise in organising a subject-specific – or cross-curricular – tour will likely see additional excursions suggested which you may not have previously been aware of.

Take the time to map out what you would like to achieve by leading an educational tour for your students. While there will be inevitable benefits to the personal development of the students, it is best to consider the strong curriculum links. This will become particularly useful when approaching your SLT for sign-off of your educational tour.



Section 3. How To Get A Trip Off The Ground

Schools can differ in how initial ideas for a school trip come together. Some establishments may even have their own Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) who will be able to provide advice and support for planning the trip. The role of the EVC typically allows them to mentor colleagues in the planning of effective outdoor learning and ensuring the experiences comply with the school's requirements.

It's important to build up a good rapport with the finance team at your school. Understanding how they process payments, plan schedules and gather essential information for the trip will be key in the planning process. They may also be in contact with your designated Regional Account Manager at your chosen education tour company when it comes to payment for deposits and final payments.

Knowing whether your school operates [ParentPay](#) or requires transfers by BACS will be important when collecting money from students and transferring it to the educational tour operator.

Gaining approval

Forming a critical part of the internal process you will face at school will be getting approval from your SLT. You will need to agree on the location and when you are looking to run the educational trip abroad. The date of your trip will have to factor in the school calendar, including exam dates.

The SLT will also need time to assess the potential impact on staff numbers to ensure school life isn't dramatically affected.

Your SLT can at this point also advise you on whether the proposed trip will need approval from the [Local Education Authority \(LEA\)](#) or governing body.

Your chosen school tour operator will be able to outline in your quote the baseline details for your tour.

If specific questions on accommodation or excursions are raised, your school tour operator will also be able to provide the relevant information upon request.



Section 3 Cont. How To Get A Trip Off The Ground

Inspection Visit

Don't forget the importance of an Inspection Visit.

School tour operators, like Travelbound, offer two nights' bed and breakfast accommodation for two people for confirmed bookings.

This is a valuable opportunity to cover aspects relating to risk assessments as well as providing

you with a chance to find your bearings at your chosen location.

This can both provide peace of mind ahead of your educational tour and allow you the chance to visualise the transition from one excursion to the next.





Section 4. Planning First Steps

1. Research school trip providers

Finding the right school trip provider for you will be key in order to find the perfect educational tour to suit your school and students' requirements. You need to be able to trust your chosen provider to give advice and expertise to ensure the experience abroad for your students is maximised and meets your desired learning outcomes.

Working with your Regional Account Manager at your chosen school trip provider will allow you to build your tour and make amendments where necessary. Their experience in school travel will be a valuable resource as they will be able to paint a picture of how your school trip abroad will appear leading to peace of mind prior to even launching to your school.

[Start researching school trip providers](#) early in order to give you and your students plenty of time to promote and pay for the trip. Party Leaders tend to book 9-12 months in advance to

allow for families and school time to plan out funds for the trip.

School trip providers generally split the cost of the tour into three payments over the agreed schedule. However, schools may choose to break down the payments further into monthly payments to make finances manageable for parents.

It is recommended that for long-haul destinations additional time is considered to allow for a payment schedule to be met.



Section 4 Cont. First Steps

2. Gather quotes for your trip

Once you have gathered your ideas for your school trip abroad and decided on potential dates that work for your school, you can request a no-obligation quote from the school tour provider.

Use their trusted website to submit a quote request or contact the team by phone to discuss your destination, dates and needs with a Regional Account Manager directly.

Typical turnaround for a quote can be around 24-48 hours, as the quote will be unique to your requirements. It may be that particular flights will be sought for your trip which can take time.

In order to manage time effectively, it is best to ask for multiple quotes which are costed on different numbers of students joining the tour. This way, should students decide to drop out from your trip at any point you will be prepared for any eventuality and changes to cost which you can build into your contingency money.



Get A Quote



Section 4 Cont. First Steps

3. Review your quotes and make a decision

Upon receiving your quotes, you will have a better idea of how the school trip will appear and the costs involved.

It is a good idea at this point to consider the price you will be pushing out to parents which takes into account contingency money. The amount of contingency money may be dependent on what type of accommodation you have requested to

be quoted for, i.e. full board, half board or room only. This is because the cost of additional meals may need to be factored in to ensure you are not caught short when abroad with your group.

Upon consulting with your SLT, costs for staff cover and damage deposits may also be required. Should you need to seek assistance in gaining approval from your SLT, your chosen school tour operator will be able to help.

Top Tip!

Low budget?

Consider going by coach to keep costs down and benefit from the use of your own transport throughout your tour!





Section 4 Cont. First Steps

4. Get sign-off internally

Once you are happy with your quote, it's time to seek the approval of your SLT. Some schools require the trip proposal to be submitted to school governors. It is important to take into account your school's internal sign-off process and LEA's protocols.

At this point, your SLT will want to know about contingency costs and to ensure you have considered every eventuality.

Your SLT may also want a conversation about the circumstances of particular students and their families who they are determined to not miss out on the opportunity due to funding issues. Take the time to think carefully about costs realistically and seek the advice of your Regional Account Manager should you have any questions.

5. Expressions of interest

Once you have your plan for the school trip signed off by your SLT, you can launch your trip with your school. You may choose to limit the offering to a particular subject group, year, or decide to open it to the whole school.

Send out an expression of interest form highlighting the relevant details to gauge what interest there is for your school trip. Be sure to include a deadline for slips to be returned or interest voiced. This may be determined by the schedule you have set out with your SLT and school tour provider.

It is important to try and keep to the pre-planned schedule as particular aspects such as flights cannot be held indefinitely without a deposit.



Section 5. Booking & Promoting



Understanding payment deadlines

As part of your pre-trip planning, it is important to have a clear picture of the payment deadlines with your school trip provider.

Understanding where first deposits will be required and how that will translate to parents securing their children's place on the trip. You may have agreed with the SLT that payments from parents need to be split into monthly instalments, which will need to fit in with the deadlines agreed with your designated Regional Account Manager.

Make a provisional booking

Should you decide to carry forward your chosen quote, your booking will be made provisional and held for two weeks with no obligation to go any further. The period should be maximised to promote your school trip to students, parents and decision-makers using promotional and supportive material your school trip provider can assist with producing for you.



Section 5 Cont. Booking & Promoting

Promotional material

For your school trip provider, organising and promoting school trips is their business which is why you can rely on your chosen provider to assist with promotional materials. Whether you are looking for a PowerPoint presentation to use or adapt for a parents' evening or are seeking posters to pin around the school walls, there will be options available to promote your school trip.

Look out for videos or media galleries from your school trip provider and don't be afraid to adapt PowerPoint presentations to suit your needs. There will be additional pieces of information you will be keen to share with students and parents, which may include your policy on behaviour away from school.

Collect deposits

Though you may have a clear idea on who is likely to commit to the trip, this stage will determine who will be joining your group.

You will be continuing to promote your tour to

compensate for any individuals who decide to drop out last minute.

It is also a good idea to have a 'reserve' list to record those who may be interested but have missed out on the initial spaces.

As with the expression of interest form, it is important a deadline for deposits is provided to students and parents to ensure your school's finance team have enough time to process the payments and send to your school trip provider.

Top Tip!

Struggling for numbers? Try to combine the trip with another department. History and languages in Normandy is always a popular choice with schools with highly relevant excursions and cultural sites to explore!



Section 5 Cont. Booking & Promoting

Review your sign-up numbers

You may have already decided to promote your school trip through assemblies and parents' evenings to increase numbers for your tour. With first deposits collected from your students who have committed to joining the group, there is a need to review how many students you have signed-up.

If numbers are lower or higher than you anticipated and shared with your school trip provider, there may be a need to re-cost the trip.

Don't fret as school trip providers are used to this scenario and in most cases where there are more students interested than previously estimated the cost of the trip could actually reduce per student.

Read: [How To Boost Sign Ups For Your School Trip](#)





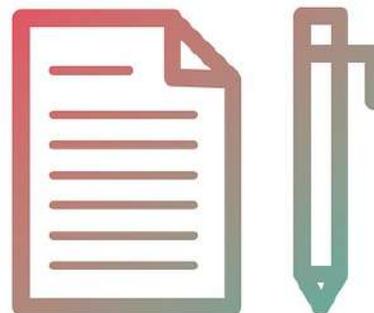
Section 6. Confirming & Working With Your TC

Confirm your booking

As you enter the final stages of the initial booking process, it is likely there will be a change in numbers. This may be from students dropping out from the group or agreeing with your Regional Account Manager to increase the numbers.

It is important to ensure these changes are communicated to your Regional Account Manager and the booking form completed in full.

Together with your first deposits, the booking form needs to be sent in to confirm your booking.



Top Tip!

If you are planning a European air tour, you will need a full names list and details as featured in your group's passports.

Save a late rush by gathering this information from your students early.

Section 6 Cont. Confirming & Working With Your TC

Working with your Tour Co-ordinator

You will receive an introduction email from your personal Tour Co-ordinator who will have completed a handover of your booking including notes on special requests and essential requirements. The confirmation email will include the following:

- Receipt of first deposit
- Invoice for second deposit
- Party Leader notes
- Health and safety travel tips
- Insurance documents*
- ATOL certificate*
- Booking form reminder
- Final confirmation form

From this moment on, your Tour Co-ordinator will be your point of contact for your booking.

They will work with you to finalise your perfect tour culminating in your final itinerary.

The experience and expertise of your Tour

Co-ordinator will see your itinerary not only shaped around your requirements but what will be possible when taking into account the logistics of transporting your group to venues.



*where applicable



Section 6 Cont. Confirming & Working With Your TC

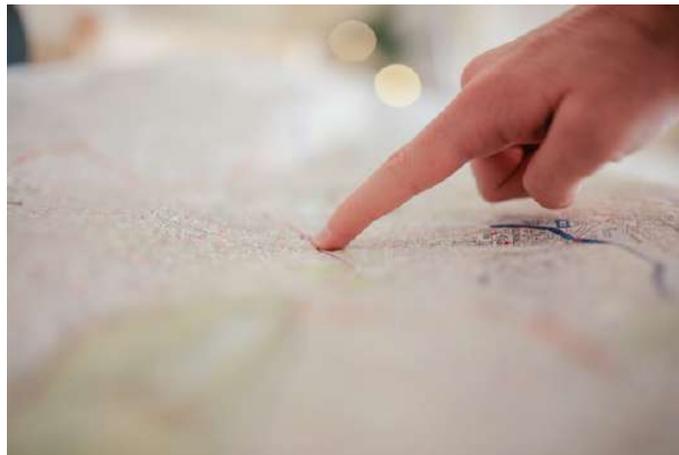
Part 2: Working with your Tour Co-ordinator

In addition to your confirmation email, you will be sent a confirmation pack. This is to ensure you receive all relevant communications and have them to hand on your tour. Your confirmation pack will include:

- Confirmation letter
- Booking form (if not already completed)
- Final forms
- Party Leader notes
- Insurance details
- Tour clothing information

If you have any questions, it is advisable to raise these at the earliest point possible to ensure your Tour Co-ordinator can provide you with an answer or act upon requests on your behalf.

As bookings contain [many different elements](#), your Tour Co-ordinator will be liaising with agents to piece together your perfect educational tour





Section 6 Cont. Confirming & Working With Your TC

Building your itinerary

Building your itinerary is the exciting point of your planning as you build up a clearer picture of how your educational tour could run day to day. As much as you may have the desire to deliver to your students a whirlwind tour that takes in all the key sites in a short space of time, it is important to take on the advice from your Tour Co-ordinator. Not only will your Tour Co-ordinator have a clear idea on transfer times between excursions and what is feasible during the day, but will be able to inform you as to whether particular venues will be open and available on the dates you are travelling.

Your Tour Co-ordinator is your guardian angel. They will be the person finalising all the finer points of your educational tour to ensure it runs smoothly.

Depending on the type of tour you have booked, this can include all elements from travel to accommodation and excursions to personal requirements that are included within your educational tour.



Teachers Trip Toolkit



Section 6 Cont. Confirming & Working With Your TC

Contingency Money

When building your itinerary it is important to have a clear understanding of costs. Knowing what is already paid for and what can only be paid for on the day is key and can have an effect on your contingency money. Having this clear in your mind will mean the money ring-fenced as contingency money can then be allocated where necessary to save any potential surprises that may appear on your educational tour. The clearer you are with the day to day running of your educational tour, the less likely you will have to cut into the valuable learning time spent at each location.

Timings

If you have requests for particular departure times from school or transport options, these should be communicated to your Tour Co-ordinator at the earliest point possible to ensure they have time to explore the options available. It is likely as a subject specialist you

will have particular excursions within the destination you will be keen to have your students visit. Working with your Tour Co-ordinator, together you will be able to identify how the excursions sit at the top of your priority list will meet your desired learning outcomes.

If you decided to include extra excursions or swap particular visits, be mindful that this may need to be factored into your contingency pot.

Top Tip!

Trust your Tour Co-ordinator! They'll have years of experience for your destination. Working day in and day out on tours to the region, they will have the knowledge to help you make informed choices.



Section 6 Cont. Confirming & Working With Your TC

Gathering the relevant travel information

You might think gathering travel information from your group of friends for a trip in the sun is tough before you even consider completing such a job for your school group.

Don't fret! The information you need to gather from your students can be done in one hit. Names as detailed within passports, emergency contact numbers and dietary requirements will all be required for your Tour Co-ordinator to complete their booking documents, including the Advance Passenger Information (API) process.



Top Tip!

Gather relevant travel info together as early as possible as it will be important your Tour Co-ordinator receives this information in good time to be able to adequately organise the tour.



Section 6 Cont. Confirming & Working With Your TC

Completing your Risk Assessments

As educational travel experts, your chosen school travel provider will always be on-hand to offer advice on completing your specific risk assessments and health and safety paperwork. Forming an important part of your tour, it is your responsibility as Party Leader to be confident you are aware of any potential hazards. You can consult your Tour Co-ordinator regarding some details.

It is important to understand what your chosen travel provider can and cannot typically provide you with when it comes to support for your risk assessments.

What to expect from your school travel provider:

- Reputable school travel providers should feature a Step-by-Step Guide to Risk Assessments. The School Travel Forum (STF) has also produced a handy document titled '*Demystifying Risk Assessment*', which details how to break down the risk into

seven easy steps in order to help complete your assessment

- Offer information to help complete your school trip risk assessment
- Complete safety checklists for all of your accommodation, transport and excursion suppliers and ensure they meet or surpass the requirements of the STF

What you will need to do:

- Submit to your SLT your own health and safety reports
- Complete your own risk assessments for your group

Potential risks arise from factors such as special needs, disabilities, medical ailments, allergies, behavioral issues or the age of students. You, as Party Leader, have a responsibility under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (which also applies to educational visits) to ensure risks are assessed and appropriate control measures are put in place.

Section 6 Cont. Confirming & Working With Your TC

The value of an Inspection Visit

The option of taking on an Inspection Visit is an invaluable opportunity to experience your chosen location. It means Party Leaders can not only take the time to piece together their risk assessments but explore the location and build a picture of how your educational tour will run.

The Inspection Visit includes two nights staying in a twin room for two people, including breakfast. Transport and meals are booked by the Party Leader.

A perfect opportunity to take in the destination, to explore excursion locations and identify how your learning outcomes can be best achieved.

Leading up to departure

There are a number of elements Party Leaders need to consider when it comes to gathering the relevant information for travel. These are not only crucial to gather for your Tour Co-ordinator but can be the difference between travelling and being

refused permission. As Party Leader, it is your responsibility to ensure all within your group can legally travel.

You will need to ensure the following pieces of information are collected:

- Collect passports and record names as listed
- Emergency numbers
- Completed Advanced Passenger Information (API) form
- Dietary requirements





Section 6 Cont. Confirming & Working With Your TC

Visas and ESTAs

For China and the United States of America, there will be a need to complete a visa or Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA).

These will need to be organised by you as Party Leader, however some school travel providers are able to organise group visas for China.

The ESTA is applicable to those who are citizens or eligible nationals of a Visa Waiver Program country. If you are unsure of students' eligibility, it is best to ask as many questions as possible.

Ensuring you have all you need and are aware of the processes in booking an educational tour abroad will support you in checking off the steps and providing peace of mind.

For school groups who have students without a non-EU nationality, it is important to complete a 'List of Travellers' form allowing students to go on the trip without the need for a visa. They are

sometimes also referred to as a 'Visa Waiver Form'. Applications need to be submitted at least two weeks prior to departure.



Visa Waiver Info



Section 6 Cont. Confirming & Working With Your TC

European Health Insurance Card (EHIC)

Some students within your group may already have a valid EHIC giving the holder the right to access state-provided healthcare during their visit to a country in the European Economic Area (EEA) or Switzerland. This care is free of charge and covers treatment that is medically necessary until your return home.

When liaising with parents, ensure they are directed to the official online outlet to apply for the EHIC as unofficial and fraudulent sites have caught others out in the past.



EHIC Card





Section 6 Cont. Confirming & Working With Your TC

Fit for travel

It is also important to check up on vaccines and communicating any relevant information to parents. Parents can then check their child's vaccination cards or contact their local surgery for an updated list of vaccinations their child has had and when they received them.

Cultural sensitivity

Travelling abroad also raises the need to respect customs. There may be a need to cover legs or shoulders when entering certain religious structures or other specific actions that need to be considered out of a mark of respect. Whether you are travelling to Italy or Poland or further afield, research a little more about local customs and how they may be relevant to your chosen excursions.

Rooming for your tour

As well as knowing numbers for your group it will be important to inform your Tour Co-ordinator of

the gender breakdown. This allows the Tour Co-ordinator to sort rooming as soon as possible to ensure suitability for your group.

It is advisable to communicate this to your chosen school travel provider as soon as possible to avoid any issues with availability.

Insurance for your tour

Your school may have its own travel insurance for educational trips abroad or you may choose to purchase insurance through your school travel provider.

It is important to gather any information on your group's pre-existing medical conditions and communicate these where appropriate. When dealing with travel insurance yourself, these need to be checked with the insurance company directly.



Section 7. Departure!

Stay prepared

You might not have been in the Girl Guides or Boy Scouts but staying prepared for every eventuality is something all Party Leaders should work towards prior to departing on their educational tour.

Here are 3 quick-fire tips to consider:

1. Emergency contact numbers

Party Leaders will be provided with details of their hotel as well as an emergency contact number for their school travel provider in their final pack typically sent out 2-3 weeks before departure.

Take your skills on the laminator to a new level by providing your students with an individual card detailing the hotel address and contact number in order for them to reach you in an emergency.

2. Social media

Using your school's social media channels is a great way to stay in touch with the school and families. Sharing day to day events, memorable moments and learning, social media allows the benefits of your educational tour to be seen by

others to inspire similar learning opportunities.

Be mindful of any pictures you do take as schools will have on file which children are allowed to appear.

3. Emergency calls

School travel providers offer Party Leaders a direct line during office hours and also provide a 24-hour out of office number for emergencies. It may be that your school can provide you with a phone to save eating into your own personal phone contract.

Many phones networks now offer no additional roaming charges for connection in a number of European countries. It is worth contacting your phone provider to see whether there are additional charges for your chosen destination.

- **Use:** [7 Tools for School Social Media Teams](#)
- **Read:** [50 Ideas For Your School Social Media & Blog](#)
- **Learn:** [4 Independent Schools That Are Totally Killing it on Social Media](#)



Section 7 Cont. Departure!

Departure for your tour

Prior to your departure, your Tour Co-ordinator will liaise with you with regards to all details of the trip. During this time it is important to ask any questions you may have to garner all the information you need. Throughout the tour, your school travel provider will be on hand should your group require any emergency assistance while in resort.

Most reputable school travel providers will have their Tour Co-ordinators fluent in various languages that allow for the booking of accommodation and particular excursions to run smoothly. This supports the experience of Party Leaders in resort in being able to rest assured their educational tour is planned from start to finish.

Following your payment schedule, you can expect to receive your final pack 2-3 weeks prior to departure. This will be dependent on your school travel provider receiving the final balance for your

educational tour. The sooner you submit all the details from your school, your Tour Co-ordinator will be able to liaise with agents and suppliers to deliver the planned itinerary.

It is important to remember your responsibility as Party Leader while on the trip. Heading up the group, it is your responsibility to ensure you are fully aware of the itinerary planned out for you, what has been booked and how you will arrive at particular locations.

Taking into account the risk assessment you would have completed prior to departing, it is crucial this piece of work is kept in mind on your educational tour and any potential risks or hazards are effectively communicated to support staff.

Remember to make a note of your school travel provider's emergency contact details and share these with your school. It is also worth printing these out and making copies of your group's passports for reference.



While There Is A Lot Of Responsibility As Party Leader...



...working step by step through the booking process and taking on board the advice from your chosen school travel provider will allow you to build the ideal educational tour tailored to your students.

While there is inevitably a need to allocate additional time taken to complete the planning process, it is key to remember the vast number of benefits that stem from the educational tour abroad.

It is not only an experience that will live long in the memory of your students, but in *your* memory as you integrate fun and learning into an educational experience outside the classroom!



TIMELINE

School Trip Organisation

6 - 12 months before

Enquire about your trip, obtain quote and make provisional booking



2 Weeks Later

Confirm your booking by sending first deposits

8 Weeks Later

Send in second deposits



16 Weeks before travel

Send in final forms, completed passenger lists

12 weeks before travel

Pay your trips final balance



2-3 weeks before travel

Receive your final pack with all your booking details, final itineraries and rooming information

Day Of Travel

Bon Voyage! - Remember, Travelbound have 24/7 emergency contacts & over 30 years experience in school travel so relax and enjoy yourselves!



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Inspiration made easy



Get A Quote

Useful Links:

- [8 things I've learned as a university tour leader](#)
- [A teacher's take on music tours](#)
- [Council for Learning Outside the Classroom](#)
- [School Travel Forum](#)
- [Planning Your School Trip](#)
- [Managing Your Social Media Profile](#)
- [Social media for schools: a guide to Twitter, Facebook and Pinterest](#)