

Hereford Cathedral Junior School

Out of School Visits Policy

This policy applies to all pupils at Hereford Cathedral Junior School including those in our EYFS settings

INTRODUCTION

AIMS

To allow pupils the opportunity to enjoy a full range of educational, social and sporting experiences outside of the classroom.

To ensure that all visits out of school are made as safe as they can be.

To support and enrich teaching and learning in the school by providing varied and relevant out of school visits.

POLICY STATEMENT

Hereford Cathedral Junior School (HCJS) places a high value on fieldwork, excursions, visits and organised holidays. Out of school visits are considered important for extending pupils' learning and for the full delivery of several curriculum areas such as Art, Science, Games, Music and Humanities. They also provide a vital contribution to pupils' personal, social and cultural education. It is a central part of the ethos of the school to provide the opportunity for educational visits and school excursions.

At HCJS, pupils are given opportunities throughout the school to participate in academic field visits, sporting fixtures and competitions, musical events, visits to art galleries and theatre productions, weekends away and visits abroad. Pupils' physical and moral safety is of paramount concern. The school accepts that trips, visits and outdoor activities cannot be completely without risk but it requires that those staff in charge take all reasonable precautions to protect staff and pupil health, safety and welfare and minimise the risk of untoward or dangerous situations.

PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR THE POLICY

The EVC at HCJS is the Deputy Head, who is assisted by a trained Deputy EVC. The job is to ensure that staff are adequately prepared to safely organise and run trips. The EVC supports trip leaders by monitoring plans and procedures, assisting with risk assessments and where necessary arranging appropriate training. The EVC advises the Heads (HCJS and HCS) in drawing up of policy for approval by the governing body and assists in measures to ensure activity guidelines are followed.

PROCEDURES

In order to make out of school visits as beneficial and as safe as possible, the staff at HCJS should follow the procedures set out within this policy.

APPROVAL OF PLANS AND ARRANGEMENTS

Any proposed visit needs to be sanctioned by the Deputy Head, in liaison with the Head of the Junior School. In the great majority of cases, it is necessary to have approval for all trips in principle a full term in advance to ensure that details are included in the school calendar. Central to the planning of trips is Evolve, an online service specifically designed to enable schools to facilitate the efficient and robust planning, processing, monitoring, evaluating and reporting of all trips. The School also benefits from the support and back-up of Herefordshire Council's Resilience Team, including an Outdoor Education Adviser.

When completed on Evolve, the proposal should be submitted online to the EVC. The EVC will examine the proposed arrangements, possibly suggest amendments, and, once details have been agreed, will approve the trip using the Evolve system. The submission can then be viewed by the Head and submitted to the LA via the Evolve system. This submission will include completed risk assessments. Generic risk assessments are available to all staff planning a trip. These will act as a good starting point for identifying risks on school trips, but are in no way intended to be exhaustive. In most instances, planning a trip will involve a pre-inspection visit by the member of staff responsible for arranging the trip. It is preferable if this can be arranged without unnecessary disruption to the school day, but time will be made available to the party leader to undertake this risk assessment should this prove necessary. Where a visit is not possible, written and oral reports from those previously organising such a trip should be sought. Pre-inspection visit costs should always be levied against the overall cost of the trip.

All staff taking visits out of School

- should read DfE Health and Safety on Educational Visits: November 2018.
- should read Appendix 3: The Law and Your Liability When Taking Children Outside the School.
- should refer to OEAP National Guidance: Guidance for the management of high-quality outdoor learning, educational visits and adventurous activities

Copies of these documents and other useful guidance are available in the Evolve resources section.

TIMING

Out of School Visit documentation should be submitted to the EVC no later than 10 days before departure for trips within Herefordshire and ideally no later than 21 days in advance of trips outside Herefordshire.

PLANNING AND DOCUMENTATION

The planning and documentation of all trips remains the responsibility of the trip leader. All bookings, transport arrangements, insurance and communication with parents regarding the trip will be the responsibility of the trip leader and should either form part of the Evolve submission or be available as requested. The EVC is able to assist with documentation and staffing, and advice on best practice. The EVC will also be responsible for informing staff in advance of pupils that will be absent from school owing to school trips.

CHECKING INSURANCE COVER

Normal School insurance may cover most visits but this should be checked with the Bursary, particularly when visits are to occur outside normal School times and/or involve adventurous activities. Where possible, it is advised that private cars should not be used to transport children, however, if private cars are used to transport pupils on school business, the driver or drivers concerned must ensure that their insurance permits this.

TRANSPORT

All coaches or minibuses used should be fitted with cross belt seat-belts. It is advisable to first obtain quotes for transport costs from more than one known provider, particularly for longer journeys. The school's transport co-ordinator will assist with this process if required. Bookings can be made via the transport office who will provide written details as soon as bookings are confirmed.

If travelling by school mini-bus, staff should be aware of their responsibilities in checking the vehicle before setting out and should ideally have a driver or second adult on board to supervise the children. It is expected that all staff driving school minibuses will have undergone training approved by the COO. They must also make sure that all passengers are wearing seat belts. (Refer to Appendix 1 : *The School Mini-Bus and Drivers' Responsibilities*)

INFORMATION TO PARENTS

For each visit, a letter should be sent to parents via MSP detailing the destination, means of transport, times of departure and return, the purpose of the outing, clothes to be worn, food requirements and costs. First drafts of these letters should be sent for editing to the Deputy Head.

WRITTEN PARENTAL CONSENT

Medical consent forms are collected from parents at the beginning of each academic year and it is therefore not necessary to re-issue these for day trips. However, letters containing information regarding school trips must invite parents to provide any update on medical conditions and staff should use the standard school template. Medical consent forms are always requested for overnight trips. Parental consent forms attached to the letter to parents, and if appropriate, medical forms, must be completed and returned to School prior to the visit.

STAFF/PUPIL RATIOS

The degree of supervision must be appropriate to the age of the children and the nature of the excursion. Staff / pupil ratios must be agreed with the EVC before the visit takes place. Staffing should also take into account a gender balance where appropriate. Staffing on EYFS trips will be in accordance with the EYFS Framework 2023.

Assistance from parents may sometimes be acceptable but the parent of a child taking part in the visit should only be supernumerary.

REPORTABLE INCIDENTS ON AN OFF-SITE VISIT

If a member of the visiting party is injured or harmed when on a school visit off-site, this incident must be reported to the facility providers where appropriate, in addition to the EVC. Party leaders are advised to obtain relevant risk assessments from the facility provider prior to making the visit wherever possible and these should be included in the Evolve submission as appropriate. This policy should be read in conjunction with the First Aid policy, which contains advice on dealing with an injury/illness off site.

PROTECTION OF PUPILS OFF SITE

Assurance must be obtained prior to a trip that there are appropriate DBS checks and Child Protection Policies and procedures that apply to any staff employed by another organisation and working with pupils where appropriate. Please refer to '*Safeguarding Policy*'.

PUPIL DOCUMENTATION TO TAKE ON VISIT

Trip leaders should have all contact details and medical details of the members of their trip available to them on the trip. For day trips, this can be obtained from the School Office, the School Nurse or via ISAMS. For residential trips, it is necessary to issue and collect medical forms for all children. Emergency contact details for staff on residential trips should also be obtained.

RISK ASSESSMENT

It is essential that a full and up to date risk assessment is made by the party leader before every visit out of School. Further risk assessments provided by the outside provider are a useful addition to this but cannot be relied upon by the party leader. A clear assessment needs to be made of any special circumstances relating to the trip, notably in terms of transporting the party and moving groups of children around or between public places. It is also necessary to plan specifically for risks posed by individual children. Risk assessment should be continuous throughout the visit.

PUPIL BRIEFING SESSIONS

Staff organising and leading the visit should arrange briefing sessions with the children and, where appropriate, with the parents. This forms part of the risk management procedure for the trip. Children should be made aware of what is expected of them on the visit and they should be warned of any particular dangers. Where appropriate, the children themselves should be involved in making risk assessments. Each member of staff or adult helper should have a list of the children for whom they are responsible on the visit and the children themselves should know which adult has responsibility for them.

DE-BRIEFING AND REVIEW OF RISK ASSESSMENT

Evaluation of all trips should be completed on Evolve and should be completed within one week of the trip returning by the trip leader. Any feedback received regarding the trip from staff, pupils or parents should be recorded in this way.

DISCIPLINE

The highest standards of discipline are expected on visits out of school to ensure safety and to maintain the reputation of the School.

- Staff should set the example in dress and behaviour. (Well-dressed does not necessarily mean formally dressed but often it does.) Uniform for the children is often appropriate although there may be sound reasons for children not travelling in uniform such as the need for wellingtons to be worn on farm visits
- Courtesy and good manners should be encouraged. Steps should be taken to avoid noise and disturbance to other people.
- Children at HCJS are of an age range that requires a high degree of supervision, especially where there are particular hazards such as being on or near water, on mountains, in urban areas, at old buildings and castles, out after dark and on trains. They should be accompanied by staff at all times.
- Staff on school trips should not drink alcohol.
- Purchasing by children should be supervised.

FIRST AID

A first-aid kit should be carried but only for minor injuries, unless medical aid is not readily available. Minor illness and accidents may be dealt with by a member of staff. Parents will always be informed of the nature of the problem and details of the treatment given.

If members of the party have particular medical needs, for instance asthma or diabetes, proper provision must be made prior to the trip departing in consultation with the School Nurse.

In acute cases of illness or accident, emergency medical help must be sought and parents contacted as quickly as possible, whilst adequate supervision is made for other pupils.

Each member of staff escorting Pre-Prep children on a visit will be responsible for inhalers or medicines specifically required for the pupils for whom they have particular care on that occasion.

Before all trips the Trip Leader should discuss first aid and medical provision with the School Nurse. This policy should be read in conjunction with the First Aid Policy.

THE SCHOOL MOBILE TELEPHONE

A School mobile telephone should be taken on visits out of school to avoid any delays in communication should any unexpected situation arise. This can be obtained from the School Office. It is recommended that this is the point of contact for the Trip Leader rather than a personal number, although there may be circumstances that make this impossible. Staff might like to consider having an additional mobile phone available on a second network.

SPORTS FIXTURES

Sports fixture visits are arranged by games staff who post copies of team lists and plans on MSP, notify the School Nurse, and publish them on the sports noticeboards.

EXCLUSIONS

Staff taking visits out of School reserve the right to leave behind children who have not followed the Code of Conduct on previous visits or whose record of misbehaviour causes concern about the risk they may pose to themselves and to others. Children will not be excluded on the grounds of disability where reasonable adjustments can be made to accommodate them safely on the visit.

CHARGING

As a broad principle, pupils are expected to pay the full cost of all school trips.

The COO will hold all expedition money until required in a specially designated account and appropriate accounts/documentation will need to be submitted by the party leader on completion of the trip.

EMERGENCIES

Group leaders should make consideration of potential emergencies in their planning and costing of a trip and this will form part of the risk assessment for a trip. Guidelines for a group leader and advice for actions in the event of an emergency can be found within the Resource pages on Evolve.

ADDITIONAL PROCEDURES FOR STAFF ESCORTING PUPILS ON SCHOOL HOLIDAYS ABROAD

Members of staff taking pupils on visits abroad must follow the above procedures but they will also need to make additional preparations and to take additional precautions.

The party leader must ensure that all financial, insurance, medical, supervisory, disciplinary and administrative details are in place and communicated effectively to parents.

TRAVEL AGENTS

Any trip abroad should be booked through ABTA or ATOL travel agents. Where instructors and equipment are hired on activity holidays such as skiing, the qualifications of instructors and the suitability of equipment should be checked with the travel agency.

PASSPORTS AND VISAS

Arrangements should be made for all members of the party to travel with current passports or a current group passport, and with visas if necessary.

TRAVEL

Travel may be by air, sea and rail in addition to road. Behavioural expectations and school rules will still apply, but staff will also need to have agreed strategies for supervising pupils in public places such as stations and airports. Pupils must know which adult is supervising them and what to do if they become separated from their party at any time.

Where trips involve long coach/bus journeys the member of staff in charge should check that the coach company concerned complies with the European directive on driver's hours.

INJURY AND ILLNESS

All party members will need medical insurance for visits abroad and GHICs for global travel. The party leader must have medical forms, completed and signed by parents, available. Standard forms are available from the School Office.

Every trip should take a First Aider or one member of the staff nominated as responsible for the medical welfare of the children. This person should keep the medical records, the First Aid provisions and a log of all complaints made by pupils of sickness or injury and the treatment given. Anything that cannot be treated with simple First Aid must be referred to a doctor or hospital as soon as possible and parents should be informed. The nominated person must investigate all pupil complaints of sickness or injury. Parents will always be informed of the nature of any problems and details of the treatment given. The party leader should establish how expert medical help can be summoned at each location, including the skiing slopes, and inform all staff. If it were ever the case that children are out with an instructor but without a member of staff, the party leader should establish procedures with instructors. Children should know which adult is supervising them at all times, and they should know how to summon staff help if they are injured or unwell.

All non-School members of staff such as skiing instructors, hotel staff and tour guides should be asked to inform School staff immediately should they receive a complaint of sickness or injury from a pupil. It should not be assumed that the injured or sick child or his/her companions will report competently.

WATER ACTIVITIES

Under no circumstances should swimming, paddling or otherwise entering the waters of river, sea or lake be allowed as an impromptu visit or activity.

SCHOOL CONTACT FOR PARENTS

Because School visits abroad usually occur during School holidays, parents will need to be able to contact someone at home. This would normally be a senior member of staff who should keep in direct contact with the party leader. The party leader, who will have access to MSP, will be able to relay any important messages to parents e.g. changes in itineraries, via the home contact. The home contact should have a copy of all the relevant information: all pupils' home phone numbers, itineraries and particulars of the travel agency and insurances.

SAFETY BRIEFINGS

Pupils should be given regular safety briefings and reminders about activities, itineraries and discipline throughout the holiday.

Last review date: 1.11.24

Reviewer: JMD