

Educational Visits Policy

Introduction to School Visits

Hollygirt School offers a range of educational visits which are regarded as a key part of the learning provision. A wide range of day visits are arranged involving pupils in all year groups; these include theatre, participation in competitions, visits to places to support the curriculum, sports and many others. Other visits involve UK residential stays e.g. The Mill. Others go further afield e.g. skiing or cultural/outdoor activity holidays in Europe and occasionally beyond.

Organisation

The Headmistress, Deputy Head, Senior Teacher (Curriculum), Head of Juniors, Deputy Head of Juniors and Bursar oversee the organisation of all visits. The school has clear guidelines which are followed by members of the teaching staff who organise each visit, they include:

- Authorisation by the Headmistress
- Careful planning and budgeting
- Risk assessment including consideration of first aid, supervision (including ratios and vetting checks), special and medical needs, communication with parents, transport, insurance and emergency procedures
- Evaluation

Pupils may not be permitted to go on residential holidays if there have been concerns about behavioural issues or school fees are in arrears.

Risk Assessment

No visit or activity can be entirely risk free. For each visit the significant hazards must be listed and, for each hazard, there must be an assessment of the risk (likelihood and extent of harm) to those involved. Sufficient control measures must be in place to reduce the risk posed by each hazard to an acceptably low level. Risk assessment can never eliminate risk but it can reduce the likelihood of harm by careful planning of each aspect of the visit. All participants in the visit have a responsibility to behave in such a manner as to maintain the low level of risk for all involved. The visit organiser continuously reassesses the risks as the visit progresses and successful management may necessitate the imposition of different control measures to those originally planned. The party leader and all accompanying staff should be involved in the risk assessment process. Risk assessments for holidays and residential visits will be signed off by a designated member of the Board of Trustees.

The Organisers

The school relies on the goodwill of those staff that regularly organise visits many of which take place at weekends and during the school holidays. The organisation of a visit is a considerable individual burden; teachers' unions are inclined to discourage their members from such undertakings for fear of litigation in the event of a mishap.

The school has high expectations of all those who are involved in visits i.e. pupils, parents and staff.

Expectations of Pupils

- To co-operate fully at all times and carefully follow instructions and guidelines
- At no time should other party members be put at risk
- Civilised behaviour is expected
- No individual's behaviour should make excessive demands on staff
- A pupil with specific medical or other needs will be included in the risk assessment and must adhere carefully to control measures in place to ensure their safety
- Any pupil whose behaviour falls short of expectations may not be allowed to participate in other visits
- A pupil who behaves in an unacceptable manner will be disciplined by staff and may be withdrawn from the activity or sent home at their parents' expense in accordance with the terms of the code of conduct. Serious misbehaviour may result in suspension or permanent exclusion in accordance with policy.

Expectations of Parents

- All information regarding the visit should be read carefully
- Written consent should always be given
- Contact telephone numbers should be supplied
- Any queries should be raised with the organiser prior to the day of the visit
- Accept that no risk assessment can completely eliminate the risks
- Support staff in a spirit of trust and mutual respect with an expectation of reasonable behaviour from the pupil
- Where applicable, countersign the code of conduct signed by the pupil, especially for trips overnight and overseas.
- Attend any information meetings for visits
- Understand that costs cannot be refunded unless the trip is cancelled by the school

Parents Accompanying a Trip

- Parents who accompany a residential school trip will undergo a DBS check.

Expectations of Organising/Accompanying Staff

- All school guidelines for organising visits will be followed
- Each visit will be carefully planned and costed including considering ratio of staff to pupils and the nature of the activity
- A comprehensive and specific risk assessment will be carried out and discussed with all members of the party including pupils
- Insurance documentation will be checked with the Bursar and a copy of the relevant sections should be taken if necessary

- Letters to parents will be approved by the Headmistress prior to distribution
- Necessary skills should be acquired such as first aid or leadership
- Inexperienced staff should learn from those with past experience of visit organisation
- A discussion will be held with senior staff for any pupils whose presence may cause concern
- For overseas visits an information meeting will be organised
- The organiser will set clear behavioural guidelines which are communicated effectively to pupils and regularly monitored
- Post-visit the organiser and relevant staff will evaluate the visit and make any relevant suggestions for the future
- Emergency procedures as described in the guidelines for staff will be made known to all accompanying staff. Contact details and necessary permission for emergency medical treatment should be carried in the event of parents being unobtainable

Expectations of SLT

- The Headmistress must give formal approval for each visit
- A member of SLT will act as a point of contact for each visit which involves overnight stays or takes place at weekends or during school holidays
- Sufficient support will be given to the visit organisers
- Organisers will be encouraged attendance at relevant training such as first aid

Evolve

During the school year 2020-21 a new process of Risk Assessment for OSV and residentials will be embedded. This bought in online system will ensure that there is the correct internal and external scrutiny of any 'risky' activities involving pupils. This process will eventually be spread throughout all activity risk assessment at Hollygirt School

Expectations of the Trustees

A Trustee will sign off the Risk Assessment for all holidays and residentials

Covid – 19 and OSV. OSV's will only take place if a thorough assessment of Covid -19 risk has occurred alongside the normal process of risk assessment

This policy has been read and reviewed by the Chair of the Trustees.

Updated July 2020