



Educational Visits Policy

2011-12

This policy applies to Early Years Foundation Stage, Junior School and Senior School.

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. Kingswood or Brecon Beacons. Others go further afield e.g. skiing or cultural/outdoor activity holidays in Europe and occasionally beyond.

Organisation

The Headmistress, Deputy Head, Head of Juniors, Bursar and Health & Safety Coordinator 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 (and Trustees)
- 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 risks as the visit progresses and successful management may necessitate the imposition of different control measures to those originally planned. All participants should be involved in the risk assessment process.

The Organisers

The school relies on the good will of those staff that regularly organise visits many of which take place at weekends and during the 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 in all public places
- 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 her 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 her parents' expense in accordance with the terms of the code of conduct. Serious misbehaviour may result in suspension or permanent exclusion in accordance with the school's policy.

Expectations of Parents

- All information regarding the visit should be carefully read
- Written consent should always be given
- Phone contact 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
- For overseas, attend the information meetings

Expectations of Organising/Accompanying Staff

- All school guidelines for organising visits should be followed
- Each visit should be carefully planned
- A comprehensive and specific risk assessment should be carried out and discussed with all members of the party including pupils
- Insurance documentation should be checked with the Bursar and a copy of the relevant sections should be taken if necessary
- Necessary skills should be acquired such as first aid or leadership
- Inexperienced staff should learn from those with past experience of visit organisation
- Discuss with senior staff any pupils whose presence may cause concern
- For overseas visits, organise an information meeting
- Set clear behavioural guidelines which are communicated effectively to pupils and regularly monitored
- Post-visit the organiser and relevant staff should evaluate the visit and make any relevant suggestions for the future
- Emergency procedures as described in the guidelines for staff should be 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 SMT

- The Headmistress must give formal approval for each visit
- A member of SMT will act as a point of contact for each visit which involves overnight stays or takes place at weekends or during holidays
- Give sufficient support to visit organisers
- Encourage and facilitate attendance at relevant training such as in first aid

Expectations of the Trustees

- The overall responsibility for all health and safety matters including school visits lies with the Trustees
- A Trustee must sign to give approval for any overseas visit

Unchanged August 2011