

HINCHINGBROOKE SCHOOL



Policy Statement on **EDUCATIONAL VISITS**

Drawn up by: DHB
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Revised:

STATEMENT RELATING TO AIMS AND IMPLEMENTATION OF HINCHINGBROOKE SCHOOL'S EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY

AIM

The Governing Body of Hinchingsbrooke School is supportive of the inclusion of educational visits in the school curriculum and has a legal obligation to ensure that the Cambridgeshire County Council's Educational Visits Policy is met.

As part of its responsibility for the general conduct of the school the governing body has:

- Ensured that guidance is available and followed (from LA/DSCF) to inform the school's policy on Educational Visits. This includes full parental consent, investigation of parental complaints and discussing and reviewing procedures including emergency plans/systems.
- Ratified the Educational Visits policy.
- Will continue to notify the LA of planned participation in visits abroad and to seek approval for adventure activities.
- Assured itself that the appropriate risk management procedures are in place.

1 Overview

Staff at this School organise and lead an enormous number of visits; students have access to a wide variety of places and experiences and their education is enriched as a result.

Staff and students also derive great enjoyment as well as value from visits and we believe that enjoyment is a very important part of a student's education.

However, organising a school visit is a very serious responsibility and it is vital that staff understand and observe the School Policy and the County Policy – "Learning Beyond the Classroom" (2005 Edition), the DCFS Guidance and specifically, where appropriate, the handbook "Group Safety at the Water Margins". Copies of each document are obtainable from School Offices, the Languages Department, PE Department and one is kept by the LG link. The member of LG with responsibility for visits is the Deputy Head i/c Ethos. The County Policy and Guidance strikes the right balance and meets all current statutory requirements. As a result County will support staff who, despite careful adherence to their guidance, encounter difficulties.

In reading both the School Policy and the County Policy note must be taken of three key words. These are "must", "should" and "ought". Trip organisers need to be aware of the weight of these words.

- "Must" should be taken as mandatory and particular attention paid to the advice.
- "Should" implies strong advice but less than mandatory; departures from the advice having to be justifiable in the event of a problem arising.
- "Ought" means organisers need to think very carefully before following a different course but local circumstances, if objectively assessed, may justify a different course of action.

2 Planning a Visit (Plan, Do & Review)

Most day visits and all residential visits are approved by the Deputy Head i/c Ethos and the Ethos Governors at the end of the previous academic year.

Staff considering arranging an additional day visit during the year should discuss it in department/year team first, then complete an Initial Application Form and forward to Deputy

Head of Ethos for approval. Confirmation of approval will come via e-mail from the EVC. The visit will be added to the approved list of visits for the year.

The Visit Leader must

- i) meet with the EVC to discuss their visit before proceeding further.
- ii) refer to the County Guidance (Learning Beyond the Classroom) and
- iii) complete the appropriate documentation (see below), now accessible on the staff intranet.

The EVC can 'sign-off' the visit on receipt of

- i) the completed paperwork
- ii) a copy of the letter to parents and
- iii) a list of participating students (with emergency contact numbers) included.

For visits abroad, or including adventure, all paperwork must be completed **at least 4 weeks** before departure because it must be forwarded to the County Outdoor Education Adviser for approval; for all other visits, **just one week** in advance.

Forms to be completed (not all items apply to each visit)

Item	Action
Initial Application Form	Only required if visit is not already approved by Governors and included on the calendar
Data Form (<i>all visits</i>)	Essential record – includes Insurance Copy to EVC + Accounts
Risk Assessment (<i>all visits</i>)	Completed copy to EVC and accompanying staff
LA Checklist 1 (<i>all visits</i>)	Completed copy to EVC
LA Checklist 2 (<i>adventure activities only</i>)	Completed copy to EVC
LA 2A (OE2007) <i>to request OEA approval. (For visits abroad &/or including adventure)</i>	Copy to EVC at least a month prior to departure.
LA Checklist 3 (<i>Visits Abroad only</i>)	Completed copy to EVC
Hinchingbrooke checklist – (<i>all visits</i>)	Completed copy to EVC
Review/Evaluation Form – (<i>all visits</i>)	Completed copy to EVC
Accident/Incident Form	Completed copy to EVC

Following a visit, leaders are required to complete a Review. All paperwork is retained on file for 7 years.

3 Informing Parents

Parents must be informed by letter about any School visit, including day visits. Model letters and examples of recent letters about School visits are available from the EVC. Letters should be seen by the LG link before distribution.

Parents must be asked for the medical needs of their child on any educational visit and these must be recorded on the list of participants.

(Specimen letters for trips available from EVC)

4 Finance

School trips mainly fit into 3 categories:

- Compulsory Fieldwork
- Curriculum Related (including Exchanges)
- Recreational

The following charges for supply cover should be applied:

- Recreational Trips, including Day Trips: Student payments should fully cover all Supply Costs. These should be calculated at £75 per day for the first member of staff and £125 for a second member of staff.
- Curriculum related (including Exchanges and all residential trips): Students may make a voluntary contribution based on costs calculated at £75 per day for the first member of staff and £125 for a second member of staff.
- Compulsory Field Work: No cover charges should be made to students.

Whether a trip or visit is organised by a Department or a Year-Based team, the HoD or the HoY should inform the Accounts Office and discuss the management of the arrangements with them. Early discussion is essential so that proper arrangements may be made well in advance to cover deposits, emergency funding, foreign currency etc. Usually, a separate, temporary fund will be set up. Collected money should be banked as soon as possible.

Staff should note the legal requirements of the **Charging and Remission Policy (Revised 2008)** on the staff intranet.

We should try to provide a range of visits to suit the varied financial circumstances of our range of student backgrounds. Some financial assistance can be offered from School Fund in cases of hardship but early requests are needed, and no promises made until permission is given by KN and the Leadership Group. From time to time, the school staff will help organise events with students to raise money to build up the School Fund to a viable level.

The Foundation may be approached for Bursaries for students in years 9 - 13 (see Clerk to Governors). Students entitled to free school meals are able to claim a pre-packed school lunch for a trip. The organiser should liaise with the Hospitality/Commercial Manager.

A flow chart template is available from the EVC to guide trip organisers on the charging policy of their visit. Careful consideration with her is needed on the nature of charging and she can supply suitable templates for clear explanation to parents/carers.

5 Insurance

The County insurance policy insures staff against being sued as a result of their actions: it does not automatically cover students on visits. Additional personal accident insurance for students **must** be taken out – the cost is currently in the region of 10 pence per student per day. It is recommended that Travel Insurance is taken out for all organised trips. Once a visit has been approved, staff organising the trip should complete the **School Visits Insurance Section** included with the **Educational Data Form 2** together with any further information needed.

If the organiser has made insurance arrangements, eg with a tour operator, then clearly the additional school visits insurance will not be necessary. However, please check any such cover carefully to ensure that it is sufficient and at least comparable with the School's Insurance.

Parents should be fully informed about insurance arrangements. For visits abroad and/or high risk activities, parents must receive a copy of the insurance policy.

6 Safety & Discipline

The safety and well-being of all individuals, staff and students, on visits is of paramount importance. Leaders **MUST** read Section 2 of "Learning Beyond the Classroom" for guidance.

Important points to remember:

- (a) All groups must carry a first aid kit, available from the Medical Room.
- (b) Leaders should be provided with written details of special medical requirements of students, eg epilepsy. In addition to the information provided by parents on the consent forms Admin or GSA's are able to print out from SIMS a list of the medical conditions of all students on a visit.
- (c) Break down large groups into smaller groups, reporting to a named adult.
- (d) On ships, in airports or large buildings, the group should have a fixed base or reporting point.
- (e) Fire: fire arrangements and procedures must be ascertained and clearly explained to students. No smoking, especially in bedrooms, upstairs rooms or tents. If the journey includes an overnight stop, a practice fire drill must be conducted as soon as is reasonably possible and should be before bedtime on the day of arrival. Rules regarding locking of rooms must be considered and made clear.
- (f) Stress the importance of appropriate clothing and footwear.
- (g) Free time should be limited or structured according to the age and maturity of students, and the location.
- (h) On return, any serious breach of discipline must be reported **immediately** to HoD/HoY or Head of Guidance and parents **must** be informed.

Group control and discipline is an important factor in ensuring safety:

- Clear instructions to students.
- Regular headcounts.
- Positioning an adult at the head and tail of a line of students, moving through the streets for example.
- Staff positioned at the front and rear of a coach.
- A reasonable standard of dress and personal cleanliness, whether the party is in uniform or not.
- **No consumption of alcohol is allowed on any school residential educational visit, apart from a modest share of table wine at the visit leader's discretion.**
- **At all times, there should be the required levels of supervision by alcohol-free staff.**
- **It is expected that single day visits will be alcohol-free.**

7 Contact List

- (a) A list of students and staff on a visit must be lodged with HoD/HoY (as appropriate) and a member of the Leadership Group. This will contain full names and contacts for any emergency.

- (b) Visits which extend beyond the school day: the organiser must establish a contact point with a member of the Leadership Group (usually LG link or HT) and have their phone number to use in any emergency. The LG member must have contact details of all members of the visit party and itinerary.
- (c) Details of the above to be with the emergency school contact at least 48 hours prior to departure of visit/trip.

8 Staffing Ratios

UK: One adult per 15 students, with a minimum of two adults. The group leader must be a qualified teacher or other approved person employed by the LA. In mixed parties, one male and one female adult. This applies up to and including Year 11 students.

For Year 11 students the ratio is the same for camps and journeys, but for day visits Year 12 and 13 may be accompanied by one adult for up to 20 students of one sex. Mixed sex groups still require one male and one female adult.

Sixth Form: Day visits of a routine nature may be made unaccompanied if authorised by a Deputy Head or the Headteacher and advised to parents.

Abroad: The School Policy is that visits abroad should be accompanied by a minimum of one adult to 15 students. Foreign Language Assistants may accompany trips, but do not count as adults in this calculation.

Volunteer Adults: At least half of the adults accompanying an educational visit should be staff based at Hinchbrook (teachers or other members of staff). Organisers are encouraged to use other adults to meet (or exceed) the minimum staffing requirements. HSA volunteers should be able to provide assistance. Sixth Formers (over 18) may also be used sparingly. Any volunteer helpers should be properly briefed on their responsibilities and especially on safety procedures and must be CRB checked if volunteering regularly or on a residential visit.

Exchange Parties: Staff organising exchanges should send a list of host families to the Child Protection Co-ordinator for his information. This is to ensure that we do not place a visiting youngster in a home which is potentially unsuitable.

Full details on staffing ratios are in the County Guidelines in "Learning Beyond the Classroom" Section 2 D.

9 Involvement of Head Teacher & Governors

It is the duty of the Headteacher and Governors to ensure that the County Policy on School visits is observed and review it at regular intervals.

The role of the Headteacher is to ensure that the School and LA Policies are implemented and that all activities are properly planned, appropriately supervised and risk assessed by a competent person.

Particularly:

- to ensure that tasks are delegated to the EVC as appropriate;
- that the visit leader is appropriately experienced and a competent staff member;
- the suitability, number and competency of all adults accompanying or instructing;
- that adequate child protection measures are in place;

- proper and effective support structures are in place in the event of a difficulty or emergency including means of contacting the Education officer and the LA;
- notification approval of the visit to the LA, where required, and appropriate insurance cover is in place;
- visits are evaluated to inform future visits;
- the role of the Governing Body is to ensure that guidance is available and followed (from LA/DCFS) to inform the school's policy, practice, and procedures relating to health and safety of students on Educational Visits.

Particularly:

- ensure that a policy exists for the co-ordination of visits and their effective and safe management;
- assure itself that the appropriate risk management procedures are in place;
- ensure the LA is notified where appropriate;
- determine what types of visits may require their specific attention or notification;
- determine its procedures in responding to a major emergency (Critical Incident Policy);
- have a Charging and Remissions Policy;
- to appoint an EVC within the staff;
- to consider and implement the appropriate advice set out in Section 1 Paragraphs 12 –19 of the LA Policy.

In most cases, the Governing Body's role is to ensure that the school has effective systems in place to enable the Governing Body to feel confident that the various requirements can be met. Further, ensure that the Headteacher and EVC have taken all reasonable and practicable measures to include students with special educational needs or medical needs on a visit. To enable this:

- The Premises Committee will review the Health and Safety issues surrounding all trips.
- The Ethos Committee will assess the programme of trips on an annual basis giving due consideration to inclusion and the overall menu and coverage of the school curriculum.
- All trips costing more than £100 will be brought to the committee during the summer term for approval for the following academic year.
- Trips under £100 can be brought to the committee throughout the year.

10 Functions of the Educational Visits Co-ordinator

- Work as delegated by the Headteacher/Governors/LA.
- Ensure the competence of the staff and volunteers to lead or supervise a visit.
- Organise the training of leaders and others accompanying a visit.
- Ensure CRB Checks are in place.
- Ensure that parental consent (or refusal) is obtained.
- Organise the emergency arrangements and ensure emergency contact for each visit.
- Keep records of individual visits including accident/incident/near miss reports.
- Review systems and monitor practice.

11 Minibus Transport

Anyone arranging a visit involving the use of the School Minibus **MUST** read Section 6 of the County Policy Document, "Learning Beyond the Classroom".

Further advice is also obtainable from the Council guidance document "Minibuses: Regulations and Operational Guidelines".

All drivers must have completed the minibus driver training scheme and have qualified for and hold a valid "Council Minibus Driver Permit".

Note:

Driver fatigue or distraction has been highlighted in recent minibus incidents nationally.

- Journeys not exceeding 1 hour, a single teacher/driver **may** be considered adequate, subject to the nature of the group and the driver's ability and confidence to manage that group.
- Journeys involving between 1 hour and 4 hours driving, a second responsible adult should be present.
- For journeys involving over 4 hours of driving, the second adult should be a suitably qualified driver (minibus permit).
- For journeys involving over 4 hours, at least one of the drivers should have had a rest period of at least one hour prior to the start of the journey.
- For journeys involving over 4 hours driving appropriate rest periods as defined in Section 6 (12) of "Learning Beyond the Classroom" **must** be taken.

Organisers of visits may wish to discuss timings and allocation of drivers with a member of the Leadership Group.

Overloading: The minibus is overloaded if the total weight (bus + fuel + passengers + luggage) exceeds the **maximum laden weight** for the vehicle. This weight is printed on the vehicle and in the handbook. For guidance, the vehicle should only carry passengers, driver and hand luggage.

The use of a trailer greatly increases the maximum laden weight and is **essential** when transporting a full load of older students plus luggage.

LIABILITY FOR DRIVING AN OVERLADEN VEHICLE RESTS WITH THE DRIVER

Seat Belts: Students and staff travelling in mini-buses must wear seat belts by law.

12 Visits to Farms

Ensure that your visit complies with Department of Health Guidelines – printed as an appendix to this policy.

13 Forms & Checklists

Initial Application Forms, Data Forms, Visit Checklist 1, Risk Assessment Forms and Hinchingsbrooke's Ed.Vis.Checklist 3 **must** be completed prior to **any** visit taking place; Adventure Checklists 2 and/or 3 and LA 2A (OE2005) should be completed as appropriate. The Hinchingsbrooke School – Visits Checklist must be completed.

Also, the following checklists as in the EdViz Folder and in the School's "Educational Visits Guidance" should be used.

- 1 Checklist 1 : Preliminary information to Parents and Students.
- 2 Checklist 2 : Final Details for Parents and Students.
- 3 Checklist 3 : On the Journey/On Arrival at the Destination/On return

The Review and Evaluation Form must be completed and returned within 2 weeks after the visit has taken place.

Sub Appendices Not Included, but may be found on the Staff Intranet – Procedures for School Visits:

- Administration Notes for Visit organisers
- Hinchingsbrooke Initial Application Form
- Hinchingsbrooke Data Form
- Hinchingsbrooke Checklist 3 for all visits
- LA Checklist 1
- LA Checklist 2 Venture Approval
- LA Checklist 2A Venture Approval
- LA Checklist 3 Travel Abroad
- Review and Evaluation Form
- Accident Form
- D of E Essential Paperwork Guide
- Planning a Visit Mindmap
- Thinking – Risk Assessment Mindmap
- Parental Permission Letter
- Risk Assessment Notes
- Hinchingsbrooke School Visits Guidance
- Staff Record of Experience
- Updated Travel Guide - Vehicles