



Holmer Green Senior School
Educational Visits Policy

June 2025

Aims and purposes of Educational Visits

Holmer Green Senior School has a strong commitment of adding to the culture capital of all students, with extending learning beyond the statutory school day and beyond the school premises.

Each year the school will arrange activities that take place off the school site, in/or out of school hours, which support the aims of the school and the curriculum.

The Governing Body has given its approval to the following types of activities being arranged in support of the educational aims of the school (to include, but not limited to):

- Out of hours clubs (music, drama, art, science, sport, homework etc.)
- School teams, including sport, drama and dance teams
- Local, national and international visits to places and events of significant educational value
- Residential visits
- Adventure Activities: Duke of Edinburgh, team building activities, skiing

Criteria

Proposed educational trips during taught curriculum time (i.e. "the school day") are subject to the following criteria:

- Limited to no more than two per department per academic year
- Limited to no more than one per school day
- Any cover generated will in the first instance be covered internally by the department
- All Educational Visits will be referenced in departmental Medium-Term Schemes of Learning
- All Educational Visits will require a period of notice of at least two calendar months, and completed costings and risk assessments
- Trips should be offered to all students, including SEN/D students, students eligible for Pupil Premium funding and low prior attaining students on entry, as shown in the "Equality Impact Assessment" form.

Proposed trips outside of taught curriculum time are approved at the discretion of the EVC and will require completed costings and risk assessments, including safeguarding checks.

Please note that departments are not obliged to offer educational trips and should not do so unless the proposed trip meets the above criteria and are of significant educational value.

Approval Procedure and Consent

The Governing Body has delegated the consideration and approval of educational visits and other offsite activities to the Headteacher. The Headteacher has nominated a member of staff as the Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) and the Governing Body has approved this appointment.

Plans for trips are to be handed in to Kimberley Joynson, Deputy Headteacher, in charge of trips, no less than two months before the date in question. Please see the latest Procedures for Booking a School Trip document for guidance.

Educational visits are approved or declined by each week. Educational visits are communicated to staff via the Weekly Bulletin.

Where external contractors are involved in organising all or part of the visit the contract will be made with the school on behalf of the pupils. All payments for the visit will be made through the school's accounts.

For out of hour's clubs, school teams and nearby visits parents/ carers will be asked to sign a general letter of consent for participation in these activities when their son/daughter enters the school. Parents/ carers will be given the timetable for the activities that pupils are involved in and will be informed, as soon as possible, if an activity has to be cancelled.

For any visit lasting a day or more parents/ carers will be asked to sign a letter, which consents to their child taking part. The school has a standard model letter which should be used for this purpose.

As part of the parents/ carers consent they will be fully informed of the activities and arrangements for the visit. For all residential visits, parents/ carers will be invited to a briefing meeting where they can ask for clarification of any aspect of the itinerary and organisation of the visit.

The school has separate policies for 'Charging and Remissions' and 'Diversity' which applies to all educational visits.

Staffing

The school recognises the key role of accompanying staff in ensuring the highest standards of learning, student conduct, safeguarding and safety on a school visit.

The level of supervision must realistically reflect the purpose, location and nature of the visit, the age and maturity of the pupils and any special needs.

Visits are planned in accordance with the principles of effective supervision. When deciding staff to pupil supervision ratios, the EVC will consider factors such as staff experience, the potential risks and making adequate provision to allow for emergencies. Some activities may be unaccompanied or involve a sole teacher in charge, for example a small group of student who are all over the age of 16 taking an educational visit as part of their A Level course. In all cases, we make staffing details clear to parents when they are notified of the visit.

The selection of staff for educational visits will be a key priority in the initial approval of any proposed visit.

Where it is appropriate the school will ensure that DBS screening is available for volunteer adults assisting with educational activities and visits.

The school does not support additional people accompanying educational visits who are not pupils at the school or part of the agreed staff complement. This may include family members accompanying visits if the governing body is not satisfied that there is an educational benefit for the pupils.

The appointed Group Leader will be fully supported in the tasks required to arrange the visit. This will include, as necessary, making time or finances available to conduct an exploratory-visit, briefing teachers and other staff, accessing training courses, speaking with members of SEND Department and Safeguarding Team to ensure all students needs and circumstances are considered during the visit, reviewing and evaluating the visit or identifying time when the leader and EVC might work in partnership to undertake planning and risk assessments.

Staff will adhere to the Staff Alcohol and Drugs Policy when conducting any school trip or activity. This Policy states: Staff are not permitted to drink alcohol, smoke or take any form of recreational drug whilst on duty in any of the above forms of supervision.

Safeguarding of Students

The group leader who holds responsibility for supervising and conducting the visit, will carry out the risk assessment. The group leader may need to carry out a pre-trip visit to think through what needs to be considered when they carry out the risk assessment.

The risk assessment will need consider both health and safety issues and child protection issues.

Health and Safety

When carrying out the health and safety risk assessment for the trip the trip leader should consider:

- Identify the dangers: which are general and which are site specific?
- Identify who may be at risk.
- Consider the likelihood of the risk materialising, and its severity. Put precautions in place.
- Record everything, and identify control measures.
- In the case of visits to outdoor pursuits centres, check that the centre has its own health and safety policies and advice in place and ensure that the centre's staff are suitably qualified.
- Ensure equipment for activities are both suitable and safe.
- Assess any likely difficulties that might be encountered in the event of an emergency.

Child Protection

This section of the educational visits policy links to the schools safeguarding policy.

Risk assessment, in respect of child protection, should cover the adults who will be accompanying children and young people, the adults that they will meet at centres they visit and/or places they will stay and the risks posed by individual children and young people to others.

Centres and external companies providing support and activities for students should be asked to provide evidence that their staff have been DBS checked.

Where it is known that a student going on the trip may be a risk to themselves or other on the visit, an individual risk assessment should be carried out. Trip leaders should consult with the Safeguarding Team, Pastoral Team and SEND Department to ensure they are aware of any concerns regarding a child. These teams will be able to support the trip leader in devising a risk assessment. If it is determined that the risk posed by a student can not be suitably managed, the student will be withdrawn from the visit.

The expectations of Students and Parents

The school has a clear code of conduct for school visits based on the school's Behaviour Policy. This code of conduct will be part of the condition of booking by the parents, and include the potential of withdrawal of a pupil prior to and during the visit if such conduct would have led to a temporary exclusion from school. The school will state the implication for parents/carers (associated costs, collection of child) as part of the signed agreements from parents/ carers.

If a student fails to meet the school Code of Conduct during the visit, then the student will be sent home. The care of the rest of the group will be considered to be equally important as the safe return of the suspended student. Any costs incurred for the visit, e.g. theatre tickets, transport, etc. may not be reimbursed. Parents/ carers will be required to collect their child from the school, transport arrival / departure point, or from the visit centre, depending on the supervisory cover available.

Mobile phones, social media, internet and contacting home

Communication by various means has become a part of society and as such allows instant access throughout the world. This can have a variety of effects on visits, particularly when looking at developing independence and confidence skills. It can also produce great problems in the event of an emergency.

Problems for group organisation

- Young people communicating wrong or limited information in the event of a problem.
- Young people informing others of emergencies, particularly parents of those who may be seriously injured or killed.
- Communicating false or misleading information such as 'they are lost' when they are not prepared to use the skills they have.
- Young people receiving information of a troubling nature direct to their mobile phone without the information being passed through the leaders who would be prepared and able to counsel if the information had come through them.
- Parents receiving distressing information through the mobile phone calls or emails of young people which may put the leadership at risk of negligence and liable to prosecution or claims of damages.

Risk management and emergency contacts

Mobile phones are not permitted on off-site activities and will be confiscated by members of staff. Exceptions to this must be presented by the trip leader to the Headteacher for approval.

- The trip leader will hold a school issued trip mobile phone.
- The trip leader will arrange a "home base" emergency contact person who will hold a school issued trip mobile phone.
- Arrangements must be established by the trip leader which allow young people to communicate with their families in problem situations to alleviate worry.
- Arrangements must be established by the trip leader through the "home base" emergency contact to allow information to be sent first to the families of those involved in any incident, before the families receive the information by other sources.
- Families must also agree to pass all information that may be distressing to a member of the party through the "home base" emergency contact. The emergency contact will then contact the trip leader who will then have the time to prepare the person and the rest of the group. They will also

be prepared to assist the young person rather than suddenly being faced with a distraught member of the group and no knowledge of the cause.

Emergency Procedures

The school will appoint a member of the SLT as the emergency school contact for each visit. All major incidents should immediately be relayed to this person, especially those involving injury or that might attract media attention.

The Group Leader will leave full details of all pupils and accompanying adults on the visit with the emergency school contact, including the home contact details of parents/guardians and next-of-kin, as appropriate.

The Group Leader will take with them a copy of the Buckinghamshire Grave Emergency Procedure.

All incidents and accidents occurring on a visit will be reported back through the school systems.

The school will have emergency funding available to support the Group Leader in an emergency.

Evaluation

All visits will be evaluated by the Group Leader with the EVC. A short evaluation report will be made available for the Governing Body.

The EVC will ensure that any risk assessments on the trip are dated as having been evaluated and/or modified as a result.

The Group Leader is responsible for presenting a financial account for the visit which will be audited as part of the schools' procedures.

Approved by Governors: June 2025

To be reviewed: June 2027