



The High School  
Leckhampton

## Off-Site Visits Policy

**Reviewing Member of Staff:** Mr Chris Newman  
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The High School Leckhampton has formally adopted, through the Governing Body, the Gloucestershire 'Guidance for Off-Site Visits'.

### 1. Aims and Purpose of Off-Site Visits

The High School Leckhampton has a strong commitment to the added value of learning outside the classroom and beyond the school premises.

Each year the school arranges a number of activities that take place at various times, off the school site, which support the aims of the school in ensuring a broad and balanced curriculum. The range of activities to which the governors have given its approval includes:

- Out of hours Clubs (music, drama, art, science, sport, homework etc.)
- Supporting of school sports teams in competitions and events
- Regular local visits (places of worship, swimming, other local amenities, and local festivals)
- Day visits for particular groups
- Residential visits
- Overseas visits
- Adventurous Activities
- Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme
- Opportunities for Outdoor Learning

## 2. Procedures

### *Gloucestershire eVisit*

This is a central database which Gloucestershire SHE (Safety, Health & Environment) use to track and authorise residential and hazardous trips. The system stores centrally all of the trips and visits details and teachers upload risk assessments, staff contact details, trip overviews, coach providers and insurance details.

#### **2.1 Pre-approval for visits**

The governors and the Headteacher have delegated the consideration and approval of off-site visits and activities to Chris Newman in his capacity as Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC).

Before a visit is advertised to parents, the EVC will approve the initial plan in conjunction with the Senior Leadership Team. Staff proposing the visit will demonstrate awareness of the major risks posed by the trip by completing a preliminary risk assessment in collaboration with the EVC. There is a digital proposal form found in SharePoint for this purpose. New overseas visits will additionally be approved by the Governing Body, delegated to the Headteacher to oversee.

The EVC will approve the completed plan and risk assessments for the visit before departure, seeking the necessary clearance for residential, international, and potentially hazardous trips from the Local Authority SHE Unit.

New foreign off-site activities or residential visits must be approved by both the Headteacher and the EVC. A formal written proposal must be presented by the Trip Leader, with major risks for the visit outlined within the proposal, the proposal should outline the case for the visit and if recommended by EVC this can be formally approved by the Governing Body, who delegate this to the Headteacher.

To assist the approval process, a yearly overview of all trips will be provided by the EVC to Senior Leadership Team, to ensure decisions are made in an informed manner, with consideration of equity between departments. Trustees retain the option to cancel a trip if these processes are not followed. The EVC will approve the visit and generate a log-in for the eVisit system which the Trip Leader now has to work from. The Trip Leader will need to change the password and complete personal details upon first use.

All generic risk assessments and other documentation for trips can be found in the document library of eVisit. The Trip Leader must upload this and attach it to the application via eVisit and submits. The EVC checks the paperwork and sends it directly to the Gloucestershire SHE to approve if the trip is residential or hazardous.

#### **2.2 Approval and Planning**

The information on SharePoint includes:

- Application for approval of an educational visit form
- Examples of letters for parents with Medical Consent Form
- Links to generic Risk Assessment documents for the trip or visit
- Public Liability Documentation
- Checklists for Trip Leader

## **2.3 Financial Viability**

All visits and trips need to be financially viable. Staff cover implications must be considered when planning the trip and advice should be taken from the Finance Department.

Where a visit takes place during school hours and supports the normal curriculum, parents should be asked to make a voluntary financial contribution towards the cost of any trip; however, children must not be denied a place should parents decline to make such a contribution. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund a visit, then the visit should be cancelled.

The school will endeavour to support students who find it difficult to meet the cost of trips. Leaders of trips will be able to identify students within their cohort who may find it difficult to meet the cost of trips and they will be able to provide advice and support about how to access additional funding where it is required.

In the event of a student wishing to attend a non-core trip, and the Parents/Carers being unable to afford the full cost of a non-core trip, a request for help with funding should be submitted to the EVC. This should outline the reasons behind the request and the expected benefits of the student attending the trip. Each request will be considered on a case by case basis and will result in either full, partial or no funding being offered by the school.

## **3. Risk Assessment**

The appointed Trip 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/or other staff, accessing training courses, reviewing and evaluating the visit or identifying time when the leader and EVC might work in partnership to undertake planning and risk assessments.

### **• Risk Assessments**

The Trip Leader will identify the risks from any activity and take appropriate steps to ensure all participants are safe. Good practice, precautions and safety measures will be taken and this will be recorded in a risk assessment. Examples of risk assessment paperwork for almost all trips to be undertaken by schools are found on the Gloucestershire eVisit portal. Whilst on trips, it is expected that all supervising staff undertake a dynamic risk assessment to anticipate hazards as and when they arise.

### **• Deadlines**

All day trips and non-hazardous trips are required to have paperwork submitted via the Gloucestershire eVisit portal. This must be submitted 5 working days before departure. The trip may face cancellation if this deadline is not met.

Gloucestershire SHE must be informed of residential, hazardous or foreign visits and will require 14 days' notice. The trip may face cancellation if this deadline is not met.

### **• External Activity Providers**

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 students. All payments for the visit will be made through the Balcarras Trust accounting SCOPay system.

The Trip Leader will make appropriate checks before committing the school to the contract. This will include seeking assurances about Health and Safety and any accreditation and licensing. By outsourcing the use of an external provider, the responsibility for the provision of hazardous activities lies with them.

If Trip Leaders are in doubt about the credentials of a company being used then an outdoor provider form can be completed and sent for checking to the Local Authority and should be done by the trip's organiser. Trip organisers should work with the EVC to ascertain whether external providers have been approved by the Adventure Activities Licensing Authority (AALA) or hold a Learning Outside of the Classroom (LOtC) awards.

#### **4. Consent**

- **Parental Consent for trips and visits that take place during school hours**

Written consent from parents is not specifically required for those students who take part in off-site activities organised during the school day. The school will take reasonable steps to ensure that parents are informed of trips taking place during this time, for example by sending a letter home which explains where the students will be, why they are going and what special arrangements have been made around transport. Parents can also be informed about trips taking place during the day by information being placed on the school website or by using the school's social media channels.

- **Parental Consents for Sports Fixtures**

The school will take reasonable steps to ensure that parents are informed of sports fixtures by information being placed on the school website or by this information being shared on the school's social media channels or sent home via students or via email. The P.E. department will use the VLE to notify students and parents about fixtures.

The parental signature on the data checking sheet completed annually in the first term, gives permission for students to attend school fixtures and travel to and from them without further permission being sought.

The data checking sheet also details any medical concerns and it is the responsibility of the parent to inform school when any details change. Responsibility for the updated medical needs of students lies with the parent. For home fixtures, staff will have access to the management information system if contact with home is required in a case of emergency. For away fixtures the responsible staff member is required to take with them home contact and medical details for all pupils and a contact number for the EVC. In the case of an emergency the member of staff would contact the EVC if any help or decision making is required.

- **Parental Consent for Residential or Foreign trips**

Consent from parents is required for those students who take part in residential or foreign trips. This will take the form of a tick-box option on the SCOPay system, to reduce the likelihood of paperwork being misplaced. The school will take reasonable steps to ensure that parents are fully informed of the activities and arrangements for the visit. Parents can also be informed about residential or foreign trips by information being placed on the school website or by this information being shared on the school's social media channels. It is good practise for a parental meeting for residential and foreign visits to be held so that parents

can be briefed, so that they can ask for clarification of any aspect of the itinerary and organisation of the visit.

## **5. Emergency Medical Situations**

- **The use of First Aid on trips and visits**

There is not a legal requirement to have first aider on every school trip or visit. However, we will endeavour to have at least one first aider on school trips and visits. If this is not possible due to staffing considerations, the school can make use of trained first aiders at venues. It may be useful for the Trip Leader to take a first aid kit for minor injuries.

If a medical emergency should arise involving either pupils or accompanying staff, the Trip Leader should seek the help of trained professionals (doctors, nurses, paramedics). If required first aid should be administered by a qualified first aider if present, or by anyone else in the vicinity if not. A member of staff should accompany the patient to hospital whilst other students are supervised by remaining adults in a low-risk environment.

Communication should take place between Trip Leaders and EVC, or Headteacher who will then contact next of kin for the patient to relay information in the first instance. If a prolonged hospital admission is required, arrangements should be made for a parent to come and relieve staff so that they can resume duties on the trip. A written report should be generated by the Trip Leader detailing the circumstances of the event, with information about preceding events and actions taken.

In the case of ALL Parental Consent Forms, parental authority will be requested for students to receive emergency treatment when appropriate, including administration of an anaesthetic or blood transfusion. If parents do not agree to this, the school may decide to withdraw the child from the visit.

- **Using information about special/medical/dietary needs**

The High School Leckhampton maintains information about special educational, medical and dietary needs of all students, which will be referred to by the Trip Leader during the planning of all off-site visits. Parents will be reminded to provide up to date information at regular intervals through the school newsletter. The High School Leckhampton will contact parents at the beginning of each academic year to check that medical and emergency contact information held by the school is accurate and current. This information is updated by parents on a 'data checking sheet', Trip Leaders are required to have a copy of this information with them on the visit they are leading.

It is important that Trips Leaders have this information about special/ medical/ dietary needs of students before the final risk assessment is completed to enable any personal risk assessments to be completed.

Where necessary special arrangements will be made and information will be shared with relevant staff and training provided.

## **6. Expectations**

### **6.1 Responsibilities of the Trip Leader**

For each activity, one member of staff is nominated by the school as Trip Leader. The Trip Leader:

- Must obtain approval, complete the compulsory documentation and get authorisation for the activity from the EVC by submitting the necessary documentation to eVisit
- Liaise with the Finance Department for the Balcarras Trust before the visit can be finally approved and communication with parents begins. Where external contractors are involved in organising all or part of the visit the contract will be made with the school/centre on behalf of the pupils/young people. All payments for the visit will be made through the Finance Department's SCOPay system. After the trip, any monies paid or financial arrangement that are outstanding are settled between the Finance Department and the Trip Leader
- Must be familiar with the place of the visit and carry out a pre-visit risk assessment if necessary or able
- Must consider their own skills and expertise in planning to lead the trip, seek expert advice where appropriate and consider the skills and expertise of other staff taking part. For example – gender mix of staff and students, staff who know the children by sight, a member of staff who is qualified to administer first aid etc.
- Must ensure all parents and staff are fully informed of the details of the trip [E.g. travel dates and times, medical information, emergency procedures etc.]
- Has authority to cancel the visit if necessary
- Must ensure that the students know the standards expected of them
- Carry out on-going risk assessments during the trip/activity
- Has ultimate responsibility for the safety of the group during the visit and has authority from the school to take any necessary action to ensure the safety of the group or any individuals
- Must take copies of the student medical and contact details and the completed trips paperwork with them on the off-site activity - a full check list of items for trip leaders to take with them is available on SharePoint
- Will liaise with the Operations Manager to ensure that DBS screening is carried out for volunteer adults assisting with off-site activities
- Must attend a trip training session with the EVC

- Must follow the policy on Data Protection when handling personal information for staff and students and ensure that trips paperwork has been disposed of confidentially after the trip returns.

## **6.2 Responsibilities of the Trip Leader in the event of an emergency**

The Trip Leader will call for help from the emergency services and stay with affected students. Another teacher or adult will call the school appointed member of the Senior Leadership Team as the first emergency contact. All major incidents and those including any injury must be relayed to this person immediately.

The Senior Leadership Team first emergency contact will notify the parents of the child involved. The Senior Leadership Team first emergency contact may also choose to inform the Headteacher.

It is the responsibility of the group leader to be wary of the use of social media in the area and how students are reacting to the emergency. The group leader will keep a record of any medical treatment which is required during the visit, or of any incidents which occur as a result of this, these will be reviewed with the EVC when the group return.

For those incidents which may attract media attention, the advice of the CEO of Balcarras Trust will be sought by the Senior Leadership Team point of contact. Members of staff on the trip must at no time speak to the media. The school will have emergency funding available to support the Group Leader in an emergency.

## **6.3 Communication between Emergency contacts and the Trip Leader**

The High School Leckhampton will ensure there is appropriate and adequate communication when groups of students are out on Trips and Visits and as such, two members of the Senior Leadership Team will be appointed as the emergency contacts for each visit. All major incidents should immediately be relayed to this person(s), especially those involving injury or that might attract media attention.

The Trip Leader will leave full details of all students and accompanying adults on the visit with the emergency contacts, including the home contact details of parents and next-of-kin, as appropriate.

Parents will be given an emergency contact number for the Trip Leader and this phone will remain turned on at all times in the possession of the Trip Leader so that they can be easily reached.

All incidents and accidents occurring on a visit will be reported back and recorded following normal school procedures for reporting and investigating accidents.

## **6.4 Staffing of Trips and Visits**

The High School Leckhampton recognises the key role of accompanying staff in ensuring the highest standards of learning, challenge and safety on a school visit.

Staff are encouraged and supported to develop their abilities in organising and managing visits. Less experienced members of staff will work alongside more experienced colleagues on visits. The selection of suitably qualified and experienced staff for off-site visits will be a key priority in the initial approval of any proposed visit. Trip Leaders will have been fully



briefed on leading a trip through designated Trips and Visits training in the INSET programme, to be delivered on a yearly basis.

### **6.5 Volunteers**

The High School Leckhampton values and recognises the contribution of volunteer adults and parent helpers assisting with off-site activities and visits. Any volunteer will be approved by both the EVC and Trip Leader and will be entered on the voluntary helpers list kept by the School. They will have read and signed the Volunteers Policy prior to departure. They will be carefully briefed on the scope of their responsibility. The school will ensure that vetting and DBS screening is available for volunteers.

### **6.6 Conduct of Staff & Volunteers**

All staff accompanying students on off-site activities and trips have ultimate responsibility for their safety and are in loco parentis. Staff must show the same standard of care as would apply to a "reasonable parent". All staff accompanying students must be proactive in supervising the students and assisting the group leader.

It is not acceptable for staff to drink alcohol during off-site activities. All staff must be able to take overall responsibility of the group including, if necessary, to legally drive a vehicle or accompany a child to hospital. Personal liability on the part of teachers involved in the event of an accident can arise if they have failed to exercise reasonable care for the health and safety of others by their acts or omissions.

Volunteers should not be left in sole charge of students and should be accompanied.

### **6.7 Expectations of Students and Parents on school trips or visits**

School policies regarding behaviour and conduct apply on all school trips; please refer to Behaviour Policy for further detail. By agreeing for them to attend a trip, parents agree to adhere to the Behaviour Policy whilst students are on that trip. Students are expected to follow all instructions from staff and must stay within the supervised areas as designated by the Trip Leader. Students, whose behaviour is such that the Trip Leader is concerned for their safety, or for that of others, can be withdrawn from any activity. The Trip Leader will consider whether such students should be sent home early and parents will be expected to cover any costs associated with their removal from the trip. Students are not permitted to smoke, vape or consume alcohol and should be aware of the consequences of doing so.

### **6.8 Digital Devices**

Students are able to take digital devices with them on visits but these should remain switched off and in school bags for the duration of the visit unless otherwise directed by the Trip Leader. Mobile devices can be beneficial to students on residential trips as they allow for photography and ease communication issues with parents at home, however, there is no expectation on the part of the school that students have a mobile phone.

Whilst on a residential, students must follow the guidance of the Trip Leader in relation to mobile phone use, restrictions on use may be imposed if the Trip Leader sees that there is a need and mobile phones should be turned off at the allocated 'lights-out' time given. If a Trip Leader wants to collect devices in, so that they are not taken into bedrooms, then they will be stored in a suitable location and should be handed in switched off. Neither the

school, nor the school's insurance policy will be liable for any damage, theft or loss of digital devices whilst on a trip.

## **6.9 Dress**

All students must wear school uniform unless the activity requires specialist clothing or would result in the uniform getting dirty. Permission for non-uniform must be gained from the EVC. Staff must dress appropriately; if students are in uniform, staff should be in normal school dress too.

## **6.10 Consequences**

If students are in breach of the school's Behaviour Policy, school reserves the right to exclude the pupil from future trips and they may face sanctions. The EVC with responsibility for school trips will maintain a list of such students who are not permitted to take part in off-site activities.

## **7. Evaluations**

All visits will be evaluated by the Trips Leader and EVC and feedback provided. The Trips Leader is responsible for presenting of any receipts so a final financial report can be completed by the Finance Manager. The EVC will ensure that any risk assessments on the trip are dated as having been evaluated and or modified as a result. The EVC will provide an annual written summary of all-day visits and residential activities for particular groups undertaken or planned to the Governing Body.

## **8. Review by the Local Authority**

The school is supported in its arrangements for off-site visits by Safety, Health and Environment (SHE) at Gloucestershire County Council. Where necessary the school will seek advice from SHE. All visits that involve an overnight stay, going abroad and any that involve adventurous activities will be notified to SHE prior to departure within **14** days. SHE will provide an independent reassurance check of the plan and the precautions and safety measures that will be taken via the eVisit portal. Any advice provided will be fully considered prior to the trip taking place.

The High School Leckhampton's Off-Site Visit Procedures will be audited by the SHE Unit on an annual basis.

## **9. Links with Other Policies**

- Behaviour Policy
- Volunteers Policy

### ***Rights Respecting School Statement***

*The contents of this policy have been reviewed taking into account The High School Leckhampton's responsibilities as a Rights Respecting School. In particular, our commitment to the following articles of the Convention of The Rights of The Child:*

**Article 28: (Right to Education):** *The Convention places a high value on education. Young people should be encouraged to reach the highest level of education of which they are capable.*

**Article 29: (Goals of Education):** *Children's education should develop each child's personality, talents and abilities to the fullest. It should encourage children to respect others, human rights and their own and other cultures. It should also help them learn to love peacefully, protect the environment and respect other people.*