

Educational Visits Policy

Heathcote School and Science College



Approved by the Governing Board:	Summer 2025
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To be reviewed:	Every 3 years
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Next review due:	Summer 2028
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Other Documentation

This Policy should be used in reference with the following documents;

- Behaviour Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Charging and Remissions Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Equality Information and Objectives
- Accessibility Plan

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Aims and Scope

At Heathcote School, we believe that learning outside of the classroom is an essential component of our curriculum. It gives our pupils unique opportunities to develop their resourcefulness and initiative and to spend time together in an informed environment.

Educational visits are activities arranged by, or on behalf of, our school, which require pupils to leave the school premises, having been authorised to do so by the Headteacher or other designated member of staff.

Educational visits are a valuable way to supplement and enhance the curriculum, expand pupils' education and provide enriching social and cultural experiences, teach life skills and promote independent learning and social awareness, provide a foundation for lifelong learning, and form an integral part of our approach to furthering our pupils' education and personal growth.

This policy sets out our approach to planning and operating educational visits, to ensure the health and safety of our pupils and staff, and to make sure that our visits are available to all pupils. It sets out the roles and responsibilities of staff, pupils and volunteers when it comes to visits.

This policy applies to activities taking place within and outside of normal school hours, including weekends and holiday periods. This includes (but is not limited to):

- Visits to places of interest in the local area
- Day visits to places such as museums and other cultural and educational institutions
- Sporting activities
- Adventurous and recreational activities
- Residential trips organised by the school
- Trips abroad organised by the school

Legislation and Guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's guidance on health and safety on educational visits, and the following legislation and statutory guidance:

- Equality Act 2010/SEND
- Code of Practice
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022

Roles and Responsibilities

Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Approving staff requests for educational visits, including having final authority to approve any educational visit of less than 24 hours
- Making sure staff, including the educational visits co-ordinator, have received any necessary training
- Working with the governing body to approve residential trips of more than 24 hours

The Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC)

The Assistant Headteacher is the appointed EVC at our school. Their role is to:

- Oversee and guide other staff to arrange and organise educational visits
- Assess the ability of other staff to lead visits and a designate suitable trip lead for each visit
- Assess outside activity providers
- Advise the headteacher and governing board when they're approving trips
- Access the necessary training, advice and guidance
- Evaluate all visits once complete, from planning to the visit itself, and use this to improve future arrangements

Trip lead

Every educational visit will have 1 member of staff designated as the trip lead. The trip lead will:

- Plan the proposed visit, taking into account the health and safety risks to pupils, staff and volunteers
- Assign staff and volunteer roles, as needed
- Make sure the school has accurate and up-to-date information about the trip destination, to be used in risk assessments
- Make sure the needs of everyone taking part are considered, including co-ordinating any additional support needed
- Make sure parents and carers are given accurate information about educational visits, including any costs or necessary equipment not supplied by the school or a third party
- Communicate key details about the visit and all locations to staff, pupils and parents/carers, including roles and responsibilities and expected behaviour
- Make sure staff are capable and able to fulfil their roles at all times while responsible for pupils and others
- The overarching responsibility remains with the trip lead and cannot be delegated to others (volunteers or teachers) who have not be a part of the planning process.

Staff

Staff have a responsibility to make sure all pupils and staff who take part in visits are kept safe and understand the proper way to prepare for trips, as well as how to act while taking part. Staff will:

- Seek and obtain approval for all educational visits from the EVC in the first instance and this is approved by the headteacher
- Carry out any required risk assessments and work with the trip lead
- Communicate with parents and carers and make sure trips are inclusive of all pupils' needs
- Look out for the health and safety of themselves and those around them
- Help manage pupil behaviour and discipline as required while on the visit
- Share any concerns or worries with the trip lead and others, as appropriate
- Must not take photographs of students on their personal phones
- Must remain with their allocated group at all times
- Must not consume alcohol/drugs or any illegal substance at any point of the trip
- Must only administer medicine that has been authorized. The trip leader has overall responsibility for this.
- If a member of staff's own child is attending the trip, one additional adult, who does not have a child on the visit, must be added to the staff responsible for that group.
- Where possible, the child must not be placed in the same group as their

parent.

Parents and carers

By agreeing that pupils can take part in educational visits, parents/carers agree that they will:

- Provide all information required, such as emergency contact details and health/medicine information if applicable
- Give consent on Arbor and complete any Google consent forms or any other documentation required in a timely manner
- Share any concerns or information about the pupil that may affect or impact their ability to safely take part in the trip

Volunteers

Volunteers attending school trips, including parent volunteers, agree to:

- Follow the directions of staff and act accordingly
- DBS checking
- Behave appropriately and model good behaviour for pupils
- Report any concerns to the trip lead or other staff present as soon as possible
- Make sure pupils under their supervision are acting safely and appropriately, and raise any issues with staff as soon as possible

Pupils

Our school behaviour policy also applies to all educational visits. This includes the expectation that pupils will:

- Follow instructions given to them while on the trip
- Dress and behave as expected for the length of the trip
- Take responsibility for their own safety and the safety of others, reporting any concerns to a staff member or trip supervisor

Pupils will always be reminded of our behaviour expectations before going off-site for a visit, and will be expected to uphold the school's behaviour policy at all times. The following statement must appear in all trip letters sent home to parents:

“Enrichment activities are a privilege, and it is important that school trips and activities take place safely. The school must ensure that pupils who attend are upholding the highest standards of behaviour and maintaining Heathcote’s reputation. Pupils who have been isolated, suspended or have multiple regulations in a given period of time maybe refused entry to trips, events or activities. The Headteacher reserves the right to refuse entry to any school, events, trip or activity without any notice, and delegates this responsibility to the Trip/Event Leader in each case. This is to ensure that school trips can take place safely and pupils that attend are upholding the standard of behaviour we would expect from Heathcote pupils. Monies or deposits will not be returned in this scenario”

Planning and Preparation

The decision on whether or not a visit will take place will be made by the EVC and based on factors including:

- Cost (including any potential cost to parents/carers)
- Timing in the school year and any potential clashes
- Educational purpose and value
- Disruption to the normal running of the school
- Health and safety considerations
- Staff-to-pupil ratio

- Review of draft letter to parents and itinerary

As part of the planning stage, information will be gathered by staff proposing the visit, including:

- Location and travel distance
- Travel plans or options
- Full cost breakdown, including multiple options where available
- Resources, including staffing, volunteer, and physical supplies
- Accommodation options for abroad trips and residentials
- Insurance detailed, where needed
- Risk assessment plans and first aid provision
- What safety measures can be put in place in order to reduce any risks
- Cover implications

See appendix 1 for our trip proposal form.

In cases where a trip involves activities for more than 24 hours, an overnight stay and/or travel overseas, the headteacher will seek approval of the governing board.

Once the trip has been approved by the headteacher, and the governing board where relevant, staff will communicate with parents/carers and provide trip information.

Parental consent is required for trips with low risk and parental consent is obtained at the start of the academic school year.

Parental consent will be required for trips that take place outside of normal school hours, and for any trips requiring a higher-than-normal level of risk assessment.

We will evaluate each visit after its conclusion, from the planning through to the visit itself, to continually improve the planning and experience of our future visits.

Inclusion

All pupils, regardless of background or abilities, should be able to take part in every aspect of our school life, including visits.

If a pupil with a disability, statement of special educational needs (SEN) or an education health and care (EHC) plan, or any other specific needs (e.g. medical conditions including allergies) is participating in the visit, they will have the same support that is available to them during the school day.

We will adjust the trip programme where necessary, working with parents/carers to provide additional support, making reasonable adjustments to itineraries, providing additional support staff, and other adjustments as appropriate.

Additional risk assessments may be carried out to ensure the safety of all staff and pupils.

Risk Assessment

We will carry out a full risk assessment at least 2 weeks before the start of all trips.

This will be completed using the school's risk assessment template which can be found on our shared drive - <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1gyixeNNyxTEvTq9-sC7UfaX994jSRplr> and in appendix 2. Risk assessments provided by the destination itself will also be used to support this process.

The risk assessment will include any specific SEN and medical issues and allergies, the role of additional support on the visit, specified activities to be carried out, as well as risks associated with transport to and from the destination.

Where practical, staff may make a preliminary visit to the trip destination as part of the planning and risk assessment process, but this is not mandatory.

Trip leads will raise any concerns or questions about potential risks and safety measures with the headteacher and, where appropriate, third party vendors.

Every risk assessment will be approved by the EVC and then headteacher, and a copy taken on the visit and another copy left with the EVC.

Staff Ratios and First Aid

Risk assessments for each visit will ascertain the safe level of supervision required. On all educational visits, we will attempt to have:

- At least 1 male and 1 female supervising adult is present (for mixed pupil groups)
- For Category A trips there must be a staff to pupil ratio of 1:10 and for Category B trips a staff to pupil ratio of 1:15
- Minimum 1:10 for overseas visits
- At least 1 supervising adult able to administer first aid is present on all trips
- Appropriate first aid equipment will be taken on all trips, in accordance with the school's first aid and health and safety policies. These can be found: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1yXHJt2nmylQ9t0Y8WtNZjUQVjQh2ovq9>
- All supervising adults will be made aware of any medical issues or allergies at the start of the trip
- A medical list will be produced on Arbor and the trip leader will collect all of the relevant medication from the first aid officer in the main school office prior to the trip departing
- Pupils who are diabetic MUST have a member of staff who is diabetic trained on the trip with them at all times
- Controlled medication must be administered by the first aider and returned immediately to the medical officer after the trip.
- Adults without a DBS check will not be left alone with pupils at any time
- The trip lead will take regular headcounts and/or rollcalls
- The overarching responsibility remains with the trip lead and cannot be delegated to others (volunteers or teachers) who have not been a part of the planning process.

Transport

Transportation for trips will be organised by the school, in line with our safety procedures. We will make sure pupils, staff and volunteers are transported safely and efficiently, with the required first aid provision.

Unless previously agreed with parents, transport for visits will leave from, and return to, the school site. When using the school mini bus to transport children for any trip outside of the borough there must be two members of staff who are able to drive the mini bus in attendance.

Use of External Organisations

As part of the risk assessment process, we will check that any external organisations providing an activity have appropriate safety standards and liability insurance.

This includes checking that organisations hold the Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) Quality Badge. Where an organisation does not, we will check additional details as outlined in the DfE's guidance on health and safety on educational visits to make sure it's an appropriate organisation to use.

We will have a written agreement in place with each external organisation outlining what everyone is responsible for during the activity.

The organisations risk assessment must be read and understood in the initial planning stage. Any relevant information must be added to the HCS risk assessment with the risk assessed.

Communication and Consent

We will contact the parents and carers of pupils invited to take part in an educational visit at least 6 weeks before the proposed date of the trip. Communication will be via letter on Arbor and information provided will include the date, travel times, destination, purpose of the visit, information about lunch arrangements including those students eligible for FSM.

We will also communicate:

- Times and details of travel, including drop-off and pick-up times and location
- Clothing and equipment required, and whether this is provided by the school
- Expected behaviour and consequences of pupils' failure to meet these standards
- Parents/carers will be asked to provide consent on Arbor for educational visits where appropriate

Mobile Phones

It is up to the group leader to ensure that there are enough mobile phones within the group. The trip leader must take responsibility of the school phone to ensure that there is communication with all members of staff.

Information and Final Arrangements Pack

Final details of the visit, including the final version of the risk assessment, must be submitted to EVC for approval at least 10 days before the visit. This information will be retained for future reference. The group leader holds the same information for the duration of the visit and checks immediately prior to departure for any late changes, for example due to pupil

illness or absence. Such changes are noted and an amended copy submitted to the Headteacher. As a minimum, the information pack should include details of:

- Original trip proposal and letter sent to parents
- Itinerary
- pupils' and staff emergency contacts
- copies of Parental Medical details from Arbor
- copies of any insurance documents, contracts, etc. if necessary
- risk assessments (both school and venue) with site maps if available
- pupil groups with staff allocation
- Pupils eligible for FSM
- SEN support plan
- Medical support plan

For sports fixtures the fixture leader must provide the EVC with the team sheet, consent and leave of absence form for approval. The EVC will sign this on behalf of the Headteacher and must ensure the information regarding fixtures is shared with the Headteacher and senior leaders. All staff in the PE department have read and signed off the PE risk assessment at the start of the academic year.

Emergency Procedures and Incident Reporting

Generally, emergency planning will be defined as planning for:

- Serious and unexpected risk
- Serious and life-threatening injury.
- Individuals going missing
- A serious breach of safeguarding expectations

The trip leader will be familiar with these plans for each visit.

In the case of an emergency, the trip leader or other supervising adult will contact the EVC or school office. The school office will then contact parents/carers as required, and inform them of changes to plans or cancellations of trips and/or alternative travel plans. This will form part of a wider communication plan that covers how routine communications should be handled in such situations.

1 member of staff will always accompany a pupil seeking medical treatment especially in the case of hospital treatment. They must remain with the pupil until the parent arrives.

In a case of a pupil being unaccounted for, the trip leader will search the area while another member of staff remains in charge of other pupils. In the unlikely event that a pupil cannot be found within 30 minutes, the trip leader will contact the school office who will notify the parents/carers. The trip leader will then contact the police and provide them with the relevant information so they can take over the search, staying with them to comfort the pupil when found. The remaining staff and adults will return to the school with the rest of the pupils.

Smaller incidents, accidents or near misses that do not require external reporting will still be covered by an internal report, to include steps that can be taken in the future to avoid similar incidents.

There will also be a clear process for evaluating all visits and trips once they have been concluded from the planning through to the visit itself. This will help with evaluating whether planning worked and to learn from any incidents that took place.

Charging and Insurance

Parents will be notified of the cost of trips well in advance and no later than 6 weeks before the trip date. All visits must be paid for by the set deadline so booking can be made.

In some cases, we may ask for a voluntary contribution to the costs of educational visits, but this will be entirely optional (except for residential visits) and will not affect pupils' ability to take part fully in the trip.

We will make sure adequate insurance is in place for all trips, including, but not limited to: cancellation insurance for contracts with external providers, travel insurance, accident and medical cover, and loss of luggage and other personal items.

In some case we may ask for non-refundable deposit to secure a place on a trip; this will be no more than 25% of the total cost of the trip.

The school will not keep places on trips open where payment deadlines are missed and reserve the right to cancel the place. In this instance all monies paid will not be returned

Residential Visits

The headteacher, together with the governing body, will approve all residential trips longer than 24 hours.

The planning and preparation laid out in this policy will apply to residential visits as well as 1-day visits. In addition, the trip lead will make sure:

- The trip proposal and draft letter to parents are submitted for approval no later than 12 weeks prior to the trip taking place, along with a detailed itinerary.
- The trip leader will need to submit proof of insurance and the certificate of compliancy from the company/venue
- All necessary permissions and medical forms are obtained at least 1 month before the start of the trip
- All adults, including volunteers, have had adequate safeguarding checks. Where appropriate – e.g. if the volunteer will be in direct unsupervised contact with pupils – this will include relevant DBS checks

Parents and carers will be given information about the visit and asked for permission at least 2 months before the first day of the visit. Information shared with parents will include:

- The dates and time of departure and return to school
- The full address and contact details of the destination
- Planned activities and options
- Meal provision
- Costs and optional charges, including deposits and the date by which this must be received, in line with our charging and remissions policy (this will include information about exemptions)
- Clothing and equipment provided, and what pupils must bring themselves
- Public health requirements, including any required vaccinations
- Accommodation options and arrangements
- The names of staff attending

For visits abroad, we will make sure that any organisation providing activities hold the LOtC Quality badge or similar local accreditation. We will follow the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's overseas travel guidance and foreign travel advice when organising these visits. For trips abroad, the Trip leader is expected to obtain the pupils passport information at the initial planning stage.

Review

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years by the EVC. At every review, the policy will be shared with the full governing board.

Appendices - see links attached

- 1. Sporting Fixtures Risk Assurance**

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1dhuMgOoT26Vn8h81DJ3RVYcv81typ57j/edit?usp=sharing&oid=115421468812888178252_rtpof=true&sd=true

- 2. Trip Proposal Form**

[1. Trip Proposal Form please download](#)

- 3. Educational Visits and Off-Site Activities Risk Assessment**

[Master New RA for Trips .docx](#)