

Educational Visits Protocol

Introduction

Heckmondwike Grammar School provides students with a wide variety of educational visits and experiences. This protocol is designed to assist visit leaders in planning, costing, organising and safely supervising such visits. Visit leaders should also consult the Educational Visits Co-Ordinator (EVC) and complete the Costings Template and Request for Absence/Activity (RFA) for review by SLT at the diary meeting:

1. Request For Absence /Activity (RFA) Form

Members of staff planning to lead a visit should first submit a Request for Absence/ Activity form (RFA).

This form will require specific information about proposed dates and staffing, and will also categorise the visit as Essential, Desirable or Optional (see appendix for definitions). At this stage, staff proposing to lead the visit will need to identify the impact on achievement or learning. Any links to the curriculum or examination specifications should be supported by evidence from the examination specifications.

No bookings should be made until the RFA has been submitted and approved at an SLT diary meeting. Following this approval, all bookings must remain provisional until all costings have been approved.

Any non-essential trips, including residential trips, may take up to one day from lessons and must not exceed the allocated allowance.

2. Costings

At this planning stage, due attention should be paid to the costs of the visit, including transport, accommodation, costs of entry to venues and staffing. Staffing costs include subsistence and the costs of cover at £70 per member of staff per lesson requiring cover.

The Costings Template should be completed for each Educational Visit. The following should be considered:

- When planning the costs of a visit, staff proposing the visit should be mindful of the Charging and Remission Policy. In line with this, cover costs will not be levied for any visit which is part of the specification for a prescribed examination.
- Any deposit requested from parents should be the same as the deposit requested by the tour operator.
- No firm bookings should be made until the visit leader has had costings and terms and conditions approved by the Finance Director.

3. Staffing/Cover

It is the responsibility of the visit leader to identify the most appropriate staff to supervise the visit at the outset of the planning phase. This may relate to subject knowledge, experience and expertise or availability. In addition to the costs of cover, visit leaders should be mindful of the teaching commitments and/or management responsibilities of staff whilst planning a visit or series of visits. The number of cover periods required should be included in the Costings Template.

To ensure that all educational experiences are selected fairly and in accordance with safeguarding policies, external family members or friends are not normally permitted to accompany school visits. This approach helps maintain compliance with the Keeping Children Safe in Education guidelines and ensures the safety and well-being of all students during off-site activities.

4. Evolve Submission

After the approval of the RFA at an SLT diary meeting, the visit leader can then proceed with the creation of an evolve submission. This submission will provide the Educational Visits Co-Ordinator (EVC) with details of the visit, staffing and the number and ages of the students involved. The evolve submission should include all relevant documentation including letters and consent forms and should include risk assessments for all activities to be undertaken during the visit, including the assessment of risks and control measures related to transport.

This submission will be subject to approval by the EVC and the Headteacher. Local Authority (LA) approval will be required if the visit is residential, adventurous or abroad.

Evolve submissions should be submitted in good time to enable evaluation by the EVC, Headteacher and, if applicable, the LA. The evolve system contains documents to assist with budgeting, planning and risk assessment and visit leaders will be provided with training by the EVC if required.

5. Communication to Parents/Carers

Expression of Interest communications to Parents/Carers should be approved by the Finance Director prior to being distributed. Any deposits due must be collected in full before any payments are made to suppliers. likewise for interim and balance payments.

Student Access to Educational Visits and Eligibility Criteria

Eligibility criteria is clear and inclusive; all students are eligible to apply for a place on a residential or other educational visit provided that they present no significant risk to the health, safety and/or security of themselves or their peers, additional to the assessment of risk carried out by the leader of the educational visit and documented in the evolve submission.

All students and parents will be able to access information regarding the content, duration and cost of educational visits in order that they are able to make informed choices and decisions about whether they wish to take part. Information is provided on the school website and written information is provided for students and parents in the form of letters home. Residential and day trip letters should also include information using the appropriate wording relating to the contribution parents are asked to make in order to meet the cost of the trip or visit (see Charging & Remission Policy).

Parents are able to express their interest in gaining a place on a residential or educational visit for their child/children by returning reply slips that are attached to trip letters within the time-frame stated in the letter or by completing the appropriate online form. The designated leader of each residential or educational visit is responsible for all related organisation and carries out a selection process where it is necessary to do so.

Selection process and over-subscription criteria

Where residential or educational visits are curriculum based, over-subscribed and where the number of places are limited, the following over-subscription criteria will apply in order:

1. Students who are eligible for the Pupil Premium/Bursary
2. Students who are on a MySupport Plan or who have an EHCP (education, health and care plan)
3. All other students

A ballot will then be conducted to determine the allocation of places. The names of students who fulfil categories 1 and 2 will have their names removed from the ballot and their participation is therefore guaranteed.

The ballot will be run by the visit leader and overseen by the EVC or a member of SLT. Names will be drawn until the visit is full. A reserve list will be compiled from those students who have not been successful in securing a place. If a student chooses not to take up their offer of place, their place will go to the next person named on the reserve list.

The following points must also be taken into account:

- Students who have failed to gain a place on more than two trips due to not being selected, the EVC and/or the visit leader may use their discretion to prioritise the participation of such individuals. Such decisions should be rare and must not disadvantage the participation of any other students.
- consideration in the allocations process will be given to students' conduct. Visit leaders, in consultation with the relevant Pastoral Leaders, have the discretion to remove from the allocation process the names of any students for whom there is **documented evidence** of misbehaviour and as a result their participation in the trip may compromise the health and safety of all those taking part as well as risk the reputation of the school. **This includes any student who may qualify for any of the over-subscription criteria above.**
- In the case of visits that are purely recreational any oversubscription for limited places will be addressed by drawing students randomly.

Records of participants will be kept by the school to monitor participation.

Appendix 1

- i) An educational visit defined as **Essential** would be to fulfil a requirement as part of the specification for a prescribed course of study or examination.
- ii) An educational visit defined as **Desirable** would be beneficial but not essential to the teaching, learning and curricular or extra-curricular experience of students.
- iii) An educational visit defined as **Optional** would be a valuable wider experience which was essentially recreational and contributed more to the development of the students involved than the curriculum.