



HERSCHEL GRAMMAR SCHOOL

OFF-SITE ACTIVITIES POLICY

Date approved:

5 March 2024

Approval:

LGB

Date for revision:

March 2027

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Off-site activities bring a range of benefits to pupils. They broaden their horizons, develop their independence and help build strong relationships within the Herschel community. These activities promote learning, problem solving and resilience whilst developing cultural capital. They form an invaluable part of Herschel's curriculum and wider offer.

Governors and the Headteacher have direct responsibility for off-site activities. Delegated powers have been given by the Headteacher to the Educational Visits Co-ordinator to authorise non-hazardous and UK-based visits.

Most off-site activities will occur without incident, yet no amount of planning can guarantee that nothing untoward will occur. However, good planning and attention to detail can reduce the number of incidents and reduce the seriousness of any which do occur.

This policy sets down the minimum requirements on all people involved in the planning, approval and participation of the 'off-site' visit.

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 2023](#)

2.0 SCOPE

- 2.1 This policy applies to all people employed by Herschel Grammar School.
- 2.2 The policy is to inform staff of their responsibilities to ensure all hazards that employees and pupils are exposed to, caused by the school's off-site

activities, are adequately assessed, including hazards from the use of materials, substances, machinery, equipment and the location.

3.0 STATEMENT OF INTENT

Herschel Grammar School fully accepts its responsibilities for the safety of its employees and those in its care who are taken on external visits or activities.

This policy recognises that co-operation is required between all interested groups in order to achieve the health and safety of all people involved in the visit. General requirements are laid down for group leaders and supervisors in ensuring the safety of those in their care. Detailed planning is required for each off-site activity, taking into account the needs of all members of the party.

4.0 STANDARDS

- An 'Off-site Guidance' document sits alongside this Policy Document and details procedures.
- The Educational Visits Co-ordinator has been given responsibility over school trips and must give written approval for all visits. Visits which are deemed 'hazardous', or are overseas or residential visits, must receive the approval of the Governing Body. In this case the Educational Visits Proposal Form (EVPF) must be signed by the Chair of Governors (or in his/her absence the Vice Chair).
- Visits where the Educational Visits Co-ordinator is the Group Leader will be authorised by the Headteacher or Governors, as appropriate.

5.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1. Educational Visits Co-ordinator:

Their role is to oversee and guide other staff in arranging and organising educational visits.

Specifically, the EVC must ensure:

- 5.1.1 Governors have approved the visit, where necessary;
- 5.1.2 visits comply with relevant legislation and guidelines;
- 5.1.3 suitable and sufficient insurance cover is provided;
- 5.1.4 that the financial aspects of the visit are satisfactory and that a budget is approved;
- 5.1.5 the relevant experience of the organiser and assistants for the visit have been assessed;
- 5.1.6 that the group leader or another employee is competent in any activities being undertaken and is familiar with the location/area where the activity will be undertaken;

- 5.1.7 the group leader has sufficient time to organise the visit;
- 5.1.8 the group leader has fulfilled their responsibilities as outlined below and in the checklists with which they are provided;
- 5.1.9 the ratio of teachers/supervisors to pupils is appropriate;
- 5.1.10 the Group Leader is competent to monitor the risks throughout the visit;
- 5.1.11 an SLT contact has been nominated and that the group leader is aware of who the contact is in case of an emergency;
- 5.1.12 he or she has a contact number for the group leader and contact details for the place being visited, where possible;
- 5.1.13 the group leader and assistants have copies of the emergency procedures should an incident occur;
- 5.1.14 off-site visits are monitored and reviewed to determine whether any lessons can be learnt and improvements made for future visits.

5.2 Group Leaders

A Herschel Grammar School employee must be designated as having overall responsibility for the supervision of the visit. The Group Leader will follow the "Herschel Ed Visit checklist". In particular they will:

- 5.2.1 obtain the Educational Visits Co-ordinator's agreement before any off-site visit is planned, gaining approval before it occurs;
- 5.2.2 undertake and complete the planning and preparation for the visit, ensuring the activities and mode of travel are appropriate for the participants;
- 5.2.3 communicate key details about the visit and all locations to staff, pupils and parents/carers, including roles and responsibilities and expected behaviour;
- 5.2.4 appoint a deputy for the visit;
- 5.2.5 clearly define the role and tasks for teachers/supervisors making up the group, ensuring that anybody leading the group in any activity is competent to do so and familiar with the location and weather conditions;
- 5.2.6 complete a comprehensive risk assessment if the visit is hazardous, overseas or residential, identifying all hazards to be encountered **and** put control measures in place to eliminate the risks, or if not practicable, reduce the risks to a level as low as reasonably practicable.

- 5.2.7 ensure adequate first aid provision is supplied for the duration of the visit;
- 5.2.8 be aware of the needs of the group, especially for children and the vulnerable (this includes medical needs);
- 5.2.9 ensure a sufficient level of supervision can be maintained at all times (information on ratios can be found in the guidance to this policy);
- 5.2.10 ensure all teachers/supervisors have access to the emergency numbers for the duration of the visit (for staff and pupils);
- 5.2.11 ensure consent has been received from Parents/Guardians;
- 5.2.12 circulate a list of pupils wishing to go on the visit. It may be necessary to deny a pupil a place on a visit. This decision will be made by the Group Leader, the Head of Learning and the Educational Visits Co-ordinator (see Section 8).
- 5.2.13 ensure a contingency plan exists for delays or a late return home.

5.3 Teachers/ Supervisors must:

- 5.4.1 ensure the safety of everyone in the group;
- 5.4.2 follow the instructions of the group leader and help manage pupil behaviour while on the visit
- 5.4.3 raise any item where they are concerned over the safety of anybody in the group.

5.4 Participants on the Ed Visit

The Group Leader must make clear to pupils being taken on any off-site visit that they must:

- 5.4.1 follow the instructions of the Group Leader or other teachers/supervisors, including those at the venue being visited;
- 5.4.2 dress appropriately for the activity as instructed by the Group Leader and behave sensibly and responsibly;
- 5.4.3 be sensitive to local codes and customs;
- 5.4.4 Take responsibility for their own safety and the safety of others, reporting any concerns to a staff member.

6. RATIOS

The following are minimum requirements for UK visits:

- For **day visits** the pupil/adult ratio shall be 1 to 20
- UK visits of a non-hazardous nature to places where activity is to take place under the control of properly qualified adults then the ratio mentioned above does not need to apply but the risk assessment must detail the number that are required to cover the journey
- For UK visits of a hazardous nature the ratio is to be 1 adult to 8 pupils/participants – there may be ratios specified by the organiser of the event in which case they must be followed if they exceed the school's minimum requirements
- For **residential visits** the pupil/teacher ratio shall be 1 to 15

The following are minimum requirements for Overseas visits:

- the pupil/teacher ratio shall be 1 to 10
- for hazardous trips the teaching ratio will be 1 to 8
- overseas visits to places where properly qualified supervision/control is in place the ratio mentioned above need not apply. The Headteacher/ Educational Visits Co-ordinator will in such cases determine the staffing ratio before requesting permission from the Governing Body.

Sundry issues:

- On all residential visits, pupils should be accompanied by staff of both gender
- Sixth Form pupils may undertake an educational visit unaccompanied but they must be accompanied for hazardous activities in the same ratio as mentioned above
- Any responsible adult who is a relative of a pupil in the party will count as 0.5
- Sports trips – e.g. football away matches - 1 member of staff may accompany the team as this is 'custom & practice'. It is recognised that there are adults at the venue where the sporting activity takes place. A generic Risk Assessment should be in place for each sporting activity. Lists of participants are shared with the EVC via a WhatsApp group.

These examples are minimum requirements. Other factors could well have a bearing on the final numbers. These other factors include disabilities (both mental & physical) and any elderly persons. Party Group Leaders should assess the risks involved and set an appropriate safe supervision level for their particular group. There should be a minimum of one person who is the party group leader and who is in overall charge of the party group plus at least one other.

7. ALCOHOL

On any trip there must be two members of staff who do not consume alcohol on any given day. Whilst other staff may drink in moderation, all staff must be capable of looking after the pupils in their care at all times.

8. INCLUSION

When planning off-site activities, we are committed to the principles set out in the Equality Act (2010) whereby off-site visits should be available and accessible to all,

irrespective of any special educational or medical needs or protected characteristics. When planning a visit all practicable measures are taken to include every member of the group, making reasonable efforts to ensure activities are suitable and accessible. Behaviour is not one of the protected characteristics defined by the Equality Act. It may therefore be acceptable to exclude someone from an activity or visit if their potential behaviour presents a significant, unmanageable and unacceptable risk to the health, safety or welfare of either themselves or others, or to the successful completion of the activity or visit.

9. OTHER DOCUMENTS/ POLICIES RELEVANT TO OFF-SITE ACTIVITIES

- Safeguarding Policy
- Charging and Remissions Policy
- Emergency Plan