OFFSITE VISITS POLICY

2026 - 2028

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CLEEVE SCHOOL

AND SIXTH FORM CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE

OFFSITE VISITS POLICY

Cleeve School has formally adopted, through its Board of Trustees, the Gloucestershire 'Guidance for Educational Visits', further procedures have been agreed to with the Board of Trustees to ensure that this policy is adhered to.

Aims and purposes of Educational Visits

Cleeve School 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 off the school site and out of school hours, which support the aims of the school in ensuring a broad and balanced curriculum. The range of activities to which the Board of Trustees has 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 Activities.
- Opportunities for Outdoor Learning.

Approval Procedure

The Board of Trustees and the Executive Head have delegated the consideration and approval of off-site visits and activities to Chris Holder in his capacity as Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC). Before a visit is advertised to parents, the EVC will approve the initial plan. Staff proposing the visit will demonstrate awareness of the major risks posed by the trip by completing a risk assessment in collaboration with the EVC and the Trips, Enrichment and Marketing Officer. There is a digital proposal form found and shared on the Trips and Visits Site on the staff portal, FROG for this purpose. New overseas visits will additionally be approved by the Board of Trustees, delegated to the Executive Head 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 via the eVisit off-site visits online system.

Staffing of Trips and Visits

Cleeve School 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, supporting their development. The selection of staff for educational visits will be a key priority in the initial approval of any proposed visit. Staff will be suitably qualified and experienced for proposed activities. 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.

Cleeve School values and recognises the contribution of volunteer adults and parent helpers assisting with educational 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 be carefully briefed on the scope of their responsibility. The school will ensure that vetting and DBS screening is available for volunteers.

The appointed Visit Leader will be fully supported in the tasks required to arrange and facilitate 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 trip leader and EVC might work in partnership to undertake planning and risk assessments.

Visit staff will not be under the influence of alcohol or other drugs such that their ability to recognise hazards or respond to emergencies is in any way restricted. It is not acceptable for staff to drink alcohol during off-site activities; beyond the limit of a “reasonable parent” such as a glass of wine with a meal. All staff must be able to take overall responsibility of the group including, if necessary, to legally drive a vehicle. 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.

Risk Assessment

The Visit Leader will identify the risks from any activity that is under their control 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.

All day trips and non-hazardous trips are required to have paperwork submitted via the Gloucestershire eVisit portal. This should 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 advance notice. The trip is subject to cancellation if this is not completed in a timely manner.

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 school accounting SCOPay system.

The Visit 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 this will be raised with the Gloucestershire SHE. Trips organisers should work with the EVC, where necessary, to ascertain whether external providers have been approved by the Adventure Activities Licencing Authority (AALA) or hold a Learning Outside of the Classroom (LOtC) awards.

Parental Consents 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 school hours. The school will take reasonable steps to ensure that parents are informed of trips taking place during this time, for example by sending communications 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 Class Charts, the school's social media channels or sent home via students. In addition, the P.E. department use a specialist website to share this information, which was launched by the school formally in 2019-20 and continues to be used.
(https://sport.cleeveschool.net/Fixtures_Teams.asp?Id=2288&S=20182019&SID=24)

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 the students 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 Consents 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 or be ascertained via Microsoft forms, 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 and where clarification can be sought for of any aspect of the itinerary and organisation of the visit.

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

Cleeve School maintains information about special educational, medical and dietary needs of all students, which will be referred to by the Visit Leader during the planning of all educational visits and off-site activities. Parents will be reminded to provide up to date information. Cleeve School 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 competed 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 providers and training provided.

The use of First Aid on trips and visits

There is not a legal requirement to have a first aider on every school trip or visit, with the extent and nature of first aid provided will depend on the type of visit and risk identified. It may be useful for the Trip Leader to take a first aid kit for minor injuries. The school can also make use of trained first aiders at venues.

The expectations of Students and Parents on school trips or visits

The school has a clear code of conduct for school visits based on the school 'Behaviour for Excellence Policy' By agreeing for them to attend a trip, parents agree to adhere to the Behaviour for Excellence Policy whilst students are on that trip. Students, whose behaviour is such that the Visit Leader is concerned for their safety, or for that of others, can be withdrawn from the activity. The Visit Leader will consider whether such students should be sent home early and parents will be expected to cover any costs associated in facilitating this. School polices regarding behaviour and conduct apply on all school trips.

Students are expected to follow all instructions from staff and must stay within the supervised areas as designated by the Trips Leader. Students are not permitted to smoke, vape or consume alcohol, or be in possession of a prohibited item, as referenced in the 'Behaviour for Excellence' policy, and should be aware of the consequences of doing so. Students may not be permitted to take part in future activities and they may face sanctions upon their return to school.

As a result, 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.

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. 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. Any student who does not follow guidance from trip leaders will be liable to face school sanctions on their return from the trip. 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.

Dress

Year 7 – 11 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 be dressed accordingly; if students are in uniform, staff should be in normal school dress too.

Personal Property

Trip attendees who decide to take valuable personal effects for example but not exclusive to mobile phones, laptops, watches and jewellery do so at their own risk and will not be able to be covered by school insurance in the instance of damage, theft or loss.

Conduct of Staff

All staff accompanying students on off-site activities and trips have ultimate responsibility for their safety and are said to be acting in *loco parentis*. All staff accompanying students must be proactive in supervising the students and assisting the group leader.

Staff must show the same standard of care as would apply to a “reasonable parent”.
It is not acceptable for staff to drink alcohol during off-site activities beyond the limit of a “reasonable parent” such as a glass of wine with a meal. 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.

Communication between Emergency contacts and the Trip Leader

Cleeve School 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 Management 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 Visit 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.

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

Review by the Local Authority

The school is supported in its arrangements for educational visits and off-site activities 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 submitted to SHE on eVisit prior to departure. 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.

Appendix: Procedures

Gloucestershire eVisit
The school procedure for approval and planning of trips and visits is set out on the staff portal, FROG with direct links to the Gloucestershire eVisit website. This is a central database which Gloucestershire SHE 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.

Approval and Planning

The information on FROG 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 via eVisit
• Public Liability Documentation.
• Checklists for Trip Leader.

Approval Procedure and Consent

Before a trip or visit is advertised to parents/carers the Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) must approve the '***Application for approval of an educational visit form'***. This is found on the FROG site. New overseas off-site activities or residential visits must be approved by 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 Trustees delegated to the Executive Head.

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 Trips Leader and Trips, Enrichment and Marketing Officer 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 uploads this and attaches 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.

Responsibilities of the Trip Leader/Trips, Enrichment and Marketing Officer
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 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, the Trip Leader and the Trips, Enrichment and Marketing Officer.

- 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.
- Carries 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 FROG.
- Will liaise with the staff in charge of human resources 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 or Trips, Enrichment and Marketing Officer.
- 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.

Responsibilities of the Trip Leader in the event of an emergency

The visit leader will call for help from the emergency services and stay with the student. 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 Executive Head.

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 Executive Head 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/centre will have emergency funding available to support the Group Leader in an emergency.

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 and both the Charging Policy and Expenses Policy.

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/Guardians being unable to afford the full cost of a non-core trip, a request for help with funding should be submitted to the Finance Manager. 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.

Exchange Visits

Where an exchange programme is being organised, or students from other organisations are invited to stay in the homes of Cleeve student's or staff it is the responsibility of the Group Leader to follow the guidance and policy set out by the Gloucestershire County Council Educational Visits Manuel Section 12 Exchange or Home Stay Visits.

Evaluation

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 a six-monthly summary of all-day visits and residential activities for particular groups undertaken or planned to the Board of Trustees.