

## **TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR EDUCATION SCHOOL VISITS**

Thank you for making an Educational booking with Birmingham Botanical Gardens for the academic year 2015/16. Here are some instructions to help you to plan your visit.

- FREE PRE-VISITS

Teachers are welcome to conduct a free pre-visit to have a look around at any time during the Gardens' opening hours (see website for details). Just bring letter headed paper, signed by your Head Teacher with the date of your visit on, to allow you free entry at reception (guests must be paid for). Teachers bringing their own cars into our car park to conduct pre-visits or on the day of the visit itself will need to follow the instructions for education vehicles in the next paragraph to avoid a parking fine.

- ARRIVAL AND COACH INSTRUCTIONS

The Gardens open at 10am, when groups will be permitted entry. Please see the teachers' resources part of our website at

[www.birminghambotanicalgardens.org.uk/education/teachers-resources-a-risk-assessments/](http://www.birminghambotanicalgardens.org.uk/education/teachers-resources-a-risk-assessments/) where you can download our coach instructions. Please enter with your group at the main entrance (and not the Study Centre entrance) after disembarking from the coach. Please note that school coaches need to re-park off-site if they are staying all day and are not permitted to stay in the car park. Minibuses and cars are permitted to park in the car park and their registration numbers must be entered into one of the machines at reception (if staying on site for more than one hour) to avoid parking charges (**please inform your drivers of this procedure**). The Botanical Gardens does not have the power to cancel fines so it is best to avoid one!

- LUNCH STORAGE/PROVISION

Lunches may be stored in public spaces so it is important that you **do not** leave valuables including gift shop money with lunch bags. Lunch spaces may include an outdoor marquee, part of the gallery or a room up a spiral staircase (all may be shared with other schools). Please note the Gardens **cannot accept liability** for loss or damage to belongings left on site so we recommend that you keep valuables with you at all times. In order to plan your lunch area in advance, you must inform the Education Team if your group can't climb a spiral staircase (usually via the booking form). Please note that we are only able to accommodate up to one class in any lunch space, so if you bring more than 30 pupils, please be ready to split into groups on arrival.

It is best to have your groups planned **before** you arrive at the main entrance since it will be busy with other visitors and space is restricted. We recommend that groups bring disposable lunches with minimal packaging, and use the refuse and recycling facilities available. Groups may be asked to take rubbish back to school if there is a lot of waste packaging to be disposed of. We regret that we are unable to provide teachers with hot drinks so please ask your colleagues and adult helpers to bring a flask if they require a hot drink during the visit or use the on-site tea room. In hot weather, we recommend that schools bring **at least two drinks per pupil** since it is not possible to re-fill bottles on site and we do not have any water fountains. Please note that it gets very warm and humid in our greenhouses and pupils can easily become dehydrated quickly. Groups may choose to eat lunch outside in the grounds and are permitted to eat anywhere on the lawns or the many benches provided (please note that schools should only use the tables in front of the tea room if making a purchase there; the tea-room reserves the right to move groups on from this area if they are eating their own packed lunches). We regret to advise that education groups are not permitted to eat their own packed lunches inside the tea room.

- TOILETS

Please note that all toilets are public toilets so teachers must ensure that pupils are supervised for safety reasons. We regret to advise that education staff are not permitted to supervise children in the toilets. Please ensure that pupils leave the toilets in a tidy state for other visitors to use.

- GIFT SHOP

Schools should ensure that **no more than 10 pupils** at a time visit the shop to prevent overcrowding. If teachers prefer not to visit the shop but would still like to make a purchase, then the shop can arrange for goody bags to be made up for collection instead. Please advise of your requirements on your booking form.

- HEALTH & SAFETY

All schools are asked to sign in on arrival so that we know who is on-site in case of a fire alarm. Please ensure that you return the signing-in sheet to Reception or the Education Team before commencing your activities. You can indicate which method of payment you prefer by way of this form also. The up-to-date Education Risk Assessment is found on-line at

[www.birminghambotanicalgardens.org.uk/education/teachers-resources-a-risk-assessments/](http://www.birminghambotanicalgardens.org.uk/education/teachers-resources-a-risk-assessments/).

Please ensure that you brief your pupils about key risks before the visit and schools are reminded to carry out a risk assessment pertaining to your group and bring a first-aider with you since there won't always be one available at the Gardens. The Education Team or Reception will tell you about any maintenance or emergency repairs known to be taking place on site on the day of your visit. A map with a summary of the main points from the risk assessment will be given to the group leader on arrival. A first aid box is kept at main reception and is where the accident book is located, in which to record all incidents taking place on site. If you have booked a teaching session, please ensure you inform the Education Team before your visit, of any plant or nut allergies that could affect handling any seeds and plants during the session.

- TIMETABLE

If you have chosen to be self-guided all day, you may plan your own timetable. Please note that there will be other schools booked in alongside you so prepare to split your group up and spread out on site to avoid congestion. Our busiest area tends to be the glasshouses which become even busier in wet weather! If you have opted for a teaching session per class that you bring, the Education Team will liaise with you about this before your visit. Teaching sessions are usually offered on arrival; please note that we open at 10am and our first sessions are scheduled from 10.15am onwards. Sessions may be offered to you to be delivered either back-to-back for two classes before lunch or one may be delivered in the morning to one class with another after lunch to the other class – this will depend on your arrival and departure times, other school bookings and the length of teaching session that you have requested. Most teaching sessions last around an hour but may be slightly shorter or longer, so the Education Team will advise on how best to structure your day before your visit in your visit confirmation.

Teaching sessions are delivered to one class or group of 30 children at a time so please plan carefully for your self-guided time when you're not in a teaching session. Please plan for any snack breaks if they are required, in your self-guided time. Teaching sessions take place mostly in the glasshouses, classrooms, Gallery or in the grounds since we educate in public spaces. Please advise the Education Team before your visit if you can't climb a spiral staircase with your group, to access some of our lunch and workshop spaces upstairs. Please note that in the event of your school being late on the day and you missing the start of your allocated teaching session, the Education Team will do its best to try to offer you a later slot. However,

it may not be possible to re-schedule your workshop if the team are booked out with other schools. We regret to advise that the full teaching rate will be charged in this eventuality.

- EDUCATION RESOURCES

Please see the many on-line teaching resources including worksheets and teachers' notes at [www.birminghambotanicalgardens.org.uk/education/teachers-resources-a-risk-assessments/](http://www.birminghambotanicalgardens.org.uk/education/teachers-resources-a-risk-assessments/).

Please note that the Gardens **does not** provide these resources on the day so schools must ensure that they bring them with them. These resources are freely available on-line and teachers may download and print them off for pupils to use. We also offer **free** orienteering maps to borrow for our orienteering trail and this must be booked in advance with the Education Team. In addition, there are monthly trails for just £1.50 per trail and explorer backpacks at £2 each to hire (plus £8 refundable deposit) – both available from main reception.

- BEHAVIOUR

The Gardens is an independent educational charity, for which the entry fee provides visitors with a beautiful and tranquil haven in the heart of Birmingham. School pupils are warmly welcomed and will enjoy the varied areas to explore in the Gardens. We would ask that to respect the needs of all visitors that pupils keep noise to a minimum and are not permitted to play music aloud in the grounds. Please ensure that your pupils are supervised **at all times** including in the playground, in the toilets and at lunchtimes. Please ensure that your school complies with your Local Authority's recommendations for adult to pupil ratios. Your pupils are ambassadors for your school and the Gardens has the right to ask any groups that are behaving irresponsibly or spoiling the enjoyment of other visitors, to leave the site immediately. Please note that if any schools are found to have damaged any plants on site, a plant damage fee will automatically be added to your invoice.

- CANCELLATION/CHANGE OF NUMBER

Your booking form is a contract between the school and the Gardens to an agreed date with an agreed number of pupils. If you cancel your visit within a 4 week period of the visit date, we regret that we are unable to refund you unless we can fill the date with another school. If the number of pupils in your group changes after you have completed the booking form, you must inform the Education Team in writing. This will be re-confirmed back to you to acknowledge the change. If you do not inform us in writing, we regret that the full charge will be made.

- PAYMENT/PRICES

Schools may make payment to the Education Team on the day of the visit (by cash, cheque or credit card) for which a receipt will be given. Alternatively, schools can request, by way of the signing-in sheet on the day of the visit, to be invoiced afterwards. School prices are currently £6 (inclusive of VAT) per pupil for self-guided visits and £7.20 (inclusive of VAT) per pupil for a visit including a teaching session per class. (A minimum charge of £144 (inclusive of VAT) per group of less than 20 children is charged to groups wanting a teaching session.) In all cases, a charge of £1.80 (inclusive of VAT) per adult is made.