Information for Your Visit to the Botanic Garden

Before your visit

- **Confirmation letter**
  Once your visit has been arranged, you will receive a confirmation letter by e-mail containing the details of the visit. Please read this carefully, and if any alterations need to be made, please contact Kate Castleden or Emma Williams (education@obg.ox.ac.uk).

- **Further information**
  In addition to the confirmation letter, you will also receive further information for your visit, including notes to help you complete your risk assessment and detailed information about your chosen session. Please distribute this information to all teachers whose classes are involved in the sessions. You will also receive a pre-order list of items available from the Botanic Garden shop, should your pupils like to make any purchases.

- **Teacher pre-visit**
  If you would like to arrange a free pre-visit to the Botanic Garden to discuss your session and any questions you might have, please contact Kate Castleden or Emma Williams.

- **Preparation for your visit**
  Pre-visit activities will be provided as part of the detailed information for your session. You are advised to complete some of these activities prior to your visit to help prepare your students.

- **Special needs**
  All our activities can be adapted for students with special educational needs. We are pleased to welcome special school groups and to support children with special needs who are integrated into mainstream schools. Please talk to us about your students’ needs when you book.

- **Group size**
  The maximum group size that can be accommodated at the Botanic Garden is 35 students. If the number of students in your group increases beyond this threshold after you have made your booking, please get in touch as soon as possible, so arrangements can be made for two separate visits. No exceptions will be made.

- **Adult supervision**
  All school groups are required to bring four adults with them to accompany and supervise the students. However, we realise that some groups may want to bring more adults. In this case, we request a maximum ratio of one adult to every four children in the group (e.g., no more than eight adults for a class of 32); please do not bring more adults than this as it can be a distraction for the students. Please note that all schools sessions are age-specific, so it is not appropriate for participating parents to bring younger siblings or pushchairs.
What to wear
You will be outside for part of the visit so make sure your group are all dressed sensibly with plenty of warm, waterproof clothing (layers are advisable) and sensible shoes, boots or wellingtons (with thick socks). Please do not bring umbrellas. In warmer weather it is also advisable that you bring hats and plenty of sunscreen.

Cost
The suggested donation for each session is £65. Please bring your cheque with you on the day of your visit, made payable to: “The University of Oxford Botanic Garden”. By supporting the Botanic Garden with this donation you are helping us meet some of the costs that go towards running our educational activities and ensuring that we can continue to develop new and exciting sessions for schools.

Safeguarding
All Education Officers have enhanced DBS checks and have undergone safeguarding training.

On arrival
Location
We are located just off the High Street in Oxford, opposite Magdalen College and next to Magdalen Bridge.

Parking
The Botanic Garden is able to provide parking for a school minibus. This must be booked in advance. If you are travelling in a coach please advise the coach company that they cannot park at the Botanic Garden, but the driver may drop-off and pick-up your group outside. It is advisable that the coach approaches the Botanic Garden from the east (facing towards Oxford city centre), so passengers are not exposed to the main road when alighting and embarking. Coaches can park in the Oxpens Coach Park in central Oxford.

Meeting point
A member of our Education Team will meet your party at the Danby Arch at the time your session is due to commence.

During your visit
Visit format
A member of our Education Team will lead your session; however the participation of your adults is essential to the success of the visit. After a brief introduction to the session, your party will be divided into two groups. Each of these groups must be accompanied by two of your adults. One group will be guided by a member of our Education Team, while the other completes a trail and activities which we will prepare for you. Half-way through your visit the two groups will meet up and swap over. After both groups have completed both parts of the visit, we will meet up again for a brief plenary to close the session.
Adult participation
To gain maximum benefit from your visit it is important that your adults fully participate in the session. The timetable for each visit has been carefully co-ordinated, so it is advisable that all adults have watches to ensure smooth running. Teachers are encouraged to informally assess their students’ progress throughout the visit.

Behaviour
Teachers are responsible for the conduct of their students whilst visiting the Botanic Garden.

Safety and First Aid
Please bring your own First Aid kit. You are responsible for administering any First Aid treatment required by your students during their visit to the Botanic Garden. Please advise us in advance if any of your students have allergies.

Equipment
You do not need to bring any equipment with you, as you will be supplied with paper and pencils etc. if they are required. You may like to bring a camera to take photographs to record your visit.

Photography
We will send you a photography consent form in advance if we would like to photograph your group during their visit.

Toilets
We have a limited number of toilets available for use by visiting schools. The toilets are located behind the Conservatory.

Lunch
There are no catering facilities at the Botanic Garden. Picnic lunches may be eaten outdoors or in the Conservatory if the weather is wet. If you would like to stay for a picnic lunch, you can participate in our Waste-Free Lunch Challenge (please contact Kate Castleden or Emma Williams for further information). Please let us know in advance if you would like to stay for lunch.

Disabled access
All areas of the Botanic Garden are accessible for wheelchairs. There is disabled toilet. Please advise us in advance if any of your students use wheelchairs or have walking difficulties.

Independent exploration
If you would like to stay in the Botanic Garden after your session please book this in advance.

Departure
Your confirmation letter includes the time that your session will finish. Please allow a little extra time for visiting the toilets and collecting your bags when arranging for your coach to collect you.
After your visit

- **Follow-up activities**
  Post-visit activities are provided as part of the detailed information for your session. At the end of your session you will be given a feedback questionnaire and postcards for the children. Please complete these and return them to us, as they are integral to the evaluation of our programmes.

- **Another visit in the future**
  If you would like to plan another visit to the Botanic Garden, perhaps during a different season, please contact Kate Castleden or Emma Williams for details.

Queries
If you have any queries about your visit that have not been addressed here, please contact Kate Castleden or Emma Williams.