

# SCHOOL VISITS TO ICELAND

## PARENTAL GUIDANCE

These notes have been compiled to assist parents to prepare their child in advance of their trip to Iceland.



### FIELD STUDIES:

The school's programme in Iceland has been put together by specialists in the chosen field. It is sometimes said that Iceland is 'living textbook' on account of the freshness of the landscape and the rate at which the processes create change. To be able to observe these processes so dynamically is extremely valuable in enhancing students' ability to communicate their knowledge. This will most definitely be an 'awe and wonder' visit to enhance your child's C.V. We have prepared what we call GeoKeycards, which you could ask to see after the visit and use to test the information gained.

### ABOUT THE TOUR OPERATOR TREX:

Trex - Travel Experiences was established in 1978 and applied for a travel agency licence in 1987. We have been providing safe and successful travelling service for more than 42 years. As a company we are very conscious of your safety and well-being while travelling with us. TREX has provided transport for tailor made school and university expeditions and field study visits to Iceland. All accommodation, vehicles and sites have been risk assessed and covered by our generic risk assessments. We subscribe to the safety principles of Safetravel ([www.safetravel.is](http://www.safetravel.is)) and comply with the requirements of BS8848.

### COACHES AND DRIVERS:

All drivers and guides speak English and are fully aware of the group's itinerary. Our vehicles have seat belts in all seats, our drivers know first aid and our guides are accredited.



### **HEALTH AND SAFETY:**

Trex has compiled a Safety Management Policy for school visits, which you can view online ([www.trex.is](http://www.trex.is)). You will see that we take the safety of our groups very seriously but that can only be achieved with the co-operation of the staff and students. We ask that parents stress the importance of personal and communal safety.

### **EMERGENCIES:**

If your group needs assistance our 24 hour emergency phone line is always available. The school teaching staff will be advised of this number, which must only be used in extreme emergencies. It must not be used for general communication with students. To avoid confusion and to speed lines of communication, other than direct to your student's own mobile phone, please channel enquiries through the school's appointed 'home agent'.



### **VOLCANIC ERUPTION:**

Iceland has a number of volcanoes and most of them are in the highlands and well away from most groups. All volcanoes are consistently monitored and travellers are usually not in immediate danger. Every community in Iceland is required to have a set of logistical procedures in place to deal with natural disasters. Local authorities assess risks of volcanic activity and evacuate areas according to safety procedures if needed.





### **PASSPORTS:**

Please check in good time that your child's passport has at least 6 months validity from the date of travel. Visas for UK citizens are not required for Iceland. For other nationalities please check with the Icelandic Embassy.

### **ACCOMMODATION:**

In school field trips TREX offers two kinds of accommodation in hotels or guesthouses with either made up beds or with sleeping bag facilities. Usually 2-3 persons share a room and of course it is sex divided. It is up to the school to make rooms arrangement on site. There may well be other schools or guests staying at the same places as your group. We therefore request that the usual common courtesies are applied with regard to general behaviour, noise levels, no smoking, no alcohol for anyone under 22 years.

### **SPECIAL DIETS:**

If your child has any special needs such as food allergy please let the school know in good time so we can send instructions to the accommodation.



### **WEATHER AND CLIMATE:**

The weather in Iceland has implications for the clothing to be packed. Iceland is milder than its name and location imply. A branch of the Gulf Stream flows along the southern and the western coast and moderate the temperature but this also brings mild Atlantic air in contact with colder Arctic air that leads to frequent changes, storminess and rain, especially in the south.





### **SUMMER:**

The high summer season is from late May to early September. During the first half of this period the sun stays above the horizon for almost 24 hours and even during the middle of summer the sky can be cloudy or overcast and the sunshine does not warm the air much.

The average temperature of the warmest month, July, exceeds 10°C in the lowlands of southern and western Iceland and the warmest summer days around Iceland can reach 20-25° C.

### **AUTUMN:**

In the autumn from middle of September to October, the weather can be cool and wet. There is a drop in the average high temperature to 10°C and 7°C. During night time it goes down to 5°C and 2°C. At this time there is a decrease in sunshine and the days get shorter.

### **WINTER:**

Winter extending from November to March is chilly, dark and damp in the south and snowy in the north. The coldest month is January with an average high of 2°C and a low of -3°C. The adjacent months are relatively warmer with a possibility of winds reaching gale force bringing about storms.

### **SPRING:**

Spring in April and May is comparatively dry and bright. There are rising winds but this can still push the temperatures lower. Rainfall drops to lower level and sunshine persists for about six hours a day in May.

The average high temperature rises to 6°C and then the average low gets down to 6°C and it is slightly colder in the north.

If weather conditions prevent our groups from travelling according to the planned itinerary a plan B is always available.





### **PACKING:**

Parents are requested to keep hand baggage to a minimum. Any item considered to be a potential weapon (e.g. nail files, scissors etc) will be confiscated at check-in. This also applies to liquids. Toiletries (eg. Toothpaste, medicines) should be packed separately in a polythene bag for inspection. Electronic items (eg. iPad) should be accessible to be scanned separately also.



### **CLOTHING NEEDS TO BE CONSIDERED UNDER THREE HEADINGS:**

1. Wet: You can expect rain at any time of the year and even if it does not rain your waterproof clothing is a good protection against wind chill. Note that the edges of glaciers can be exceptionally muddy (sometimes coming over the top of ordinary walking boots).
2. Cold: At all times of the year you can expect chilly conditions and thus the principle of warm woollen clothing next to the skin topped by windproof overgarments (e.g. cagoule/anorak) is applicable. Winter conditions will be colder but more clothing does not necessarily mean greater warmth; it is the quality and the arrangement of the clothing that is important.
3. Indoors: The accommodation is warm and comfortable so you need to pack light clothing and footwear (e.g. trainers) around the buildings.





## MINIMUM RECOMMENDED CLOTHING LIST:

### Outdoors:

- walking boots
- warm socks to wear with footwear (2 – 3 pairs; loop pile best)
- cagoule and waterproof over trousers
- \*woollen vest (thermal in winter)
- \*woollen shirt or loop pile T-shirt
- \*underwear (thermal in winter)
- \*sweater
- \*warm trousers (not jeans)
- gloves (and over-gloves in winter)
- woolly hat (balaclava in winter)
- sunglasses (bright light – especially in snow)
- day sack for field equipment, lunch box etc.

### Indoors:

- shirt/T-shirt
- light trousers/jeans
- socks
- light jersey
- trainers
- coat hangers (a few extras to hang wet clothing)

### Personal:

- washing/shaving kit
- towel (suitable as swimming towel)
- swimsuit
- any personal medications
- water bottle
- thermos flask (optional)
- charger for phone

### Fieldwork:

(School staff will advise as to necessity)

- strong field notebook
- protractor and ruler
- metric graph
- paper file and file paper
- HB and B pencils for field recording
- calculator
- pen and coloured pens/pencils for graphic work
- large polythene bag for field notebook (large enough to write inside)
- freezer bags (you can never have too few poly bags)

\* = a couple of changes of clothing recommended. Getting wet is to be expected.

We hope that you have found these notes to be helpful.

The staff at  
Trex Travel Experiences  
in Iceland

