

Heritage in Schools Panel 2024-2027

Candidate Information Booklet



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The Heritage in Schools Scheme

The Heritage in Schools Scheme is a primary school heritage education initiative which is now in its 23rd year.

Background

The Heritage in Schools Scheme, which was launched in 2000, is a primary school heritage education initiative which facilitates visits to primary schools by a range of experts on Ireland's natural, cultural, and built heritage and is the Heritage Council's main activity for primary schools. Visits are part-funded by the school and the remainder of the fee and travel expenses are funded by the Heritage Council. The programme aims to support deeper, sustained engagement with heritage among participating teachers and pupils and to foster relationships between schools and specialists.

Aims of the scheme

The scheme provides an additional resource for teachers and supports the stated aims and objectives of the Social, Scientific and Environmental Education (SESE) curriculum where the topics link in with the aims of the scheme which are:

- To generate greater awareness, respect, interest, and appreciation of our heritage among primary school children (4–12-year-olds) by encouraging both teachers and pupils to engage with their local heritage in a hands-on, interactive, and meaningful way, through place-based learning.
- To encourage learning in the outdoor classroom to address the increasing decline in time spent outdoors by Irish children.

How the scheme works

1. Primary schools visit the Heritage in Schools website www.heritageinschools.ie to browse the [Heritage Specialist Directory](#) and view individual profile pages.
2. Schools contact their preferred specialist to discuss requirements and availability and then submit an online booking request through the Heritage in Schools [Booking Form](#).
3. The Heritage Council approves the booking request, and the visit takes place.
4. Schools pay their portion of the visit cost directly to the specialist and the Heritage Council pays the balance with travel costs.

The Heritage in Schools Panel of Specialists

The objectives of the scheme are achieved through providing a panel of Heritage Specialists that make up a community of practitioners, sharing best practices, who are committed to delivering an outdoor educational experience that supports the learning objectives of the primary school SESE curriculum and is aligned with the aims of the Heritage in Schools Scheme, as outlined above.

Specialists on the Heritage in Schools panel possess a rich and diverse range of skills and knowledge in a range of specialised areas, many are highly qualified within their chosen field or have extensive experience working within their area. They provide engaging and interactive, cross-curricular learning through interactive and practical workshops.

Heritage in Schools Specialists are self-employed individuals providing a service to the Heritage Council. They are not contracted to the Heritage Council but are required to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) which sets out the terms of membership of the panel.

All Heritage in Schools Specialists are Garda vetted in accordance with the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012.

Terms of panel membership

Heritage in Schools Specialists are required to:

- Hold public liability insurance with an indemnity limit of 6.5 million and a specific indemnity to The Heritage Council.
- Work with a maximum of 30 children at a time on school visits (where possible).
- Accept the risk that visits may be cancelled last minute due to weather or other reasons. The Heritage Council will not cover costs for cancelled visits.
- Deliver a programme for visits to schools that supports the learning objectives of the primary school SESE curriculum and the stated aims of the Heritage in Schools Scheme.
- Familiarise themselves with and adhere to the scheme's [Operating Procedures](#).
- Familiarise themselves with and adhere to the scheme's [Code of Conduct](#).
- Attend child protection training and familiarise themselves with The Heritage Council's [Child Protection Policy](#)
- Carry Heritage in Schools photo identification on all school visits.
- Provide the necessary documentation required for Garda vetting when requested.
- Use Heritage Council promotional materials, templates and branding as required.
- Provide a profile photograph and text for use on the Heritage in Schools website.
- Respond within seven days to administrative queries from The Heritage Council.
- Engage in or assist with evaluation of the scheme as required by The Heritage Council.
- Have basic IT skills and email access.

Operating Procedures

Bookings and claims

Heritage in Schools Specialists must comply with the following operating procedures relating to the scheme:

1. The school contacts the Heritage Specialist in advance to arrange mutually convenient date(s) and discuss lesson plan(s).
2. Once a date(s) is agreed, the school must book the visit, in advance, through the online [booking system](#) located on the Heritage in Schools website.
3. The Heritage Specialist will receive an automated email once a booking has been approved on the system. If the school does not book through the online system, the Heritage Specialist will not be able to make a claim for that visit.
4. The Heritage Specialist is paid a fee of €250 per day and €140 per half day for in-person visits and €150 for preparation and delivery of a block of two virtual visits. This fee is part-paid by the school and The Heritage Council.
5. The school must pay their fee directly to the Heritage Specialist after each visit.
6. The scheme operates per calendar year (not school year).
7. Cap on visits per Heritage Specialist per calendar year will be determined by The Heritage Council at the beginning of each year.
8. A Heritage Specialist must undertake a minimum of ten visits per calendar year to remain on the panel.
9. A Visit Confirmation Form (VCF) must be fully completed, stamped, and signed by the school following a visit. This will form part of a claim to The Heritage Council.
10. Heritage Specialists must provide a short summary of visit content and record any variations to the visit such as date, content, duration, or additional travel in the relevant fields.
11. Travel is paid at the flat rate of 44.79c per km up to a maximum of 241km for the return journey. The Heritage Council cannot cover accommodation costs, however, if a specialist has a consecutive booking which merits staying in the area, travel can be claimed for each day as a return trip. Maximum travel per trip still applies.
12. The Heritage Council will cover the cost of road tolls and ferry transport to island schools. These additional costs must be clearly identified on the online claim and receipts for ferry costs must be provided.
13. Claims for visits must be submitted through the online system within 14 days of the actual visit. This rule applies to multiple visits as well as single visits.
14. All claims to the Heritage Council must include a tax number. As the Heritage Council is a public body it is obliged to make a return of all payments to Revenue and tax numbers form part of this data. If payments in a given year amount to €10,000 or more, Tax Clearance details (PPSN and Access Number) must be provided to The Heritage Council.

15. The Heritage Council is committed to paying suppliers within a timeframe of 15 working days. The 15-day period will commence from the date on which a claim is submitted (provided there are no queries related to the claim). The Heritage Council's [Payment to Suppliers Policy](#) provides further information on this area.

Payment rates for visits

Visits are part-funded by the school and The Heritage Council. The Heritage Council covers travel costs at the rate of 44.79c/km and capped at 241km for a return journey¹.

| Duration of visit | Half Day (2.5 - 3 hours) | Whole Day (5 - 5.5 hours) |
|---|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| Cost to school | €60 | €100 |
| Cost to Heritage Council | €80 | €150 |
| Total payment | €140 | €250 |
| Cost to designated disadvantaged school | €40 | €60 |
| Cost to Heritage Council | €100 | €190 |
| Total payment | €140 | €250 |

Terms for participating schools

Schools wishing to avail of funding through the Heritage in Schools Scheme must agree to the following Terms and Conditions when submitting a booking request:

1. The Heritage Specialist has been contacted and has agreed to the requested dates.
2. The class teacher will be present at all times during the visit and will maintain adequate supervision of children.
3. The number of children participating in a session should not exceed 30 and, for virtual visits, should be from one classroom.
4. As an invited visitor the Heritage Specialist is covered under the school's public liability insurance policy.
5. To secure a booking the Heritage Specialist may request payment at the time of booking.
6. Collection of data regarding contact information for sessions participants will be in line with GDPR legislation.
7. Photographing, filming or audio recording of sessions is not permitted without prior agreement.

¹ Travel capping is reviewed regularly, and updates are at the discretion of The Heritage Council.

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8. Links to resources provided by the Heritage Specialist will not be shared with third parties without prior agreement.
9. An online evaluation form will be completed by the class teacher after each visit or series of visits.
10. A Visit Confirmation Form (VCF) will be signed and returned to the Heritage Specialist by the class teacher after each visit and, where possible, within two working days.
11. The school has obtained parental consent for all children involved in Heritage in Schools activities (in-person or virtual).
12. A representative of the Heritage Council may attend sessions for evaluation purposes if arranged in advance with the school.
13. Resources provided by the Heritage Specialist in advance of the visit will be reviewed before the visit takes place (if requested).
14. At least five working days' notice will be provided for cancellations as the specialist does not receive payment for cancelled visits.

Heritage in Schools Panel: 2024-2027

The existing Heritage in Schools Panel will remain in place until the end of 2023 which will see completion of the four-year term. The 2023 recruitment campaign will include a full review of the existing panel – current members, meeting certain criteria, will be invited to apply to renew membership and up to 50 new Heritage Specialists will be recruited. The new panel will be in place from 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2027. A reserve panel may be established, from which gaps will be filled over the life of the panel.

Application process for new members

The application form for the 2024-2027 Heritage in Schools Panel can be downloaded [here](#). Completed application forms with accompanying cover letters should be emailed to mwalsh@heritagecouncil.ie by 5pm on 31st July 2023, referencing 'Heritage in Schools Panel' in the subject line of the email.

Late or incomplete applications will not be accepted.

Selection process

Shortlisting will be completed in August and interviews scheduled for late September – these may be in-person or online.

As well as proving expertise in a given area and having practical experience in an educational environment working with children, candidates will be required to demonstrate attention to detail and good communication skills as well as the ability to follow instructions and meet deadlines. This is critical for general scheme administration such as claim submissions; Garda vetting; providing website profile content and responding to general administrative requirements from The Heritage Council.

The Heritage in Schools Scheme supports diversity and inclusion and welcomes applications from underrepresented groups.

Shortlisting

Applications will be assessed competitively and scored 1-5 (1=poor; 2=average; 3=good; 4=very good; 5=excellent) against the following:

1. *Cover letter*

This should introduce the applicant and their suitability to the scheme and demonstrate professional written communication skills.

2. *Capacity to deliver visits*

Candidates who demonstrate availability throughout the school term or, where committed to other seasonal work, ability to allocate specific blocks of time to school visits will score higher.

3. *Previous relevant experience*

Applicants should have experience working with children in an educational and/or primary school environment; working in an outdoor classroom; held previous roles which required good communication and leadership skills and demonstrate a level of professionalism and competency in their field.

4. *Ability to fill current gaps*

Efforts will be made to fill current gaps in the panel in terms of content and geographic spread:

- Built heritage; marine biodiversity; peatland biodiversity; climate change and biodiversity loss.
- Candidates from counties Carlow; Cavan; Dublin; Donegal; Kilkenny; Louth; Mayo; Monaghan; Offaly; Roscommon; Tipperary; Waterford and Wicklow.
- Irish language speakers – candidates should indicate their level of written and/or oral competence

5. *Knowledge of the Irish primary school curriculum*

Applicants should demonstrate an understanding of the primary school curriculum and outline how their visits will link with SESE curriculum strands in particular.

Interviews

Shortlisted applicants will be invited to attend an interview which may be in-person or online.

Interviews are expected to take place the last week in September 2023.

Training and induction for successful candidates

Successful candidates will be required to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) which sets out the terms and conditions of panel membership. In addition, they will provide text, photographs and documentation for website profiles, Garda vetting and photo identification. All documentation will be required within a specified timeframe. Induction training will take place before the end of 2023 – this may be online or in-person.

Further information

Queries or requests for further information can be sent by email to Maria Walsh, Programme Manager, Heritage in Schools Scheme: mwalsh@heritagecouncil.ie.