

Bedales Schools’ School Visitor Policy

INCLUDING EYFS

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Author	Bedales Deputy Head, Operational and Co-Curricular
Review body (individual or group)	Heads of Dunhurst and Dunannie
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Tick relevant box(es) how this Policy should appear:

Inspector Folder		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Website	Upload	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Signpost	<input type="checkbox"/>
Internal only		<input type="checkbox"/>
Parent Portal		<input type="checkbox"/>
For Pupils/Students		<input type="checkbox"/>

Covid-19 Note

During the period of additional, necessary covid-19 precautions, visitors must take note of the coronavirus guidance to keep the community safe. This is a fundamental part of our visitor expectations and is subject to regular change, based on government information. This guidance is available separately on the school website: <https://www.bedales.org.uk/sites/default/files/documents/2020-11/Visitors%20to%20Bedales%20during%20COVID-19%20Nov%202020.pdf>

Introduction

Bedales Schools operate within a rural location which has its own inherent security implications. Although it is neither necessary nor desirable to place tight restrictions on visitors' movements, the school recognises that it has a legal and moral duty to ensure the safety and welfare of its pupils; this is reflected in the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy which is available separately on the school website and intranet.

A visitor is defined as any person (over the age of 16) seeking to enter the school premises who is not a pupil, employee of the school or a family member registered as living in the household of staff in accommodation attached to Boarding Houses.

Visitors will normally fall in to one of the following categories:

- Parents/carers of pupils in school and those interested in pupil enrolment
- Adults seeking employment at Bedales Schools
- Teachers, pupils, parents from other educational establishments on experience visits or attending sporting fixtures
- Student teachers on placement
- Contractors or professional agencies
- Lets, using designated spaces or facilities
- Family and friends of residential staff members
- Former staff and pupils
- Service providers e.g. postperson, waste collector etc.

Whenever possible, visitors should obtain authorisation from a member of school staff in advance as visits may not be possible at certain times e.g. when important examinations or other assessments are being conducted.

All Bedales Schools' visitors must comply at all times with Bedales' policies, administrative rules and regulations, a brief summary of which will be given to all visitors to read when registering at the relevant reception area / welcoming point at each school. Where the welcoming point is not a reception area (for example Boarding Houses, residential accommodation attached to Boarding Houses or the Theatre), staff should ensure that safeguarding and health and safety procedures are adhered to – in particular that visitors are not to be unaccompanied with pupils unless part of an organised activity, such as a tour, and should evacuate a building in the event of a fire alarm.

Deliveries should be made directly to the designated drop off points and behaviour or conduct that is inconsistent with our safeguarding and health and safety policies should be challenged. This Policy does not apply to full or part-time employees of Bedales Schools, volunteer workers or individuals on work experience, including student and supply teachers, who will have completed the necessary safeguarding checks prior to their appointments.

Access

Access to Bedales Schools cannot be prevented entirely, as parts of the campus include public footpaths and access and the perimeter is bounded by unfenced areas. The policy for limiting access therefore relies on channelling visitors towards the main reception areas at each school using appropriate directional signage.

Visitor arrival

Apart from matches and publicised events in the Theatre and other performance spaces (and those companies preparing for those performances, who will liaise with the school contact managing that performance and abide by the rules of this document), all visitors to Bedales Schools should immediately report to the relevant main School Reception or the Facilities Reception. Parents of current boarders at the senior school may go directly to the Boarding House at normal pick-up and drop-off times or if they have made a prior appointment with Houseparents. Visitors for matches and events should go only to and from the venue.

In the interest of security and safeguarding, all visitors and contractors are politely requested to strictly abide by Bedales' signing in and out procedure.

At all times at Bedales and during Reception open hours at Dunannie (7.45am to 4pm) and Dunhurst (8am to 7pm) all visitors are required to read the relevant guidance relating to health and safety, safeguarding and emergency procedures, plus first aid, parking, entry to classrooms and use of cameras at Dunannie. Visitors must wear a visitor identification badge which must be visibly worn at all times. Staff inviting visitors or contractors to any of the schools must inform them of the signing-in procedure and give directions to the relevant welcoming point. Staff are also expected to inform Reception staff of any said arrival. Visitors should return their badge at the end of their visit. Most visitors must be escorted by the person whom they are visiting, or another member of staff, at all times during their visit. The exceptions to this are: contractors with appropriate safeguarding checks who work at agreed places and times and visitors on pupil tours, which must be organised via the Registrar or Head.

Visitors who should wear badges

- Prospective parents (apart from those visiting Dunannie who are accompanied by staff at all times)
- Adults attending an employment interview
- Teachers/pupils from other educational establishments other than those here for a sports fixture
or such events where all members of the party are escorted at all times
- Tutors of pupils on placement or work experience
- Contractors working on site
- Professional agencies
- Former pupils
- Governors and Trustees
- Guest/Visiting Speakers
- Guest pupils visiting current pupils e.g. exchange partners
- Pupils on work experience at the school

Exceptions to Visitor Requirements

- Employees of the school

- Pupils enrolled at the school
- Registered school volunteers
- PGCE pupils on placement at the school
- Suppliers/contractors making deliveries or collections, provided they are not anywhere other than the delivery point
- Residing families of school employees visiting common use areas of the school or using facilities open to them such as the swimming pool
- Family and friends of residential staff members (this is covered in the policy relating to staff living in residential accommodation)
- Parents/guardians dropping off or collecting pupils
- Parents, Visitors, Governors or Trustees who have been invited to visit the school as part of a scheduled open day, special event, calendared event or scheduled performance including sporting fixtures
- Other adult participants in organized and school-approved activities during out of school hours

Suspicious behaviour, with or without a visitor badge, is a source of concern which should also be addressed by staff and reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy immediately.

Visitor access

Within the site, access to individual buildings such as Boarding Houses is controlled. Access to other areas is dependent upon constant vigilance by staff and pupils.

Security access within Bedales Schools is managed at four levels:

- Boarding Houses – There must be no unrestricted public access when pupils are present. Work in an occupied Boarding House will only take place with a Houseparents or Matron present, unless otherwise authorised by the Estates Bursar or Registrar.
- Academic areas – such as classrooms or the library, where visitors may be present only when accompanied by a member of staff or designated person (e.g. pupil tour guide)
- Public events – hosted in areas such as the Theatre, sports fields, SLT, Quad etc. where visitors may be present when invited and members of staff are in attendance. These events may include Parents' Evenings, performances (and the preparation for those performances) or sporting events
- Public footpaths – unrestricted access to the single public footpath that traverses one part of the Campus

Sand quarry – this area is out of bounds to pupils unless they are supervised by staff. Members of the local community may use the area for walking.

The School Caretaker and staff with security responsibilities ensure that buildings are secured at night.

Unknown/uninvited visitor

Any visitor to Bedales Schools who is not clearly wearing an appropriate identity badge should be politely challenged to enquire who they are and their business on the school site.

For example “Can I help you? “Can I direct you to the main Reception or Facilities Reception?” “Who are you here to visit?”

If an unknown/uninvited visitor becomes abusive or aggressive, they should be politely asked to leave the site immediately. If they fail to follow the instructions they should be warned that if they fail to leave the school grounds, police assistance will be called for. It is the responsibility of ALL employees to verbally and respectfully challenge any individual on the school campus who is not wearing a visitors' I.D. badge. Older pupils should also challenge individuals if they feel confident to do so but should not attempt to engage in an aggressive exchange. Any instances of this nature should be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads.

Visitors to Boarding Houses

Access to Boarding Houses must be strictly controlled as this is not only the pupils' home but there are also areas where pupils may be changing or sleeping. Collecting and returning pupils on to Flat/Wing at normal times is permitted without signing in. Boarding Houses at the senior school do, however, have a Visitors' Book for signing in and out outside of normal access times.

At the Senior school outside of normal access hours (and organised events in the House), parents should sign the book on arrival and departure. Parents should not enter sleeping areas except to deliver or collect luggage at the start and end of terms and should wait in the welcome area unless accompanied. At all other times entry to houses will only be permitted by prior appointment agreed by the Housemaster/mistress or Matron on duty.

All other visitors who are not current members of the school (including OBs) must always make a prior arrangement to visit and should be met in the school Reception. All such visitors must remain in the Boarding House welcome area.

Visitors and guests of staff members who reside in properties linked to or attached to Boarding Houses must adhere to the Adults Staying in Accommodation Linked to Boarding Houses Policy. Staff members have a duty to ensure that their visitors comply with this Policy.

Access to Boarding Houses by Facilities

Facilities should contact the Boarding House Matron in order to arrange the times of their work on Flat. This will enable Houseparents to advise pupils and make any necessary arrangements to ensure their privacy, including signage to advise pupils of location of work where appropriate. It will also maximise opportunities for work to be carried out. All staff at Bedales are subject to safeguarding checks in accordance with our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy which means they are permitted to work with children. Particular care should, however, be taken with regards to practices in Boarding Houses; bedrooms and bathrooms should not be accessed if pupils are in them. Contractors should not be unaccompanied if there are pupils on Flat.

Access to Boarding Houses by Admissions

Admissions should notify a Boarding House Matron if a prospective parent or family would like to view it. Ideally, this will be at least a day before any visit. A request to view a Boarding House on the same day will normally be accommodated but it may not be possible to view a dorm. All visitors (i.e. those not employed by the school) on Flat must be accompanied by a member of staff at all times, if pupils are present.

It may be preferable for a member of the house team to show someone round as they know and work on Flat. Admissions staff may accompany visitors if there are no pupils present and with prior permission from Houseparents or a matron.

Parents of current pupils

Parents of current pupils may participate in ticketed school events without badges and they may visit their son/daughter's Boarding House but should contact the Houseparents in advance if the visit is outside of normal access times and sign in at Reception. Parents wishing to walk their children to school between the senior school and prep and pre-prep can do so without visitor badges by using the common areas of the school, the public footpath or the footpath running between Bedales and Dunhurst and Dunannie.

Public access to the grounds

The public footpath running from Church Road, past the back of the Theatre and down Emma's Walk is a public right of way and open to all walking members of the public. There is also a public footpath which the pupils may access during the school day between the main school site and the area known as the Sand Quarry, which is out of bounds to pupils unless they are with staff.

Prospective parents

Prospective parents will be asked to report to the Reception and will be escorted from there, normally by a member of the Admissions team or pupils for tours.

Friends of current pupils

Requests to bring a friend into school to take part in normal school activities should be made directly to the Head of Dunhurst or Dunannie or the Deputy Head Pastoral of Bedales with at least six school weeks' notice. Such visitors will normally be permitted for up to three days. They will be required to sign in and out of school and provide medical information to the Health Centre at Bedales or Medical Matron at Dunhurst/Dunannie. They should be accompanied at all times by the pupil host. Visitors who are aged 16 or over may need to have safeguarding checks completed prior to their visit taking place and these can take several weeks to complete.

Visitors to staff residential properties

In view of the number of other residential properties owned by the school, that are not linked to Boarding Houses, it is inevitable that several visitors will consist of family or friends of staff, who may remain either for the day, overnight or for longer periods. Staff are asked to be mindful of the safeguarding requirements when they have visitors.

It is also possible that individuals with a personal relationship with the employee may need to be accommodated by staff resident on Boarding Houses at short notice and it is not possible to complete a DBS check beforehand. Under these circumstances, a risk assessment must be completed and signed off by an appropriate member of the Senior Leadership Team before the person comes to stay. Please read separate Adults Staying in Accommodation Linked to Boarding Houses Policy for more details.

Contractors

Prior to working at the school, all contractors are required to complete the relevant contractor paperwork and be confirmed as being suitable to work at the school by being placed on the "Authorised Contractor

Register”, which is held by the relevant Department. Part of this process ensures that all contractors ensure that their workers have been safer recruitment checked.

The contract worker will be required to report to the Facilities or school Reception and to sign ‘in and out’ and also be required to provide I.D. to confirm that they are who they say they are, before being allowed to work on site. Signing in is required at the beginning of each and every shift regardless of the duration of time and contractors must be issued with an identification badge which must be visibly worn at all times.

Visiting workers

These are ad hoc and sporadic workers, speakers, supply teachers, etc. who come to Bedales Schools to offer their services perhaps on a one-off basis, annually or very occasionally throughout the year. Paid visiting workers must be authorised in advance by the Head of Department after consultation with the HR team regarding the safeguarding and health and safety requirements. All visiting workers will be asked to show photo I.D. to verify their identity, they will be required to sign in at Reception and will need to be accompanied for the duration of their visit. They should not be allowed to wander alone.

School Events and Sporting Fixtures

Parents of current pupils or visitors who have been invited to visit the school to attend an event or sporting fixture are restricted to the areas of the school where the event is taking place; these areas will normally be the Theatre, sports fields, SLT, Quad etc.

Those companies (or individuals) setting up the event in the Theatre will sign in with Bedales staff at that location, who will remain with them if they need to access other facilities, such as the dining hall for meals. This allows us to have the same rules whether or not reception is open and remain clear and consistent with outside companies.

Those companies (or individuals) delivering performances or lectures at the school will be guided by the school’s expectations around the material’s content. This is reflected in the school’s ‘visiting speakers – code of conduct’, which is available separately on the school website and intranet.

Parents and visitors should only use the designated adult toilet facilities and must not access pupil toilet or changing facilities. If they are in any doubt they should consult a member of staff.

If parents or visitors wish to access other areas of the school they must first report to the school Reception where they will be required to sign in, wear a visitor badge, be accompanied at all times and follow the standard visitor procedure.

Advice should be given that those attending events should proceed directly to the venue where the event is being held. At no point should they seek to enter Boarding Houses or academic buildings unless supervised by a member of staff. Where tickets are issued in advance the tickets should advise that visitors should proceed directly to the venue on arrival and not wander the site.

Families of employees residing in school accommodation

Families residing in school accommodation with employees of the school are an important part of the school community and as such are welcomed in visiting and making use of the common

areas of the school site and of the facilities available to them at the designated times e.g. swimming pool.

Families should be mindful that during term time, when pupils are present, the same access restrictions apply to residing families as to other visitors regarding access to restricted areas of the school site including academic areas and Boarding Houses. If staff residing in school accommodation attached to boarding houses wish to have visitors who would be unattended in their accommodation (for example, grandparents helping to look after children), they must contact the HR department to arrange appropriate safeguarding checks.

Visits by other Pupils

All requirements for adult visitors also apply to visiting pupils with additional considerations to be applied at the discretion of the Head of each School. No pupil who is under suspension, expulsion or other form of discipline from any other school shall be permitted to visit the school without specific permission from the Head of the School.

Visitors to the gym and swimming pool

Members of the school gym and swimming pool have access only to those sports facilities identified by the school as available to them, and at the times designated by the Director of Sport or i/c Lets; these are, as much as possible, when the pupils are not in the building. Visitors must sign the attendance record on arrival and departure.

Staff receiving visitors

If you are expecting a visitor, please inform Reception in advance. When collecting a visitor, please check that the visitor has been issued with a visitor badge. When escorting a visitor off the premises, please ensure that his/her visitor badge is handed in to Reception.

Assessing the risk to children

If the visitor is here to work independently (e.g. setting up software, repairing machinery) the risk presented to children should be assessed and action taken to mitigate that risk. Steps to be taken might include:

- supervision – constant or at intervals
- leaving doors open where staff are nearby
- removing pupils from that area
- advising pupils of an adult's presence

Vehicles and parking

Parking of any vehicles is strictly restricted to school car parks unless permission is granted to park in other areas around the school which will be authorised by the Facilities Department or staff employing the services of any contractor.

There is a strict speed limit around the school campus of 10mph.

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checks

All full and part time staff and volunteer workers on site are subject to tight pre-employment checks that include an enhanced check for regulated activity by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). These checks also apply to all those over 16 years of age and not employed by or a pupil at the school, who are resident in Boarding Houses on the site.

Contractor, third party providers and other regular business visitors to the school also undergo safeguarding checks, including where appropriate an enhanced DBS and Barred List check, appropriate to their status. Although not a guarantee, evidence of clear safeguarding checks helps to reduce the risks to the safety and welfare of pupils.

Exceptional circumstances

Ultimately, the Head of each school is responsible for the care of pupils and, should they consider that an increased level of risk exists for any reason, and at any time, an increased level of visitor checking and/or supervision may be introduced without notice. Under exceptional circumstances, this could extend to a temporary total ban on all visitors to the site.

Similarly, there are some circumstances under which the guidelines set out in this policy may be relaxed temporarily. Large numbers of visitors are often present on the site for formal events such as Badley Day and at the start and end of term when it is impractical to expect them all to sign in and be given passes. In this case, the principle of “loose supervision” applies as staff will always be present in the vicinity of the visitors.

Breach of the Policy

Safeguarding the welfare and safety of pupils is a key priority for all those who live or work at Bedales Schools. Breaches of this policy will be investigated thoroughly and could result in disciplinary action (for employees), exclusion (for contractors, volunteers etc.), a request that alternative accommodation is found off-site (for residents etc.) or the banning of a member of the public from the site. These restrictions will only be imposed by either the Head of Bedales Schools or Bursar.

NB: All School Policies are available to staff and can be found here:

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APPENDIX I

The following wording is included in School Visitors Books - Reception, hosts and Boarding Houses should flag to visitors:

For the attention of Visitors and Contractors

Bedales School has certain Health and Safety responsibilities to Visitors and Contractors, one of which is the provision of information regarding the rules which are in place for your safety and welfare while you are on the School premises.

To help us ensure your safety, we require you to read and comply with the information on the reverse of your Visitor or Contract identity passes.

In addition, as you may not be familiar with Bedales, we ask you to comply with a few simple rules in order to ensure both your own safety and the safety of others.

Safeguarding

A safe and caring school environment is provided and all visitors are requested to co-operate in maintaining this duty of care. You must be accompanied by staff at all times, unless you are on an organised pupil tour. You should not make physical contact with a pupil unless the member of staff confirms there is express consent for you to do so. If a pupil wishes to maintain contact with you after your visit, please inform the member of staff and they will advise parents of this. If you are concerned about the welfare of a pupil, contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Head before you depart. Please ask staff for contact details.

General Safety on the Site

It is a condition of access to Bedales that you comply with all signs and instructions that are intended to safeguard you while you are on the site. You are required to carry out the purpose of your visit to Bedales in a safe manner with due regard to your own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by your activities. While on the site, if you come into contact with any issues that you consider to be unsafe, please report the matter immediately to your host and to the Facilities Department.

Fire Safety on the Site

If you suspect that there is a fire or discover a fire, please use the nearest fire alarm call point to activate the fire alarm system. Only use the fire extinguisher equipment if you are trained and feel confident to do so and there is no apparent risk to yourself.

If you hear a continuous alarm please leave the building as quickly as possible following the nearest fire escape route marker signs. Please do not use lifts or go to collect belongings from other parts of the building or from other buildings.

Please make your way to the designated assembly point. This is shown on the blue Fire Action Notice located next to all fire exits. If you are unsure of the location of this assembly point, please ask now.

Do not return to a building until you have been advised that you may do so.

Smoking

The School operates a No Smoking Policy within its buildings in accordance with smoke-free legislation. There is one designated outdoor smoking area for adult visitors. The use of e-cigarettes or vaping devices is considered in the same way and is also not permitted anywhere on site apart from the designated smoking area.

If you require First-Aid

The School has a Health Centre within the grounds which is fully staffed throughout term-time. Outside of term-time there are a large number of First Aid trained staff available. Should you require first aid/ medical assistance please contact Reception staff or inform your host.

Equality and Respect

We embrace the Equality Act 2010 and respect the rights of all, and particularly including those with protected characteristics which relate to age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. If you have any special needs please do not hesitate to advise your host upon arrival.

Traffic on Site

The campus roads are used by cars, pedestrians, bicycles and lorries. Please maintain a high level of awareness when crossing roads. The speed limit around the School campus is 10mph. Please park in designated car parks. There is marked disabled parking around the site.

Taking of Images

The taking of images is not permitted on any part of the school site without permission of your host. The school adheres to strict photo-consent policies and images of pupils must not be taken without prior arrangement with the External Relations department.

APPENDIX 2

Wording on back of Visitor badges (everyone to wear 16 and over)

Visitor Badge at Bedales School and Bedales Prep, Dunhurst:

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY

1. **THE SAFEGUARDING** of our students is paramount. You should only be with students, as agreed by staff.
2. **TAKING OF IMAGES** is not permitted on any part of the school site without permission of your host.
3. **ALL VISITORS** are subject to company Health and Safety regulations.
4. **FIRE/EMERGENCY.** In the event of the **fire alarm** sounding, please remain in the company of your host and, only when safe to do so, leave the building by the nearest exit.
5. **SMOKING.** This is a **NO SMOKING** site – please abide by this rule.
6. **CAR PARKING.** All vehicles are parked at the owner's risk and should NOT be parked so as to cause obstruction.
7. **PLEASE RETURN THIS BADGE TO RECEPTION** and book out before leaving the site.

Visitor Badge at Bedales Pre-Prep, Dunannie:

Welcome to Dunannie

Whilst on site please observe the following:

1. **HEALTH AND SAFETY AT SCHOOL:** A safe and caring school environment is provided and all visitors are requested to co-operate in maintaining this duty of care.
2. **EMERGENCY PROCEDURE:** In emergencies an alarm is operated. Immediately proceed to the assembly point in the orchard. You will be advised when re-entry is permissible.
3. **FIRST AID:** In the event of injury or illness please contact reception where first aid will be arranged.
4. **PARKING:** Vehicles must be parked in the designated car park. Unauthorised parking can endanger staff and pupils of the school.
5. **ENTRY INTO CLASSROOMS, ETC:** You must not enter any area of the school unless accompanied by your contact.
6. **CAMERAS:** Cameras and those on mobile phones are not allowed without approval.



Smoking is not permitted anywhere on school premises.

APPENDIX 2 (...cont'd)

Facilities Visitor Badge:

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY

1. **THE SAFEGUARDING OF OUR STUDENTS IS PARAMOUNT. YOU SHOULD ONLY BE WITH STUDENTS, AS AGREED BY STAFF.**
2. **ALL VISITORS ARE SUBJECT TO COMPANY HEALTH AND SAFETY REGULATIONS.**
3. **FIRE/EMERGENCY. IN THE EVENT OF THE FIRE ALARM SOUNDING, PLEASE REMAIN IN THE COMPANY OF YOUR HOST AND, ONLY WHEN SAFE TO DO SO, LEAVE THE BUILDING BY THE NEAREST EXIT.**
4. **SMOKING. PLEASE ABIDE BY THE COMPANY RULES ON SMOKING.**
5. **CAR PARKING. ALL VEHICLES ARE PARKED AT THE OWNER'S RISK AND SHOULD NOT BE PARKED SO AS TO CAUSE OBSTRUCTION.**
6. **PLEASE RETURN THIS BADGE TO RECEPTION AND BOOK OUT BEFORE LEAVING THE BUILDING.**

Facilities Contractor Badge:

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY

1. **THE SAFEGUARDING OF OUR STUDENTS IS PARAMOUNT. YOU SHOULD ONLY BE WITH STUDENTS, AS AGREED BY STAFF.**
2. **ALL CONTRACTORS MUST COMPLY WITH BOTH THE COMPANY HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY AND THE HEALTH AND SAFETY AT WORK ACT 1974.**
3. **PERSONAL PROTECTION: NECESSARY PROTECTIVE CLOTHING (EAR DEFENDERS, SAFETY GLASSES ETC) MUST BE WORN AS DIRECTED.**
4. **FIRE / EMERGENCY: IF THE FIRE ALARM SOUNDS LEAVE THE PREMISES BY THE NEAREST EXIT.**
5. **ENSURE ANY PLANT AND EQUIPMENT USED IS IN GOOD CONDITION AND SAFE.**
6. **IN THE EVENT OF INJURY OR ILLNESS, CONTACT RECEPTION IMMEDIATELY.**
7. **SMOKING: ABIDE BY THE COMPANY RULES ON SMOKING.**
8. **CAR PARKING: ALL VEHICLES ARE PARKED AT OWNER'S OWN RISK.**