

Visiting with Cheetah Conservation Botswana



Education Camp Visitor's Handbook



Contents

CHAPTER 1 – Background	3
The cheetah	3
What does CCB do?	4
CHAPTER 2 – CCB’s bush camps	5
What happens at a CCB bush camp?	5
Objectives and aims of our bush camps	5
Who we host at our bush camps	6
Carrying capacity	6
How many teachers need to come	6
Costs and transport requirements	7
Camp rules	7
Health and Safety	8
CHAPTER 3 – Our bush camp facility	11
Our facility	11
Location	12
How to get there	12
Climate	13
Others in camp	13
CHAPTER 4 – Lessons and activities	14
General schedule and curriculum	14
Fun activities	15
Optional activities	15
CHAPTER 5 – What you need to bring	17
Clothing	17
Other items	17
Paperwork requirements	18
CHAPTER 6 – Information for teachers	19
Cell phones and internet	19
Personal items	19
Cigarettes, alcohol and drugs	19
Teachers’ accommodation and meals	19
APPENDIX - Contact us	20

CHAPTER 1

Background

The Cheetah

Although once widespread in both Africa and Asia, the cheetah has decreased in range and numbers drastically over the last 100 years. With approximately only 7,000 surviving individuals worldwide, the worlds fastest land mammal, the cheetah, is now registered as a threatened species. Without conservation efforts, it is unlikely to survive.

The cheetah (*Acinonyx jubatus*) is the fastest land mammal, obtaining speeds of up to 110km per hour and accelerating from 0 – 75km/h in 3 seconds. It is present in 20 countries in Africa, and in very small numbers in Iran (80 cats). It is Africa's most endangered large cat, with populations declining by half in only a few decades due to loss of habitat and prey and due to human persecution.



Botswana contains the second largest population of free ranging cheetah in the world (Namibia has the largest) and is a central point connecting populations in South Africa, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Namibia. In 2016 it was estimated that 1700 - 2000 individuals remain in Botswana, representing 28% of the world's population. Like in many Southern African countries, cheetahs occur at higher densities in agricultural zones than in protected areas. In protected areas they suffer competition from larger predators, primarily lions and spotted hyaenas and survivability of cubs is often low. In non-protected areas (often farmlands), larger carnivores like lions have been exterminated, offering the cheetah reduced competition and a better chance of survival. However, this brings the cheetah into conflict with rural farming communities and human persecution remains one of the biggest threats to the cheetah's survival in Botswana. As such the conservation management of these areas is essential to the survival of the species.

What does CCB do?

Cheetah Conservation Botswana was established in January 2003 and has grown considerably over the years. It uses scientific research, farmer outreach and engagement and awareness to promote the use of cheetah-friendly farming practices, practical species management and overall conservation of the species.

Our community officers work in conjunction with the Botswana Department of Wildlife and National Parks (DWNP) to conduct Problem Animal Control workshops with local communities and through site visits to gather information about cheetah problems and distribute information on how to reduce losses to carnivore species.



The research department carries out various aspects of research to assess the status, ecology, health status and distribution of the cheetahs in Botswana. It focuses on the major human-predator conflict zones allowing us to identify priority areas. Education and information programmes on non-lethal methods of predator control, appropriate livestock management and the sustainable use of wildlife, may then be focused in these areas. The cheetah acts as a flagship species for the biodiversity of these areas.

Our engagement and awareness department conducts awareness raising activities to a wide range of stakeholders. They hold school talks to educate the future leaders of Botswana about the importance of carnivores. We also hold teacher-training workshops to help teachers incorporate environmental education into the curriculum. CCB is also involved in a mentorship programme to help develop future leaders in conservation and also runs a pen pal programme with overseas schools to help build national pride amongst the youth of Botswana. CCB has a bush camp facility at our Ghanzi farm, which is being developed and used to extend and enhance our education work.



CHAPTER 2

CCB's Bush Camps



Thank you for taking an interest in visiting Cheetah Conservation Botswana's Tiisano Bush Camp. Most visitors find the experience very rewarding and leaves them with memories to last a lifetime.

What happens at a CCB Bush Camp?

Groups or clubs (maximum of 58 participants) are invited to visit our Ark Tiisano Education Camp in the bush of the Ghanzi farmlands. Groups can stay 1-4 nights (3 is the most common) at our facility and enjoy environmental education lessons, fun activities, games and a unique immersive bush experience. Food, accommodation and lessons are provided by CCB during your stay at our camp.

Objectives and Aims of our bush camps

We host groups at our Ark Tiisano Education Centre because we want people to understand the environment and develop an appreciation for Botswana's wildlife. With the combination of lessons, activities and the immersive bush experience, we hope that participants will leave the bush camp with a newfound love of the environment, and a commitment to conserving nature.

Who we host at our student educational bush camps

We invite students from Botswana (9 years and over) from all walks of life for our bush camps. We have had classes and clubs from primary, junior and senior secondary schools attend our camps over the years, as well as groups from universities and brigades from all across the country.

There are only two requirements for all visitors:

- ❖ a sufficient level of health and fitness to be able to walk through the bush
- ❖ reasonable proficiency in English or Setswana



Carrying capacity

The camp has a maximum capacity of 58 people; teachers, students and drivers included. The accommodation available at our Ark Tiisano Education Centre includes four separate square brick houses (that can house 8 people in each), two large military tents (that can house 8 each), four two-man dome tents and one block house (that can house 2).

How many teachers need to come

We require at least one teacher or supervisor to come with each group to the bush camp, however, we prefer there to be 1 teacher for every 10 students that visit us, to help the students get the most out of the bush camp experience. Teachers are required to attend all lessons and activities and play an active role in assisting the CCB staff during the bush camp.



Costs and transportation requirements

We request that schools that have funds or sponsorship available (internally or from government) contribute 50BWP per person per night to help us cover our costs (this fee applies to students and teachers alike). If your school does not have the ability to obtain sponsorship, CCB may have the ability to sponsor your school. We have limited availability of funds, so sponsorship by CCB cannot be guaranteed. However, if you need financial assistance, please ask us if we have funds available to sponsor your school.

The following are provided by CCB during the camp:

- ❖ food for all participants
- ❖ accommodation (including electricity and hot running water)
- ❖ lessons
- ❖ transport in and around our camp

What is not covered by CCB:

- ❖ transportation to and from the camp
- ❖ teacher's stipends or overtime
- ❖ cost and transportation required for additional activities that are not on the CCB programme (which can be arranged on request)
- ❖ internet or phones



Camp rules

For camp life to run smoothly and cooperatively, everyone needs to follow some basic rules. It's a simple case of respect for your fellow visitors and the project. In addition, we require everyone to follow some simple healthy, safety, environmental, and legal rules.

These rules shouldn't pose a problem for most people. But it's important to understand that we take them very seriously.

- ❖ Never act in any way that might cause risk to the camp's property, data, or reputation.
- ❖ If your group travels outside of the camp for an activity, we ask all participants to be well behaved during the entire activity and conduct themselves in a respectable manner. When on field excursions, students are representing CCB and we require them to behave respectably.
- ❖ Do not harass or harm any animal — including, as far as reasonably possible, insects and other invertebrates.
- ❖ CCB personnel will not drive off established tracks in the bush, do not expect them to do so.
- ❖ Do not pick flowers or otherwise gratuitously damage any living plants.
- ❖ Alcohol is not allowed at the bush camps and students will not be allowed to smoke

cigarettes. Recreational drugs may not be used at any time during your visiting period, whether on site or off. Use of recreational drugs will result in immediate dismissal from the camp.

- ❖ Do not use anyone else's property (including food and beverages) without their prior permission.
- ❖ Aggressive, disruptive, or antisocial behaviour may lead to dismissal from camp.
- ❖ Theft of anyone else's property, including CCB's, no matter how small, is cause for immediate dismissal from the camp and may also lead to criminal prosecution. Prior to each visitor's departure, we take an inventory of the camp, to ensure that all project property is present.
- ❖ Any form of sexual harassment is cause for immediate dismissal from the camp and may also lead to criminal prosecution.
- ❖ Any significant breach of the rules outlined in this chapter, or of any other rules communicated to you verbally or in writing by the Public Relations and Education coordinator or Education officer, is ground for dismissal from the camp.

Health and Safety

CCB's staff will do our utmost to make your stay as enjoyable and safe as possible. Our staff are trained in first aid and snake handling to help us provide a safe environment for our guests. We ask all visitors to abide by the following rules to help keep them safe at all times.



- ❖ You must disclose all medical conditions, allergies, and prescription medications on your visitor indemnity form. This information is not used for screening applicants, but only for purposes of your health and safety in the event that a medical issue arises during your visit. If you do not disclose a pre-existing condition that adversely affects your ability to take part in both the indoor and outdoor activities, CCB reserves the right to ask you to leave. Your medical information is treated with strict confidentiality. It will not be disclosed to other visitors and other CCB staff unless an emergency arises that requires them to assist in getting you the treatment you need.
- ❖ Do not walk off the road into the bush. Always stay with the group. You may go for walks around the camp, but you must not leave the fenced area of the Education Camp.
- ❖ If you encounter an animal carcass, do not touch or approach it. The carcass may be host to an infectious disease such as anthrax. Notify a member of staff about animal carcasses immediately.
- ❖ Do not wade or swim in any natural or artificial lake, pond, waterhole, river, or stream. Potential risks include leptosporidium and schistosomiasis (waterborne parasites), crocodiles, pythons, venomous snakes, and hippos.
- ❖ Do not walk barefoot. Potential risks include thorns, hookworm (a parasite that enters the

body through the soles of the feet), insects, scorpions, and snakes.

- ❖ Do not wear sandals (thongs, flip-flops), or other open toed footwear at night, when you are less likely to notice insects, scorpions, or snakes in your path.
- ❖ Always check your shoes and clothing for insects or scorpions before you put them on.
- ❖ Always check your bed and bedding for insects, scorpions, or snakes before you get into bed.
- ❖ To prevent dehydration, heat exhaustion, or heatstroke, always wear a hat (preferably wide-brimmed) and drink lots of water.
- ❖ The sun can be very intense in Botswana. Use hats when you are doing outdoor activities, especially during late morning and early afternoon hours.
- ❖ Always carry a torch (flashlight) when walking at night.
- ❖ After lights out, students are not allowed to leave their tents, except to visit the bathroom.
- ❖ In the highly unlikely event of a venomous snake or scorpion bite, do not attempt to capture or kill the animal unless you are certain you can do so without risk of a further bite. Local

medical personnel can generally identify the species (or at least the genus or family) from the bite itself and can provide appropriate treatment without seeing the animal specimen. Our staff are trained to deal with these animals. If you see a snake in camp, notify the staff immediately and keep everyone a safe distance away from it.

You will be involved in a fair amount of outdoor activities in bush conditions. Medical care including private doctors and a hospital are available within a 30 min drive of our Education Camp — but conditions can be unpredictable. Being vigilant, using common sense, and following the safety advice of CCB staff will significantly reduce any risks that may be present.



That said, you should certainly be aware that outside activities necessarily involve some risk. You'll be staying in an area with fair amount of small and big game, and wild animals can be unpredictable. You're very unlikely to encounter any large predators (lion, leopard, spotted hyena, crocodile, python) at close range, but even smaller predators such as the cheetah, African wild dog, brown hyena, caracal, serval, and feral domestic dog can be dangerous if cornered or otherwise threatened.

The larger herbivores — elephant, buffalo, rhino, hippopotamus — can also be dangerous. In fact, hippos are responsible for more human deaths in Africa than any other mammal or reptile, including the big five and venomous snakes. However, hippopotamus and buffalo are absent in the Ghanzi area and elephant and rhino are extremely rare.

Snake and scorpion bites are rare but can be life-threatening. The local clinic and hospital stock the appropriate anti venoms.



Wild cheetahs occasionally visit the waterhole at the Tiiisano Education Centre, but there are no captive cheetahs at our camp

CHAPTER 3

Our Bush Camp Facility

Our facility

The Ark Tiisano Education Camp is based in Western Botswana, 20km from Ghanzi Town. The camp is located on a commercial farm owned by People and Nature Trust and is surrounded by cattle and game farms. The camp is fenced with cattle fencing, however, plentiful wildlife including small and medium sized



antelope, warthog, cheetah, leopard, brown hyaena, small carnivores, porcupine, aardvark and a huge variety of birds, reptiles and insects utilize the area. The camp consists of two open-air classrooms, one main kitchen facility, four separate square brick houses (that can house 8), two large military tents (that can house 8), four two-man dome tents and one block house (that can house 2). The camp has a capacity to host 58 people; teachers and students included.

The tents/block houses are large enough to stand up in and are equipped with a light bulb. Cheetah Conservation Botswana will provide all the food, (including special dietary requirements) for the visitors throughout the duration of their stay.

The camp operates on solar electricity and therefore power may be rationed especially on cloudy days. Donkey boilers supply hot water to both the kitchen and the bathrooms, however water is scarce throughout Botswana and we request all visitors to avoid wasting water. Drinking water is available on site.

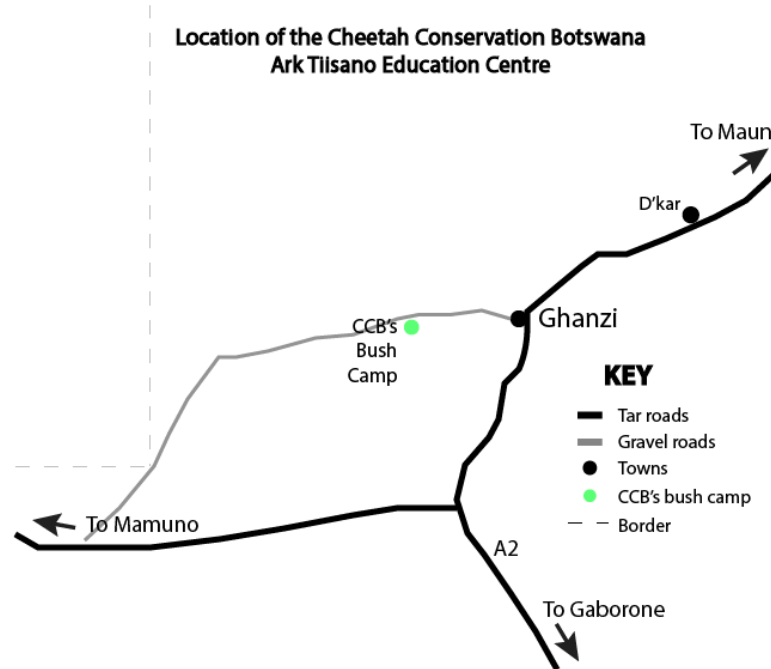
For most people, living and working in the bush is a completely different experience from their daily life at home. You should be prepared to cope well with the challenges described in this section.

Camp life is basic. Accommodation will be in shared block houses and shared military tents for students and shared block houses for teachers. You will be provided a single bed with bedding (pillows, pillowcase, sheet, sleeping bags and blankets). The block houses and tents have lights but no sockets for charging electric devices.

There is also a medium sized swimming pool in our campsite to cool off the unforgiving Kalahari heat during the warmer months.

Location

The Ark Tiisano Education Centre is located on the southern end of Farm 35-NK in the Ghanzi commercial farmlands. The farm is located 20km outside of Ghanzi town and can be accessed using the gravel road that runs west out of Ghanzi town.



How to get here

You are responsible for making all necessary travel arrangements to Ghanzi at your own expense. A staff member will meet you at the Ghanzi bus station, as long as you provide us with your arrival information at least five working days in advance. If you have hired a bus or been provided a bus by Council, please ensure that the drivers are aware that they will need to travel on the gravel road from town for 20km to get to our camp. Once on our farm, the bus will need to negotiate a 2km-long farm road, which is a combination of sand, rock and gravel. Most 2x4 vehicles, including buses have no problems negotiating this road, however, it is considerate to make your drivers aware of this in advance.

If you are unable to hire a bus or obtain one from Council, you can take a regular bus from Gaborone via the Trans-Kalahari Highway straight to Ghanzi. If you are coming from the North/North west region, you can take a bus to Maun and catch a bus bound for Ghanzi from that side. The bus from Gaborone to Ghanzi takes approximately 7 hours and from Francistown to Maun is about 5 hours, then 3 hours from Maun to Ghanzi.

Upon your arrival in Ghanzi, you will be greeted at the bus station by a member of the CCB team. He/she will be clearly visible in CCB uniform. We will then escort you to the Education Camp. You will leave on your final day after you have eaten breakfast, picked up litter and having filled up the necessary post survey paper work. CCB educational resources such as posters, booklets and pamphlets will be given to you for reference once you get back to your respective places.

Climate

The Ghanzi farmlands experience approximately 400mm of rain each year, the majority of which falls in the wet season (October – May). Temperatures vary widely with temperatures often above 40 degrees Celsius in the spring and summer months (October-February) and below freezing in the winter months (May-August). It is for these reasons that we usually offer bush camps in the months where the temperatures are not too extreme – generally March-May and August-October).

Others in camp

Please be aware that there are CCB staff living at our Education Centre permanently; please do your best not to disrupt them as they go about their work. Our Tiisano Education Centre is also home to our demonstration farm kraal, which hosts our goats, sheep and livestock guarding dogs. The livestock and dogs are free-ranging through the farm during the day and are kept in the kraal during the night. The goats, and sometimes the dogs can be heard at night, however, they are rarely a disruptive influence during our bush camps.

The Tiisano Education Centre is also home to CCB's guard dog, Murphy. Murphy is a very big dog and although he looks very intimidating, he is mostly a very gentle old dog. His job is to protect the camp and the CCB staff, so if he feels threatened by you he may growl or bark. If this happens, do not run. Stay still, bow your head and call his name and talk to him. Call for help if someone is nearby. This has never happened to any of our participants in camp, however, it pays to be prepared, especially if our visitors are intimidated by Murphy, which they sometimes are. Generally though, he is incredibly friendly and his presence is a highlight for many students who visit.



CCB's camp guard dog Murphy getting attention from some of our visitors

CHAPTER 4

Lessons and Activities

General schedule and curriculum

Each curriculum is tailored to each attending group and differs depending on the age of the group attending. Here is an example of a schedule that was provided for a secondary school group. Note that each “lesson” involves classroom and outdoor activities. Bedtime (lights out) is at 2200 hours each evening.

Day 1 – Thursday	
1500	Arrival and Introduction
1600	Welcome snack and Introduction to Bush Camp and CCB
1630	Bushwalk Group 1
1800	Showers/Free Time
1900	Dinner
2000	Video – Spirit of the Kalahari

Day 2 – Friday	
0700	Bushwalk Group 2
0830	Breakfast
0900	Tour of demonstration farm
0915	Lesson 1: Cheetahs and HWC: CCB Education
1100	Lesson 2: Farming with Carnivores: CCB Community
1230	Lunch
1600	Bushwalk Group 3/Outside Activities – sports and games
1800	Showers/Free Time
1900	Dinner
2000	Night game drive (optional)/Stories around the campfire

Day 3 – Saturday	
0830	Breakfast
0930	Lesson 3: CBRNM and Rural development: DWNP
1230	Lesson 4: The environment and hygiene: CCB Education
1330	Lunch
1630	Bushwalk Group 4
1800	Showers/Free Time
1900	Dinner
2030	Stargazing: Finding Direction using stars
2100	Video- Birds of the Kalahari

Day 4 – Sunday	
0730	Breakfast
0800	Post-camp paperwork
0930	Pack and clean up – ostrich parade (picking up rubbish in camp)
1000	Depart from bush camp – lunch in transit (sandwiches)

Fun activities

Visitors can be involved in a variety of tasks or activities lasting from half an hour to an hour and a half, we cannot guarantee that you will have an opportunity to perform any particular task on the following list.

It's important to understand that **you may never have direct interactions with captive or wild cheetahs. We do not have captive cheetah on site and wild cheetahs are often elusive.**

Here are some of the main tasks/activities that you may take part in:

- indoor and outdoor lessons
- bush walks
- swimming (depending on time of year and weather)
- games, role playing, songs and story telling
- game drive on our farm
- visit to the demonstration farm
- stories around the campfire
- spoor (footprint) tracking of cheetahs, hyenas, leopard or other predators



Optional activities

Additional activities that can be arranged (if transport and funding are available) include:

- ❖ visit to the Kanabo Conservation Link vulture restaurant at Thakadu Camp (cost is P20 per person)
- ❖ bushmen walk (P60 per person)

- ❖ visit to the D'kar San Bushmen Museum (nominal donation per person)
- ❖ visit to the San Art Project in D'kar (free – nominal donation per person)

A visit to Ghanzi provides a unique chance to learn about the culture of the San Bushmen. Ghanzi is home to a large community of San who are the indigenous people of southern Africa. You will have the opportunity to learn more about their traditional lifestyle by a visit to the museum at D'kar. Here, you will learn about the history of the Ghanzi area and people over the past several hundred years. Visitors to the museum are required to bring a nominal donation to assist the D'kar community. Donations of clothing, blankets, school supplies or other items are always welcomed by the D'kar community. Also at D'kar is the world-famous San Art Project where many renowned Bushmen artists produce their work.



CHAPTER 5

What you need to bring

Clothing

It is strongly recommended that you bring the following:

- ❖ sturdy hat, preferably wide-brimmed for maximum sun protection
- ❖ at least one jumper (sweater), fleece jacket, sweatshirt, thermal shirt, or other warm outer garment
- ❖ lightweight clothing for warm or hot daytime temperatures — note that jeans and other heavier fabrics may be too hot, especially during the summer months (December - February)
- ❖ swimming costume / trunks
- ❖ sturdy closed toed shoes for walking in the bush
- ❖ bath towel

Other items that would be useful:

- ❖ Sunglasses, regular or prescription
- ❖ sandals (flip-flops) for use in the shower block
- ❖ rain jacket (October – May)

Other items

It is strongly recommended that you bring the following:

- ❖ torch (flashlight), head torches are particularly useful
- ❖ sunscreen (at least SPF 20+)
- ❖ toiletries and other personal supplies
- ❖ prescription medications, if needed, for the duration of your stay
- ❖ prescription eyeglasses or contact lenses, if needed
- ❖ insect repellent

Other items that may be useful:

- ❖ camera and related equipment
- ❖ binoculars
- ❖ reading material
- ❖ journal
- ❖ playing cards

Please note that the camp runs on solar electricity and power must be rationed accordingly. The system can not support appliances with high wattage requirements (these are usually appliances

with heating elements), such as hair dryers, hair straighteners or travel irons, please do not bring these appliances. Also note that the bathroom block is not equipped with electrical outlets.

Paperwork requirements

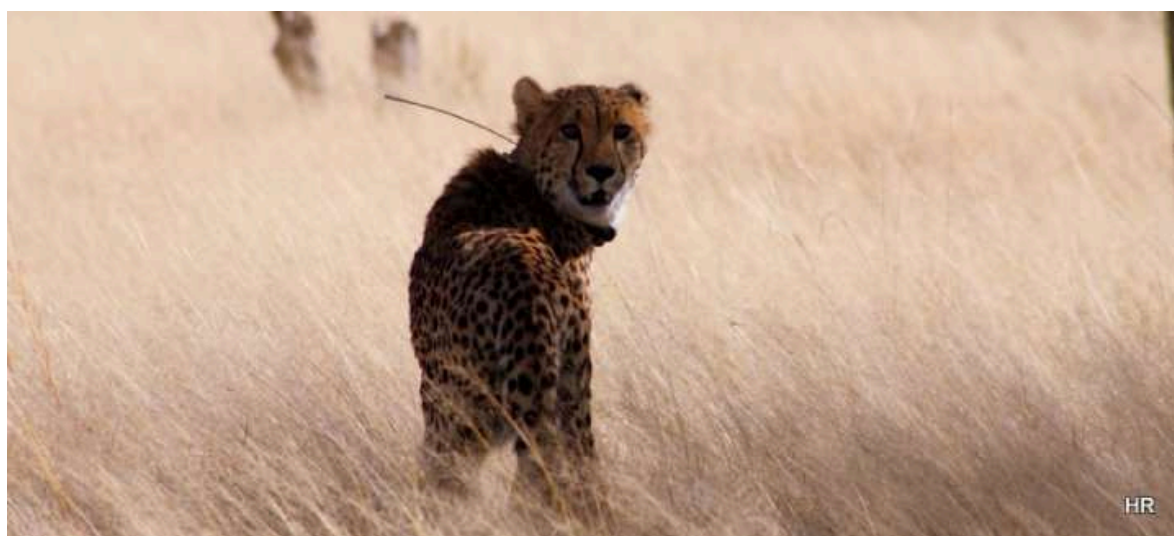
Before you begin your visit, you must complete forms indemnifying Cheetah Conservation Botswana and the landowners of the camp site where you will be camping, of liability for loss, injury, or death occurring during your visiting period. We will either send you these documents along with your letter of acceptance and visitor handbook, or ask you to fill them out upon arrival in camp. As legal documents, they require a wet signature, so a faxed or scanned copy is not acceptable.



Documents that you need to complete:

What	When	By Who
Class/group indemnity form	At least 1 week before camp	Teacher/school head
Individual indemnity forms	At least 1 week before camp	All participants (inc. teachers)
Student pre survey	On arrival at camp	All students
Student post survey	Just before departure from camp	All students
Teacher evaluation	Just before departure from camp	All teachers

Any significant omission or inaccurate statement on the indemnity form is grounds for dismissal from the camp.



CHAPTER 6

Information for teachers

Cell phones and internet

Teachers will be allowed to charge their electronic devices at the kitchen, however this will not be allowed for students unless there is an important reason why they need to. There is no cell signal at the bush camp, however there is often reception at the farm's front gate (2km from the education camp). We also have a landline in our camp that can be used in case of emergencies. At the main camp office (which is 2 kilometers from the Education camp) there is also internet available, however, this will only be available to teachers or students in an emergency.

Personal items

Our camp is isolated in the bush and although we aim to provide everything that the students and teachers should need during their stay, occasionally there may be items that need to be sourced from town. If a teacher or a student is in need of something important, they can request from one of the CCB staff to obtain it for them from Ghanzi. We will not make a special trip into town unless it is an emergency. Teachers are required to stay in camp to supervise the children at all times and will not be allowed to venture into town on trips. Any items that are not required immediately will be obtained only when the next CCB member is going to town. It is for this reason that we request that all students and teachers bring any special items that they may need during their stay.

Cigarettes, alcohol and drugs

If you smoke, please do so out of sight of students and where the smell will not disrupt others. There is no smoking allowed inside CCB buildings or tents. Please dispose of your cigarette butts properly and safely. Always make sure the butt is completely out and discard it only in a rubbish receptacle. Alcohol is not allowed at the bush camps. Recreational drugs may not be used at any time during your visiting period, whether on site or off. Use of recreational drugs will result in immediate dismissal from the camp.

Teacher's accommodations and meals

Teachers will generally be accommodated in the block houses, however we also have a few dome tents that can be made available on request (this must be requested at least one week prior to your arrival). Because of space limitations, teachers will often need to share their accommodation and will be separated into male and female rooms. Male and female teachers will not be allowed to share a room unless they are legally married.

Teachers will be served the same meals as the students and CCB staff. If you have special dietary requirements, please make us aware of this on your indemnity form.

Contact Us

For more information about Cheetah Conservation Botswana, our Engagement and Awareness-raising activities or our bush camps, please don't hesitate to contact us.

CCB's Engagement and Awareness Officer

Britz Malepe – 7138 0603
- 7289 7875

CCB's Engagement and Awareness Coordinator

Jane Horgan - 7262 9703

CCB's Ghanzi Camp Coordinator

Phale Max Seele - 7511 9485

Ghanzi field site (including Tiisano Education Camp)

Farm 35-NK, Ghanzi
P.O. Box 300, Ghanzi, Botswana
Ph: +267 651 1596

Head office (Gaborone)

Office B5, Kgale Siding Park, Plot
1069-KO, Gaborone
Private Bag 284, Bontleng,
Gaborone, Botswana
Ph: +267 350 0613

Maun office

Unit 2, Boronyane Complex,
Boronyane, Maun
P.O. Box 718, Maun, Botswana.
Ph: +267 7289 7875

