

Document Control			
Policy Name	Educational Visits and Off-Site Activities	Date Approved	22 <sup>nd</sup> March 2018
Status	Approved by Board	Review Date	Spring 2020
Committee	Pupil Achievement (Resources Committee to review Risk Assessment / H & S Aspects)	Version Number	3.00

## Educational Visits and Off-Site Activities Policy English Martyrs Catholic Primary School

*“Working together to provide the very best in Catholic Education”*

*“There is a variety of gifts but the same Spirit gives them. There are different ways of serving but the same Lord is served. There are different abilities to perform service, but the same God who gives ability to all for their particular service. The Spirit’s presence is shown in some way in each person for the good of all.”*            1 Corinthians 12: 4 - 7

### 1 Introduction

- 1.1 All schools are required to offer children a broad and balanced curriculum that promotes their spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development, and prepares them for the opportunities and experiences of adult life.
- 1.2 In our school we seek to ensure that the National Curriculum is delivered to all children, regardless of social background, race, gender or differences in ability. All are entitled to the development of knowledge, understanding, skills, and attitudes. To enrich the curriculum for our children, we also offer a range of educational visits and other activities that add to what they learn in school.
- 1.3 Off-site visits are activities arranged by or on behalf of the school, and which take place outside the school grounds. The governors and teaching staff believe that off-site activities can supplement and enrich the curriculum of the school by providing experiences which would otherwise be impossible. All off-site activities must serve an educational purpose, enhancing and enriching our children’s learning experiences.
- 1.4 In this policy we seek to establish a clear and coherent structure for the planning and evaluation of our off-site visits, and to ensure that any risks are managed and kept to a minimum, for the safety and health of all pupils at all times. Within these limits we seek to make our visits available to all pupils, and wherever possible to make them accessible to those with disabilities. The visits usually take place within the school day.

### 2 Aims

- 2.1 The aims of our off-site visits are to:
  - enhance curricular and recreational opportunities for our pupils;
  - provide a wider range of experiences for our pupils than could be provided on the school site alone;

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- promote the independence of our children as learners, and enable them to grow and develop in new learning environments.

These visits begin with short excursions in to the local area in the Early Years, and progress to a residential experience towards the end of Key Stage 2.

### 3 Curriculum Links

3.1 The National Curriculum defines what we teach the children in school. This is the basis for each class' programme of learning for each school year. In addition, teachers and the Senior Management Team agree the corresponding programme of residential visits and activities in advance of each academic year.

3.2 Within each class' programme of work the teachers plan education visits and activities that support the children's learning. We plan activities as the school year progresses, and inform parents of these in due course.

3.3 Visits and activities usually take place within the school day, and the Headteacher or deputy head approved these visits in advance ensuring staff have followed the LA's guidelines relating to health and safety, risk assessments, pupil staff ratios etc. We ask parents to give written permission for their child to take part in any activity that takes children off the school site. If we do not receive written permission, the child will be unable to participate.

3.4 All educational visits and activities support and enrich the work we do in school. There are also a number of people who visit the school to support our work. Some visits relate directly to areas of learning for individual classes, whilst others relate to all our children.

3.5 For each subject in the curriculum there is a corresponding programme of activities (which include visits to the school by specialists). All these activities are in line with guidance published by the Local Authority (LA):

- English - theatre visits, visits by authors, poets and theatre groups;
- science - use of the school grounds, visits to museums, rain forests and gardens;
- mathematics - use of shape and number trails in the local environment;
- history - castle visits, study of local housing patterns, museums;
- geography - use of the locality for fieldwork, village trails;
- art and design - art gallery visits, use of the locality;
- PE - a range of sporting fixtures, extra-curricular activities including canoeing for Year 6 pupils, Catholic Cluster tournaments, visits by specialist coaches;
- music - a variety of specialist music teaching, extra-curricular activities, orchestras, concerts including those for parents to hear;

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- ICT - its use in local shops / libraries / secondary schools, industry etc;
- RE - visits to our parish church, attending Mass at church, visits to local centres of worship, Good shepherd services, visits by parish priest and other local clergy, visits by charity workers and speakers from CAFOD;

We also have regular visits from our parish priest, neighbourhood police officers and health workers. As well as visits to the fire station or old people's residential home. These visits support the personal, social and health education of our children in line with the SEAL programme of study. We do this with the full agreement of the governing body.

#### **4 Residential Activities**

- 4.1 Children in Year 6 have the opportunity to take part in a residential visit to Wales. This activity includes part weekend as well as school time and supports their studies in various academic areas of study including geography, science, PSHE and RE. We make a charge for the cost of travel, board and lodging, activities insurance and specialist instruction for certain activities.
- 4.2 The residential visit enables children to take part in outdoor and adventure activities as part of the PE work. ICT work in the classroom is linked to outdoor activities. We undertake this visit only with the written agreement of the LA. All specialist activities are undertaken with qualified teachers or instructors.
- 4.3 Children in Year 4 visit Ufton Court to support history, geography, science and RE. We make a charge for the cost of travel, board and lodging, activities insurance and specialist instruction for certain activities.

#### **5 How visits may be authorized**

- 5.1 The Headteacher will be responsible for running the activity or appoint a party leader. This will normally be a class teacher.
- 5.2 The school's educational visits co-ordinator, will be involved in the planning and management of off-site visits. S/he will:
- ensure that risk assessments are completed;
  - support the Headteacher and governing body in their decisions on approval;
  - assign competent staff to lead and help with trips;
  - organise related staff training;
  - verify that all accompanying adults, including private car drivers, have had satisfactory police checks, and that the letter from our coach company (see 6.5) assures us their drivers too have had police checks;
  - make sure that all necessary permissions and medical forms are obtained;

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- keep records of visits, and ensure there are regular generic assessments of the risks (for example road-crossing) where there are frequent visits to local venues (for example a swimming facility).

Staff arranging or otherwise involved in off-site activities must familiarize themselves with the regulations, advice and procedures published by the LA. All off-site activities must take place in accordance with the LA's instructions.

- 5.3 Where staff are proposing to arrange an off-site activity, they must seek and obtain the approval of the Headteacher before any commitment is made on behalf of the school. A comprehensive visit plan should be provided by the member of staff to allow for an informed decision to be made.
- 5.4 Where the activity involves a journey greater than 20 miles, a period of more than 24 hours, an oversight stay, or a journey by sea or air, the Headteacher will inform the governing body and the LA before permitting the activity to take place.
- 5.5 It is our policy that all children should be able to participate in educational visits. Where a child with a disability is eligible for a trip, we will make every effort to ensure that s/he is included. We may seek guidance from parents to help us adapt our programme, and we will make any reasonable adjustments to our itinerary to include a child with disabilities. Any such adjustments will be included in the risk assessment.

## 6 Risk Assessment

- 6.1 A comprehensive risk assessment is carried out by the group leader before the proposed visit. Staff will keep in mind the aims as set out in paragraph 2. It will assess the risks which might be encountered on the visit, and will indicate measures to prevent or reduce them. The risk assessment should be based on the following considerations:
- What are the hazards?
  - Who might be affected by them?
  - What safety measures are needed to reduce risks to an acceptable level?
  - Can the group leader put the safety measures in place?
    - What steps will be taken in an emergency?
- 6.2 Staff planning an off-site activity should make a preliminary visit to the venue, in order to carry out an off-site risk assessment. It is important to take into account the probable weather conditions at the time of year proposed for the trip, and the party leader should take careful account of the facilities available, with due regard to the proposed size of the group. They should also assess the

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site's suitability with regard to the age and any particular needs of the children. They will also consider the venue's own approach to security and to health and safety. Venues providing instructor-led activities will have their own risk assessments for particular sessions, and these assessments may be adopted if it is impractical for the group leader to experience the activity beforehand, or if s/he lacks the skills required to make informed judgments about the risks it may involve. The LA will not have given its' approval for the visit unless it is satisfied with the venue, its' instructors and their risk assessment procedures.

6.3 It is important to assess and record and health, safety or security issues that are identified during the preliminary visit. Any such issues will be taken into account when the final decision is taken on whether the visit should proceed, and the Visit Plan must state both the extent of any risks involved, and the measures that will be taken to reduce or eliminate them. The cost of these preliminary visits will be borne by the school, and paid for from school funds.

6.4 An activity should normally have sufficient adults taking part to provide the following minimum ratios:

- 1 adult to between 10 and 15 pupils in Years 4 to 6;
- 1 adult to 6 pupils in Years 1 to 3;
- 1 adult to 3 pupils in Early Year.

Any trip will require a minimum of two adults. However, these are *minimum* requirements, and may not provide adequate supervision in all cases.

6.5 A risk assessment must also cover transport to and from the venue. The coach company we use on a regular basis has provided us with a letter detailing all the health and safety measures it routinely takes, including:

- the provision and required use of seat belts;

6.6 A copy of the completed risk assessment will be given to the Headteacher, and our educational visits co-ordinator, and all adults supervising the trip.

## 7 Transport

7.1 The costing of off-site activities should include any of the following that apply:

- transport;
- entrance fees;
- insurance;
- provision of any special resources or equipment;
- costs related to adult helpers;

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- any refreshments the school has opted to pay for.

7.2 Transport arrangements will allow a seat for each member of the party. It is our policy only to use coaches fitted with seat or lap belts, and to insist that they be worn by all those participating in the visit.

7.3 Where private cars are used for transport, the group leader is responsible for checking that the insurance of each driver covers such journeys.

## **8 Communication with parents including charging for school activities**

8.1 The parents of children taking part in an off-site activity should be provided with all appropriate information about the intended visit. Parents must give permission in writing before a child can be involved in any off-site activities.

8.2 All education during school hours is free. We do not charge for any activity undertaken as part of the National Curriculum however we will ask for a voluntary contribution when organising activities and trips to cover the full cost of the trip if the trip is to take place during school hours. However, if insufficient funds are received then the trip may have to be cancelled. As per the Regulations, Advice and Procedures manual from the LA a charge can be made for board and lodgings as per the Charging provisions of the Education Act 1988. The governing body has a Charging Policy that details the full range of activities where a charge can be made. A copy of this is available from the school office.

8.3 Funding for off-site activities is provided mainly by parental contributions (voluntary except in the case of residential visits), with a limited subsidy from the parent teacher association / school funds where appropriate. This must be made clear to parents in all correspondence about an educational visit at the planning stage.

8.4 No child may be excluded from an activity because of the unwillingness or inability of the parent to make a contribution except in the case of a residential visit. Parents will be informed of this principle through letters sent home about intended visits.

8.5 The timetable for the payment of contributions should allow for the Headteacher to make a decision about the financial viability of the activity in reasonable time.

## **9 Further health and safety considerations**

9.1 All adults accompanying a party must be aware, by the party leader, of the emergency procedures which will apply. Each adult should be provided with an emergency telephone number. This will normally be the school number, but where an activity extends beyond the normal school day the home telephone number of a designated emergency contact should be provided.

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- 9.2 Before a party leaves school the school office should be provided with a list of everyone, children and adults, travelling with the party, together with a programme and timetable for the activity.
- 9.3 The safety of the party, and especially the children, is of paramount importance. During the activity the party leader must take whatever steps are necessary to ensure that safety. This involves taking note of any information provided by medical questionnaire returns, and ensuring that children are both safe and well looked after at all times.
- 9.4 Prior to an activity, if it is felt that the behavior of an individual child is likely to compromise the safety of others or the good name of the school, the party leader should discuss with the Headteacher the possibility of excluding that child from the activity.
- 9.5 More detailed guidance on procedures and requirements can be obtained from the LA's Off-Site & Hazardous Activities File.

## 10 Group Leaders' planning

- 10.1 Group leaders must read thoroughly the appropriate guidance for off-site activities:

- ***Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits: A Good Practice Guide*** - (DfE 1998) and its supplements:
  - *A Handbook for Group Leaders* (DfE 2002)
  - *Group Safety at Water Margins* (DfE 2002)

They must draw up a Visit Plan which records in writing (including standard forms where appropriate) the arrangements that have been made.

## 11 Visit Plan

- 11.1 The visit plan for intended education visits must include the following:
- risk assessment;
  - approval of visit from Headteacher;
  - names, ages, contact details, permissions forms, medical records and other relevant details of all those going on the visit;
  - travel schedule;
  - accommodation plan (if applicable);
  - full plan of activities;
  - fire precautions and evacuation procedures;
  - intended arrangements for supervision;

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- insurance arrangements for all members of the group;
- emergency contacts and procedures;
- general communications information;
- guidance for party leaders;
- guidance for the emergency contact and Headteacher;
- first-aid boxes.

## 12 Monitoring and review

12.1 This policy is monitored by the governing body and will be reviewed every two years or before if necessary.

## 13 Related Policies

13.1 This policy has been drawn up in light of the following policies:

- Mission Statement
- Health & Safety Policy
- Charging & Remissions Policy
- RBC regulations, advice and procedures.

## 14 Equality of Opportunity

14.1 In light of the 2010 Equality Act, this policy has been written with due consideration to its potential impact (both positive and negative) on the many diverse groups of adults and children within the school. The school has ensured that to the best of its knowledge, the statements and procedures set out in this policy do not discriminate unjustly against any such groups or individuals.

Approved by governing body on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2018

Signed by: *Chris Tracey* Chair of Governors

Review: Every 2 years