



ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY, HEDNESFORD

- THIS DOCUMENT IS THE SCHOOL'S EDUCATIONAL VISIT POLICY
- IT WAS APPROVED by the governing body on 11th July 2018
- THIS POLICY WILL BE REVIEWED every three years

1. INTRODUCTION

This policy covers all educational visits that occur off the school premises, and those which take place outside the classroom while remaining on the school premises. This includes any member(s) of staff taking an individual child, groups of children, whole classes, key stages or all the children in the school, and ranges from minibest searches in the school grounds, walks around the locality to residential visits of several days' duration. It includes also Outdoor and Adventurous Activities.

Educational Visits and Outdoor and Adventurous Activities are an integral part of the children's education at St Joseph's Catholic Primary School and Nursery. They offer opportunities to enrich the curriculum, enabling the children to have first-hand experience of a wide range of topics and activities. On residential visits especially, there is opportunity to develop social skills which have a long-lasting beneficial effect. The benefits include; Developing Individual Potential, Spiritual and Emotional Development, Improved Understanding and Awareness of the Environment, Other Cultures and Real World Learning, Improved Learning Skills, Improved Teamwork and Improved Relationships.

The school runs a wide range of Educational Visits. These include:

- Walks around the town of Hednesford, including visiting the Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic church.
- Sports activities in the local area.
- Half-day or full day visits to places of historical, environmental, religious or other interest to support specific curriculum areas.
- An annual residential visit for children in Year 5 and Year 6, with a focus on the 'Outdoor and Adventurous' curriculum.

EMPLOYER'S POLICIES AND OEAP NATIONAL GUIDANCE

Staffordshire County Council has adopted the OEAP Employer Guidance as its operating Guidance for the management of Visits and learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) activities. St Joseph's Catholic Primary School and Nursery also uses this Guidance when planning and taking children on school visits as well as the requirements of this school policy. If there appears to be any conflict between them, then our school policy must be followed and clarification sought from the Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC).

2. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The **Local Authority** are responsible for:

- Approving overseas, residential and adventurous activities
- Giving advice to Educational Visits Co-ordinator.
- Giving access to appropriate training.
- Ensuring relevant risk assessments are completed and in accordance with Staffordshire County Council guidance.
- Monitor work of Educational Visits Co-ordinator.

Governors are responsible for:

- Supporting the Educational Visits Co-ordinator.
- Being aware of visits and asking questions about their educational objective.
- Ensuring the Educational Visits Co-ordinator has explored all risks, put in place safety procedures, included all pupils and informed Staffordshire County Council if necessary.

Head teacher is responsible for:

- Appointing an Educational Visit Co-ordinator and ensuring that the EVC has received training for their role;
- ensuring approval for visits is given, including liaising with the LA where appropriate;
- ensuring that the Governing Body is made aware of visits;
- ensuring that arrangements are in place for the educational objectives of a visit to be inclusive;
- ensuring that all accreditation or verification of providers has been met;
- ensuring that each visit has an appropriately competent Group Leader;
- ensuring that all teachers are aware of the LA guidance;
- ensuring that the school has an emergency procedure in case of a major incident, which has been discussed and reviewed by staff.

Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) is responsible for:

- ensuring a educational visit policy is in place and reviewed on a 3 yearly cycle.
- Reviewing risk assessments prior to visits on the evolve computer system which have been completed by the trip leader
- liaising with group leaders over completion of evolve.
- Submitting visits to the Head teacher for approval through evolve.
- ensuring the issues identified on the preliminary visit have been resolved within the risk benefit assessment, if necessary.
- ensuring accreditation / verification of providers has been checked.
- ensuring correct ratio of adults to children and first aid supervision in place.
- ensuring transport and accommodation arrangements meet standards required by LA.
- organising related staff training, such as 'Visit Leader' training.
- ensuring parents are informed of trips by group leaders and have given consent if a donation is requested or the trip takes place out of school hours.

- reviewing systems and monitoring practice.
- ensuring teachers update their risk assessment record for their class general information about pupil's medical conditions, special needs and behaviour at the beginning of every school year

The **Group Leader** has overall responsibility for the supervision and conduct of the pupils during the visit and must:

- Use the 'Visit Leader Planning Checklist' to plan the visit.
- If appropriate, ask whether the provider holds a valid Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) Quality Badge. (Details of the badge and a list of holders can be found at www.lotcqualitybadge.org.uk) If not, then the provider is required to complete EVC1 found on the evolve website, and a preliminary visit may be required to assess the risks.
- Complete a risk assessment for the visit and upload to evolve. Paper copies to be printed and taken on trip. Risk assessments to be shared with all adults accompanying trip.
- Provider risk assessment to be obtained and uploaded to evolve
- Submit evolve form to EVC a minimum of 1 week prior to visit.
- Ensure correct ratio of adult supervision – discuss with the EVC if unsure.
- Make pupils and other adults aware of all aspects of the visit, including risks, groups, behaviour expectations, and the focus of the trip. Give a copy of everything to a second adult in case something happens to you!
- Continually assess risk during the visit.
- Take a first aid box and sick bucket.
- Take the school mobile phone for emergency use.
- Record any accident or incident reports when returning to school as per school procedures.
- Ensure visits are evaluated to inform the operation of future visits.
- Inform parents of their child's participation in a particular visit. The letter will be a reminder of consent given and will also be an opportunity to update participant information. Activities that involve a charge, or that include agreement to any payment or cancellation terms, will need individual consent by parents to the financial arrangement.
- Obtain permission from parents (staff to check which children do not have permission). Consent only needs to be sought for activities that need a higher level of risk management or those that take place outside school hours, for example for adventurous activities, off-site sporting fixtures outside the school day or residential visits.
- Recognise children's medical, special needs and behaviour requirements by keeping the 'Class general risk assessment' up to date, and put appropriate measures in place to reduce the risks.
- If trip is outside school hours; take a list of children's names, addresses and telephone numbers, in case parents need to be contacted.
- 'Check out' and 'check in' before and after a visit
- Ensure all pupils and supervisors arrive back at school safely.

Other adults are expected to:

- Follow guidelines from group leader.
- Ensure the safety of the group they are responsible for.

Pupils are expected to:

- Wear appropriate clothing and footwear.
- Behave appropriately.
- Consider their safety and the safety of others.

3. RISK MANAGEMENT AND RISK-BENEFIT ASSESSMENT

'Risk assessment' is a careful examination of what could cause harm to pupils, staff or others, together with an identification of the control measures necessary in order to reduce risks to a level which, in the professional judgement of the assessor, is deemed to be acceptable (i.e. low).

In considering risk, there are 3 levels of which visit leaders should be mindful:

- Generic Risks - normal risks attached to any activity out of school. These will be covered by reference to the school's generic risk assessments.
- Event Specific Risk - any significant hazard or risk relating to the specific activity that is not covered in the generic risk assessments. These should be recorded on the 'risk benefit assessment' form.
- Ongoing Risk – the monitoring of risks throughout the actual visit as circumstances change.

Visit Leaders must refer the 'Visit Leader Checklist' as part of the risk management process. A set procedure is followed for all Educational Visits, although the nature of each visit will determine the level of preparation required. The RADAR model: based on SAGED: Staffing, Activity, Group, Environment, Distance should be used to determine the level of planning and whether an additional risk-benefit assessment form is required. When using an external provider, such as an activity centre, for which you have received appropriate assurances, you need to assess the risks only for those aspects of the visit where St Joseph's Catholic Primary School and Nursery staff are in charge (e.g. transport to and from the venue and supervision during non-programmed time). When using a provider, you do not need copies of their risk assessments. If they hold a valid Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) Quality Badge (or, in the case of adventurous activities within the scope of the schemes, an AALA licence or Adventuremark) this provides assurance that they meet accepted standards of risk management. Otherwise you should seek written assurance that they have appropriate risk management systems in place.

Risks are expected to be reduced to an *acceptable* or *tolerable* level, and not necessarily eliminated. Planning should achieve a rational balance between potential adverse risks and the intended learning benefits.

Generic risk assessments

Regular local visits and activities such as; swimming lessons at Chase Leisure Centre Pool, sporting fixtures, walking visits around Hednesford and coach travel are all covered by generic risk assessments which form the agreed principles for conducting these visits. However, these may need to be accompanied by a SAGED risk benefit assessment, described above, if any of these aspects are not covered adequately in the generic risk assessment.

Ongoing Risk Assessment

Monitoring of the visit must be on-going during the visit, and this contributes towards both enjoyment and safety.

It is primarily the responsibility of the visit leader, in consultation with other staff where appropriate, to modify or curtail the visit or activity (eg Plan B) to suit changed or changing circumstances - for example: over-busy lunch area, rain etc.

Ratio

As a general guide and in normal circumstances, the adult /child ratio may be:

Age 4 – 1:4

5- 6 - 1:6

7-10 –1:10

However, a professional judgement must be made for **each visit**, by the Visit leader, EVC and Headteacher, as a range of characteristics relevant to the particular visit should determine the ratio. These are:

- Type, duration and level of activity
- Needs of individuals within the group medical, SEN and behaviour
- Experience and competence of staff and accompanying adults
- Nature of venue
- Weather conditions at that time of year
- Nature of transport involved

The competence of supervisors and the supervision arrangements are more important than ratios.

4. VOLUNTEERS

When going on a trip, volunteers who are not DBS checked, should not be in-charge of a group or left alone with any children.

5. EMERGENCY PROCEDURES AND INCIDENT REPORTING

Visit leaders must identify a school contact and telephone number for Emergencies on the Internal Visit Proforma. The Emergency Contact(s) should have access to all details of the visit, including the itinerary, venue details, names and emergency contact details for all participants including staff. They should also have a copy of the 'Visit Leader Emergency Checklist' which sets out the local authority's procedures to be followed in the case of an emergency. Visit leaders must take with them a copy of the 'Visit Leader Emergency Checklist'. It would be very beneficial for group leaders and other adults to understand the advice given on the 'Off-site visit emergencies: Guidance for Leaders' when planning a visit. This also explains the reporting requirements for all emergency incidents.

Plan B

Despite the most detailed and careful pre-visit planning, things can go wrong on the day, e.g. parent helper is unavailable, member of staff is ill, transport fails to arrive, museum have lost booking. To avoid having to make important decisions under pressure, it is important that some advanced thinking is done to cater for any foreseeable eventuality. This takes the form of a Plan B. Not having a Plan B has been a common cause of accidents.

6. INCLUSION

All children are entitled to participate in all our Educational Visits. Adaptation or modification to activities is to be made if needed and possible to include all children. 7

7. HEALTH AND SAFETY

The School's Health and Safety Policy will be adhered to fully when taking children out of school.

8. INSURANCE

The school subscribes to the Staffordshire County Council School Journey Insurance.

9. FINANCE

Careful consideration is given to the cost of all trips to avoid putting some families under excessive financial pressure. The trip leader and school bursar work closely together to ensure that all trips and visits are financially viable. Parents can apply for financial assistance in line with the school's Charging and Remissions Policy. Payment for school trips is made via ParentPay. Prior to payment being made parents have to give consent via ParentPay for the trip.