

St George's Catholic Primary School **'Achieve, Believe, Care.'**

Educational Visits Policy

"All students regardless of race, age or gender, by virtue of their dignity as human persons, have a right to an education that is suited to their particular needs and adapted to this ability" Pope Paul VI

1. MISSION STATEMENT

At St George's Catholic Primary School, we welcome everyone as a member of God's family.

With Jesus in our hearts, we pray together, we work together, we show respect for each other and the world around us. We love God, ourselves and one another.

2. OUTLINE AND PURPOSE

Teachers who bring their pupils into the outdoors find it makes their learning more enjoyable, challenging, active and collaborative, according to University of Stirling research.

*Learning in green areas like parks, gardens, wildlife areas and woodland, as well as on residential outdoor trips, particularly increased children's engagement and enriched the learning experience in many ways. **June 2015***

Must we always teach our children with books? Let them look at the mountains and the stars up above. Let them look at the beauty of the waters and the trees and flowers on earth. They will then begin to think, and to think is the beginning of a real education.

An educational visit can therefore be seen as any aspect of a pupil's education that takes place off the main school site and should include visits to such places as parks, museums, swimming pools etc. as well as residential trips.

This policy applies to all visits whether or not they occur during normal work hours.

Therefore, the aim of off-site visits is to:

- enable pupils to derive maximum educational benefit from visits
- enable pupils to undergo experiences that will not be available within school
- ensure pupils stay safe and healthy at all times

- encourage independence, cooperation, collaboration and collective responsibility amongst the pupils, where appropriate

The school has adopted the guidance from two key documents and all guidance within this policy has been formed in conjunction with the detailed advice contained within them. These are:

- OEAP National Guidance (oeapng.info) – Outdoor Education Advisors Panel 2012
 - Health and Safety on Educational Visits and is available on Gov.uk. (2018)
- All staff must follow this guidance and read it in conjunction with the WCC Visits Policy.

The school's Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) is:

2023-24 Academic Year: **Miss Sarah Stilwell** (Last EVC training: June 2022)

The responsibility for approving all out of school visits remains with the Headteacher.

3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Governors (EVC Governor Mrs R Bader) should ensure that:

- They have an understanding of how Outdoor Learning, off-site activities and visits support a wide range of outcomes for children and young people
- They have access to the National Guidance as well as this policy, and a training package to support it
- There is an EVC in place that meets with employer requirements
- There are formal notification and approval procedures in place that meet with employer recommendations and requirements
- The school's visit policy supports the principles of inclusion
- There are monitoring procedures in place

The Headteacher (Mrs Bury – temporary Head) should ensure that:

- All outdoor learning, off-site visits and Learning Outside the Classroom complies with this guidance and are notified or submitted for formal approval as required
- You have ascertained that all staff involved are competent to carry out such responsibilities as they are allocated
- You have clearly designated either yourself or a suitable member of staff as the EVC and that the designated person meets employer requirements, including undertaking EVC Training as recommended or required by the employer
- Suitable child protection procedures are in place
- You are assured that the EVC, Visit Leaders, assistant leaders and voluntary helpers are appropriately trained and competent to carry out such tasks as they are allocated. The visit leader must have carried out visit leader training within 3 - 5 years of leading a visit. No visit will take place unless the leader is visit leader trained.
- You have assigned sufficient time for staff to organise activities and visits properly
- You support your EVC in ensuring that all activities and visits are effectively supervised with an appropriate level of staffing, that information has been shared with parents and that consent has been sought where necessary

- Arrangements have been made for the medical needs and special educational needs of all the young people and staff and voluntary helpers
- Suitable transport arrangements are in place and meet any regulatory requirements
- Insurance arrangements are appropriate
- Details related to off-site activities and visits (including personal details of both participants and staff) are accessible at all times to a designated 24/7 emergency contact(s) in case of a serious incident
- You are aware of the need to obtain best value. Appropriate consideration must be given to financial management, choice of contractors, and contractual relationships
- Where charges are made to parents, these are within legal and employer requirements
- Proper procedures are in place to account for the finances of activities and visits
- A set format for recording written risk-benefit assessments is in place
- Where the activity or visit involves a third party provider, appropriate assurances have been obtained
- All visits are evaluated with regard to best value, teaching and learning, quality experiences, addressing issues raised by any incident and to inform the operation of future visits
- **That an appropriate Critical Incident and Emergency Policy is in place with emergency procedures in case of a major incident, including a procedure to ensure that parents are appropriately informed in the event of a serious incident**
- Serious incidents are reported to the employer as required by your employer's guidance
- Ensure that all **visit leader trained staff** (or everyone – assistant leaders may not be VLT) have read, understood and signed the Educational Visit Leader's Policy every year.
- The headteacher or EVC will sign the RBAs prior to a visit going ahead.

The Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC – Miss S Stilwell) should ensure that:

- They have an understanding of how outdoor learning, off-site visits and learning outside the classroom can support a wide range of outcomes for children and young people, and raise achievement
- They have attended EVC Training which is updated every three years.
- Outdoor learning, off-site visits and learning outside the classroom meet guidance requirements
- Establishment managers, visit leaders, assistant leaders and voluntary helpers understand that all staff involved in outdoor learning, offsite visits and learning outside the classroom have access to training at an appropriate level to ensure that the employer's guidance and establishment procedures are properly understood
- There is monitoring of Visit Leader planning and **sample monitoring of visits**
- They organise the training of Visit and Assistant Leaders as part of a TED.
- Visit Leaders know how to share information to parents and gain parental consent
- There is a 24/7 emergency contact(s) with the base for each and every visit and that emergency arrangements are in place through the Critical Incident and Emergency Policy

- First aid support is present on any off-site visit
- Emergency arrangements include emergency contact access for children and staff (including medical and next of kin information for all members of the party, including staff when on residential visits)
- Individual activities and visits are reviewed and evaluated and that this process includes reporting of accidents and incidents, complying with employer requirements
- Ensuring that policies and procedures are reviewed on a regular basis. A review should follow any serious incident or systems failure. Risk management documentation must be updated if necessary
- Ensuring that activities and visits are led by competent and confident leaders
- Signs off RBAs prior to a visit going ahead.

The Visit Leaders should ensure that:

- They liaise with the Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) and that the respective roles are clear
- They are formally approved to carry out the visit, following the St George's policy guidelines and follow the visit checklist while planning a visit.
- They plan and prepare for the visit, (taking a lead on risk assessment including other staff in the planning of it where possible)
- The roles and responsibilities of other staff (and young people) have been defined to ensure effective supervision
- Relevant information is given to supporting staff, including about the nature and location of the visit and about the participants (including age, health information, capabilities, special needs, safeguarding and behavioural issues)
- Informed parental consent has been obtained as well as, medical information and contact numbers
- There is access to first aid at an appropriate level
- All staff and any third party providers have access to emergency contact and emergency procedure details
- They evaluate all aspects of the visit, both during and after the event
- They report any accidents, incidents or near misses to the Head or EVC.
- When working with third-party activity providers, there is a clear handover before and after any activity led by the third party – carrying out checks on providers that don't have LOTC, Adventure Mark or AALS. (See EVC)
- They are clear about any arrangements to hand-over and hand back responsibility for supervision between members of staff and to /from any third-party provider
- NQTs are not allowed to lead a visit until they have attended two with an experienced member of staff. Their third visit will be seen as an assessed one to ensure they are competent to lead visits from then on. Newly appointed experienced staff may lead a visit after they have lead one under the supervision of a St George's experienced staff member. (Dependent on this one visit being completed satisfactorily, they will be allowed to lead from then on.)

The Assistant Leaders should ensure that:

- They are specifically competent and knowledgeable about establishment and employer policies/procedures, in so far as they affect the responsibilities you have been assigned
- They have been sufficiently involved in the planning and preparation for the activity/visit, including contributing to the organisation of risk management
- They should read and abide by the risk assessments relevant to their role on that trip.
- Provide emergency contact information and declare any health issues that may arise.
- They understand the role and responsibilities that you have been assigned and how these integrate with other staff and especially that of the activity/visit leader
- They are clear about any arrangements to hand-over and hand back responsibility for supervision between members of staff and to /from any third-party provider
- They have access to emergency contact and emergency procedure details
- Staff and other supervisors have been appropriately briefed on the young people, the nature and location of the activity
- Contribute to the ongoing monitoring of all aspects of the activity/visit, including the quality of any activities provided by a third-party provider
- Contribute to the evaluation of the activity/visit after the event

VOLUNTEERS

- Volunteers are vetted and are known to School.
- The necessary information about the visit is shared with them by the leader so they are clear about their role
- They are expected to do what the visit leader asks of them

4. PRINCIPLES FOR OFF-SITE VISITS

- All visits will comply with the National Guidance (oeapng.org) and school's health and safety requirements
- All visits will have a named Visit Leader and Assistant Leader(s) in case of emergency
- No visit will take place without a thorough risk benefit assessment (RBA) of the destination and travel route
- A RBA form will be completed and signed by the Headteacher, EVC or Assistant Head if the Headteacher or EVC are absent, before each visit.
- Adequate child protection procedures will be in place
- The correct adult: pupil ratios will be adhered to:
- The LA will have oversight of all overnight visits, hazardous activities and long distance travelling (over 50 miles) for monitoring and emergency planning purposes
- A blanket permission slip (completed every September) will be required to cover all visits except those that involve adventurous activity, swimming or are over 50 miles from School. These slips will be taken out by staff for every visit.

- It is not necessary for a first aider to accompany all trips. However, a basic level of first aid support will be available at all times. This means adequate first aid equipment and necessary preventative medicines for children with requirements will be carried and available to use.
- Buses / coaches with seat belts will be used for any visit that requires transport.
- Adequate insurance cover will be in place
- Venue contact details and names of all visit participants will be taken by the Visit Leader on the trip as well as a copy of our visit form and RBA left in school for day visits. For overnight visits a copy of these details will be with the senior leader responsible for providing 24/7 cover for that visit.
- The Emergency Contact Card will be taken by all adults on all visits
- There will be notification made through the school for any delays regarding the visit

5. RISK BENEFIT ASSESSMENTS (RBA)

Risk benefit assessment and risk management are legal requirements. For educational visits they involve the careful examination of what could cause harm during the visit and whether enough precautions have been taken or whether more should be done. The aim is to make sure no one gets hurt or becomes ill. The programme of a visit, as set out in the risk benefit assessment and the consent form, should not be deviated from.

Staff are only responsible for conducting RBAs on the elements of the visit over which they have control. Anything provided by a third party will be the responsibility of that establishment. Staff should ask for the venue provider information drawn up by the agencies providing the services.

The written RBA, which is the responsibility of the Visit Leader, should be given to the Headteacher and/ or EVC in advance of the visit, so that they can see that effective planning has taken place. The visit leader and other supervisors should continually re-assess risks throughout the visit. RBA can be signed by the Head, the EVC or the two senior leaders in school.

Educational visits can be usefully considered as having three levels:

Generic activity risk benefit assessments, which are likely to apply to the activity wherever and whenever it takes place. Examples of generic RBA include coach travel. These are provided through the National Guidance and amended or altered due to the individual visit.

Visit/site specific risk benefit assessments which will differ from place to place and group to group. These are usually undertaken by the school for each venue and are amended as necessary for different groups. They should be prepared by the Visit Leader and then agreed by someone trained and competent to assess risks, such as the EVC.

- Activities such as swimming, crossing roads and curricular partnerships with other schools are examples of these site specific RBAs where the same venue

is used on a regular basis and, barring any changes to the nature of that venue, the prime concern is the risk presented by the group of pupils undertaking the visit.

- However, for visits which are 'one offs', a specific RBA for the venue itself as well as for the pupils is required. Examples of this would be visits to farms, galleries, museums, public parks, garden centres etc.
- For both of these the EVC will direct the Visit Leader to the relevant sections of the National Guidance covering the type of visit.

Ongoing risk benefit assessments

These are designed to take into account any of the unplanned and unexpected changes, for example, illness of staff or pupils, changes of weather, availability of preferred activity. The Visit Leader is responsible for making decisions on an on-going basis during the visit as to the appropriateness of continuing the visit in the light of prevailing conditions.

RBAs should be based on the following:

- What are the hazards?
- Who might be affected by them?
- What safety measures need to be in place to reduce risks to an acceptable level?
- Can the Visit Leader put the safety measures in place?
- What steps will be taken in an emergency?

The following factors should be taken into consideration by the Visit Leader when assessing the risks:

- The type of visit/activity and level at which it is being undertaken
- The location, routes and mode of transport
- The competence, experience and qualifications of supervising staff
- The ratio of teachers and supervisory staff to pupils
- The group members' age, competence, fitness and temperament and the suitability of the activity
- The SEN or medical needs of children
- The quality and suitability of available equipment
- Seasonal conditions, weather and timing
- Emergency procedures
- The monitoring of the risks throughout the visit

RBAs should be read and taken by the leader and assistant leader on the visit, and a copy left in the office prior to leaving.

6. ASSESSING VENUES/PROVIDERS

- If the provider has a quality badge then getting RBA from the provider to assess competence isn't needed as this has been done for you by the badge. e.g. LOTC (Learning Outside the Classroom) Quality Badge, AALA Licence,

Adventuremark. Holding one of the above is a credible assurance of appropriate Health and Safety management systems, although it would be prudent to check this information is true. (<https://lotcqualitybadge.org.uk/search.>) The LOTC Quality Badge also covers learning quality.

- In those instances where the provider does not have an accredited badge, if you are considering using one of these organisations then you need to apply some basic health and safety measures in judging the provider's suitability. It is **crucial** that you check their risk assessment and control measures for the proposed activity. If these do not demonstrate competent and effective planning and organisation, then the school would be unwise to consider using the provider. A preliminary visit needs to be undertaken where possible by staff to check a venue or provider.
- Check public liability is in place (between £5,000,000 - £10,000,000)

7. SUPERVISION RATIOS

Staffing must be determined by the RBA. Adequate consideration must be given for the maintenance and welfare of the whole party in the event of one or more Assistant Leaders having to leave the group for any length of time.

Recommended ratios are:

EYFS – effective supervision (1:5)

Y1 – Y3 1 : 6

Y4 – Y6 1:10 (or 1 : 15 if class very good and very low risk visit)

8. EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

All information regarding the procedures in an emergency whilst on an off-site visit is in the school's Critical Incident and Emergency Policy and Emergency Contact Card. These cards must be taken by all staff on every visit.

If children are out in a city / town centre and working in separate groups, an agreed meeting place/s will be ascertained prior to leaving school in the event of a large scale incident occurring. This enables children to be taken to a place of safety as quickly as possible should mobile phone signals be disabled.

9 CHILD PROTECTION

The planning and organisation of all visits, particularly those of a residential nature, must include precautions to protect children from abuse such as racial, sexual or physical harassment from either adults or other children. In the case of any off-site visits, all Assistant Leaders must be Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checked.

10. CHARGING FOR VISITS

Charging will be made in accordance with the school's charging policy i.e. voluntary contributions for the whole cost of transport, board and lodging will be requested,

with the caveat that if the cost of the trip cannot be covered, then it reserves the right to cancel the trip.

11. COMMUNICATING WITH PARENTS

Parents should be informed of the:

- Date of the visit, location and its aims
- Times of departure and return
- Details of accommodation
- Names of the Visit Leader and Assistant Leader(s) when deemed necessary.
- Details of the activities planned
- Details of charges
- Money to be taken
- Clothing and equipment required

Parents should be discouraged from transporting children to and from off-site visits. It should only be allowed when specific permission is given to allow the child to be transported by the designated parent.

12. GDPR

Visit leaders are responsible for shredding parent reply slips, if taken (for travelling over 50 miles, a swimming or adventurous activity) the RBA and the visit form which contain telephone numbers, as soon as possible after a visit. One copy of the visit form and RBA will be filed in the EVC folder and an evaluation of the visit will be added.

13. INDUCTION

- New staff who are not visit trained will assist in the planning of trips with an experienced visit leader (Head or EVC) until they can be trained. They will never lead a trip until they have undertaken visit leader training.
- Newly qualified inexperienced staff will be trained as soon as possible.

14. BEHAVIOUR OF STAFF & PUPILS

- No alcohol or smoking is permitted during a visit.
- Staff are on a supervisory role even during the night on residential visits.
- Mobile phones will not be carried by pupils on any visit.

15. EXCLUSION & INCLUSION

It is unlawful to treat a disabled person less favourably or fail to take steps to ensure that disabled persons are not placed at a substantial disadvantage **without justification.**

Expectations of staff must be reasonable and within their own competency to provide inclusion of a young person.

This policy endorses the following principles:

- A presumption of entitlement to participate
- Accessibility through direct or realistic adaption or modification
- Integrations through participation with peers

16. INSURANCE

17. MONITORING

The Head teacher and EVC co-ordinator check every RBA and visit form prior to a trip. The EVC co-ordinator checks evaluations have been completed for every trip and enters a dialogue with the staff member if anything of concern or interest has been written down. In the summer term, The EVC reviews the policy and procedures in order to update if necessary.

18. TRANSPORT

The use of private cars to transport children to visits is not recommended. If there is no alternative, the Headteacher should perform some basic checks:

- Does the driver hold a valid license and the correct business insurance?
- Is the car taxed and has a current MOT?
- Is the vehicle roadworthy?
- Is sufficient safeguarding in place?

20. POLICY REVIEW

It is the role of the Headteacher to ensure that this policy is fully implemented.

This policy will be reviewed every year, in the summer term, or as required by changes in legislation.