

Educational Visits Policy

Mission Statement

Jesus light our way on our faith journey. Be our guide, our joy and our hope, as we learn, live, love and pray together

The Governors and staff of St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School acknowledge the great value of Educational Visits in broadening and enhancing both the learning and social experience of pupils.

We have adapted the Birmingham educational visits and learning outside the classroom policy. A full copy of the educational visits can be found on the website and the council websites. Under statutory guidance which came into effect on 1st March 2004, all schools are required to have a named Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC), who will ensure that the planning and supervision of all visits and adventurous activities meet DfES requirements and LEA guidelines.

Our current EVCs are **Julie Pattinson and Alison Treadwell**

To enable children and staff to gain a full and enjoyable educational visit it is essential that the following guidelines and policies are adhered to. These guidelines are to be read in conjunction with the regularly updated information provided by Birmingham County Council on the extranet (see page 6 of council guide).

School visits benefit young people in many ways, including:

- being able to apply a different range of skills than those used in the classroom
- enabling, supporting and complementing the work of the National Curriculum, experimental (first hand) and memorable learning
- assessing and managing risks (safety)
- developing latent talents, abilities and interests, which can be motivational and have lifelong relevance.

1. **Approval for Visits**

All matters regarding each visit outside school – feasibility, planning, safety, organisation etc – will require the prior approval of the EVC.

Approval of day visits will usually be at the discretion of the EVC's.

St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School – Educational Visits Policy

2. The Governing Body

The Governing body has

- Ensured that the Head Teacher and the EVC have adhered to the LA guidelines.
- Ensured that visits are approved as necessary by the LA before bookings are confirmed
- Ensured that that all aspects of risk management have been considered and that risk assessments for travel, accommodation and activities have been carried out prior to departure. It is not expected that Governors should become directly involved in risk assessment and related matters unless they have an appropriate competence.
- Ensured measures exist to obtain parental consent on a basis of full information, to investigate parental complaints.
- Reviewed annually the EV policy and procedures including incident and emergency management systems.

3. The Headteacher should ensure that:

- The Educational Visit Co-ordinator (EVC) is competent to oversee the co ordination of all off-site education, and support the EVC in attending relevant training courses.
- Visits comply with regulations and guidelines provided by the LA, schools governing body and the schools own health and safety policy
- The group leader is competent to monitor risks and supervise the trip throughout the visit
- Adequate child protection and safeguarding procedures are in place
- All necessary actions have been completed before the visit takes place
- The risk assessment has been completed and appropriate safety measures are in place
- Group leaders are allowed sufficient time to organise visits properly
- Non teacher helpers on the visit are appropriate to supervise children
- Ratios of staff to pupils are appropriate
- The LA or governing body has approved the visit where necessary
- Parents have signed consent forms
- Arrangements have been made for the medical and special educational needs of the pupils
- Adequate first aid provision will be in place
- The mode of transport is appropriate
- Travel times out and back are known in school
- There is adequate and relevant insurance cover
- They have the address and phone number of the visits venue and have a contact name
- A school contact has been nominated and the group leader has the details
- The group leader, helpers and nominated contact have a copy of the agreed emergency procedures

St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School – Educational Visits Policy

- The group leader, helpers and nominated school contact have the names of all the adults and pupils travelling in the group, and the contact details of parents and the teachers and other helpers next of kin.
- There is a contingency plan for any delays, including a late return home.

4. Risk Assessment

Risk assessments for school visits have three levels:

1. Generic activity risk assessments, which are likely to apply to the activity whenever it takes place.
2. Visit/site specific risk assessments, which will differ from place to place and group to group.
3. Ongoing risk assessments that take account of e.g. illness of staff or pupils, changes of weather, availability of preferred activities.

5. Pre-Visits

In order to undertake a full and comprehensive assessment of risks, it will be preferable in most cases to undertake a pre-visit, even when the visit is made regularly, risks should be reassessed from time to time. When undertaking risk assessment, a number of variables need to be taken into account.

- the number of pupils involved
- the age of the pupils, their sex, ability and general behaviour
- the previous experience of the group undertaking off-site visits
- the time of day and time of year
- the travel arrangements
- the hazards at the environment being visited
- the numbers, experience and quality of staff and volunteers
- the nature of the activities
- the special educational or medical needs of the pupils
- the quality and suitability of available equipment
- seasonal weather conditions
- emergency procedures
- how to cope when a pupil becomes unable or unwilling to carry on
- the need to monitor the risks throughout the visit

6. Duties and Responsibilities

All staff must:

- conduct themselves in a manner compatible with their own safety and the safety and well-being of the pupils.
- inform the visit leader if they are unsure of their ability to perform any supervisory function requested of them

St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School – Educational Visits Policy

- recognise the limits of their responsibilities and act within those at all times.
- report to the visit leader any concerns they may have regarding pupil behaviour and well being during the visit.

Greater levels of responsibilities will normally be assigned to teachers than to adult helpers and a higher standard of care is expected of them.

7. Responsibilities of Nominated Group Leader

Group leaders, who must be a member of the teaching staff, but not an NQT, have a common law duty of care towards the pupils in their charge. Group leaders must recognise their responsibilities:

- Obtain the EVC's prior agreement before any off-site visit
- Follow LA and governing body guidelines
- Appoint a deputy (preferably another teacher)
- Have ownership of the risk assessments
- Pre-visit the site if possible
- Evaluate the trip after the event and forward all paperwork to the EVC to be kept on file.
- Clearly define each helpers role and ensure all tasks have been assigned
- Be able to control and lead pupils of the relevant age group
- Be suitably competent to instruct pupils in an activity and be familiar with the location/centre where the activity takes place
- Be aware of child protection issues
- Ensure adequate first aid provision is in place
- Undertake and complete the planning and preparation of the visit including the briefing of group members and parents
- Undertake and complete a comprehensive risk assessment
- Review all undertaken visits/activities and advise EVC where adjustments may be necessary
- Ensure that teachers and helpers are fully aware of what the proposed visit entails
- Have enough information on the pupils proposed for the visit to assess their suitability or be satisfied that their suitability has been assessed and confirmed
- Ensure staff pupil ratio is appropriate for the group
- Consider stopping the visit if the risk to the health or safety of the pupil is unacceptable and have in place procedures for such an emergency
- Ensure all helpers have details of the school contact
- Ensure all helpers have copies of the emergency procedures
- Ensure that all helpers have details of the medical or special needs of the pupils
- Observe the guidance set out for teachers

8. Teachers

Teachers must do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group and act as any reasonable parent would in the same circumstances.

They should

- Follow the instructions of the group leader and help with control and discipline
- Consider stopping the visit or the activity, notifying the group leader if they think the risk to the health and safety of the pupils in their charge is too great

9. Adult Volunteers

Additional adults on the visit should be clear about their roles and responsibilities during the visit.

They must

- Do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group
- Not be left in sole charge of pupils except where it has been previously agreed as part of the risk assessment
- Follow the instructions of the group leader and teacher supervisor and help with the control and discipline
- Speak to the group leader or teachers if concerned about the health and safety of the pupils at any time.

10. Pupils

The group leader must make it clear to pupils that they must:

- Not take unnecessary risks
- Follow the instructions of the leader and other helpers including those at the venue
- Dress and behave sensibly and responsibly
- Look out for anything that might threaten themselves or anyone in the group and tell the leader or helpers about it

Any pupil whose behaviour may be considered to be a danger to themselves or to the group may be stopped from going on the visit.

If the group leader feels that such action may be necessary, first speak to the school EVC or the Headteacher.

11. Parents

Parents should be able to make an informed decision on whether their child should go on a visit.

The group leader should ensure that parents are given sufficient information in writing and invited to any briefing sessions.

St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School – Educational Visits Policy

The group leader should also tell parents how they could help prepare their child for the visit, e.g. reinforcing the visit's code of conduct.

Parents should also be asked to agree the arrangements for sending a pupil home early and **need to understand that they would expected to pay any costs involved.**

Parents will need to:

- Provide the group leader with emergency contact numbers
- Sign the consent form
- Give the group leader information about their child's emotional, psychological and physical health, which might be relevant to the visit.

12. Records and Communications

Records of a visit can provide a very useful and informative way of demonstrating the accountability of the school towards its pupils.

Pre visit risk assessments and after visit reports should be given to the EVC to keep on file.

Reports of any accidents or incidents should also be kept on file by the EVC.

Parents should always be made aware when their children are leaving the school premises. Even for a local walk, which is theoretically covered under the consent form parents sign when their child starts school, parents should be sent a brief note explaining the offsite activity.

Parents may exercise their right not to allow their children to take part in a visit. Under these circumstances the school must make alternative arrangements to educate that child. **The refusal of the parent not to allow the pupil to go on the visit does not offer the opportunity for the child to be kept off school for the day.**

13. First Aid

There should be a qualified first aider on every visit.

A first aid kit should be taken on every visit.

14. Staff/Pupil Ratios

Birmingham guidelines on staff pupil ratio should be adhered to on all school visits. These are currently:

Foundation Stage = higher than 1 adult for every 6 pupils

Years 1 to 3 = 1 adult to every 6 pupils

Years 4 to 6 = 1 adult to every 10 pupils

These ratios should take into account

- Sex, age and ability of the group

St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School – Educational Visits Policy

- Pupils with special educational or medical needs
- Nature of activities
- Experience of adults in off site supervision
- Duration and nature of the journey
- Competence of staff, both general and on specific activities
- Requirements of the organisation/location to be visited
- Competence and behaviour of pupils
- First aid cover

Where there is more than one teacher on the visit a group leader should be appointed who has the authority over the whole group.

When parents are taken on visits they should be carefully selected. They must be fully briefed before the visit.

It should also be noted that for the protection of both adults and pupils. All adults should ensure that they are not alone with a pupil whenever possible.

All adults on a visit should clearly understand their roles and responsibilities at all times. It should always be clear that the teacher is responsible for the group at all times.

15. Head Counts

Whatever the length of the visit, regular head counts should be taken of the children, particularly before leaving any venue.

All adults should carry a list of all the pupils and adults involved in the visit.

Pupils, especially R to year 3, should be easily identifiable.

The group leader should identify rendezvous points and tell pupils what to do if they get separated from the group.

16. Emergency Procedures

Teachers in charge of visits have a duty of care to make sure that their pupils are safe and healthy.

They also have a common law duty to act as a reasonably prudent parent would. Teachers should not hesitate to act in an emergency and to take life saving action in an extreme situation.

If an accident happens the priorities are

- To assess the situation
- Safeguard the uninjured members of the group
- Attend to the casualty
- Inform the emergency services
- Inform school or the home contact
- Ensure that a teacher accompanies any casualties to hospital if necessary and the rest of the group are supervised.
- Notify the police if needed
- Ascertain telephone numbers for any future calls

St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School – Educational Visits Policy

- Write down accurately all relevant facts and witness details and preserve all vital evidence
- Keep a written account of all events, times and contacts after the incident
- Complete an accident report form as soon as possible
- No one in the group should speak to the media and no names should be provided
- No one in the group should discuss any legal liability with other parties

In an emergency the group leader would usually take control of the situation. The home contact's main responsibility is to link the group with the school and to provide assistance as necessary. This named person should have all the information about the visit.

17. Transport

The group leader should consider

- Passenger safety
- Type of journey
- Traffic conditions
- Insurance cover
- Weather
- Journey time and distance
- Stopping points on longer journeys
- Supervision

If public transport is to be used, all pupils and supervisors must be fully briefed as to procedures on platforms, at bus stops, on busy streets etc.

18. Supervision on Visits

If possible, the EVC or a member of the SMT should visit a trip (especially a residential one) at some point to check that all is going to plan.

Pupils must be supervised throughout all visits. However, there are circumstances when they might be unaccompanied by an adult. This is referred to as 'remote supervision'. The decision to allow remote supervision should be based on risk assessment and must take into account such things as:

- prior experience of pupils
- age of pupils
- responsibility of pupils
- competence/experience of staff
- environment/venue

St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School – Educational Visits Policy

The level of supervision necessary should be considered as part of the risk assessment

- Level of supervision on coaches
- Safety when crossing roads
- Safety of pupils at dropping off points
- Head counts when getting on and leaving transport
- Responsibility for checking seat belts

The sex of the accompanying adults needs also to be considered, particularly where there is a mixed group of pupils.

19. Swimming pools

A minimum supervision level of 1 adult to every 12 pupils is recommended

The following checks should be made

- is there constant pool supervision by a sufficient number of qualified staff?
- is the water temperature appropriate?
- where there is no lifeguard the leader should stay on the pool side at a raised location and the group leader should have the relevant life saving award
- is the water clear?
- are there signs indicating depth of water?
- does the pool cater for children with disabilities?
- does the deep end allow for safe diving?
- are there a resuscitator and other pieces of first aid and rescue equipment and is there someone trained to use them?
- is there a changing room for each sex?
- are the changing and showering facilities safe and hygienic?
- can clothes be stored safely?
- have the pupils been instructed how to behave around water?

20. Residential visits

Staff ratio should be at least 1 member of staff for every 10 pupils.

- **There must be at least one adult from each sex for mixed groups**
- **There should be a member of staff on standby who is able to join the trip if someone on the trip is needed elsewhere e.g. repatriation**
- **A telephone tree of contact numbers should be established prior to the visit in case of emergency.**
- The group should ideally have adjoining rooms with teachers' quarters next to the pupils rooms – the leader should obtain a floor plan of the rooms reserved for the groups use in advance;
- There must be separate male and female sleeping/bathroom facilities for pupils and adults

St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School – Educational Visits Policy

- The immediate accommodation should be exclusively for the groups use
- There should be appropriate and safe heating and ventilation
- The whole group should be aware of the lay out of the accommodation, its fire precautions/exits, its regulations and routines, and everyone can identify key personnel
- Security arrangements where the reception is not staffed 24 hours a day, security should be in force to stop unauthorised visitors
- All staff employed at the centre should be checked on their suitability for working with young people
- Locks on doors should work in the groups rooms but appropriate access should be available to teachers at all times
- There should be drying facilities
- There should be adequate space for storing clothes, luggage, equipment
- There should be adequate lighting
- There should be provision for children with special needs and for those who fall sick
- Balconies should be stable, windows secure, electrical connections safe
- Where possible pupils should not be lodged on ground floor rooms
- The fire alarm must be audible throughout the whole accommodation
- There should be recreational facilities for the group
- There should be an appropriate number of supervisors on duty during the night
- As soon as possible after arrival a fire drill should take place

21. Review

The Governing Body reviews the policy every two years. The governors may, however, review the policy earlier than this, if the government introduces new regulations, or if the Governing Body receives recommendations on how the policy might be improved.

The named person on the Governing Body responsible to support the implementation of the Behaviour and Discipline policy is Mrs M Baines.

Signed: Chair of Health, Safety and Welfare Committee

Date: January 2016

Review: January 2018.