

Educational Visits Policy



As agreed by the Health, Safety and Premises Committee and Full Governing Body January 2014 and reviewed November 2020

To be reviewed Autumn Term 2022

1. Introduction

St. Michael's CE Primary acknowledges the many benefits of learning outside the classroom and is committed to supporting educational visits and activities that enrich the learning opportunities of children and young people.

The school works within the requirements set out in Staffordshire County Council's Educational Visits Policy (click on this link <https://evolve.edufocus.co.uk> and the formally adopted Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel 'Employer Guidance' (available at <https://oeapng.info/>).

All school staff members are made aware of the requirements of this policy and any changes that are made when the policy is reviewed. It is the responsibility of Visit Leaders to familiarise themselves with the updated policy.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

The Head Teacher is responsible for ensuring visits are approved as necessary, that all visits approved can be accommodated within the timetable and that the ethos of each visit is one with which the school wishes to be associated. The Deputy Head will grant verbal permission for trips after deciding that the timetabling and ethos of the visit are acceptable.

The Educational Visit Co-ordinator (EVC) is a staff member who has received relevant training and induction and is delegated with the following tasks: -

- To check and approve that the planning and risk management for visits follows employer policy and guidance, and to liaise with the LA as required.
- To ensure that there is sample monitoring of visits in keeping with the recommendations of employer policy and guidance

The designated EVC for St Michael's CE Primary is the School Office Manager (Emma Friend) who has undertaken approved training and who liaises closely with the Educational Visits Lead at Entrust. The EVC also seeks continuous development / updates in their training.

The Head Teacher will ensure that the EVC, Visit Leaders, assisting staff and voluntary helpers are appropriately trained as required and specifically competent to carry out the responsibilities allocated to them for all visits.

This policy should be considered in conjunction with the following supporting documentation:

Emergency Procedures –Educational Visits <T:\Staff Planning and Resources\RISK ASSESSMENTS - EVOLVE\Emergency Procedures on Educational Visits.docx>
<T:\Staff Planning and Resources\RISK ASSESSMENTS - EVOLVE\Missing Child Procedure on a Trip - Key Stage 1-2.docx>

Visit Leaders will have over-all charge of the visits they lead, which will be effectively supervised with an appropriate level of staffing. Relevant visit information is shared with parents and consent is sought where necessary.

Details related to a visit and its participants (including staff) will be accessible to a designated 24/7 emergency contact in case of emergencies.

3. Procedures

Staff (prospective Visit Leaders) wishing to plan and undertake a visit should do this 4 working weeks before the visit is set to take place and should first seek permission from the EVC to plan a visit. Visits requiring LA approval (eg., overseas visits, residential visits and those which include adventurous activities) should be submitted 6 working weeks before a visit is set to take place, and before anyone is financially committed. Approval notification will be sent out as soon as possible up to two working weeks after receipt of the visit form.

Once permission to plan a visit has been granted, the Visit Leader should then add the visit details through the EVOLVE system which will then be automatically passed to the EVC for checking and approval and to ensure that the planning and risk management for the visit follows employer policy and guidance. Details of all letters will be added to EVOLVE by the school's Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC). The Head Teacher will further be asked to declare that the Visit Leader and staff are competent to supervise the visit.

All visits should be approved by the Head Teacher. Approval from the Local Authority (LA) will be required for all overseas visits, residential visits and those which include adventurous activities, be it provider or establishment lead. The EVOLVE system will automatically pass such identified visits to the LA for approval.

In order to assess appropriate ratios and effective supervision the Visit Leaders should consider the framework set out in the OEAP National Guidance – Ratios and Effective Supervision which states:

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework no longer sets out different ratios for minimum ratios during outings from those required on site. As with other age groups, ratios during outings should be determined by risk assessment, which should be reviewed before each outing.

Consideration should be given to **Staffing, Activities, Group and Environment (SAGE)**. The appropriate ratio on an outing is always likely to be higher than the legal minimum:-

- 1:8 or 1:13 (children aged 3 and over in early years settings)
- 1:30 (children in infant school reception classes and maintained schools)

Visit Leaders will ensure that sufficient staffing is available to ensure effective supervision and to ensure the management of incidents and emergencies should they occur.

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When providers are used it is a requirement for them to hold Public Liability insurance cover with a minimum limit of indemnity of £5M.

Regularly repeated visits may receive block annual approval subject to parents being made aware of every visit, especially any involving a return time outside the normal school day.

The Head Teacher, EVC and Visit Leaders should take account of the legal framework relating to charging, voluntary contributions and remissions as set out in the Education Act 1996.

4. Travel/Transport Arrangements

Appropriate travel/transport arrangements for the trip will be made by the EVC using an approved travel company. Plans for visits will include risk accessing compliance with current guidance on epidemics (eg., Coronavirus).

5. Risk Management

It is the Visit Leader's responsibility to risk assess all aspects of the intended visit, to be able to understand and manage all risks all of which should be communicated to staff/volunteer helpers prior to each visit. Risk assessments should include access medical intervention/first aid appropriate to the group and environment.

The risk management of an activity should be informed by the benefits to be gained from participating. St. Michael's CE Primary recommends a 'risk-benefit assessment' approach, whereby the starting point for any risk assessment should be a consideration of the targeted benefits and learning outcomes.

This appreciation of the benefits to be gained through participating provides objectivity to a decision that any residual risk (i.e. the risk remaining after control measures have been put in place) is 'acceptable'. HSE endorse this approach through their 'Principles of Sensible Risk Management' and advocate that it is important that young people are exposed to well-managed risks so that they learn how to manage risk for themselves.

There is no legal requirement to produce a risk assessment in a particular format; but there is a legal requirement for the process to be recorded and for suitable and sufficient control measures to be identified for any significant risks i.e. those that may cause serious harm to an individual or harm several people.

It is recommended that staff adopt and adapt the risk management materials/documentation available through EVOLVE to ease the burden of bureaucracy that might otherwise discourage leaders from making full use of educational visit learning opportunities. EVC is available to assist in the development of risk management materials/documentation.

Prior to the visit, the Visit Leader will ensure that all staff and visit helpers attending fully understand all aspects of the risk assessment, the purpose of the trip and their roles. All support staff should be in a position to competently fulfil their roles and approval from the Head Teacher and EVC should be sought.

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6. Emergency Procedures

Please read the following link: <T:\Staff Planning and Resources\RISK ASSESSMENTS - EVOLVE\Entrust Educational Visits Guidance Update Dec 2020.docx>

The risk management for each visit will identify the relevant emergency procedures during the visit. For visits extending beyond the school day this includes designating a home contact from the school who may be needed as a link between the party, the parents, the school and the County Council in the event of an emergency. Staff will refer to the OEAP National Guidance for Off Site Visit Emergencies (accessible via EVOLVE) which gives Visit Leaders guidance on how to manage an incident/accident during an educational visit.

In the event of a delay (of more than 1 hour), or of an incident resulting in harm to any attending participant, staff member or volunteer, then the school must be contacted as soon as possible to inform the Head Teacher or designated deputy so that they can decide:

- A. If the incident is of a less serious nature then the next of kin or parents of those affected will be informed about what has happened (e.g. that the party will be returning late or that an incident has befallen a party member) and the action that has been taken so far. In appropriate circumstances the Visit Leader will be designated to undertake this task.
- B. If the incident is very serious to contact Staffordshire County Council using the emergency contact pager number held by the Head Teacher.

Documentation

The documents/information to be carried on each trip by the Visit Leader should be prepared by the EVC and destroyed at the end of the visit.

- List of pupils attending
- List of staff/volunteers and their mobile numbers
- Medical/dietary information for those attending the trip

Action to take when a critical incident occurs

1. In the first instance the school/service should refer to its Visit Emergency Plan and Business Continuity Plan.
2. If the level of incident is beyond the coping mechanisms of the above plans, then schools/services should contact SCC.

Under no circumstances should these numbers be given to young people or to their parents or guardians.

7. Accident Reporting

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All accidents will be handled in line with Staffordshire County Council's Accident Guidelines which can be found on Evolve. Accident investigation and employee hazard report forms are to be completed and discussed with the Head Teacher – go to <https://www.staffordshire.info-exchange.com>

8. Evaluating an Education

It is important to evaluate the outcomes of a particular visit in order to learn from the experience. The evaluation process will inform the planning for all future visits. The reporting of potentially hazardous occurrences allows for the evaluation of trends within the organisation overall as a part of the continuous improvement of best practice. **All documentation pertaining to and following trips, including risk assessments, consent forms, checklists and itineraries and monitoring and evaluation forms should be retained in the school for one academic year.**

9. Inclusion and Equality

All educational visits ensure that activities are available and accessible to all, irrespective of special educational or medical needs, ethnic origin, gender or religion.

10. Safeguarding

All safeguarding procedures will be carried out in line with agreed school Safeguarding Policy and E-Safety Policy which are held on the school's website <https://www.st-michaels-lichfield.staffs.sch.uk>. Any concerns will be reported to the Head Teacher, or Deputy when Head Teacher is unavailable, immediately and then followed up in writing as soon as possible.

11. Statement on Equality

The Governing Body is committed to ensuring consistency of treatment and fairness in the operation of this policy. In addition, the Governing Body values diversity and is committed to ensuring that no individuals are discriminated against on any grounds, including the protected characteristics included in the Equality Act 2010.

Signature: **Rachelle Trueman**

Date: **Chair of Governors**

Signature: **Helen Robertson**

Date: **Head Teacher**

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