

ST MARY'S PRIMARY SCHOOL



Educational Visits Policy 2022

Definition

Within this policy the term 'educational visits' refers to:

'all academic, sporting, cultural, creative and personal development activities, which take place away from school, and make a significant contribution to learning and development of those participating'

Policy Statement on Educational Visits

The School recognises the important role educational visits play in the delivery of an enriching and stimulating curriculum. With this in mind the School will encourage the organisation of educational visits as and when appropriate.

Well organised and planned educational visits will hopefully provide the pupils with:

- First hand learning experiences
- Experiences that they might otherwise not have.
- An opportunity to develop/extend a topic
- The opportunity to make the curriculum more meaningful
- An opportunity to develop social skills.

Visits which take place during school time and form an integral part of the curriculum will be regarded as important educational experiences and therefore parents will be encouraged to allow their children to participate.

Educational Visits Co-ordinator

Mr. Prunty

Role of the Educational Visits Co-ordinator

The educational visits co-ordinator will be satisfied that:

- there is an acceptable code of conduct for leaders and participants
- the visit complies with best practice
- a competent Group Leader is selected

- child protection procedures are adhered to in the planning process, including the vetting of volunteer supervisors
- all necessary arrangements and preparations have been completed including risk assessment, before the visit begins. Appendices 1-6
- all relevant checks have been undertaken if an external provider is to be used
- the Group Leader has experience in supervising young people of similar age and ability to those participating and will organise and manage the group effectively
- voluntary supervisors on the visit are appropriate people to supervise children
- the ratio of leaders to young people is appropriate i.e Reception 1:6, P.1 & 2 classes 1:10, P3 -7 classes 1:15.
- proper procedures have been followed in planning the visit
- there is adequate and relevant insurance cover
- the Group Leader, accompanying staff, volunteer supervisors and central contact are aware of the agreed emergency contingency arrangements
- the Group Leader, leaders and central contact have all relevant information on the group members. Appendix 6.
- establish any arrangements which may be required for the early return of individual participants

Role of the Group Leader

The Group Leader will:

- undertake and complete the planning and preparation for the visit including the briefing of leaders, group members and parents
- collect relevant information on the children proposed to participate in the visit to assess and confirm their suitability
- ensure the ratio of leaders to children is appropriate for the needs of the group and the nature of the activity to be undertaken
- clearly define the role of each member of accompanying staff and volunteer supervisors and ensure that all tasks have been clearly assigned
- ensure child protection procedures are followed
- ensure that accompanying staff and volunteer supervisors and the central contact are aware of the emergency procedures
- ensure that the visit is planned and risk assessed, including an exploratory visit whenever it is possible. Appendix 1

- ensure that parents/guardians are made fully aware of the nature, purpose and detail of a visit and that permission including all relevant information is obtained for any off site activity.
- ensure that appropriate enquiries are made of any establishment or company being used for outdoor adventurous activities.
- ensure that provision is made for any incident, including first aid and a procedure to follow in the event of an emergency or other serious incident.
- ensure that all necessary forms are completed for an educational visit and the appropriate consents and approvals are obtained. Appendices 1-6
- ensure that all accompanying adults are selected on the basis of their competence and suitability to undertake the tasks they are allocated and ensure those adults understand their role.

During a visit the Group Leader will:-

- Ensure that the visit is as safe as practicable.
- Curtail the visit or stop the activity if the risk to the health and safety of any participant reaches an unacceptable level
- Ensure that participants are aware of the need to be involved in the process of ongoing risk assessment including the reporting of hazards and potential risks
- Retain ultimate responsibility for participants at all times

During a visit accompanying adults will:-

- ensure they undertake the roles and tasks given to them so as not to put themselves or others at unacceptable risk
- accept the authority and follow the instructions of the Group Leader
- under direction of the Group Leader, assist with the organisation of activities and discipline of the children.
- consider stopping the activity and notify the Group Leader, if they think the risk to the health or safety of the group members in their charge, is unacceptable
- not be left in sole charge of group members except where it has been previously agreed as part of the risk assessment

Dealing with unexpected situations can be aided by a central figure, who will act as the contact person for both the group and the participants' families. This should be a responsible adult directly linked to the school who is fully briefed on the details of the visit. (Mrs Catherine Cadden, School Secretary)

Central Contact will:

- retain details of the place to be visited, contact personnel and telephone number, and mobile number, if appropriate
- retain a copy of the contact details of all the participants' parents/guardians/next of kin.

Parents (or those with parental responsibility)

Parents or those with parental responsibility, should be able to make an informed decision as to whether their child should go on the visit. However, in the interests of the overall safety and success of the visit the ultimate decision as to who participates rests with those involved in organising the visit.

The Group Leader should ensure that parents are given sufficient information in writing and are invited to a briefing session, where appropriate.

Parents will :

- sign the consent form. Appendix 4
- provide the Group Leader with an emergency contact number(s). Appendix 6
- provide the Group Leader with relevant medical/dietary details, including any medication currently being taken in writing (by means of the consent form) and any other relevant information (about their child's emotional, psychological and physical health) which may affect their participation in the visit. Appendix 6
- help prepare their child for the visit, for example, by reinforcing the school's code of conduct

- agree the arrangements established for a member of the group returning home due to unforeseen circumstances.

During a visit all participants will:-

- ensure they co-operate with the Group Leader and follow the instructions given to them in order to maintain the lowest acceptable risks to the health and safety of all participants.

After the visit the Group Leader will:-

- ensure that the visit is reviewed. This will include the results of all investigations into particular incidents as necessary. Appendix 7 & 8
- ensure that pertinent information acquired from or about the visit or activity is drawn to the attention of colleagues for consideration in the planning of future educational visits and activities.

St. Mary's Primary School will ensure that:

- procedures are in place to monitor all educational visits.
- there is a procedure for dealing with emergency situations, including having a named home-base contact for each visit and a home based emergency plan.
- all accidents, incidents and near misses are reported and investigated.

Categories of Educational Visit

There are two different sets of procedures and documentation to support different types of visit i.e. categories 1 and 2 and categories 3, 4 and 5.

Category 1

Visits which take place on a regular basis. (Non hazardous) and occur largely within establishment hours e.g. sporting fixtures, swimming pool visits and outings

Category 2

One-off day excursions (Non hazardous) e.g. field study trips, theatre visits, business/education visits, regional sporting fixtures.

Category 3

Residential visits of one or more nights within the UK or Ireland. (Non hazardous) e.g. visits to residential centres, field centres, youth and school exchanges, and award bearing schemes (Duke of Edinburgh)

Category 4

Residential visits outside the UK or Ireland (Non hazardous) e.g. international exchange visits, sporting events, cultural activities and international community work

Category 5

Hazardous Activities - residential and non-residential as exemplified below:

Hill walking, Fieldwork, Cycling/ mountain biking, Orienteering, Rock climbing/abseiling, Caving and potholing, Kayaking, Open canoeing, Windsurfing, Dingy sailing, Sub-aqua, Skiing/ Snowboarding, Horse, riding, Angling, Waterskiing, Rafting, Rowing, Surfing, Bouldering/ Gorge walking, Swimming in open water

Visits in categories 1 and 2 encompass all non hazardous visits, both those which occur on a regular basis and one-off events. This can range from taking a group of pupils to the local swimming pool on a regular basis or a one off attendance at a theatre production.

Visits in categories 3, 4 and 5 encompass all visits which involve either a residential element or hazardous activities. The procedures associated with both sets of visits are set out step by step below and, where appropriate, relevant forms are highlighted.

CATEGORY 1 & 2 RECURRING AND ONE-OFF (NON-HAZARDOUS) VISIT

Step 1 Identification of objective of educational visit

The school will identify an area or areas of the curriculum for which the educational visit(s) may be an essential or relevant component.

Step 2 Approval

Details of the proposed visit(s) are submitted on the EVA Form to the principal for approval. Appendix 2

Step 3 Implementing appropriate risk management

It should be ensured that all visits are organised in accordance with relevant school policies (e.g. Health and Safety and Child Protection) and take cognisance of best practice, as set out in this document.

Step 4 Informing the parents

Parents are informed about the educational visits their children will participate in. Once parents have been informed of these visits they should be asked to give their consent in writing. Appendix 4

Step 5 Maintaining records

Copies of all forms (e.g. EVA and Consent Forms) and any other relevant information will be filed at the school.

In the case of an incident / accident occurring, all appropriate documentation from the relevant Employing Authority must be completed. Appendix 7

PROCEDURES STEP BY STEP FOR VISITS IN CATEGORIES 3, 4 AND 5

Step 1 Identification of objective of educational visit

The school will identify an area or areas of the curriculum for which an educational visit may be an essential or relevant component.

Step 2 Initial Approval

Details of proposed visit will be submitted to the Principal for consideration in consultation with the Governing Body. The EVP should be used for this purpose and any relevant information attached eg. details of residential centre to be used. Appendix 3

It is the responsibility of the Principal in consultation with the Governing Body to decide whether a visit should proceed. It is essential, therefore, that they be consulted at the earliest opportunity. Under normal circumstances, a minimum period of notice of not less than 4 weeks is recommended. Detailed planning can proceed once initial approval has been granted.

Step 3 Completion of Planning Checklist

The appropriate sections of the planning checklist should be completed by those with key responsibilities for the visit. (EV1Checklist Appendix 5)

Step 4 Briefings

Staff, volunteer supervisors, parents and pupils, will be briefed about all aspects of the educational visit.

Once parents are fully aware of the visit details they should be asked to give their consent in writing. Appendix 4.

Step 5 Information collated

It is important to gather together all relevant information about the young people participating in the visit. This should be collated by the group leader and the originals retained by the school. Appendix 6.

Step 6 Final Approval Secured

Visits in these categories can only proceed once final approval has been secured from the Principal and the Governing Body. The EVP form should be signed by both the Principal and the Chair of the Governing Body to confirm approval and endorsement of the arrangements for the visit. Appendix 3.

Step 7 Maintaining Records

Copies of all forms and relevant information will be filed at the school. Any changes to the original approved visit must be agreed, as appropriate, prior to the event taking place.

The group leader should will ensure that all documentation required by the employing authority in relation to any incidents or accidents is completed as appropriate. This must be forwarded to the employing authority as soon as is practicable.

Step 8 Evaluation

On return it is important to undertake an evaluation of the key aspects of the visit. The completed evaluation should be forwarded to the relevant

personnel and maintained by the school for future reference. Appendix.
Appendix 8

Ratios - Suggested Starting Points.

	AGE GROUP	RATIOS
PRE-SCHOOL	Nursery	one adult for up to a maximum of six young people
PRIMARY	Foundation Stage (P1/P2)	one adult for up to a maximum of ten young people
	Key Stages 1 and 2 (P3-P7)	one adult for up to a maximum of fifteen young people
POST-PRIMARY	Key Stages 3 and 4 (Yr 8-12)	one adult for up a maximum of twenty young people
	Post-16 (Yr 13/Yr 14)	one adult for up to a maximum of twenty young people

Appendices

1. **St. Mary's Primary School Risk Assessment Template**
2. **Educational Visits Approval Form (EVA)**
3. **Educational Visits Proposal (EVP)**
4. **Consent by Parents or Guardians – Notification of Educational Visit.**
5. **Educational Visit Planning Checklist**
6. **Educational Visit Group Details Template.**
7. **Educational Visit Incident Record Form**
8. **Post Review Incident Form**

Signed: (Chairperson of St Mary's PS Board of Govenors)

Date

Signed: (Principal of St Mary's PS)

Date

Policy Review Date: October 2021