



Educational Visits and Trips Policy

Created: January 2016

Review by: September 2020



Statement of Intent

St Mary's Catholic High School understands that visits and trips can be effective ways of motivating pupils, and they can often offer unique educational and enrichment experiences. The school aims to ensure that pupils are engaged in their learning and are given opportunities to explore this in a more practical setting.

The school takes the health and wellbeing of our staff and pupils very seriously. This policy has been designed in line with DfE and HSE guidance and details our responsibilities for pupils and staff members while out on educational visits and school trips.

1. Legal Framework

1.1 This policy has been created with regard to relevant legislation including, but not limited to:

- The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974

1.2 This policy has also been created with due regard to the following guidance:

- DfE (2018) 'Charging for school activities'
- **[New]** DfE (2018) 'Health and safety on educational visits'
- HSE (2011) 'School trips and outdoor learning activities'

- DfE (2013) 'Driving school minibuses'

1.3 This policy should be used in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Behavioural Policy
- Critical Incident Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Charging and Remissions Policy
- Minibus Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- DBS Policy

2. Definitions

2.1 'In loco parentis' means that the group leader of any school trip or educational visit has a duty of care over the pupils in place of a parent.

2.2 'School trip' means any educational visit, foreign exchange trip, away-day or residential holiday organised by the school which takes pupils and staff members off-site.

2.3 'Residential' means any school trip which includes an overnight stay.

2.4 Activities of an 'adventurous nature' include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Trekking
- Caving
- Skiing
- Water sports
- Climbing

3. Key Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 The governing body is responsible for:

- The overall implementation of this policy.
- Ensuring that this policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds including, but not limited to: ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- Handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's Complaints Procedures Policy.

- Ensuring educational trips and visits positively impact on pupils' lives, teaching them new life skills and providing new experiences.
- Promoting good safeguarding practices to ensure the safety of pupils when partaking in extra-curricular trips and activities.

3.2 The headteacher is responsible for:

- The day-to-day implementation and management of this policy.
- Appointing an educational visits coordinator, and undergoing the LA training.
- Liaising with the educational visits coordinator and communicating information regarding any planned trips to parents.
- Liaising with the governing body regarding the organisation of extra-curricular trips and activities, including settling any disputes.
- Being part of the approval process for extra-curricular trips and activities.
- **[Updated]** Ensuring the educational visits coordinator is competent to oversee the coordination of off-site education, and arranging for training to be undertaken as necessary.
- Completing relevant paperwork, including risk assessments, for extra-curricular trips and activities.
- Ensuring suitable safety measures are in place prior to each trip or activity.
- Overseeing the work of the educational visits coordinator, ensuring a whole-school approach is adopted when planning and coordinating extra-curricular trips and activities.
- Ensuring there are contingency plans in place in the event of a member of staff being absent on the day of the trip or activity.

3.3 The educational visits coordinator has overall responsibility for:

- Overseeing all issues and controls regarding extra-curricular activities and trips.
- Liaising between all appropriate parties, including the local outdoor education adviser, during the planning and organising of extra-curricular activities and trips.
- Working with the local outdoor education adviser to help staff assess and manage risks.
- Ensuring the systems and procedures for dealing with educational visits adhere to the requirements of this policy.
- Conducting risk assessments prior to school trips and educational visits to ensure pupil and staff safety.
- Creating an itinerary prior to an educational visit or school trip and distributing it to parents and staff to ensure the day is well organised and safe.
- Appointing an appropriate member of staff to be the designated leader of the trip.

- Ensuring that any problems are raised in a meeting with the EVC and reported to the Governing Body.

3.4 The Visit Leader in charge of the trip is 'in loco parentis' and has a duty of care to all pupils on the trip. They are also responsible for:

- Checking the schedule is free on the school calendar and that it is not conflicting with any other school event which will have an impact on staffing prior to planning an educational visit.
- Identifying the educational purpose of the extra-curricular trip or activity and presenting its benefits to the EVC.
- Completing all essential documentation for the trip, including a risk assessment, with the EVC.
- Informing parents of the proposed extra-curricular trip or activity well in advance of the trip.
- Distributing permission slips to parents a minimum of six weeks prior to the trip and chasing up any permission slips that have not been returned **two weeks** prior to the trip.
- Understanding and operating safeguarding measures throughout the planning, organisation and delivery of the extra-curricular trip or activity.
- Delegating responsibilities to other staff members on the school trip.
- Ensuring all adults on the trip are aware of their responsibilities and that the necessary checks have been carried out on volunteers in line with the DBS Policy.

3.5 Staff are responsible for:

- Adhering to this policy and applying its principles when participating in extra-curricular trips and activities.
- Ensuring the safety of the pupils is maximised throughout any educational visit or activity.
- Liaising with the visit leader to understand personal responsibilities and ensuring the smooth running of the school trip or activity.
- Ensuring that any outdoor space visited, e.g. a park and playing field, is kept clean and free from litter during the trip.

3.6 Pupils are responsible for:

- Following instructions from staff while on school trips.

- Keeping pride in their presentation, understanding that they are representing the school whilst on an education trip.
- Ensuring that, during visits to outdoor spaces, they keep the area tidy and free from litter.
- Behaving in a manner which matches the ethos of the school, and for following the behaviour rules set out in the school's Behavioural Policy with regards to this policy.

4. Training of Staff

- 4.1 Staff will receive training on this policy as part of their induction.
- 4.2 Staff will receive regular and ongoing training as part of their CPD.

5. Planning School Trips

- 5.1 Prior to planning a school trip, the following guidance will be read by the organisers:
- DfE (2018) 'Health and safety on educational visits'
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-and-safety-on-educational-visits/health-and-safety-on-educational-visits>
 - HSE (2011) 'School trips and outdoor learning activities' <http://www.hse.gov.uk/services/education/school-trips.pdf>
- 5.2 A thorough risk assessment will be conducted by the visit leader during the planning of the trip, to ensure pupil and staff safety.
- 5.3 **[New]** Adventure activities will always be identified at the planning stage and never added during the trip.
- 5.4 **[New]** When planning water sport activities, the need for instructors and lifeguards will be taken into account, particularly when using facilities which may not have a trained lifeguard present.
- 5.5 The school will do everything in its power to ensure that all pupils are given an opportunity to participate in school trips, for example, organising two trips with a smaller group size or finding a venue which can cater for all pupils.
- 5.6 Where there is a maximum capacity of pupils for a trip, places will be allocated on a first come, first served basis. This will be clearly communicated to parents in a letter home.

6. Risk Assessment Process

- 6.1 Our risk assessment process is designed to manage risks when planning trips, while ensuring that learning opportunities are experienced to the fullest extent.

- 6.2 The individual carrying out the risk assessment process will have the skills, status and competence needed for the role, understand the risks involved, and be familiar with the activity.
- 6.3 The process is as follows:
- Identify the hazards
 - Decide who might be harmed and how
 - Evaluate the risks and decide on precautions
 - Record findings and implement them
 - Review assessment and update if necessary
- 6.4 A generalised risk assessment form is available in [Form 5](#) – it may be appropriate to use a trip specific risk assessment depending on the potential risks of the trip.

7. Vetting Providers (new)

- 7.1 When considering external providers for activities, the visit leader will check whether they hold the 'Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge' to indicate they meet nationally recognised standards.
- 7.2 If a provider does not hold the badge, the visit leader will check the following to ensure they are a suitable organisation to work with:
- Their insurance arrangements
 - Their adherence to legal requirements
 - Their control measures
 - Their use of vehicles
 - Staff competency levels
 - Safeguarding policies
 - The suitability of their accommodation
 - Any sub-contracting arrangements in place
 - The presence of necessary licences
- 7.3 If it is deemed appropriate to engage with an external provider, a written agreement will be created outlining what each party is responsible for.
- 7.4 If an organisation does not meet the school's standards, they will not be considered.

8. Equal Opportunities

- 8.1 The school promotes values of equality and does not discriminate against any individual or group of pupils when organising a trip.
- 8.2 The extra-curricular trips and activities offered to pupils will provide new experiences and develop life skills.

- 8.3 Extra-curricular trips and activities are organised, managed and conducted in accordance with the school's Equal Opportunities Policy.
- 8.4 Due to the popularity of some extra-curricular trips and activities, the school offers places on a first come, first served basis.
- 8.5 Any individual, staff or otherwise, shown to be taking preference over one pupil or a group of pupils will be subject to formal disciplinary action.
- 8.6 Where possible, pupils will be given the opportunity to contribute to the planning and organisation of extra-curricular trips and activities.
- 8.7 For school trips that require additional payment, the fee will be reasonable and help will be provided where possible for pupils who cannot afford the initial fee.

9. Safe Use of Minibuses and Seatbelts

- 9.1 The Business Manager is responsible for arranging the annual maintenance of the minibuses, including MOTs and road tax.
- 9.2 The use of minibuses will be organised in accordance with the Minibus Policy.
- 9.3 The driver will have a current driving licence, be aged 25 years or over and hold a full licence in at least a category D PCV in order to drive on a domestic school trip.
- 9.4 Category B PCVs may be acceptable in certain circumstances, as outlined in the Minibus Policy.
- 9.5 Before driving abroad, the EVC will contact the LA for guidance on which licence is required.
- 9.6 Drivers will complete the relevant form from the staff workroom and supply a photocopy of their driving licence.
- 9.7 Passengers can not pay a charge, as the school does not hold a minibus permit.
- 9.8 Internal damage to the minibus is the responsibility of the individual or organisation using the minibus. The school will decide who is responsible for covering the cost of any repairs.
- 9.9 The minibus will carry strictly one person per seat and seatbelts must be worn at all times.
- 9.10 Fines incurred will be paid by whoever was driving the minibus at the time the offence was committed.
- 9.11 Start and finish mileage, along with any potential risks, defects or damage identified, will be reported upon return to the school.
- 9.12 The following staff members hold the required licence and have completed specific training which allows them to drive the school minibus:
- 9.13 The on-board dash camera is used for all journeys.

10. Parental Consent

- 10.1 Parental consent is not generally required for off-site activities that take place during school hours.
- 10.2 Written consent is required for:
- Activities of an adventurous nature.
 - Residential trips.
 - Foreign trips.
 - Trips outside of school hours.
- 10.3 If preferable and appropriate, parents may complete an **annual** consent form for Type A Visits at the start of any academic year which gives consent for their child to be involved in any and all activities, both on and off-site, that take place at any time, including the school holidays.
- 10.4 Separate consent will be sought for Type B visits/trips.
- 10.5 Parents will be informed of activities by letter and will have the opportunity to withdraw their child from taking part.

11. Staffing Ratios

- 11.1 There will be sufficient staff to cope in an emergency and generally. Our minimum staff to pupil ratios are as follows:
- Abroad: **1:10**
 - Other residential: **1:10**
 - Day trip visits: **1:10 and 1:20 thereafter**

12. Insurance and Licensing

- 12.1 When planning activities of an adventurous nature in the UK, the visit leader will check that the provider of the activity holds a current licence.
- 12.2 Insurance will be organised for every trip, no matter how short, to ensure adequate protection and medical cover is in place.
- 12.3 Parents will be informed of the limits of any insurance cover.
- 12.4 Where a crime is committed against a member of the party, it will be reported to local police as soon as possible.
- 12.5 Medical expenses will be recorded and stored by the visit leader on Evolve.

13. Accidents and Incidents

- 13.1 In the case of accidents and injuries while on a school trip in the UK, the school's accident reporting process will begin, as detailed in the Health and Safety Policy.

13.2 In the case of accidents and injuries while on a school trip abroad:

- Organisers will cooperate fully with local emergency services and understand that any injury or death of a member of staff or pupil outside of Great Britain may be subject to the law of the land where the accident occurred.
- The first point of contact within the UK will be base contact who will contact the family of the injured person.
- Pupils will be asked not to contact friends or parents in the UK until the family of the injured person can be contacted.
- The British Embassy/Consulate will be informed.
- The insurer will be notified.

13.3 The visit Leader is responsible to update Evolve with any incidents, accidents and near misses.

13.4 Media enquiries will be referred to the headteacher or, if they are not available, the deputy headteacher or chair of governors.

13.5 Staff will use guidance as set out in the Critical Incident Policy, in particular the 'after a critical incident' section, to ensure the safety of pupils and staff should anything happen, e.g. a terrorist attack.

13.6 Staff will be briefed on how to react and respond should an emergency situation occur, e.g. a terrorist attack.

13.7 Relevant risk assessments will be undertaken before the trip, including for points of interests such as museums and hotels.

13.8 Pupils and staff are informed of an evacuation plan before entering trip venues; this should include an agreed rendezvous point, to ensure everyone knows what to do in an emergency.

13.9 To ensure pupils are easily identifiable, they must wear trip hoodies when travelling aboard. Failing this, pupils will be given an ICE card, which must be carried at all times.

14. Missing Person Procedure

14.1 The school places pupil and staff safety as its top priority when participating in school trips, either domestically or abroad.

14.2 Before embarking on the trip, extensive risk assessments are undertaken in accordance with [section six](#) of this policy.

14.3 The visit leader will communicate with the venues of the school trips to ensure the correct group sizes are planned for each setting.

14.4 When travelling with a pupil with SEND, the visit leader will ensure an adult is with them at all times and that the visit is adequately modified to suit the pupil's needs in accordance with [section 15](#) of this policy.

- 14.5 Everyone on the trip will be provided with an ICE card for all members of staff, in the event they are unable to locate their group.
- 14.6 All staff members will be required to carry mobile phones with them at all times. The visit leader will carry the school mobile. .
- 14.7 Upon arriving at every venue, the trip leader will identify a rendezvous point where pupils and adults should go if they become separated from the rest of the group.
- 14.8 Pupils and staff will wear school branded clothing, in accordance with point [13.9](#), in order to make them easily identifiable.
- 14.9 Regular head counts of all pupils and staff will take place throughout the day to ensure all persons are present at all times.
- 14.10 In the event someone goes missing whilst on a school trip domestically or abroad:
- The trip leader will ensure the safety of the remaining pupils and staff by taking a register to identify who is missing.
 - The trip leader will immediately identify at least one adult to start looking for the person, they will be looked for where necessary, until the police arrive.
 - Where possible, the venue will be notified of the missing person to help ensure the person is found quickly.
 - If the person cannot be contacted or located within 10 minutes, the local police or relevant authorities, e.g. the British Embassy, will be contacted.
 - If the police are called, the trip leader will contact the base contact or other available person, back at the school and inform them of what has happened.
- 14.11 If the police, or another authority, is called to an incident where someone is missing, they will oversee locating the person and will advise on factors including, but not limited to, when to contact next of kin.
- 14.12 If the missing person cannot be found, the group will return to school. If this is not possible, e.g. when a trip is taking place abroad, the visit leader will make arrangements to ensure the group's safety, e.g. by changing venues or cancelling visits.
- 14.13 If a member of the party has gone missing and is subsequently found, the trip leader will report via Evolve:
- Review the group sizes and staffing ratios to ensure no one becomes separated from their group.
 - Review whether more registers should be conducted throughout the day.
 - Assess which venues they attend to ensure they are suitable for the group.
 - Make recommendations to the educational visits coordinator to ensure similar incidents can be avoided in the future.

15. Pupils with SEND

- 15.1 Where possible, activities and visits will be adapted to enable pupils with SEND to take part.
- 15.2 Where this is not possible, an alternative activity of equal educational value will be arranged for all pupils.
- 15.3 Pupils with SEND will be accompanied by a responsible adult during the extra-curricular trip or visit.

16. Finance

- 16.1 The financial procedures outlined in the school's Charging and Remissions Policy will always be followed when arranging trips.
- 16.2 The school will act in accordance with the DfE's guidance document 'Charging for school activities' (2018) and, therefore, will only charge for trips which are classed as an 'optional extra'. This is education provided outside of school time which is not:
 - Part of the national curriculum.
 - Part of a syllabus for an examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school.
 - Part of religious education.
- 16.3 Money for school trips will always be paid directly to the school. Under no circumstances should school trip money be processed through personal accounts.
- 16.4 All letters to parents regarding school trips will include a clause explaining what will happen in the event that the trip is cancelled or a pupil cancels their place on the trip.
- 16.5 In the event that the trip is cancelled due to unforeseeable circumstances, it is at the headteacher's discretion as to whether a refund is given to parents. The headteacher will consult the governing body on the matter, taking into account the cost to the school, including alternative provision costs.
- 16.6 In the event that a pupil cancels their place on a trip, it is at the headteacher's discretion as to whether a refund is given to parents. The headteacher will consult the governing body on the matter, taking into account the pupil's reasons for cancelling their place, whether the school will be reimbursed for the pupil's place on the trip, and whether the space on the trip can be offered to someone else.
- 16.7 Where a pupil has previously cancelled a space on a school trip and received a full refund, the school has the right to refuse to allow the pupil to attend future trips and visits.
- 16.8 The school will take a common-sense approach to refunds and cancellations, ensuring that all pupils are treated equally.

- 16.9 Any charge made in respect of pupils will not exceed the actual cost of providing the trip divided equally by the number of pupils participating.
- 16.10 Once trip arrangements are booked and confirmed, if contributions to a trip exceed the total cost of the trip, a refund will be given where the excess is greater than £5 per pupil. Or £10 per pupil for a residential visit.
- 16.11 Any excess of expenditure will be subsidised by the school fund.

17. Foreign Trips

- 17.1 When planning school trips abroad, the school will consider the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's guidance 'Safer adventure travel and volunteering overseas' (2015) and, where an activity poses significant risks, the school will also consult the British Standard for adventurous activities outside the UK.
- 17.2 Validity of passports and visa requirements will be dealt with within three months of the initial notification of the trip, to avoid problems when the trip is due to take place.
- 17.3 Staff and pupils will be taught about the culture and values of the country they are visiting, to ensure they understand and respect the values of the citizens.
- 17.4 Before the trip, staff are trained in spotting suspicious behaviour and remaining vigilant whilst abroad.
- 17.5 Before the trip, pupils will be taught how to remain vigilant in the country they are visiting, particularly about advances from strangers.
- 17.6 Registers will be taken at the start and end of each day, as well as before, during, and after events, and at regular intervals whilst on days out to ensure the whereabouts of pupils are known at all times.
- 17.7 Staff will check the town/city's local news at the start of each day of the trip, to ensure their planned activities are safe to go ahead.
- 17.8 Where possible members of staff attending the trip will have at least an intermediate understanding of the destination country's language.
- 17.9 At the start of the trip, all pupils and staff are provided with an emergency contact sheet, this includes the trip leader's mobile phone number, as well as emergency numbers and phrases for the country they are visiting.
- 17.10 When using external providers abroad, the school will check whether the provider holds an equivalent of the 'Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge'. If no such equivalent can be ascertained, the school will make checks in the same manner as [paragraph 7.2](#) prior to agreeing to use the provider.

18. Evaluating Trips and Visits

- 18.1 Following an educational trip/visit, the visit leader will ask staff members and volunteers present on the trip to assess the success of the trip in respect of both educational value and safeguarding effectiveness.
- 18.2 Based on this assessment, recommendations will be made to improve future trips and visits.