

# St. John the Evangelist Catholic Academy EYFS



## Policy on Off-Site Visits

Date of next review: July 2019

## Policy on Off-Site Visits

### **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 Off-site visits are activities arranged by or on behalf of the school, and which take place outside the school grounds. The governors and teaching staff believe that off-site activities can supplement and enrich the curriculum of the school by providing experiences which would otherwise be impossible. All off-site activities must serve an educational purpose, enhancing and enriching our children's learning experiences.
- 1.2 In this policy, we seek to establish a clear and coherent structure for the planning and evaluation of our off-site visits, and to ensure that any risks are managed and kept to a minimum, for the safety and health of all pupils at all times. Within these limits, we seek to make our visits available to all pupils, and wherever possible to make them accessible to those with disabilities. The visits usually take place within the school day.

### **2 Aims and objectives**

- 2.1 The aims of our off-site visits are to:
- enhance curricular and recreational opportunities for our pupils;
  - provide a wider range of experiences for our pupils than could be provided on the school site alone;
  - promote the independence of our children as learners, and enable them to grow and develop in new learning environments.

These visits begin with short excursions into the local area in the Early Years, and progress to a residential experience towards the end of Key Stage 2.

### **3 Curriculum links**

- 3.1 For each subject in the curriculum, there is a corresponding programme of activities (which includes visits to the school by specialists). All these activities are in line with guidance published by the LA:
- English - theatre visits, visits by authors, poets and theatre groups;
  - science - use of the school grounds, visits to botanical gardens;
  - mathematics - use of shape and number trails in the local environment;
  - history - castle visits, study of local housing patterns, local museums;
  - geography - use of the locality for fieldwork, village trails;
  - art and design - art gallery visits, use of the locality;
  - PE - a range of sporting fixtures, extra-curricular activities, visits by specialist coaches;
  - music - a variety of specialist music teaching, extra-curricular activities, local schools' orchestra, concerts for parents and carers to hear;
  - design and technology - visits to local factories or design centres;
  - ICT - its use in local shops/libraries/secondary schools, etc;
  - RE - visits to local centres of worship, visits by local clergy.

- PSHE and citizenship - visit to the fire station or an old people's residential home, visits by local police officers and health workers.

#### **4 Residential activities**

- 4.1 Children in Year 6 have the opportunity to take part in a residential visit. This activity is in school time and linked to the National Curriculum, so we do not make any charge for the education or cost of travel. We do, however, make a charge for board and lodging, insurance and specialist instruction for certain activities. Parents or carers in receipt of state benefits are exempt from payment.
- 4.2 The residential visit enables children to take part in outdoor and adventure activities as part of their PE work. We undertake this visit only with the written agreement of the LA. We provide qualified instructors for all specialist activities that we undertake.

#### **5 How visits may be authorised**

- 5.1 The headteacher will appoint a party leader to be responsible for running the activity. This will normally be a teacher employed at the school.
- 5.2 The school's educational visits coordinator, who may be the headteacher, will be involved in the planning and management of off-site visits.

S/he will:

- ensure that risk assessments are completed;
- support the headteacher and governing body in their decisions on approval;
- assign competent staff to lead and help with trips;
- organise related staff training;
- verify that all accompanying adults, including private car drivers, have had satisfactory police checks, and that the letter from our coach company (see 6.5) assures us that their drivers, too, have had police checks;
- make sure that all necessary permissions and medical forms are obtained;
- keep records of visits, and ensure that there are regular generic assessments of the risks (e.g. road-crossing) where there are frequent visits to local venues (e.g. a swimming facility).

Staff arranging or otherwise involved in off-site activities must familiarise themselves with the regulations, advice and procedures published by the LA (and available from the school office). All off-site activities must take place in accordance with the LA's instructions.

- 5.3 Where staff are proposing to arrange an off-site activity, they must seek and obtain the approval of the headteacher before any commitment is made on behalf of the school. A comprehensive visit plan should be provided by the member of staff to allow for an informed decision to be made.
- 5.4 Where the activity involves a period of more than 24 hours, an overnight stay, or a journey by sea or air, the headteacher will seek the approval of the governing body and the LA before permitting the activity to take place.

5.5 It is our policy that all children should be able to participate in educational visits. Where a child with a disability is eligible for a trip, we will make every effort to ensure that s/he is included. We may seek guidance from parents or carers to help us to adapt our programme, and we will make any reasonable adjustments to our itinerary to include a child with disabilities. Any such adjustments will be included in the risk assessment.

## **6 Risk assessment**

6.1 A comprehensive risk assessment is carried out by the group leader before the proposed visit. It will assess the risks which might be encountered on the visit, and will indicate measures to prevent or reduce them. The risk assessment should be based on the following considerations:

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

6.2 Staff planning an off-site activity should make a preliminary visit to the venue, in order to carry out an on-site risk assessment. It is important to take into account the probable weather conditions at the time of year proposed for the trip, and the party leader should take careful account of the facilities available, with due regard to the proposed size of the group. S/he should also assess the site's suitability with regard to the age and any particular needs of the children. S/he will also consider the venue's own approach to security and to health and safety. Venues providing instructor-led activities will have their own risk assessments for particular sessions, and these assessments may be adopted if it is impractical for the group leader to experience the activity beforehand, or if s/he lacks the skills required to make informed judgements about the risks it may involve. The LA will not have given its approval for the visit unless it is satisfied with the venue, its instructors and their risk assessment procedures.

6.3 It is important to assess and record any health, safety or security issues that are identified during the preliminary visit. Any such issues will be taken into account when the final decision is taken on whether the visit should proceed, and the Visit Plan must state both the extent of any risks involved, and the measures that will be taken to reduce or eliminate them. The cost of these preliminary visits will be borne by the school, and should be built into the overall financial arrangements for the visit itself.

6.4 An activity should normally have sufficient adults taking part to provide the following minimum ratios:

- 1 adult to between 10 and 15 pupils in Years 4 to 6;
- 1 adult to 6 pupils in Years 1 to 3;
- 1 adult to 2 pupils in Early Years Unit;
- 1 adult to 3 pupils in Reception Class.

Any trip will require a minimum of two adults. However, these are minimum requirements, and may not provide adequate supervision in all cases.

- 6.5 A risk assessment must also cover transport to and from the venue. The coach company we use on a regular basis has provided us with a letter detailing all the health and safety measures it routinely takes, including:
- the provision and required use of seat belts;
  - proper vetting of the driver by the police;
  - proper insurance for the driver;
  - details of first aid and emergency equipment;
  - breakdown procedures.
- 6.6 The group leader will double-check that all adults helping to supervise the trip have been subject to police checks (see 5.2 above).
- 6.7 A copy of the completed risk assessment will be given to the headteacher, the governing body, the LA, our educational visits coordinator, and all adults supervising the trip.

## **7 Transport**

- 7.1 The costing of off-site activities should include any of the following that apply:
- transport;
  - entrance fees;
  - insurance;
  - provision of any special resources or equipment;
  - costs related to adult helpers;
  - any refreshments that the school has opted to pay for.
- 7.2 Transport arrangements will allow a seat for each member of the party. It is our policy only to use coaches fitted with seat or lap belts, and to insist that they be worn by all those participating in the visit.
- 7.3 Where private cars are used for transport, the group leader is responsible for checking that the insurance of each driver covers such journeys, and double-checking that each driver has been subject to the normal police checks (see 5.2).
- 7.4 Our minibus meets LA guidelines, and each seat has a belt. We instruct all children, whether travelling by car, minibus or coach, to attach their seat belts.
- 7.5 The school makes a charge to parents and carers if their children are transported in the school minibus to sporting fixtures. The charge covers the expenses of the journey only; we do not make any profit from this.

## **8 Communication with parents and carers**

- 8.1 The parents/carers of children taking part in an off-site activity should be provided with all appropriate information about the intended visit. Parents or carers must give their permission in writing before a child can be involved in any off-site activities.

- 8.2 Funding for off-site activities is provided mainly by parental contributions (voluntary, except in the case of residential visits), with a limited subsidy from the parent-teacher association. This must be made clear to parents and carers in all correspondence about an educational visit at the planning stage.
- 8.3 No child may be excluded from an activity because of the unwillingness or inability of the parent to make a contribution. Parents and carers will be informed of this principle through the school prospectus and letters sent home about intended visits.
- 8.4 The timetable for the payment of contributions should allow for the headteacher to make a decision about the financial viability of the activity in reasonable time.

## **9 Further health and safety considerations**

- 9.1 All adults accompanying a party must be made aware, by the party leader, of the emergency procedures which will apply. Each adult should be provided with an emergency telephone number. This will normally be the school number, but where an activity extends beyond the normal school day, the home telephone number of a designated emergency contact should be provided.
- 9.2 Before a party leaves school, the school office should be provided with a list of everyone, children and adults, travelling with the party, together with a programme and timetable for the activity.
- 9.3 The safety of the party, and especially the children, is of paramount importance. During the activity, the party leader must take whatever steps are necessary to ensure that safety. This involves taking note of any information provided by medical questionnaire returns, and ensuring that children are both safe and well looked after at all times.
- 9.4 Prior to an activity, if it is felt that the behaviour of an individual child is likely to compromise the safety of others or the good name of the school, the party leader should discuss with the headteacher the possibility of excluding that child from the activity.
- 9.5 More detailed guidance on procedures and requirements can be obtained from the LA's Off-Site & Hazardous Activities File held in the school office.
- 9.6 Staff should always carry a fully charged mobile phone and all necessary contact numbers on visits for emergency purposes.

On an EYFS visit, all children will wear a yellow tabard. Staff will take a supply of tissues, wipes, spare clothes and nappies, medicines required for individual children, first aid kit, snacks/water. Contact numbers and the accident book will also be taken.

## **10 Group leaders' planning**

- 10.1 Group leaders must read thoroughly the appropriate guidance for off-site activities:
- 'Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits: A Good Practice Guide' (DCSF 1998) and its supplements:  
'A Handbook for Group Leaders' (DCSF 2002)

'Group Safety at Water Margins' (DCSF 2002)

They must consult the LA's documentation detailing procedures and requirements, including guidance on Emergency Planning and Crisis Line organisation, and must draw up a Visit Plan which records in writing (including standard forms, where appropriate) the arrangements that have been made.

## **11 Visit Plan**

11.1 The Visit Plan for intended educational visits must include the following:

- risk assessment;
- report on preliminary visit;
- applications for approval of visit;
- general information;
- names, ages, contact details, permission forms, medical records and other relevant details of all those going on the visit;
- travel schedule;
- accommodation plan (if applicable);
- full plan of activities;
- fire precautions and evacuation procedures;
- intended arrangements for supervision;
- insurance arrangements for all members of the group;
- emergency contacts and procedures;
- general communications information;
- guidance for party leaders;
- guidance for the emergency contact and headteacher;
- medical questionnaire returns;
- first-aid boxes.

## **12 Lost child on an outing**

12.1 An appropriate number of members of staff will stay with all of the other children in a safe, allocated place.

12.2 The other members of staff will walk around checking all areas. If appropriate, the toilets will be checked.

12.3 After 10 minutes the school secretary will be informed by mobile phone, and asked to contact the child's parents/carer and the local police.

12.4 Staff will keep searching the local area, informing all relevant persons concerned.

If for any reason the staff gain an 'extra child' from another setting, the teacher/manager will contact the police immediately.

## **13 Monitoring and review**

13.1 This policy is monitored by the governing body and will be reviewed every two years, or before if necessary.

## APPENDIX 1

### Off-Site Activities Planning Approval and Evaluation Form

(Any excursion with one or more children off the school premises (however near or short) is regarded as an Off-Site Activity for which the School's Off-Site Health and Safety Policy and the need to complete this form will apply.)

Class(es)/Group: \_\_\_\_\_

Group Leader : \_\_\_\_\_

Destination: \_\_\_\_\_

Date(s) of Visit: \_\_\_\_\_ Planned Time of Return: \_\_\_\_\_

Objective of Visit: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Make Preliminary Arrangements:	Tick when completed or insert information as appropriate.
Discuss proposed visit with EVC and Headteacher.	
What guidance is available for this type of trip -experience?	
If required, make a visit to the site - has the school been before?	
What activities will be involved?	
How will the party travel?	
Carry out Risk Assessment on all activities and travel arrangements and complete the on-line Evolve risk assessment tool.	
Make provisional booking for site.	
Make provisional booking for transport. Consider food and rest stops.	
Consider the numbers going and adult child: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 adult to between 10 and 15 pupils in Years 4 to 6;</li> <li>• 1 adult to 6 pupils in Years 1 to 3;</li> <li>• 1 adult to 3 pupils in Early Years.</li> <li>• 1:10 for residential activities</li> </ul>	
Which adults are going - are any particular adult skills required	

for the type of activity.	
Ensure that an appropriate first aider has agreed to be on the trip.	
Does anyone have special needs? If so, ensure that they can be accommodated for the planned activities, travel and adult supervision	
If planning to use parents' cars, check that the volunteer parents have correct insurance and CRB check.	
If planning to use minibus(es), check that drivers are MIDAS qualified.	
<b>2. Establish Costs:</b> (Remember the adult fares and insurance and to base cost on 90% payment from the children).	
For transport and entry fee.	
Add the insurance .	
<b>3. Obtain approval to proceed and signatures from EVC and Headteacher</b>	
<b>EVC signature:</b>	<b>Headteacher signature:</b>
<b>DO NOT CONTINUE WITHOUT EVC AND HEADTEACHER SIGNATURES</b>	
<b>4. Approval for Activity:</b>	
For residential activities check approval that is required and whether extra insurance will be required.	
<b>5. Letter to Parents:</b>	
Draft letter to parents to include: basic details of activity, medical information required from parents, consent for emergency medical treatment and contact number for that day.	
<b>Clear draft letter with EVC and Headteacher</b>	
<b>EVC signature:</b>	<b>Headteacher signature:</b>
Send out approved letter to parents.	
<b>6. Checks:</b>	
Confirm all provisional bookings for activity and transport.	
Check all car drivers have correct insurance and copies are in the office.	
Check all non county employees have a CRB/List 99 check.	
Check the adult supervision ratio again.	
<b>7. First Aid and Medical:</b>	
Who is your nominated first aider?	
Is the first aid kit in order?	
Who requires medication? What are the arrangements for administering it?	

<b>8. Communications:</b>	
Who is going to be responsible for the mobile phone?	
What is the number?	
Which senior member of staff will be at school on your return? Confirm that they are available all day.	
<b>9. Consent Form and Monies:</b>	
Have you collected all consent forms and monies in?	
<b>10. Week Prior to Visit:</b>	
Confirm all bookings.	
Check completeness of consent slips and medical information again.	
Review safety arrangements. Check availability of high visibility vests.	
<b>EVC signature:</b>	<b>Headteacher signature:</b>
<b>DO NOT CONTINUE WITHOUT EVC AND HEADTEACHER SIGNATURES</b>	
<b>11. Day before the Visit:</b>	
Full itinerary of entire trip including timings;	
Name(s), address(es), telephone number(s), contact name(s) of activity provider;	
Details of travel arrangements, travel company(ies) name(s), address(es),	
Telephone number(s), contact name(s);	
To the school office for filing in the Critical Incident Box	
<b>**Charge Mobile Phone**</b>	
<b>12. On the Visit Day Take:</b>	
Any tickets/activity booking documentation First Aid Kit (including red Emergency Contact Card)	
Spare cash.	
High visibility vests	

Group list and phone numbers.	
School's mobile phone. Give second mobile phone to contact person at school.	
Remember that if the trip is going to be late or deviate from the itinerary, phone the contact person at the school.	
Any medication and asthma inhalers if in Years R, 1 and 2 all in a labelled bag (Years 3 - 6 should carry their own).	
Whistle.	
A copy of Critical Incidents And Emergencies Plan section: "Offsite Activities - Action To Be Taken By The Group Leader In The Event Of A Serious Accident/ Incident".	
<b>13. On the Day of the Visit, Before Leaving:</b>	
Notify the office of any variation to earlier group lists including any absentees on the day.	
Insert the Coach/minibus registration plate on this form	
Give this form to the school office for filing in the Critical Incident Box.	
<b>14. After the Visit:</b> Write any helpful comments about the trip below:	
<b>Pass this form to the Headteacher</b>	

## **APPENDIX 2 - REGULAR OFF SITE ACTIVITIES**

### **A. MOVE OF SCHOOL ON FOOT TO ST. JOSEPH'S CHURCH FOR RELIGIOUS SERVICES.**

1. The Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher is the designated Group Leader.
  
2. In advance of the move, the Group Leader will:
  - a. Arrange details of the Service with Father Green of St. Joseph's Church
  - b. Check that the standard risk assessment for this activity is in date
  - c. Ensure that Parents are informed of where to collect the children.
  - d. Ensure that an appropriate First Aider will be in attendance with first aid kit.
  - e. Ensure that appropriate parental consents are in place.
  
3. In the event of extreme inclement weather, the Group Leader will decide whether to cancel the move and Service.
  
4. Children are to be formed into a line. Teachers and teaching assistants are to be with their class.
  
5. Any medication and asthma inhalers for Years R, 1 and 2 are all be in a labelled bag carried by member of staff. Years 3 - 6 should carry their mown.
  
6. At each road crossing, the school line is to pause, close up, and then cross the road under the direction of the accompanying staff.
  
7. The Route; all members of the group are to remain on the pavement which leads directly to the church.
  
8. On arrival, children are enter the Church under supervision and be guided to their pews.
  
9. The Headteacher is to delegate a member of staff to check that both the main door and the side door are unlocked (as emergency fire exits).
  
10. The Headteacher (or delegated staff member) is to announce to everyone present the location of the emergency fire exits.
  
11. Children returning to school are to form up in the porch as far as possible in the same manner as when moving from school to the church. Under staff supervision, they will return to school by the most appropriate route.