

St. John the Evangelist Catholic Academy

Part of the Newman Catholic Collegiate



Educational Visits Policy

Policy written:	September 2024
Ratified by the Academy Committee:	
Date for review:	September 2027

Our Mission

"Lord, be thy word, my rule."

St. John's Catholic Academy recognises that gospel values and the teachings of the church are central to the life of the school. The school aims to create an environment where children can develop physically, emotionally, socially and morally fostering co-operation and communication between home, school, parish and the local community. Together we hope to lead our children towards understanding, tolerance, justice and sensitivity to the needs of others.

Overview

The school acknowledges the great value of Educational Visits in broadening and enhancing both the learning and social experience of pupils.

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 the DfES Requirements and LA guidelines.

The School's Principal is Helen Rigby

The School's Chair of Academy Committee is Naomi Williams

The School's EVC is Phil Turner

Planning A Visit

It is essential that all visits have sound and clearly stated educational aims. It is important that the trip is planned so that it can be administered on EVOLVE at least three weeks before the trip date. If the cost of the trip exceeds £5 the parents must be given at least 4 week's notice and given the opportunity to pay in instalments. Before the visit;

- Ensure that the correct adult /staff ratios can be arranged for the visit
- Book visit
- Book transport
- Send letter home to parents
- Complete a risk assessment
- Log on to EVOLVE
- Inform school cook of date and if packed lunches are required

Approval for Visits

All visits will require the authorisation of both the Principal and EVC.

All visits must be processed on EVOLVE at least 3 weeks before the visit takes place.

Residential visits must be processed on EVOLVE at least 6 weeks before the visit.

EVOLVE can be accessed by visiting www.schoolvisits.org.uk. All teaching staff are issued with their own username and password. User names and passwords are issued by the EVC.

Approval of 'normal' day visits is at the discretion of the EVC and Principal. However; visits that are either:

- overseas
- residential or
- involving an adventurous activity

will require the additional approval of the LA. The governing body will also need to be informed about these visits prior to a commitment being made.

Competence to Lead

Any member of staff leading a visit will need to have their 'competence to lead' assessed before approval for the visit is given. For the majority of visits this will be assessed by the EVC.

Assessment of Risk

'Risk Assessment' is a careful examination of what could cause harm to pupils, staff or others, together with an identification of the control measures necessary in order to reduce risks to a level which, in the professional judgement of the assessor, is deemed to be acceptable (ie. low).

In considering risk, there are 3 levels of which visit leaders should be mindful:

- *Generic Risks* - normal risks attached to any activity out of school. These will be covered by careful completion of the 'Educational Visits Checklist'.
- *Event Specific Risk* - any significant hazard or risk relating to the specific activity and outside the scope of item 1 above. These should be recorded on Form EV5 (available in EVOLVE under Forms)
- *Ongoing Risk* - the monitoring of risks throughout the actual visit as circumstances change.

A risk assessment must be completed for every visit that takes place and is part of the process of recording the visit on EVOLVE.

**THE PRINCIPAL WILL CANCEL ANY TRIP THAT
HAS NOT BEEN AUTHORISED VIA EVOLVE**

Risk assessments must include arrangements for:

- children with behaviour problems
- children with mobility difficulties
- asthmatic children
- children with allergies
- weather conditions, administering suncream
- staff/pupil ratios
- abduction
- traffic accident

A copy of the risk assessment form is available in EVOLVE.

Adult/Pupil Ratio

A professional judgement must be made by the Visit Leader, Principal and Vice Principal as to the appropriate ratio for each visit.

This will be determined by:

- type, duration and level of activity
- needs of individuals within the group (SEN)
- experience and competence of staff and accompanying adults
- nature of the venue
- weather conditions at the time of year
- nature of transport involved

Prior to a visit being planned staff must ensure that the correct adult/pupil ratio can be arranged. An assessment of risk may indicate a need for a higher ratio, eg special needs children, problematic behaviour etc.

The "Outdoor Education Advisors Panel" (OEAP) national guidance recommends the following ratios be used as guidance when assessing supervision;

- Foundation Stage 1:3 (Nursery & Reception)
- KS1 1:6 (Y1 to Y3)
- KS2 1:10 (Y4 to Y6)

Plan B

Despite the most detailed and sedulous pre-visit planning, things can go wrong on the day, eg parent helper is unavailable, member of staff is ill, transport fails to arrive, museum have lost booking, etc. To avoid having to make important decisions under pressure, it is important that some advanced thinking is done to cater for any foreseeable eventuality. This takes the form of Plan B.

Supervision

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

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

Role of Supervising Parents/Volunteers

Supervising parents must be fully briefed on the programme, venue, activities, supervision arrangements and their responsibilities. They must also be given a written list of the pupils in their immediate care, and be shown the completed risk assessment.

First Aid

The level of first aid provision should be based on risk assessment. On all visits there should be a member of staff who has a good working knowledge of first aid. The Appointed Person First Aid Certificate is the minimum requirement for residential visits.

First aid kits are available from the school office and if the visit involves the party splitting up by any distance, a kit should be taken for each group.

Administering Medicine / Inhalers on a School Trip

- **Administering Medicine**

Essential medicine can be administered on a school trip but the parent must sign and complete a consent slip prior to the visit. A member of staff must be designated to take care of the medicine and to administer it at the time/times stated by the parent, this must be witnessed by another member of staff. The consent form requires a signature from both of these staff members.

- **Asthmatic Pupils**

Asthmatic children are registered by the parents and they are required to ensure that an in-date inhaler is in school at all times. A list of asthmatic pupils is listed at the front of each class attendance register. It is the responsibility of the class teacher to ensure that the inhalers are taken onto every trip.

Transport

Travel arrangements should be included in the risk assessment. 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.

If travel is by coach or minibus, all pupils must wear a seat belt. Staff must ensure that pupils comply with this rule; pupils may also be asked to check the seat belt of their neighbour. Drivers will be compliant with all necessary tests/insurance etc

If any pupils are to travel by car, the driver must complete Form EV6 (available on EVOLVE under forms). This is also relevant to sports fixtures, and applies to both staff and parents' cars. A new form must be completed every academic year.

Water 'Margin' Activities

Where pupils might participate in learning activities near or in water, such as a walk along a riverbank or seashore, collecting samples in ponds or streams, or paddling or walking in gentle, shallow water, then the guidance contained in DfES 'Group Safety at Water Margins' is relevant. All staff, including parents, should be provided with a copy of this guidance prior to the visit. A copy of this is available on EVOLVE.

Insurance

The school subscribes to a 'School Journey/Personal Accident' insurance policy.

Communication in the Event of an Emergency

Any member of staff accompanying the trip must also leave their mobile number at the school office. In the event of the need to contact the school a list of emergency telephone numbers is available in the First Aid kit. A copy of the Critical Incident Policy and procedures are also available and all members of staff are aware.

Seeking Parental Consent

Parents should be made fully aware of any likely risks of the visit and their management, so they may consent or refuse on a fully informed basis (known as 'Acknowledgement of Risk').

The letter to parents should therefore give full detail of the visit, the reason for the visit (educational aims), supervision arrangements, transport arrangements and the cost of the voluntary contribution per child. Ensure that detail of other incidental activities is included, together with Plan B if appropriate.

On the Day of the Visit

Be sure to:-

- Collect first aid kit(s) / inhalers/ Critical Incidents Policy
- Collect bags for travel sickness
- Collect pupils asthma inhalers (spare inhalers are available in school)
- Collect packed lunches from cook
- Ensure mobile phone is working and charged
- Give office staff the mobile numbers of any staff/parents/volunteers accompanying the trip
- Brief supervising parents/volunteers on the risk assessment
- Give supervising parents their lists of pupils
- Count pupils

During the course of the visit, pupils should be counted regularly as appropriate, and always when changing locations.

Always 'double-count'.

The mobile phone(s) should be switched on throughout the day.

After the Visit

It is important that after each visit a proper debrief takes place. This should take place within a week of the visit date, and should involve the Visit Leader,

accompanying staff and, if appropriate, the supervising parents. The purpose of this is to identify what went well and what could have been done better, in order to inform future planning.