



St. Wulstan's Catholic Primary School

Educational Visits Policy

Mission Statement

We learn and grow with Jesus to love, inspire and serve others

Off-site visits are activities which take place outside the School grounds. We 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 the children's learning experiences.

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.

Aims and Objectives

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.

Curriculum Links

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 and may include:

- English – theatre visits, visits by authors, poets and theatre groups;
- Science – use of the School grounds, visits to Botanical Gardens and Birmingham Science Museum;
- History – castle visits, study of local housing patterns, local museums;
- Geography – use of the locality for fieldwork, village trails;
- Art– Art Gallery visits, use of the locality;

- PE – a range of sporting fixtures, extra-curricular activities, visits by specialist coaches; swimming lessons
- Music – a variety of specialist music teaching, extra-curricular activities, local Schools' orchestra, concerts for parents/carers to hear, Birmingham Town Hall;
- Design and Technology – visits to local factories or design centres;
- ICT – its use in local shops/libraries/secondary schools, etc;
- RE – visits to our Parish Church, the Cathedral, Alton Castle, Harvington Hall
- PSHE and citizenship – visit to the Fire Station or an old people's residential home, visits by local police officers and health workers, Manor Adventure Residential weekend

How Visits may be authorised

The Educational Visits Co-ordinator will appoint a party leader to be responsible for running the activity. This will normally be a Teacher employed at the School.

The Educational Visits Co-ordinator will be involved in the planning and management of off-site visits.

S/he will:

- ensure that risk assessments are completed;
- ensure that there are competent staff to lead and help with trips;
- organise related staff training;
- verify that all accompanying adults are appropriately CRB checked; 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.

Where staff are proposing to arrange an off-site activity, they must seek and obtain the approval of the Principal before any commitment is made on behalf of the School.

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/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.

Risk Assessment

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?

Staff planning an off-site activity where practicable 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.

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.

There are currently no legal requirements governing the ratio of adults to children in Key Stages 1 and 2 however 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 8 pupils in Years 1 to 3;
- 1 adult to 6 pupils in Early Years.

Any trip will require a minimum of two adults. However, these are minimum requirements and may not provide adequate supervision in all cases. Each visit and each school group must be assessed on an individual basis and adequate supervision planned based on an assessment of the risks involved.

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.

The group leader will ensure that non-staff supervisors have supervised contact with children at all times.

A copy of the completed risk assessment will be given to the Principal.

Transport

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.

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.

Communication with parents/carers

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

Funding for off-site activities is provided mainly by parental contributions (voluntary, except in the case of residential visits). This will be made clear to parents/carers in all correspondence about an educational visit at the planning stage.

No child may be excluded from an activity because of the unwillingness or inability of the parent to make a contribution. (Further information can be found in the school's Charging Policy – please see website)

The timetable for the payment of contributions should allow for the Principal to make a decision about the financial viability of the activity in reasonable time.

Further Health and Safety Considerations

All adults accompanying a party must be made aware 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.

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.

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.

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 Principal the possibility of excluding that child from the activity.

More detailed guidance on procedures and requirements can be obtained from the LA's Off-Site Visits' File which is kept in the Principal's office along with previously carried out risk assessments.

Group Leaders' Planning

Group leaders must read thoroughly the appropriate guidance for off-site activities:

- 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.

Visit Plan

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

- risk assessment
- registration on Evolve for visits over 50 miles or Residential trip
- 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;
- full plan of activities;
- intended arrangements for supervision;
- emergency contacts and procedures;
- general communications' information;
- guidance for party leaders;
- guidance for the emergency contact and Principal and Vice Principal;
- medical questionnaire returns;
- first-aid boxes.

Monitoring and Review

This Policy is monitored by the Governing Body and will be reviewed every year.

Signed Principal

SignedChair of Governing Body

Date