

St. John Bosco RC Primary School



Educational Visits Policy

*Caring for each other as we live, learn
and grow in God's love*

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Policy for Educational Visits

1. Introduction

St. John Bosco RC Primary School believe that educational visits are an integral part of the entitlement of every pupil to an effective and balanced curriculum. Appropriately planned visits are known to enhance learning and improve attainment, and so form a key part of what makes St. John Bosco School an effective learning environment.

The benefits to pupils of taking part in visits and learning outside the classroom include:

- Improvements in their ability to cope with change.
- Increased curiosity and resilience.
- Opportunities for creativity, developing learning relationships and practicing strategic awareness.
- Improved achievement and attainment across a range of curricular subjects.
- Enhanced opportunities for 'real world' 'learning in context' and the development of social and emotional aspects of intelligence.
- Increased risk management skills through opportunities for involvement in practical risk-benefit decisions in a range of contexts. ie. encouraging pupils to become more risk aware as opposed to risk averse.
- Greater sense of personal responsibility.
- Possibilities for genuine team working including enhanced communication skills.
- Improved environmental appreciation, knowledge, awareness and understanding of a variety of environments.
- Improved awareness and knowledge of the importance and practices of sustainability.
- Physical skill acquisition and the development of a fit and healthy lifestyle.

2. Application

Any visit that leaves the school grounds is covered by this policy, whether as part of the curriculum, during school time, or outside the normal school day.

In addition to this Educational Visits Policy, St John Bosco RC Primary School:

1. Adopts the Local Authority's (LA) Educational Visits Guidance,
2. Adopts National Guidance www.oeapng.info (as recommended by the LA).
3. Uses EVOLVE, the web-based planning, notification, approval, monitoring and communication system for off-site activities.

3. Types of Visit & Approval

There are three 'types' of visit:

1. Visits/activities within the locality
2. Other non-residential visits that do not involve an adventurous activity.
3. Visits that are overseas, residential, or involve an adventurous activity.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Visit leaders are responsible for the planning of their visits. They should obtain outline permission for a visit from the Head Teacher prior to planning, and certainly before making any commitments. Visit leaders have responsibility for ensuring that their visits will comply with all relevant guidance and requirements. All visit leaders must hold Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). No visit may take place unless led by a competent, qualified teacher.

The Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) is Mr O'Keeffe who will support and challenge colleagues over visits and learning outside the classroom (LOtC) activities. The EVC is the first point of contact for advice on visit related matters, and will check final visit plans on EVOLVE before submitting them to the Head. Visit leaders must enter all visits and risk assessments onto the EVOLVE system for review and approval by the EVC and headteacher.

All teaching staff must ensure they complete a risk assessment prior to all visits taking place. It is the responsibility of the leader of each and every visit to complete a formal risk assessment in advance of the proposed visit. This should include

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assessment of the major/significant risks to staff and pupils that could occur during the proposed visit. All risk assessments must be signed by the visit leader and uploaded to the EVOLVE system for review and approval by the EVC and headteacher.

Where visits are made to an external provider offering instruction (e.g. sports activities, swimming etc.) the external provider is responsible for the risk assessment of the activities they are providing. An external provider holding the Learning Outside the Classroom Quality badge has demonstrated that the provider is safe and offers good quality teaching and learning opportunities. Risk assessments from such organisations may be regarded as suitable.

Where a provider is to offer instruction to pupils and does not hold this badge, they must complete a provider form (available from EVOLVE) to enable assessment of their suitability. Approval for such visits will not be given until the headteacher and EVC co-ordinator have reviewed the completed provider form and may need to seek advice from the EVAS at Derwent Hill.

The Head Teacher has responsibility for authorising all visits and for submitting all overseas, residential or adventurous activity visits to the LA for approval, via EVOLVE.

The Governing Body's role is that of a 'critical friend'. There is no requirement for governors to approve visits but they will be informed at regular governor meetings what visits have taken place and what is planned.

The Local Authority is responsible for the final approval (via EVOLVE) of all visits that are either overseas, residential, and/or involve an adventurous activity.

5. Staff Competence

We recognise that staff competence is the single most important factor in the safe management of visits, and so we support staff in developing their competence in the following ways:

- Qualified Teacher Status
- Relevant experience. Newly Qualified Teachers (NQT) shall initially be accompanied by another, member of staff holding QTS with experience of leading school visits until the EVC and headteacher are satisfied of the NQT's competence in leading visits. Monitoring of the NQT's competence shall be undertaken by the accompanying experienced member of staff and reported to the EVC, headteacher and NQT mentor.
- Previous relevant training.
- The prospective leader's ability to make dynamic risk management judgements, and take charge in the event of an emergency.
- Knowledge of the pupils, the venue, and the activities to be undertaken.

6. Visit Procedures

Before each and every visit (or the first visit, in the case of regular activities such as swimming tuition), all visit leaders must:

- Obtain outline approval from the headteacher
- Complete a signed and dated risk assessment using form RA1, which must be uploaded to the EVOLVE system
- Not undertake any visit until this risk assessment has been reviewed and approved by the headteacher and/or EVC (see section 8 below)
- On the day of the visit, visit leaders must:
 - o Ensure that consent has been obtained for all pupils (and where necessary, volunteers under 18) taking part in the visit. Consent forms must be left with the school office to comply with GDPR regulations
 - o Complete a register of all staff and pupils taking part in the visit and hand in to the school office, where it shall be uploaded to the EVOLVE system
 - o Ensure that they have a working mobile telephone with sufficient credit and that the school office is aware of their telephone number
 - o Take any medications for pupils and/or staff with them (see medications in school policy)
 - o Ensure that they have a complete first aid kit with them
 - o Inform the school office of the registration number of any transport used
 - o Complete a head count of all pupils leaving the school
 - o Complete head counts at regular intervals during the visit and check these tally with the register taken prior to leaving school
 - o On leaving the visit venue, complete a head count and check that the total tallies with the register taken at the start of the day

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- Contact the school office, informing them of the registration number of any transport used and where possible, give an estimated time of arrival
- In the event of any delay (e.g. traffic jam) contact the school office to enable office staff to keep parents informed

7. Emergency Procedures

Every visit will have nominated emergency contacts, copies of which are to be uploaded onto the EVOLVE system. On the day of a visit, a register of all pupils actually taking part in the visit must be submitted to the school office before leaving school. A copy should be loaded onto the EVOLVE system. This should also include the registration details of all forms of transport used and which persons are travelling on which bus. If the visit is off site for only the duration of the school day the school telephone number is used as an emergency contact. Visit leaders must take a charged mobile phone with them on every visit.

However, if the visit is of a residential nature two 24hr contact numbers of Senior Leaders will be identified (i.e. mobile and/or home phone number). The emergency contacts will have a copy of the relevant emergency contact details. They will also have access to all the relevant medical and next of kin information, copies of which should be stored on the EVOLVE system. The visit leader will keep emergency contact details with them at all times during the visit and a qualified first aider will also accompany each visit. (All teaching staff and the majority of our non teaching staff all completed a First Aid qualification in October 2018).

Therefore, the school's emergency response to an incident is based on the following key factors:

1. There is always a nominated emergency base contact for any visit (during school hours this is the office).
2. This nominated base contact will either be an experienced member of the senior management team, or will be able to contact an experienced senior manager at all times.
3. For activities that take place during normal school hours, the visit leader will be aware of any relevant medical information for all participants, including staff.
4. For activities that take place outside normal school hours, the visit leader and the emergency contact/s will be aware of any relevant medical information and emergency contact information for all participants, including staff.
5. The visit leader/s and the base contact/s know to request support from the LA/Diocese in the event that an incident overwhelms the establishment's emergency response capability, involves serious injury or fatality, or where it is likely to attract media attention. The EVAS service may use the EVOLVE system to check for the involvement of any of Sunderland LA's staff and pupils in the event of a major incident; it is imperative that accurate information is uploaded to EVOLVE.

A critical incident is any incident where events go beyond the normal coping mechanisms and experience of the visit leadership team. The school has an emergency plan in place to deal with a critical incident during a visit and where necessary, assistance will be sought from the LA/Diocese. This plan will be subject to test throughout the school year and the outcomes recorded and reported to the EVC Co-ordinator and Headteacher.

7. Parental Consent

Consent is requested from parents upon admittance to school and at the beginning of each school year, with regard to local area visits (e.g. shops, locality of school). However, parents will always be informed of the detail when their child is undertaking an educational visit. Specific consent is requested for activities which need a higher level of risk management or those that take place outside of school hours. However, specific parental consent will be obtained for visits of a residential, overseas or adventurous nature. For these visits, sufficient information must be made available to parents so that consent is given on a 'fully informed basis'.

8. Approval for Visits

All matters regarding each visit outside school – feasibility, planning, safety, organisation etc – will require the prior approval of the EVC and/or Headteacher. Approval of day visits will usually be at the discretion of the EVC (in consultation with the Headteacher if necessary). Staff should ensure that visits are submitted to the EVC at least 2 weeks in advance, (unless category 3 see below).

9. Pre-Visits

In order to undertake a full and comprehensive assessment of risks, it may be advisable to undertake a pre-visit, even when the visit is made regularly, risks should be reassessed from time to time.

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10. Category Definition Requirement for notification & approval

Category 1

Straightforward routine visits which are generally close to the school and done on a regular basis, covered by:

- a generic risk assessment, regularly reviewed
- blanket informed parental consent (signed on entry to school)
- school/service operating procedures Evolve may be used but is not required.

Category 2

Visits requiring enhanced planning which are slightly further afield and may not have previously been used with event-specific risk assessment, including:

- All residential visits not in Category 3
- Non-residential visits not in Categories 1 or 3
Must be authorised by the Headteacher / Manager, using Evolve.

Category 3

Higher risk visits, defined as:

- Visits outside the UK
- Visits which include adventure activities
- Visits to remote or hazardous locations
Must be authorised by the Headteacher / Manager using Evolve at least four weeks before the visit, and then approved by the External Visits Advisory Service.

11. Ratios

Ratios should take into account sex, age, ability and behaviour of pupils; the nature of the activity and the expertise of adults; duration of journey and any requirements of the location to be visited.

Although there is no legal set ratio, (apart from EYFS which should be higher than 1 adult : 6 children) good practice would ensure that in:

- EYFS (nursery) = 1 adult to every 3 pupils
- EYFS (reception) = 1 adult to every 5 pupils
- Key Stage 1 = 1 adult to every 6 pupils
- Year 3 = 1 adult to every 8 pupils
- Years 4 to 6 = 1 adult to every 10 pupils

These should be the minimum ratios for normal circumstances. They may need to be higher in individual circumstances where the risk is raised.

Only those persons aged 18 or over may be classed as adults for the purposes of calculating ratios. Where students or volunteers on placements at St. John Bosco are aged under 18, consent must be obtained from their parents and St. John Bosco staff are responsible for their wellbeing in the same manner as St. John Bosco pupils.

12. Volunteers

We welcome and encourage the support, experiences and help offered by volunteers. All of our volunteers are DBS checked. They often accompany children on educational visits always working alongside the class teacher.

13. Inclusion

St John Bosco School will make reasonable adjustments to avoid disabled participants being placed at a substantial disadvantage. However, the Equality Act 2010 does not require us to place employees or participants at risk of injury or ill health in order to make reasonable adjustments. If appropriate, we may ask the parent/carer of a particular pupil to accompany them on the visit. If there are any concerns about whether school can provide for a pupil's safety or the safety of others on a visit due the specific needs of a pupil we will seek advice from the LA Health & Safety Team.

14. Charging / funding for visits

St. John Bosco School pay for visits as they occur. The school try to subsidise all visits where possible and request voluntary contributions from parents where the full cost cannot be met (Coach hire, Entry fee etc.). For residential trips, which are expensive, we have a payment scheme in place for parents to pay gradually over a period of time leading up to the visit. Those pupils who qualify for Pupil Premium may be entitled to attend the visit at a reduced rate or no charge. This will be assessed on a case by case basis.

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15. Use of staff cars to transport pupils

St John Bosco School follows the Local Authority advice.

16. Use of Parents' and Volunteers' Cars

In our school we follow the guidance in the LA Educational Visits Policy guidance.

Parents are not usually allowed to transport pupils in their own car.

If staff use their own cars we will check that the following documents are in order:

- car tax, insurance (staff insurance should cover business use),
- MOT
- driving licence.

We will inform parents/carers if their child is to travel in a private car, and who will be the driver.

Parents/carers of the passengers will be asked to give their written consent. We will check that seatbelts are in working order and used by all passengers.

Drivers will not be put in a position where they are alone with a child or young person. St. John Bosco School will arrange a central dropping-off point rather than individual home drops.

LA policy is that adults working regularly with young people must be DBS checked - this does not always apply to a parent/carer who occasionally transports children. Therefore the following recommendations will be followed:

- Parents/carers and volunteers should be issued with guidance about appropriate contact with children and young people
- The departure and collection point should normally be the school or an equivalent establishment
- Vehicles should travel in convoy
- Parents/carers should always transport their own child if possible

17. Personal Accident and Travel Insurance, Employers Liability and Public Liability

St. John Bosco School is covered by the above insurances for activities when away from the school site, home base or when employees are working in the community within the UK.

18. Swimming Lessons

St. John Bosco School arrange swimming lessons for pupils in Year 4 (Autumn and Spring Term – 20 sessions) and Year 3 (Summer Term – 10 sessions) each academic year. Lessons take place at Sunderland Aquatic Centre (travelling by private coach). The Aquatic Centre is responsible for undertaking the risk assessment of swimming instruction of children. St. John Bosco staff are responsible for undertaking all other related risk assessments. Children are supervised by school staff in changing rooms and waiting to enter areas of the pool.

19. Monitoring & Review

The day-to-day monitoring of this policy is the responsibility of the Headteacher, who will report to the governors termly with details of out of school visits. Each year, a sample of off-site educational visits taking place during the school day shall be selected for monitoring by the Headteacher and EVC co-ordinator, who shall check for compliance with the Educational Visits policy and procedures. All residential visits involving overnight stays away from school shall receive at least one monitoring visit by either the headteacher, deputy head or EVC co-ordinator.

This policy will be reviewed by the governing body every two years, or earlier if considered necessary

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, DfE have recommended that no residential visits should take place until further notice.

As a school we have also taken the decision to pause educational visits for the foreseeable future until our risk assessments allow them to resume, when it is safe for everyone involved.

Signed: _____

Designation: _____

Date: _____

Review Date: November 2021

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Signed: _____

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