

St. Mary of the Angels Catholic Primary School

Educational Visits Policy

Recognising and celebrating the presence of Christ in one another

- ♦ St Mary of the Angels Catholic Primary School aims to be a positive force within the Catholic Church inspired by the life of Christ in the Gospel.
- ♦ The school is committed to the widest and fullest education with ambition for all pupils in a partnership between home, school, parish and community.
- ♦ The school aims to create a happy, ordered environment where all members feel secure and valued.



Educational Visits Policy

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| Current date approved: | May 2025 |
| Approved by: | Full Governing Body |
| Date of next review: | May 2027 |

St Mary of the Angels provides a rich and varied programme of opportunities for pupils to learn outside the classroom within the school, local area and further afield. The programme of educational visits and learning outside the classroom supports our Catholic ethos in a structured, innovative and progressive way to enhance and support young peoples' faith, attitudes, motivation and behaviour, mental and physical health and environmental awareness. This is crucial as our young people move into the wider society that the foundations are carefully laid so that throughout their lives, they continue to be successful learners, confident individuals and respectful global Catholic citizens.

Aims and Objectives

- St Mary of the Angels (SMA) believe that educational visits are a core element of pupils' education and are committed to ensuring that opportunities for participation in good quality visits are maximised.
- It is SMA's intention that all practicable steps will be taken to meet statutory requirements, recognised codes of practice and government guidance in establishing a safe and healthy environment on educational visits.
- SMA believe that participation in high quality visits by pupils and staff will enhance development and wellbeing, promote positive interactions between pupils and staff and will also improve overall school performance and ethos.
- SMA will ensure that each class are provided with sufficient resources to plan and conduct high quality educational visits and that staff will be provided with training and advice to organise and manage them safely.

At St. Mary of the Angels, through educational visits, we aim to:

- outline SMA's requirements for planning, approving and running educational visits
- detail the procedures for ensuring suitable and sufficient risk assessment is carried out for each educational visit
- develop faith, spirituality and appreciation and care for God's creation
- provide stimulating visits, developing children's curiosity and interest in the related subjects
- develop children's understanding to assist with embedding knowledge and understanding in the wider community
- Improved environmental appreciation, knowledge, awareness and understanding of a variety of environments.
- to be aware of safety considerations for others and for ourselves
- develop the children's communication and co-operative skills, develop positive behaviour and attitudes
- Enhanced opportunities for 'real world' 'learning in context' and the development of the social and emotional aspects of intelligence;
- promote and develop independence, self-confidence, self-esteem, self-discipline, self-respect and respect for others
- encourage children to develop creativity and inventiveness
- encourage children to develop ideas which will enhance their understanding and questioning of the world and enhance and broaden our horizons and 'cultural capital' to enhance a greater sense of personal responsibility and personal development

Educational Visit Objectives

Every educational visit must have clear aims and objectives designed to support and enhance curriculum delivery, with clear links to the curriculum.

Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's guidance on health and safety on educational visits, and the following legislation and statutory guidance:

- Equality Act 2010
- SEND Code of Practice
- Keeping Children Safe in Education

Sections of this policy are also based on the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Roles and Responsibilities

The school has a trained EVC leader who is Mrs Steele. All visits require planning, preparation and approval. Thorough preparation for a visit must be undertaken. The EVC and Headteacher should be consulted regarding the arrangements, nature and purpose of the visit. The key points below for all visits should be addressed in the planning:

- All visits must have clearly identified aims, benefits and objectives
- All visits must have an approved, competent visit leader
- The headteacher or the EVC makes the approval for a visit and for the designated competent visit leader role
- All visits must provide evidence of a prepared risk assessment. This will identify the significant issues or potential risks on the visit that young people, staff or volunteers are exposed to and what actions / control measures will be put in place to mitigate the risks to an acceptable level. There should be a clear emergency action plan.
- Matters of supervision, provider checks, content of the day, activities, first aid, medical needs and transport must be considered and organised in advance. The suitability of the venue must be researched.
- Visit leaders must be able to access all supporting information relating to the visit, e.g. emergency contacts, itinerary, names and group detail
- EVCs must retain and record all supporting information centrally
- Parents must be fully informed of arrangements and costs in advance
- Any cost of the visit must take into account the school Charging Policy
- All necessary permission / consent must be obtained

The Education Visits Co-ordinator will:

- Be a champion of educational visits and outdoor learning and challenge colleagues across the curriculum areas to use visits and outdoor learning effectively
- Provide an Educational Visits (EV) policy and ensure it is reviewed at least bi-annually
- Set procedures for the planning, management and approval of EVs
- Ensure staff are adequately trained, guided and supported so they can plan and carry out safe, educational visits that are in line with the SMA policy. (All teachers receive regular visit leader training.)
- Ensure classes are suitably resourced to comply with policy requirements
- Assess the competence of prospective leaders and staff in terms of qualifications and/or experience and organise appropriate training and induction
- Ensure that DBS disclosures required in support of any educational visit are in place as necessary
- Ensure that emergency arrangements are in place for each visit
- Review and approve risk assessments
- Ensure there is adequate insurance
- Ensure, where reasonably practicable, that pre-visits have taken place for higher risk visits

- Keep their EVC training and qualification up to date

The Head Teacher will:

- Ensure that EV procedures are being followed and that a review mechanism is in place
- Appoint a suitably competent EVC
- Ensure that the EVC is appropriately trained and has sufficient time and authority to fulfil their role
- Ascertain that all visit leaders are appropriately competent, confident and accountable to carry out their roles and responsibilities
- Ensure that appropriate insurance arrangements are in place
- Inform the Chair of Governors of any concerns or issues as early as possible
- Ensure that there is a process to obtain best value for individual visits
- Personally approve all overnight and adventurous EVs and seek approval from the Governing Body. (Parents are required to consent for their child to sleep in bunk beds during overnight visits where applicable.)
- Ensure that suitable emergency procedures are in place, including procedures to ensure parents are appropriately informed in the event of a serious incident and that SMA reporting procedures are followed
- Ensure that critical incident management plans are in place for dealing with an emergency.
- Monitor pupils' behaviour and where pupils are not following the behaviour expectations as set out in the SMA behaviour policy, the Head Teacher has the right to withdraw pupils from attending the visit.
- Suitable child protection and safeguarding procedures are in place
- Risk management is proportionate, suitable and sufficient

Teachers/Visit Leaders will:

- Liaise with the office staff and complete all necessary pre visit forms
- Plan the visit carefully and in line with the EV policy, including assessing the risks of activities and in recording any significant findings
- Work closely with the EVC and follow their guidance
- Supervise the visit and ensure planned control measures remain suitable and are followed by themselves and any other visit staff and volunteers to ensure effective supervision
- Prepare contingency and emergency plans and ensure that insurance covers all aspects that we require cover for
- Lead in carrying out dynamic risk assessments to take into account changing environment, conditions and the nature of the group. Compare the risk assessment with that of the venue's risk assessment
- Check whether the venue has a defibrillator and know the location of this
- Ensure that suitable transport measures are in place and meet any regulatory requirements
- Give the head teacher a signed and dated copy of the final risk assessment
- Provide risk assessments and other relevant information to other adults on the visit
- Ensure parental consent has been obtained
- Ensure access to first aid equipment, emergency contacts and check any medication for individual pupils, ensuring this is available during the visit
- Ensure all SEND pupils have appropriate supervision
- Evaluate all aspects of the visit
- Report any accidents or near misses

Volunteers will:

- Be DBS cleared, if the visit is overnight as this is a mandatory requirement.
- Do what is reasonably practicable to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group
- Be clear about the objectives of the visit
- Attend briefing meetings and participate in all relevant activities
- Not be left to supervise pupils alone unless a DBS is obtained and approval has been sought according to the risk assessment
- Follow the instructions of the Visit Leader and employed staff, and help with control and discipline
- Speak to the Visit Leader employed staff if concerned about the health or safety of pupils at any time during the visit or if concerned about any aspect of the visit prior to its departure
- Report any safeguarding concerns as per our Visitor and Volunteer Policy

Adventurous Activities and Residential Visits

Where an EV takes place in the UK and involves an adventurous activity, whether or not it also includes an overnight stay, the visit should be recorded as 'Adventurous Activity'. Where practicable, any activities of an adventurous kind should be arranged through a specialist provider. However, qualified and experienced staff may organise and run visits with the approval of the Headteacher. When planning an adventurous activity, the Visit Leader should familiarise themselves with The Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 2004. The Visit Leader must ensure that any activities that are licensable under these regulations are covered by an AALA licence. These activities include caving, climbing (except on artificial walls), trekking (including pony trekking,) off-road cycling and water- sports (on certain bodies of water including the sea, rivers and "turbulent inland waters").

Aspects to consider for all residentials:

- suitability for the age of the group and accessible to the range of abilities and individual needs
- cost effective, financial considerations and insurance
- whether the accommodation is part of the residential package or separate and the nature of accommodation, including whether bunk beds are used (parental permission must be sought for the use of bunk beds)
- whether there is sole occupancy, shared or public usage
- self-catering and mealtimes
- overseas visits

Forms or electronic notification for adventurous activities, residentials and overseas visits should be submitted through the EVC to the Headteacher and to the Governing Body for approval.

Supervision Ratios

From September 2021 new statutory guidance is in place that all 'early years' (aged 0 – 5 years) providers must adhere to. Visit Leaders, EVCs and Headteachers for primary schools that cover this age group must familiarise themselves with the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage and operate within it at all times. This framework outlines supervision and other expectations for the classroom only. (1 adult for every eight children aged 4-5. 1:13 if led by a teacher)

Supervision ratios are determined as part of the planning and approval process. The appropriate ratio for any activity will be informed by the risk assessment where there are no specific external

or stakeholder guidelines that dictate staff to pupil ratios. The decision should take into account:

- Pupil age (including developmental age), ability, competence and behaviour
- General and specific supervision competencies
- Medical needs and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (which may trigger a higher ratio or individual care plans)
- Duration and nature of the activity, including any journey required to get there/back
- Location and environment of where the activity will take place, including accommodation and requirements of the venue

Transport Providers

Where coaches are being hired to provide the transport for an Educational Visit, due diligence must be carried out on the coach company prior to the visit.

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.

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 appropriate DBS checks.

Parental Consent and Personal Data

Blanket consent can be issued for standard visits in the local area. This includes visits to St Mary of the Angels Church, wellbeing walks, visits to local libraries, parks, walks around the local area. As informed by The Department for Education, parents should be made aware of all EVs that happen outside the classroom. For these activities, consent must be obtained in the form of a written consent letter or approval given via the School Gateway electronic system. Should a consent form not be submitted in time, verbal consent may be gained from a parent/guardian. This must be recorded prior to departure. Parents must have sufficient notice of charges to enable them to make payments.

If a child in the group is subject to a care order, the relevant Social Services Department (SSD) should consent to any activity for which parental consent is advised. The SSD should be informed of any other 'learning outside the classroom' activity. The school should also ensure that foster carers are aware of this so that they can take the necessary action.

It is vital for health, safety and welfare of all those involved in visits that relevant, pertinent and up to date information is available to leaders and external providers for effective planning and in the event of an emergency. Personal and sensitive data should be available to those that need it, but this data should be treated carefully and kept securely. There should be consideration of how this is carried and disposed of securely when no longer required (reference: GDPR Policy).

Risk Assessments

In order for an EV to be approved to go ahead, a written, suitable and sufficient risk assessment must be submitted by the Visit Leader at least three weeks before the visit (eight weeks before for residential and adventurous visits).

Risk assessments are most effective when discussed with colleagues before writing and during recording. It is imperative, however, that the Visit Leader takes ownership of any generic risk assessment by making it relevant to their particular EV. This means they should take into account not only the activities being undertaken, but any specific needs of individuals on the trip. In order

to be a useful, compliant document, the risk assessment should contain evidence of the knowledge of possible risks and ways to manage them. The main considerations in undertaking risk assessments are:

- Type of group: characteristics, age, competence, fitness, SEND and medical needs
- Staffing: competency, experience, qualification and ratios
- Equipment: quality and suitability
- Specify potential hazards, who might be affected and acceptable measures in place to reduce risks
- Venue / Activities: environment, location, conditions, weather
- Travel: distance from base
- Emergency procedures

A signed copy of all risk assessments will be retained. Copies will be accessible to all adults on each visit.

The need to have a first aid trained member of staff on the visit will be dependent on the nature of the visit. This includes: the nature of the group and activity, potential injuries associated with the activity, the extent to which the group is isolated from emergency procedures. First aid and other medical needs should always be considered in the process of planning and risk assessing. The visit leader must know how to access qualified first aid support and reference this on the RA. For children in EYFS, there is a statutory requirement that at least one person has a current paediatric first aid certificate. This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's medical needs and asthma policy and the Business Continuity Plan (in the event of any critical or major incidents.)

Risk Assessing Pupils with SEN, Disability or Medical Needs

Every effort should be made to include pupils with particular additional needs where possible, in accordance with the school SEND Policy. Risk assessments should consider:

- any additional aids or equipment that are needed;
- any additional staff requirements – e.g. higher staff to pupil ratios
- PEEPS (Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans) and evacuation arrangements.

Equal Opportunities and Inclusion

Visits will be offered to pupils at our school regardless of their personal faith commitment, their parents' commitment, their faith tradition, their gender, race, ability or family circumstances. Each visit leader must consult with a member of SLT to ascertain any relevant information relating to the individual SEND, medical and behavioural needs of students. Visit leaders will liaise with a DSL to ensure they are informed of any children who may be particularly vulnerable or have specific safeguarding needs. Any risk assessment and management processed will be considered.

Evaluation

Staff should complete an evaluation form to aid and inform future visits. Involvement of pupils in the process will enhance the evaluation. A copy of the form should be sent to the EVC no later than five school days after the visit and should be kept with a copy of the risk assessment.

Monitoring and Review.

This policy will be reviewed in line with the whole school policy and the school development plan on a yearly cycle.

Useful Websites and Resources:

Elite Health and Safety (school bought in health and safety consultancy service)

[Health and safety on educational visits - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/topics/health-and-safety)

[Health and safety: responsibilities and duties for schools - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/topics/health-and-safety)

www.oeapng.info

