



St Charles Catholic Primary School

Off Site Visit Policy

May 2017

This Policy was adopted by The Governing Body of St Charles Catholic Primary School on:	
Date: 10.5.2017	Signed by: N Pearce
It will be reviewed every 3 years	Date: May 2020

Introduction

Off site visits are activities arranged by or on behalf of the school and which take place outside the school grounds. The governors and staff believe that off-site activities enrich the curriculum of the school by providing experiences which would not otherwise be possible. All off site activities must serve an educational purpose, enhancing and enriching our 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 health and safety of 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 pupils with disabilities. The visits usually take place within the school day.

Aims

The aims of our visits are to:

- Enhance curricular and recreational opportunities for our pupils.
- Provide a wider range of experiences for our pupils than couldn't 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. The following are examples of such activities;

- English: theatre visits, visits to school by authors, poets and theatre groups.
- Science: Use of the school grounds and local area, visits by scientists into school for demonstrations.
- Maths: use of shape and number trails in the local environment.
- History: Study of the local area, museums.
- Geography: Use of the local environment, pond dipping, science museums

- Art and design: Use of the local environment, art galleries
- PE: range of sporting fixtures, extracurricular activities, visits by specialist coaches inter-school competitions and events.
- Music: A variety of specialist music teaching including visits from Leicestershire Arts in Education, extracurricular activities, concerts.
- D and T: Use of the local environment.
- ICT: use of ICT in local shops, own school etc.
- RE: visits to the local church, visits by local clergy, visits to other places of worship.
- PSHE and citizenship: Visits by local police officers, fire fighters etc.

Residential activities

Residential visits offer a unique opportunity for children to experience greater independence, outdoor and adventurous activities and calculated risk taking.

When planning any residential visit, an A1 form must be completed and **sent** to the Educational Visits Team at the LA.

A preliminary visit will be carried out and necessary risk assessments made before holding a meeting to share relevant information with parents of all the children participating.

On departure for residential visits all medicines will be signed into the care of the medical lead and medical forms will be checked for any alterations or additional details. A full list of contact details will be kept in school and with the group leader for emergencies.

Planning for Off Site Visits

A group leader will be appointed to be responsible for running the activity. This will usually be a teacher in the school who will then liaise with the Headteacher with all related paperwork to include:

- Proposed visit purpose and checklist of trip organisation EV1
- Risk assessments

All details of the trip must be shared with the Headteacher and the Headteacher must authorise that all relevant risk assessments and related paperwork have been completed and the trip can go ahead.

Trips will be reported to the governing body as a regular agenda item.

The school's Educational Visits Co-ordinators are **Mrs R Elmore** and **Mrs S Wheatley**
They will:

- Ensure staff complete an EV1 form in seeking authorisation.
- Ensure all generic risk assessments are available in the Educational Visits folder in the office.

- Ensure that risk assessments are completed before departure.
- Ensure risk assessments are signed off at the end of a trip.
- Support group leaders to assign competent staff to support with trips.
- Ensure staff / child ratios are adequate
- Organise related staff training if necessary and speak to staff and volunteers to outline the arrangements for the day
- Oversee that all necessary permissions and medical forms are obtained.
- Ensure records of visits are kept in the EV office folder and ensure that there are regular generic assessments of the risks where there are frequent visits to local venues.
- Conduct a post –trip discussion to ascertain its success.

Staff arranging or otherwise involved in offsite activities must familiarise themselves with the regulations advice and procedures published by the LA. This advice is contained in Code of Practice 11 – Guidance for the Conduct of Educational Visits and Adventurous Activities kept in the educational visits folder in the office.

Communicating to Parents

When planning an off site visit, sufficient notice should be given to parents especially if a voluntary contribution is required. A trip should be advertised in advance and a letter sent out at least 4 weeks in advance. (Residential trips to be planned at least 6 months in advance). Communication should detail the learning outcomes, organisation, any changes to uniform / additional clothing, times of leaving and returning and how the learning will link with classwork. If the trip is subsidised, full cost must be shared, along with the detail of what the school is contributing so parents are aware of this information.

Official guidance and support for planning

Staff arranging or involved in off site activities must familiarise themselves with the regulations advice procedures published by the LA. This advice is contained in Code of Practice 11 – Guidance for the Conduct of Education Visits and Adventurous Activities, kept in the office.

They must also refer to the latest guidance – OEAP; Outdoor Education Advisors Panel National Guidance – <http://oeapng.info> which has extensive information to support off sites visits.

All staff leading an Off site visit must ensure they have a final conversation with an Educational Visits Coordinator about the trip before departure.

Equal Opportunities

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 he/she is included. We may seek guidance from parents to help us 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 Assessments

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 use of generic risk assessments, particularly for coach travel can be used and adapted to suit individual children or circumstances. 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 for example with a plan B?

Staff planning an offsite activity should make a preliminary visit to the venue in order to carry out an offsite risk assessment. It is important to take into account the probable weather conditions at the time of the year proposed for the trip and the party leader should take careful account of the facilities available. They should also assess the site's suitability with regard to the age and any particular needs of the children. They will also consider the venue's own approach to health and safety and where appropriate adopt their risk assessments.

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 made on whether the visit should proceed.

Any trip will require a minimum of two adults but an activity should normally have sufficient adults taking part to provide the following minimum ratios based on children's ages;

- 1 adult to 4 children for under-fives
- 1 adult to 6 children for 5-8 year olds
- 1 adult to 15 children for over 8 year olds.

These are minimum requirements and may not provide adequate supervision in all cases depending on the activity and location. A copy of the risk assessments will be given to the Headteacher, and all adults supervising the trip.

Transport

We only hire coaches from reputable companies and always use coaches with seat belts. Generic risk assessments are available in the EV folder for coach travel. All adults accompanying the group must ensure they space out on the coach to ensure supervision of children throughout the bus.

If more than one coach is used then a list will be compiled of the staff/children on each coach.

It may be necessary on occasion to transport children to sporting fixtures at other schools and hiring buses for this is just not feasible. In these instances the school will not organise this transport but allow parents to make arrangements themselves between friends. Parents undertake these arrangements themselves and at their own risk. The school recommends that parents consider carefully when undertaking these arrangements that correct car seats are used as appropriate and give health and safety due consideration.

Costings

The costing of offsite activities should include any of the following that apply:

- transport
- entrance fees
- insurance
- provision of any special resources or equipment.
- any refreshments the school has opted to pay for.

Funding for off site visits is mainly by parental "voluntary contribution". In the event that not enough contributions are received, the trip may have to be cancelled.

No child may be excluded from an activity because of the unwillingness or inability of the parent to make a contribution.

In some instances, for a trip to go ahead, it may be necessary at the discretion of the Headteacher to subsidise the trip cost with money from the school fund account.

Residential Activities

Residential Visits offer a unique opportunity for children to experience greater independence, outdoor and adventurous activities and calculated risk taking. Residential trips in the past have included visiting Caythorpe PGL Centre.

Residential Visits – key administrative planning

When planning a residential visit, and A1 from must be completed and sent to the Educational Visits Team at the LA.

A group leader will be appointed to be responsible for running the trip. This will usually be a teacher in the school who will then liaise with the Headteacher with all the related paperwork which should include:

- proposed visit purpose and checklist of trip organisation EV1
- grouping for activities
- bedroom organisation and planning
- kit lists
- risk assessments

All details of the trip must be shared with the Headteacher who must also authorise all relevant risk assessments and related paperwork.

Where the residential is new to the school, a preliminary visit will be carried out and necessary risk assessments made before holding a meeting to share relevant information with parents of all the children participating.

On departure for residential visits all medicines will be signed into the care of a supervising adult and medical forms will be double checked for alterations or additional details with parents present. A full list of contact details will be kept in school with the group leader for emergencies.

In the same way that medicine administering is signed by two people in school, the same procedure will happen in situ and be recorded on the back of the risk assessment. This paperwork is saved and signed off on return.

Further health and safety considerations

All adults accompanying a party must be made aware by the party leader of the emergency procedures that may apply. Each adult will be provided with an emergency telephone number. This will normally be the school number. Adults travelling in separate buses will exchange mobile phone numbers so they can stay in contact. Group leaders in addition will carry crisis line phone number cards.

As part of the planning process group leaders will take a medical checklist with them and ensure there are sufficient first aid personnel present with a full medical kit and inhalers as appropriate. There will be sufficient numbers in the party to account for one person to be responsible for first aid provision without compromising the ratios of the groupings.

The safety of the children is of paramount importance. During the activity the party leader must take whatever steps are necessary to ensure that safety. This includes taking note of any information provided by medical questionnaire returns and ensuring that children are safe and well looked after at all times. This may also mean a party leader alters plans in respect of adverse weather or other unforeseen circumstances to ensure the trip is carried out safely.

Prior to an activity if it is felt that the behaviour of an individual child is likely to compromise the safety of others, the party leader should discuss with the Headteacher the possibility of excluding the child from the activity. In respect of residential trips this could mean parents collecting their child and bringing them home.

More detailed guidance can be found in Code of Practice 11 copies of which are kept in the school office.