

St. James the Great Roman Catholic Primary and Nursery School



Educational Visits Policy

Date Created: Spring 2011
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Date Reviewed: Spring 2017

Purpose and Aims

The value of class visits in extending and enriching classroom learning and experience has long been recognised. At St. James the Great, planned educational visits form an essential part of the learning programme.

At St. James the Great, we aim to:

- Ensure that the children experience a variety of educational trips during their time at St James the Great and extend their activities and learning experience if revisiting.
- Provide links between the ‘real’ world and the classroom and make learning more effective by putting it in context.
- Provide first hand experience where this cannot be done in the classroom.
- Fulfil National Curriculum requirements for field studies in Science, Geography, History and P.E.
- Encourage pupils to give the same high standards of behaviour, responsibility and work in out-of-school learning as they do in school.
- Help the children gain and benefit from an increasing measure of independence from home by developing a programme of visits throughout the school, which builds a progression as to the nature, location and length of time away.

Educational visits give many and varied opportunities for pupils to learn, practise and develop skills in practical ways, for example in: -

- Literacy – listening to guides, asking questions, taking notes, reading information, writing letters.
- Numeracy – following/preparing a timetable, deciding how to spend their money.
- Science – ‘hands on’ experience/investigations, studying plant and animal life.
- ICT – creating guides, studying publishing techniques.
- Design Technology – looking at designs and making models.
- History and Geography – studying the local area, home region and other localities, the seaside, finding their way about.
- Art – studying original works, seeing art not just as decorative but useful, functional, enhancing the environment, as an end in itself.
- Music and Drama and Dance – practising for a concert, attending live music making, seeing professional actors, dancers and musicians.
- P.E. – taking part in tournaments, being spectators at local, national and international events. Participating in Outdoor Adventurous Activities.
- R.E. – visits to church, class retreats, learning about other religions.
- Gifted and talented – writers workshops, lectures, borough trials.

Planning for Educational Visits

The *LEA Guidance Procedures for Educational Visits and Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits (a good practice guide)* DFES, informs on all aspects of preparation and implementation of school visits.

The group leader responsible for organising the trip should ensure that the Headteacher and member of staff responsible for overseeing educational visits, are fully informed of the proposed visit. Any colleagues who will be involved in or otherwise affected by the journey should also be fully informed of arrangements.

The diary for coach and minibus use is located in the School Office and planned trips should be entered into the diary as soon as possible with departure and return times. Care must be taken to avoid clashes of use and trips should not be booked on a Monday afternoon as the coach and minibus are required for regular swimming and skating groups.

Drivers for the minibus should be found from parents supporting the trip. If a member of staff is required to drive the minibus, this should be discussed with them at least a week in advance. All minibus drivers are fully checked to ensure they hold an appropriate license.

The group leader should complete the school's risk assessment form attached, clearly outlining the steps which will be taken to ensure that risks are eliminated or minimised. The risk assessment should be emailed or a hard copy handed in to the member of staff responsible for overseeing educational visits at least a week in advance of the trip.

Whenever possible, the group leader should make a preliminary visit to the places to be visited in order to:

- Confirm suitability.
- Confirm its intrinsic interest.
- Help determine its position in the unit of study.
- Establish the focus for the trip.
- Help determine the suitable preparation and follow – up, and kind of work to be done on site.
- Give opportunity for the collection and possible purchase of relevant study material, both for the immediate use of the class and to augment the school's resources.
- Help teachers determine how children are grouped so that they can gain the maximum benefit, both educational and social.
- Carry out risk assessment.

After the visit is over, there should be a review to feedback any problems and consider any matters arising out of the visit that may be relevant on future visits.

Organisation

Levels of supervision and staffing ratios should be carefully considered bearing in mind such factors as the sex, age and ability of the children, the presence of SEN pupils, the nature and length of the journey, the nature of activities to be undertaken and the experience and competence of the staff involved.

The DfES recommends the following staffing ratios as a general guide for visits to local historical sites and museums or local walks

1 adult for every 6 pupils in school years 1-3 (under fives should have a higher ratio)

1 adult for every 10-15 pupils in school years 4 to 6.

Higher ratios may be appropriate for higher risk activities, for particular groups of pupils or for all trips abroad. Higher ratios are also prescribed by the DfES for swimming activities.

Consent

Prior to the visit, children take a letter home, containing details of the place, date, times of departure and return, the reason for any costs, a suggested amount of spending money and any special requirements (e.g. school tracksuit etc...) of the visit.

Letters to parents should be handed to the office at least two weeks in advance.

Costs are kept to a minimum and cover the price of entry and travel.

The school does not wish to exclude anyone from educational visits on financial grounds and therefore contributions are voluntary.

A permission slip is attached to the letter, which the parent/guardian must sign before the visit.

On rare occasions opportunities arise for a short visit within the school day when there is not time to give prior notice. A cover note signed by the parents/guardians on their child's entry to school ensures that children can take full advantage of these opportunities.

Where pupils are required to attend a series of meetings, e.g. rehearsals, sports meetings etc... parents/guardians will be advised separately. Details of time, place, method of transport and arrangements for meeting children afterwards will be sent home with the children concerned.

Roles and Responsibilities

If visits are to take place safely and efficiently all those involved need to take account of their responsibilities.

Teachers should:

- Obtain the Head teacher's agreement before any off-site visit takes place and inform the member of staff responsible for overseeing educational visits.
- Have a clear objective for the visit.
- Undertake and complete the planning and preparation of the visit.
- Complete risk assessments and ensure these are handed in on time.
- Provide detailed information for parents.
- Gain parents written consent.
- Have an alternative plan.
- Ensure that adequate first-aid provision is available.
- Ensure that pupils are well prepared for the activities they will do.
- Ensure that the ratio of adults to pupils is appropriate for the needs of the group.

- Ensure that group supervisors are fully aware of what the visit entails e.g. the purpose, the timetable for the day, their role and responsibilities etc.
- Ensure group supervisors have a copy of the emergency procedures and contact numbers.
- Check that any inhalers, Epipens or other medication required by individual children, are brought on the trip.
- Ensure that the group supervisors are aware of any special educational/medical needs that the pupils may have and know how to deal with them.
- Ensure a list is available of which children are travelling by minibus and which children are travelling by coach (if applicable).
- Bring a small amount of cash in case of emergencies.
- Bring a mobile phone and the school's contact telephone number.
- Provide the Headteacher and member of staff overseeing educational visits with an emergency contact number.
- Consider stopping the visit if the risk becomes unacceptable.

The Member of Staff Responsible for Overseeing Educational Visits should:

- Keep a record of all proposed visits taking place off site – year group, group leader, date and venue.
- Maintain a risk assessment folder, reminding staff that their risk assessment should be handed in at least a week in advance of the trip.
- Liaise with the Headteacher should the risk assessment not be completed a week in advance of the trip.
- Provide guidance and support for members of staff requiring assistance with the writing of a risk assessment or with any aspect of the planning and organisation of a trip.

Adult volunteers should:

- Be clear of their role and responsibilities throughout the visit.
- Do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in their group.
- Not be left in sole charge of the pupils except where it has been agreed through risk assessment.
- Follow the instructions of the teacher.
- Speak to the teacher if concerned about the health and safety of the pupils.

The pupils should:

- Behave sensibly and in a responsible manner.
- Follow the instructions of the teacher and other supervisors including those at the venue.
- Not take unnecessary risks.
- Look out for anything that might endanger themselves or others and inform the group leader or supervisor.

Head teachers should:

- Ensure that where necessary, visits have been approved.

- Inform the Governing Body of visits that are being planned.
- Ensure adequate child protection procedures are in place.
- Ensure that visits are inclusive.
- Ensure risk assessments have been completed.
- Allow sufficient time for induction and staff training.
- Ensure that the school has an emergency plan in place.
- Ensure accident/injury and death are reported as required.
- Help to ensure that serious incidents, accidents and near accidents are investigated.
- Ensure that all necessary actions have been completed before the visit takes place.

Next Policy Review Date: Spring 2018



St James the Great
Risk assessment for out of school visits

Location/Activity:		Class/Year group:	
Date/Time:		Group Leader:	
Group Size:		Ratio:	
		Other Staff:	

What are the potential hazards?	Who is at risk? <i>(All children, specific children, adults)</i>	Control measures – reducing the risk	Further action needed	Level of risk <i>(low/medium/high)</i>
Getting there and back:		<i>e.g. supervising the crossing of roads, head counts etc.</i>		
Weather conditions:		<i>e.g. checking weather forecast day before, appropriate clothing, shelter if an outdoor activity etc.</i>		
SEN and /or EAL children:		<i>e.g. carefully consideration of groupings, extra adults etc.</i>		
Medical needs (Inhalers, epipens & anapens):		<i>e.g. who will check for inhalers before departure, where will the children go for First Aid?</i>		
Severe injuries or illness:		<i>e.g. making sure all adults have emergency contact numbers, who will accompany a child if they need to go to hospital?</i>		

Behaviour issues:		<i>e.g. careful consideration of groupings/group leaders etc.</i>		
Lost children:		<i>e.g. do the children know who to ask for help or where to go if lost?</i>		
Toilets:		<i>e.g. how will the children be supervised?</i>		
Site and activities: • • • • • •		<i>e.g. any areas the children should avoid or need additional supervision for?</i>		

For the duration of the trip, on-going risk assessments will be carried out by all adults as situations change and need arises.

REMEMBER:

- **To take emergency contact numbers and a First Aid Kit.**
- **To take inhalers, epipens and anapens for the children in your group.**
- **To brief all accompanying adults on what is contained in this risk assessment.**
- **To give a copy of this risk assessment to the Risk Assessment Coordinator before the trip.**

Signed Group Leader: _____

Head teacher: _____

Emergency contact number of Group Leader: _____

Date: _____

Date: _____