



## **Educational Visits Policy**

### **Vision, Values and Ethos**

*St Mary & St Thomas Aquinas Catholic Primary School is committed to the principles of inclusion. We have a caring, supportive ethos that seeks to value all individuals. Our school promotes equality of opportunity for disabled people: pupils, staff, parents, carers and others who use our school.*

*By promoting a positive attitude towards disabled people we aim to eliminate discrimination and harassment related to disability and thereby fulfil an essential component of our ethos.*

*We will involve disabled people in informing the direction our school takes to promote equality of opportunity and accessibility to the school environment. We also seek to encourage full participation of disabled people in the school community even if this requires more favourable treatment.*

*Our school aims to provide a broad and balanced curriculum in a happy, challenging environment where each pupil can develop to the maximum of his/ her potential and feel valued as an individual who can contribute to the life of our school and society in general.*

### **Overview**

At St. Mary & St. Thomas Aquinas School we acknowledge the great value of educational visits in broadening and enhancing both the learning and social experience of pupils.

The named Co-ordinator for Educational visits at St. Mary & St. Thomas Aquinas School is Mrs Theresa Costello supported by Miss Amanda Green.

**All forms referred to in this policy are available from the School Office and EVC.**

### **Approval for Visits**

All matters regarding each visit outside school – feasibility, planning, safety, organisation etc, will require the prior approval of the Head Teacher.

Approval of day visits is at the discretion of the Head Teacher. However, visits that are either:

- overseas
- residential or
- involving an adventurous activity

will require the additional approval of the Governing Body of the school and Gateshead Council.

### **Competence to Lead**

Any member of staff leading a visit will need to have their “competence to lead” assessed before approval for the visit is given. This will be carried out by the EVC (& / or Head Teacher).

### **Reasons for Visits**

It is essential that all visits have sound and clearly stated educational aims, and should be linked to work or topics that are being taught within the year group.



## Assessment of Risk

Risk assessment is a careful examination of what could cause harm to pupils, staff or others, together with an identification of the control measures necessary in order to reduce risks to a level which, in the professional judgement of the assessor, is deemed to be acceptable.

In considering risk, there are three levels of which visit leaders should be mindful:

- Generic Risks – normal risks attached to any activity out of school.
- Event Specific Risk – any significant hazard or risk relating to the specific activity and outside the scope of item 1 above.
- Ongoing Risk – the monitoring of risks throughout the actual visit as circumstances change.

Despite the most detailed and careful pre visit planning, things can go wrong on the day, eg parent helper is unavailable, member of staff is ill, transport fails to arrive etc. To avoid having to make important decisions under pressure, it is important that some advanced thinking is done to cater for any foreseeable eventuality.

## Inclusion

St. Mary & St. Thomas Aquinas Primary School fully supports the availability of educational visits to all pupils and recognises that children with additional educational needs, including those with challenging behaviour should always be included. Reasonable adjustments will be made to ensure all children are able to attend, such as 1:1 support, however, should an incident of unacceptable behaviour occur which affects the individual, other children or adult helpers, a parent will be expected to collect their child, or, if it is impossible for the parent to collect their child, school will be contacted so an alternative arrangement can be made.

## Staffing Ratios

A professional judgement must be made by the visit leader and EVC regarding the ratio for each visit. There must be an appropriate level of supervision at all times.

This will be determined by:

- type, duration and level of activity.
- needs of individuals within the group.
- experience and competence of staff and accompanying adults
- nature of the venue
- weather conditions at the time of year
- nature of transport involved

The school follows Gateshead guidelines for adult: pupil ratios;

<b>Under 5's</b>	<b>– 1:4-6</b>
<b>5-7 years</b>	<b>– 1:6</b>
<b>8-11 years</b>	<b>- 1:10 / 1:15</b> (depending on the situation – see above)

## Supervision

Pupils must be supervised throughout all visits.

## Role of Supervising Parents/Volunteers

Supervising parents/volunteers must be fully briefed on the programme, venue, activities, supervision arrangements and their responsibilities. They must also be given a written list of the pupils in their immediate care. For the vast majority of times helpers/ volunteers will be DBS cleared by the school and LA, however there may be occasions where this is not necessary or possible. (e.g. Whole school walking to church, one off events.) In these circumstances the helpers / volunteers would not be left unsupervised with children.

A current list of cleared volunteers for the school is held in the school office.



### **Code of Conduct for Children**

It is important that pupils know and understand the general rules for any visit.

- Listen to all instructions you are given and obey them
- When walking keep together in an orderly manner.
- Walk do not run.
- Stay with your partner and your group.
- Do not wander off on your own.
- Never leave litter. Remember to leave everywhere clean and tidy.



## **First Aid / Medical Requirements**

The level of first aid provision should be based on risk assessment. On all visits there should be a member of staff who has a good working knowledge of first aid. We will always aim to provide a qualified First Aider on all visits.

First aid kits are available in the main office and should always be taken on a visit.

Staff are required to check the medical care list (see Medication Policy) to ensure they are aware of any child's particular medical needs and their medical care. All necessary medication, such as epi-pens, inhalers, diabetic emergency kit etc must be taken on the trip and available to the child at all times.

As part of the Risk Assessment the Class teacher or EVC will check that the venue also has a First Aid kit available.

## **Transport**

Travel arrangements should be included in the risk assessment. If public transport is to be used, all pupils and supervisors must be fully briefed as to procedures on platforms, at bus stops, on busy streets etc.

If travel is by coach or minibus, all pupils and staff must wear a seatbelt. Staff must ensure that pupils comply with this rule.

If any pupils are to travel by car, the driver must have produced insurance documentation to prove that they are covered, and the parent/carer of the child must be informed and sign a permission slip.

This is also relevant to sports fixtures and applies to both staff and parent cars.

## **Seeking Parental Consent**

Parents should be made fully aware of the nature and activities of the trip, and of any likely risks during the trip, so they may give consent or refuse on a fully informed basis.

The form sent out to parents (Educational Visit Information for Parents) or, in the case of a residential visit a letter, should give full details of the visit, the reason for the visit, supervision arrangements and transport arrangements. The form/letter should also state the cost of the visit per child. There should also be a return slip at the bottom of the form/ letter which acts as a permission or refusal slip.

## **Before the Visit**

- Fill in the Educational Visit Form before the visit, for the EVC to approve. The form will be kept in a central file.

### **If approved:**

- Class teacher to book visit
- Send out relevant form/letter to parents through the school office
- Book transport, through school office



### **On the day of the visit**

#### **Lead teacher to have list of pupils and contact details**

Be sure to:

- Collect first aid kits
- Collect buckets / sick bags in case of travel sickness
- Take all necessary medication (epi-pens, inhalers etc)
- Brief supervising parents and give them their list of children.
- Ensure that members of staff have a mobile phone and the school office has the number/s.
- Count pupils and remind them to take all necessary belongings with them (coat, packed lunch etc)

During the course of the visit, pupils should be counted regularly as appropriate, and always when changing locations. Always double count.

### **After the visit**

Hand in school risk assessment sheet and any follow up information on how the visit went to the EVC.