



***CPSWV Educational Visits Policy***

2022 - 2023

## Context

We 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 The Catholic Schools of the Waveney Valley a supportive and effective learning environment. The benefits to pupils of taking part in visits and learning outside the classroom include, but are not limited to:

Improvements in their ability to cope with change.

- Increased critical curiosity and resilience.
- Opportunities for meaning making, creativity, developing learning relationships and practising strategic awareness.
- Increased levels of trust and opportunities to examine the concept of trust (us in them, them in us, them in themselves, them in each other).
- Improved achievement and attainment across a range of curricular subjects. Pupils are active participants not passive consumers, and a wide range of learning styles can flourish.
- Enhanced opportunities for 'real world' 'learning in context' and the development of the 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.

## 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, *CPSWV*

1. Adopts the Local Authority's (LA) document: '**Guidance for Educational Visits and Related Activities with National Guidance & EVOLVE**' (All staff have access to this via EVOLVE).
2. Adopts National Guidance [www.oeapng.info](http://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.

All staff are required to plan and execute visits in line with this school policy, Local Authority policy, and National Guidelines. Staff are particularly directed to be familiar with the roles and responsibilities outlined within the guidance.

## Types of Visit & Approval

There are three 'types' of visit:

1. **Visits/activities within the 'School Learning Area' that are part of the normal curriculum and take place during the normal school day.**  
These follow the 'School Learning Area' Operating Procedure (Appendix 1).
2. **Other non-residential visits within the UK that do not involve an adventurous activity. Eg. visits to museums, farms, theme parks, theatres, etc.**  
These are entered on EVOLVE by the visit leader and submitted to the EVC for checking. As the EVC is also the Head teacher they will approve the visit.  
**Visits that are overseas, residential, or involve an adventurous activity.**  
These follow 2. above, but the Head then submits the visit to the LA for approval.

### Learning Outcomes

When making the decision to lead/plan an off-site activity it is essential to consider the justification for the visit, how it fits into the curriculum and what the pupils/students will gain from the experience i.e. what are the learning outcomes for the activity. The Evolve visit planning system provides an opportunity for visit leaders to clearly articulate the purpose and learning outcomes planned for the visit and these should be assessed by managers as part of the approval process.

### Pre-visits

All visits should be thoroughly researched to establish the suitability of the venue and to check that facilities and third-party provision will meet group requirements. Wherever reasonably practicable, it is good practice to carry out a preliminary visit. Establishment policy should clarify the circumstances where a preliminary visit is a requirement.

### Working with providers

When an establishment is using a provider for teaching and instruction:

- the provider is responsible for the risk management of their provision.
    - the Visit Leader is responsible for pastoral care (wellbeing, behaviour, medical, SEND) and the risk management of any aspects of the visit which they lead themselves, including all 'downtime' and travel. Refer to National Guidance: 3.2a Underpinning Legal Framework and Duty of Care.
- Where they are available, Visit Leaders should take advantage of nationally accredited provider assurance schemes to select suitable providers. Checking providers Where a provider holds the Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) Quality Badge, there is no need to seek further assurances regarding safety. However, Visit Leaders should ensure that a Provider Statement is completed if no LOtC Quality Badge is held. The Provider statement template is available in the Resources / Key documents section of Evolve. Certain adventurous activities require an Adventurous Activities Licence (AALA/AALS) which will either be captured through a Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge or a Provider Statement.

If using a provider, they should normally hold a minimum of £5 Public Liability insurance (this is a requirement of the Trust Insurer providing the policy covering educational visits).

## Roles and responsibilities

**Visit leaders** are responsible for the planning of their visits, and for entering these on EVOLVE (where required). They should obtain outline permission for a visit from the Head Teacher or EVC prior to planning, and before making any commitments. Visit leaders have responsibility for ensuring that their visits will comply with all relevant guidance and requirements, and should seek advice from the EVC where necessary.

**The Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC)** is *Samantha Barlow*, 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. The EVC sets up and manages the staff accounts on EVOLVE, and uploads generic school documents, etc.

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**The Head Teacher** has responsibility for authorising all visits and for submitting those that are overseas, residential or adventurous to the LA for approval.

**The Governing Body's** role is that of a 'critical friend'. Individual governors may be given 'read-only' access to EVOLVE.

**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.

## 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:

- An apprenticeship system, where staff new to visits assist and work alongside experienced visit leaders before taking on a leadership role.
- Supervision by senior staff on some educational visits.
- Support for staff to attend training courses relevant to their role, where necessary.

In deciding whether a member of staff is competent to be a visit leader, the Head Teacher will take into account the following factors:

- Relevant experience.
- 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.

## Risk Assessment

As part of assessing the risk of educational visits, outdoor learning and adventurous activities, visit leaders should determine the appropriate supervision arrangements by considering factors including 'SAGED':

- **Staffing** For example: Consider whether the adults have undertaken training, what level of experience they have and whether they know the group. Consider what level of competence is necessary (e.g. skill, knowledge, understanding, fitness) from all of the supervising adults. Ensure that all adults are competent for the roles that are assigned to them.
- **Activity** For example: Consider the nature of the intended activity and whether it requires specialist knowledge and/or equipment. Consider whether the activities might be affected by the location (crowds, remoteness, access etc.).
- **Group** For example: Consider the characteristics of the group and what prior experience they have of the activity and environment; also consider their ability and maturity. If any of the group has behavioural, medical or learning needs, ensure that these can be managed appropriately.
- **Environment** For example: Consider the impact that the weather may have on the group, activity or travel arrangements. Be aware that environmental conditions can change dramatically and ensure that there is a Plan B where appropriate. Where relevant to the location and activity, the visit leader must have a good understanding of how water levels can change and be able to make appropriate judgements.
- **Distance** For example: Consider how far the activity or visit is from the normal support mechanisms of the school and whether it is close enough to rely on immediate support from the school, or further afield where it cannot. The type of transport being used may impact on the level of supervision required (e.g. a coach journey may require a smaller supervision ratio than a visit using public transport). If the visit involves an overnight stay, a higher level of first aid competence may be necessary, and staff may need to operate a supervision rota for longer residential visits.

The EVC/Headteacher is responsible for ensuring effective supervision is in place on all visits.

## Emergency procedures

**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 (see Appendix 2). All staff on visits are familiar with this plan and it is tested at least bi-annually and following any major staffing changes.

When an incident overwhelms the establishment's emergency response capability, or where it involves serious injury or fatality, or where it is likely to attract media attention then assistance will be sought from the St John the Baptist Catholic MAT.

## Educational Visits Checklist

CPSWV's Educational Visits Checklist forms part of the risk management process for visits and off-site activities, and may be downloaded from EVOLVE Resources. This has been adapted from the LA's generic checklist. A visit should only go ahead if the answer to all relevant questions is 'YES'.

## Parental Consent

Consent is not required for activities within the School Learning Area that are part of the normal curriculum during normal school time.

The school obtains blanket consent at the start of each year for certain other routine activities, eg. after school fixtures, etc. Parents use a traditional paper consent form.

Specific, (ie. one-off), parental consent must be obtained for all other visits. For these visits, sufficient information must be made available to parents (via EVOLVE, letters, meetings, etc), so that consent is given on a 'fully informed' basis. As above parents consent through a traditional paper consent form.

## Inclusion

Every effort is made to ensure that outdoor learning activities and visits are available and accessible to all, irrespective of special educational or medical needs, ethnic origin, gender or religion. If a visit needs to cater for children with special needs, every reasonable effort is made that enables the whole group to participate fully and be actively involved.

Any individual risk assessment, behaviour/care plan should inform the planning process. Appropriate levels of supervision and staff with the necessary competences/training should be in place (e.g. intimate care/ feeding; manual handling; team teach/ restraint; administering rescue meds etc). If a decision is taken to exclude a young person (e.g. if the necessary reasonable adjustment(s) would unduly impinge on the learning outcomes for the rest of the group) then:

- All relevant parties must have been consulted throughout the process
- there must be a clear rationale
- the process should be carefully recorded with a clear evidence / audit trail

## Behaviour

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It may be reasonable to exclude a young person on the grounds of behaviour if the behaviour is unmanageable and presents a significant health, safety and/or welfare risk to the young person, the group or the leaders. Where behaviour issues are not associated with a protected characteristic then it is unlikely the Equality Act will apply. Refer to National Guidance: 3.2e Inclusion, 4.4i Special Educational Needs and Disabilities DfE Equality Act 2010: Advice for Schools

### **Charging / funding for visits**

The EVCs and Visit Leaders should take account of the legal framework relating to charging, voluntary contributions and remissions as set out in sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996 and detailed in the Charges for Off-Site Activity guidance document (published in 2012 by the Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel). See Section 7, Learning Beyond The Classroom (LBTC) 2005. All education during school hours is free. We do not charge for any activity undertaken as part of the National Curriculum, however, voluntary contributions will usually be asked for. There are some circumstances when the school can make a charge for certain activities. The governing body has a 'Charging and Remissions' policy that details the full range of activities where a charge can be made. A copy of this is available from the school office and on the website.

### **Transport**

Travel arrangements should be included in the risk assessment. If travel is by coach or minibus, all pupils/participants must wear a seat belt. If a minibus is being utilised the driver must have the appropriate LA driving permit / minibus licence.

### **Insurance**

SJBCMAT holds Public and Employers Liability insurance, indemnifying it against all claims for compensation for bodily injury from persons not in its employ, as well as for the accidental loss of, or damage caused to, property. Employees are indemnified against all such claims, as are voluntary helpers acting under the direction of the employer's staff. The indemnity covers activities such as off site activities and visits organised by establishments and settings for which the employer is responsible. The Trust also arranges a policy 'blanket policy' to cover educational visits. This policy will cover all activities routinely offered by schools.

If staff are considering an unusual or particularly hazardous activity please contact the Outdoor Education Adviser for clarification of insurance cover. It is not normally necessary (or appropriate) for schools to take up supplementary policies offered by some contractors / tour companies. Heads and Service Managers should note that insurance cover may be invalidated if they fail to adhere to the requirements of this policy and advice within National Guidance.

## **Appendix 1 – School Learning Area**

**We classify this as any area local to the schools within walking distance of both schools.**

### **General**

Visits/activities within the 'School Learning Area' that are part of the normal curriculum and take place during the normal school day follow the Operating Procedure below.

These visits/activities:

- do not require parental consent
- do not normally need additional risk assessments / notes (other than following the Operating Procedure below).
- should be recorded on EVOLVE if regular, eg swimming lessons
- do not need to be recorded on EVOLVE if these are ad-hoc activities

### **Operating Procedure for School Learning Area**

**The following are potentially significant issues/hazards within our School Learning Area:**

- Road traffic.
- Other people / members of the public / animals.
- Losing a pupil.
- Uneven surfaces and slips, trips, and falls.
- Weather conditions.
- Activity specific issues when doing environmental fieldwork (nettles, brambles, rubbish, etc).

**These are managed by a combination of the following:**

- The Head who is also EVC must give verbal approval before a group leaves.
- Only staff judged competent to supervise groups in this environment are approved. A current list of approved staff is maintained by the EVC and office.
- The concept and Operating Procedure of the 'School Learning Area' is explained to all new parents when their child joins the school, and a synopsis is in the School Prospectus.

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- There will normally be a minimum of two adults.
- Staff are familiar with the area, including any 'no go areas', and have practised appropriate group management techniques.
- Pupils have been trained and have practised standard techniques for road crossings in a group.
- Where appropriate, pupils are fully briefed on what to do if they become separated from the group.
- All remotely supervised work in the School Learning Area is done in 'buddy' pairs as a minimum.
- Pupils' clothing and footwear is checked for appropriateness prior to leaving school.
- Staff are aware of any relevant pupil medical information and ensure that any required medication is available.
- Staff will deposit in the office a list of all pupils and staff, a proposed route, and an estimated time of return.
- A school mobile is taken with each group and the office have a note of the number.
- Appropriate personal protective equipment is taken when needed (eg gloves, goggles)

## Appendix 2 – Emergency Procedure

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 leadership team 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 leadership team 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 local authority 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.
6. For visits that take place outside the School Learning Area, the visit leader will carry either:
  - a) An LA Emergency 'Card' (see EVOLVE Resources), or
  - b) An OEAP National Guidance Emergency action card (*Available via [www.oeap.info](http://www.oeap.info)*)
7. This Emergency Procedure is tested through both desktop exercises and periodic scenario calls from visit leaders.