

St Mary's CE (Aided) Primary School



Educational Visits Policy



One family: school, church, home and community.

At St Mary's we believe in a culture where:

- Everyone is special, unique and valued: diversity and difference are celebrated. We are all God's treasure.
- Education is holistic; spiritual and moral growth is nurtured.
- Inspirational and reflective worship enables all in the school community to encounter the risen Christ.
- Wisdom, knowledge and skills are a focus in everything.
- Everyone does their best at all times with a culture of the highest expectations, respect and consideration for all.
- Everyone can succeed and achieve. Aspiration and inspiration are central to all that we do.

Life in all its fullness – John 10:10.

- *I know the plans I have for you. Plans to make you prosper – Jeremiah 29:11.*
- Creativity and joy in learning is valued.
- The spiritual and emotional well-being of all members of our school community is a priority. Resilience and perseverance are developed in all.
- A community of global citizens of God is created through social action – on local, national and global levels.

All of these are underpinned by our spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding and experiences; respect of our British values and through our core Christian values of hope, peace, compassion, forgiveness, trust and endurance.

'We will grow up in every way into Christ, who is the head. The whole body depends on Christ, and all the parts of the body are joined and held together. Each part does its own work to make the whole body grow and be strong with love'. *Ephesians 4:15-16*

Love learning. Love each other.

Overview

Intent

At St Mary's we see the benefits to learning outside the classroom and educational visits to be crucial to the 'Catch Up' and recovery to learning post pandemic. We have seen real disruption to our routine, and the traumas faced by students, parents and staff has affected us all in very different ways. The opportunities to rebuild trust and relationships are much greater whilst out of the classroom. Being outside also encourages physical activity, at a time where some of our school community haven't been able to leave the house for a long period of time.

At St Mary's, our curriculum has been designed to be inclusive, broad and balanced, with our local context and Christian values at its heart.

We are committed to providing a curriculum that empowers, encourages and inspires our pupils to achieve the following:

Secure development and achievement:

- Provision of opportunities for pupils to shine and be proud of their personal development
- Creation of a growth mindset and recognition that work, commitment and overcoming challenges are the key to achievement in life
- Provision of individual and collaborative learning experiences across all subjects
- Have high aspirations and rise to challenges – demonstrating possibilities for their future lives

Prepare pupils for life beyond St Mary's:

- Challenges, motivates, inspires and leads to a lifelong interest in learning
- Fosters a sense of responsibility, respect and pride
- Prepares our pupils for life in secondary school and further education, whether academic or vocational and for the world of work
- Prepares our pupils to be outward facing and global citizens in a diverse and modern world

Promote active local, regional, national and international community involvement:

- Ensures that our pupils are prepared for life in a diverse, modern Britain and world.
- Offers a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities for personal development
- Involves working with the community to promote local, national and global awareness and identity
- Development of our moral compass

Our curriculum is underpinned by our spiritual, social and cultural understanding and experiences, respect of our British values and through our core Christian values of hope, peace, compassion, forgiveness, trust and endurance. These are embedded into the fabric of our school, infused into all aspects of our school life and rooted in scripture.

Implementation

Learning outside the classroom activities and educational visits and are used as teaching and learning tools for the delivery of elements of St Mary's statement of Intent.

Impact

Learning outside the classroom activities and educational visits have clear and measurable aims which link to St Mary's curriculum intent. The impact contributes to pupil's attainment and progress. St Mary's approach to the evaluation of activities and visits is set out in this policy.

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 St Mary's 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 practicing 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, St Mary's:

1. Adopts the Local Authority's (LA) document: '**Policy for Educational Visits and Activities Linking to OEAP National Guidance**' (All staff have access to this via Evolve).
2. Adopts National Guidance www.oeapng.info, (as recommended by the LA).
3. Uses EVOLVE for off-site activities *beyond the local learning area*.

All staff are required to plan and execute visits in line with school policy (i.e. this document), Local Authority policy, and National Guidelines. This is also a requirement of the LA's trips & visits insurance policy for schools. 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 – Appendix 1**
These are entered on EVOLVE by the visit leader and submitted to the EVC for checking. The EVC then submits to the Head for approval. As a school we have a generic risk assessment for road crossing.
Parental permission is not obtained for within 1km of the school, as this is covered in our blanket consent forms.
- 2. Other non-residential visits within the UK that do not involve an adventurous activity.**
These are entered on EVOLVE by the visit leader and submitted to the EVC for checking. The EVC then submits to the Head for approval.
- 3. Visits that are overseas, residential, or involve an adventurous activity.**
As above, but the Head authorises and then submits to the LA for approval.

Timescales

St Mary's uses the Evolve system to plan, manage and record educational visits.

Visit Leaders should plan and prepare visits allowing time for internal and external vetting and approval as required. Normally this will mean that visit plans should be submitted to the EVC by the following deadlines:

- 3 to 6 months before departure for Overseas Visits
- 4 weeks before departure for Residentials
- 4 weeks before departure for Adventure Activities
- 2 weeks before departure for other types of visit

If for any reason these deadlines cannot be met, clarification and approval should be sought from the EVC.

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 certainly before making any financial commitments. Visit leaders have responsibility for ensuring that their visits will comply with all relevant guidance and requirements.

The Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) is **Liz Cook**, 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.

The Head Teacher has responsibility for authorising all visits, and for submitting all overseas, residential or adventurous activity visits to the LA for approval, via EVOLVE.

The Governing Body's role is that of a 'critical friend' and it will:

1. Adopt and periodically review this policy, as required.
2. Ensure there is a competent Educational Visit Coordinator (EVC) in place who meets the requirements outlined in 'National Guidance' and has completed the Employer's EVC Training Programme and any updates as required.
3. Review the range of visits provided by the school via a report submitted twice a year by the EVC.

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.

Evaluation

At St Mary's we evaluate the impact of a visit by:

1. The impact on learning; in addition to usual assessment methods, we use
 - Photographs / Video
 - Of specific processes –measuring, data collection, data recording, use of creative language, sequencing etc
 - Pupil Voice
 - Develop questionnaires to capture physical activity levels & happiness
 - Look at other measures (eg attendance, behaviour)
2. The arrangements (eg risk assessments, value for money, lessons learned) – This impacts upon future planning of return trips or sourcing alternative venues / transport.

Staff Competence

St Mary's recognises 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.

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 local authority.

Educational Visits Checklist

St Mary's Educational Visits Checklist forms part of the risk management process for visits and off-site activities. 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'. St Mary's Educational Visits Checklist may be downloaded from EVOLVE Resources.



8m-Visit-leader-check-list_1.pdf

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.

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 letters, meetings, etc), so that consent is given on a 'fully informed' basis.

Inclusion

St Mary's is committed to inclusion and will include all students in our offsite activities wherever this is reasonably practicable. All reasonable adjustments are made for an individual and a personal risk assessment may be required.

We believe that all pupils should have access to school off-site visits. To this end, pupils in receipt of PPG will have half of the cost for any trip paid from the PPG. Pupils who are in receipt of the higher level PPG may have the full cost paid – to be negotiated with the Headteacher.

Charging / funding for visits

As a school we subsidise school visits either via a school contribution or pupil premium contributions. School will only run visits if they get sufficient voluntary contributions to break even etc. For some trips, the children may raise funds through sales or organising discos in order to offset some of the cost.

Transport

St Mary's will procure best value for transport. It will be from a company with appropriate insure and transport compliance. The details of the company will be entered onto EVOLVE.

Insurance

St Mary's buys into the Local Authority insurance scheme.

Appendix 1 – School Learning Area

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 – the visit will be shared on Class Dojo to inform parents that it will take place, appropriate clothing / equipment required and an opportunity to ask questions.
- do not normally need additional risk assessments / notes (other than following the Operating Procedure below).
- do not need to be recorded on EVOLVE.

Boundaries

The boundaries of the School Learning Area are within 1km radius of the school grounds.

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, Deputy or 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.

- There will normally be a minimum of two adults.
- Staff are familiar with the area, including any 'no go areas', and have practiced appropriate group management techniques.
- Pupils have been trained and have practiced 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 staff 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

Our plan in an emergency is:

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 an EV7*
7. *This Emergency Procedure is tested through both desk top exercises and periodic scenario calls from visit leaders.*

Appendix 3 – Risk Assessment Mindmap

