

# ST GEORGE'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND FOUNDATION SCHOOL

*"Every moment, every day, every individual counts"*



## EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY

***Last Reviewed:*** ***October 2019***

***Date for Review:*** ***October 2020***

**Governors Monitoring Pair:** Finance and Operations

**SLT Responsible:** Assistant Headteacher

**Review Period:** Annually

*"For the body does not consist of one member but of many" 1 Corinthians 12:14*

HOPE

FORGIVENESS

COMPASSION

FRIENDSHIP

WISDOM

EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY

**1. AIMS AND PURPOSE OF EDUCATIONAL VISITS:**

The school has a strong commitment to enhancing and enriching pupils' learning through a range of extra-curricular opportunities both in and outside school. Every pupil will have opportunities to participate in extra-curricular activities, off-site trips and residential journeys during their school career.

This policy upholds the school's commitment and includes procedures that aim to:

- ensure that activities, trips and journeys have clear educational, cultural, distinctively Christian vision and/or recreational aims;
- ensure equality of opportunity for all pupils and participation from all groups within our community, including those with special educational needs and those supported by specific funding;
- minimise the disruption to the scheduled learning of participants and other pupils and to school routines and events;
- anticipate and prompt action to minimise risk associated with the activity/trip/journey;
- encourage and support staff in organising an activity/trip/journey.

In support of these aims:

- pupils and parents will know and understand the educational reasons for the activity/trip /journey and the relevance of the activities to pupils' learning and progression;
- every activity/trip/journey will be preceded by careful preparation, by staff and with pupils, including a full risk assessment;
- every activity/trip/journey will be followed up to enable pupils to record and evaluate their experience and to stimulate further development and learning.

**2. SCOPE:**

This policy applies to activities that require pupils to be taken off their scheduled timetable, whether in school or off-site. This Policy also applies to out of hours attendance at sporting fixtures. It therefore applies to activities where adults, acting in the course of their employment, have responsibility for children and young people who are taking part in learning and recreational activities in an environment that is different from where the young people are usually based and when they learn from first-hand experiences. It applies to all staff leading, supporting, coordinating or supporting such activities. It applies to all pupils from Reception to Year 13.

**3. RESPONSIBILITIES:**

The **Governing Board** is responsible for ensuring that:

- the appropriate policy and procedures are in place and accessible to all staff;
- the policy and procedures will secure the health, safety and welfare of all employees, volunteers and pupils participating in the activity;
- appropriate approval procedures are followed for residential and/or high risk and/or out of County activities
- appropriate monitoring procedures are in place, particularly in support of the school's commitment to inclusion.

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The **Headteacher** is responsible for ensuring that:

- all visits, journeys and learning outside the classroom are submitted for formal approval and fully comply with this policy;
- an Educational Visits Coordinator is in place and appropriately trained;
- all visits, journeys and activities have a named Activity Leader;
- all staff involved in visits, journeys and learning outside the classroom are clear of their roles, have training relevant to, and are competent to carry out, their responsibilities;
- suitable child protection procedures are in place, including vetting at an appropriate level of all voluntary helpers;
- staff have been assigned sufficient time to organise activities and visits properly;
- insurance arrangements are appropriate;
- all visits, journeys and learning outside the classroom activities obtain best value, with appropriate consideration given to financial management, choice of contractors, and contractual relationships;
- where charges are made to parents, these are within legal requirements and comply with the school's charging policy;
- proper procedures are in place to account for the finances of activities and visits;
- arrangements are in place for the Governing Board to be informed of such visits as are required by this policy.

The **Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC)** is responsible for

- ensuring that the initial plan for residential and/or high risk activities is submitted to an appropriate Governor for approval.
- advising the activity leader of approval or otherwise of trip application
- ensuring that all activities have an appropriate level of staffing and advising staff of appropriate training;
- ensuring external providers have been appropriately checked and vetted and that preliminary visits have been made by staff where appropriate;
- ensuring that the format for recording written risk assessments is in place and supporting staff in completing them for all visits journeys and where necessary, learning outside the classroom activities;
- ensuring suitable transport arrangements are in place and meet any regulatory requirements;
- ensuring details related to off-site activities and visits (including personal details of both participants and staff) are accessible at all times to a designated 24/7 emergency contact(s) in case of a serious incident;
- ensuring contingency plans are in place should a visit plan be significantly changed or cancelled
- ensuring appropriate emergency procedures are in place in case of a major incident, including a procedure to ensure that parents are appropriately informed
- monitoring Activity Leader planning and sample monitoring of visits;
- ensuring necessary training of Activity Leaders (including voluntary helpers);
- ensuring that policies and procedures are reviewed on a regular basis. A review should follow any serious incident or systems failure;
- keeping practice up to date via EVC update processes.

The **Activity Leader** is responsible for:

- planning the trip, journey/fixture or learning outside the classroom activity to fully comply with this policy, in liaison with the EVC;
- using the procedures in this policy to gain approval for the trip, journey or activity;

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- complete and submit the risk assessment documentation, involving other staff and pupils appropriately;
- defining the roles and responsibilities of other staff (and young people) to ensure effective supervision, appointing a deputy wherever possible;
- providing relevant information to supporting staff, including about the nature and location of the visit and about the participants (including age, health information, capabilities, special needs, safeguarding and behavioural issues);
- obtaining informed parental consent as necessary;
- providing relevant information to parents and young people, and arranging pre-visit information meetings where appropriate;
- leading the activity in line with the plans and the risk assessment;
- making sure there is access to first aid at an appropriate level;
- ensuring that all staff and any third party providers have access to emergency contact and emergency procedure details;
- when working with third-party activity providers, ensuring a clear handover before and after any activity led by a provider;
- being alert to concern raised by an activity led by a third-party provider and intervening if necessary to remove risk;
- reporting any accidents, incidents or near-misses;
- evaluating the trip, journey or activity during and afterwards.

#### 4. IMPLEMENTATION:

Staff organising trips should ensure the procedures outlined below are adhered to ensure the success of the trip and to minimise disruption to learning and school routines.

##### a) **Procedure for seeking approval:**

It is important that staff do not confirm trips with pupils until approval has been given at the weekly meeting or by the Headteacher and by Governors where appropriate. For a residential journey or high risk activities, staff should have an early discussion with the EVC before proposing it to pupils in any form and no letters should be sent until all necessary approvals have been given. A completed Evolve trip proposal must be completed and submitted a minimum of 6 weeks prior to the trip, for consideration at the weekly trip meeting.

##### b) **Trips Approved / Non-approved – process of notification:**

Once the above form has been submitted, the activity leader will receive email notification either approving/not approving the trip. At the weekly trips meeting account will be taken of cover demands at that time and curriculum demands for the pupils involved:

- **Trips approved** – You will receive email notification that your trip has been approved, stating that transport has been booked (if required), tickets are booked (if required) and letters are ready for collection.
- **Trips not approved** – You will receive a returned copy of your trip pack with areas highlighted as to why the trip was not approved, via the Evolve system. You can approach the EVC to discuss how the trip could go ahead.
- **Notifying staff and pupils of trips, journeys and learning outside the classroom activities taking place**

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It is good practice for teachers organising trips to inform staff of all pupils participating in the trip. This will ensure the trip will be productive for all pupils taking part and any issues surrounding behaviour, completion of coursework etc. is discussed. This discussion should take place prior to submitting pupil names.

**c) Completing Risk Assessments for trips, journeys and learning outside the classroom activities:**

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, which operate alongside the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, set out the statutory duty to carry out Risk Assessments. Risks should be identified, recorded and preventative measures appropriate to the level of risk described in writing with a record of action taken, by whom and when. Each risk should be assessed as low, medium or high.

The Activity Leader is responsible for the risk assessment, involving other staff and pupils as appropriate. Risk assessment forms are available on the School's Sharepoint. All trips, journeys and some learning outside the classroom activities require a risk assessment and should be submitted with the trip to support possible approval. The correct risk assessment must be completed and submitted to the EVC, included in your Evolve proposal

In making such an assessment the Activity Leader will take into account:

- the type of activity and the level at which it is being undertaken
- the location
- the competence, experience and qualifications of school or centre supervisory staff
- the age, competence, fitness and temperament of the group members
- the ratio of competent, experienced and qualified centre staff to young people
- the quality and suitability of the available equipment
- seasonal conditions, weather and timing
- the controls put in place.

In assessing risk the organisers should always consider the objectives of the activity and ensure that the risks to the participants are the minimum necessary in order to achieve those. The location of the trip must be on the top of the risk assessment form. Many of the risk control measures will depend on adequate information and instruction to pupils and staff. The Activity Leader must ensure that this information and instruction has been given and that pupils and staff are aware of their own roles in minimising risks. Risk Assessment needs to be an on-going process, taking into account ***actual and changing circumstances*** when travelling, at the Centre and on location.

**d) Ratio of staff to pupils and supervision:**

On all visits there must be **effective supervision** that has been approved by the EVC and Headteacher in accordance with this policy. Staff ratios are as per the trip pack. There must be a designated Activity Leader. This will usually be a teacher. Pupils in training for teaching are not classified as staff for this purpose. A mixed party should be accompanied by at least one female and one male member of staff. The level of supervision should take account of the age, aptitude and ability of the young people concerned in relation to the activity, the mode of transport or road conditions if walking, the length of the visit, whether refreshment/meals will be needed etc.

More supervision may be needed with pupils that are identified as having special educational need. The Activity Leader and the EVC must ensure that this information is collated and taken into

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account when allocating numbers of staff. Where the party is of mixed ages the youngest pupils must be supervised at their given ratio.

**e) Remote Supervision:**

Young people must be supervised *throughout* all visits. At times they may be unaccompanied by a member of staff or other responsible adult, e.g. D of E expeditions, 'down time' in a shopping mall, etc. This is known as 'remote' supervision. 'Remotely supervised' activities can bring purposeful educational benefits, and the progression from dependence to independence is to be encouraged. In addition to considering the benefits of the activity, staff should also ensure that reasonable and practicable safety precautions are taken.

The decision to allow remote supervision should be based on professional judgement taking into account such factors as:

- prior knowledge of the individuals (including their maturity and levels of responsibility);
- venue and conditions;
- the activity taking place;
- preparatory training;
- the competence of the supervising staff;
- the emergency systems in place.

If any part of a trip, journey or activity is to include remote supervision, this must be explained to parents in advance and their permission should be given with this knowledge. This includes sixth form pupils meeting staff at a venue, or going directly home from a venue.

**f) Financial procedures:**

All trips must be arranged to achieve best value. Advice can be sought from the finance office. All trips must be budgeted and this information passed to the finance office as soon as the trip is agreed. The financial budget form is in the trip pack and must be completed at the same time as the Risk Assessment. Costs to pupils must take account of the school's charging policy, in particular with respect to subsidies available. Differentiated costs must be made clear in the information given to parents. Parents should always be invited to inform the Activity Leader of the cost of a trip is prohibitive to their son/daughter's participation. The Activity Leader must ensure that pupils/parents are informed of dates for payments and a clear date is set for interim and final payment so that the finance office is able to cover the costs of deposits and final payments for all invoices. Staff must ensure that all payments for the trip are made directly to the finance office. Staff should not collect funds for any school trips. A cost centre will be set up for the trip and all payments will be allocated to the cost centre, prior to pupils handing money in. A receipt will be given to pupils for all payments received. If the costs of a trip are not met, the trip will either be cancelled or the overspend will be deducted from the relevant subject budget. If no payments are required for the trip, staff should indicate that it is not applicable.

**g) Parental consent:**

Parental consent must be sought for all off-site activities, trips or journeys, including for sixth-form pupils even if under 'remote supervision'. Parental consent must be completed in writing and returned at least one week before the trip. Consent can be sought for a number of similar activities, for example a range of theatre trips, or a range of visits to support a vocational course. Parents should nonetheless always be informed of exact dates and times for each trip. The letter explaining the trip and inviting parental consent must be printed on school headed paper and contain the following information:

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- the purpose of the trip;
- the precise nature of the trip (including details of any activities and accommodation);
- explicit reference to any hazardous activities;
- the total cost and details of any costs for cancellation or additional pocket money needed;
- details of any subsidies available;
- the date and times of departure and return;
- the mode of transport;
- arrangements for meals;
- any equipment or particular clothing needed;
- the code of conduct setting out the standards of behaviour expected from the pupils in the party;

The letter must also provide a simple consent return slip and it should make clear that no pupil may join the trip without written consent and medical information (see below).

#### **h) Medical Information**

A medical information form is in the trip pack and must also be issued with the consent form and both should be completed and returned a minimum of one week before the trip. Medical forms must be returned to the office so that a group medical information and contact sheet can be prepared by the office for the Activity Leader to take on the trip.

**No pupils will be allowed to take part in the trip if the correct medical and consent forms are not received. The Activity Leader must ensure all consent and medical forms are received and handed to the school office at least the day before the trip departs, together with an updated pupil list.**

#### **i) Free school meals:**

The Activity Leader must ensure that the canteen has been informed of any pupils who will not be present for school meals if the visit extends over the lunchtime period at least the day before. They should specifically be informed of pupils in the group entitled to free school meals. All pupils entitled to free school meals must be catered for by collecting packed lunches from the canteen prior to departure on the day.

#### **j) Transport:**

All transport needed must be booked through the finance office. All coach bookings must be booked through the finance office and no staff should make their own bookings, this is to also ensure that appropriate companies are used and all required insurances are in place.

#### **k) Visits Abroad:**

The EVC and Activity Leader must make early arrangements to ensure:

- all staff and pupil members of the party must have valid passports: either full, collective or visitors' passports and that these have been applied for in good time (for a day trip to the Continent an excursion document would suffice);
- visas, if appropriate, have been obtained;
- arrangements have been made to meet medical expenses both by appropriate insurance
- there is suitable medical preparation, e.g. vaccinations and immunisations, etc.
- appropriate foreign currency arrangements are in place;
- all staff and pupil members of the party are aware of the current regulations of HM Customs;

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- the information briefing contains material about the cultural and social expectations of the country to be visited.

**l) Residential Trips:**

It is recommended that for residential trips, the Activity Leader will hold a Parents' Information Evening for those participating. The Activity Leader must inform the EVC when this is taking place. All staff joining the residential trip are expected to take part in this evening. During this meeting it is essential parents are given the following information and enabled to ask questions:

- all information regarding the purpose and programme for the residential;
- the exact itinerary for the trip;
- all travel and accommodation details;
- all arrangements for informing staff or parents of an emergency including the Leadership Team contact details;
- the fact that pupils under 18 are **NOT permitted** to drink alcohol or smoke during a school trip even with their parent's consent.

**m) Emergency Procedures**

All staff accompanying a trip should have access to a complete First Aid kit; this is issued by the School Nurse. A trip for Reception and or Years 1 and 2 pupils requires a paediatric first aider to be in attendance. A trip for Years 3 and 4 pupils requires a qualified first aider to be in attendance.

**The Activity Leader should take the trip phone and ensure that pupils have the number so they can contact the Leader should they get lost during the trip.**

Staff involved in a visit must be aware of and adhere to the school's emergency procedures and the arrangements for contacting the Senior Leadership Contact and parents. Accidents / incidents occurring offsite must be reported and investigated according to the School's Health and Safety Policy. For visits that take place outside normal school hours, the Activity Leader must complete prior to departure:

**Emergency Contact list for Home Contacts** must be issued to the Senior Leadership Contact.

**n) Insurance:**

Insurance is organised by the finance office and staff must not book or take any offers of insurance from any companies. For the finance office to ensure that insurance cover is adequate, it is essential that risk assessments and exact details of the trip are submitted in the appropriate amount of time and with the correct details of all activities involved. The finance office must ensure trips are covered for:

- Public liability;
- Third party liability covering claims against the authority, school and its employees;
- Personal accident cover for leaders, voluntary helpers and party members, including compensation for accidental injury regardless of the cause;
- Medical treatment;
- Transport and passenger liability;
- High-risk activities (often omitted from policies);
- Damage or loss of personal or hired equipment;

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- Programmed as well as non-programmed activities;
- Transport and accommodation expenses in case of an emergency;
- Compensation against cancellation or delay;
- Compensation for loss or damage of baggage and effects;
- Legal assistance in the recovery of claims;
- Failure or bankruptcy of the centre or travel company.

**o) Before the trip:**

The Activity Leader must:

- obtain the consent slips of all the pupils attending to take on the trip.
- hand in the programme for the day(s) to the Senior Leader contact so the school knows where you should be at different times of the day;
- provide Reception with a list of pupils attending to aid the attendance team
- arrange with the kitchen to collect a packed lunch for FSM pupils on the morning of the trip.

**p) On the day of departure:**

The Activity Leader must:

- Take the trip pack
- take a first aid kit and medical information on pupils.
- leave the emergency contact numbers with the attendance officer and SLT contact
- collect packed lunches for pupils on free school meals;
- take a register before you leave school, leaving a copy with the reception and inform the Attendance Officer and SLT contact of any absent pupils.

**Pupils cannot be added to the trip on the day and verbal consent is not acceptable.**

**5. MONITORING:**

The EVC will:

- keep records of all trips and journeys undertaken and the pupils involved

**6. INDUCTION / TRAINING:**

The EVC will train all new Activity Leaders in the expectations and procedures of this policy. The EVC will also ensure that experienced Activity Leaders are aware of any updates to procedures and any learning / good practice from other recent trips. Departments taking regular residential or overseas trips will be encouraged to build the experience of other members of staff under experienced Activity Leaders. The EVC will undertake relevant training every 5 years.

**7. VOLUNTEERS:**

The school actively seeks volunteers to accompany school trips and journeys. Any volunteers would be previously known to the school, most usually as parents. Any volunteer joining a school trip will have been subject to an enhanced DBS check. A list of DBS checked volunteers will be maintained by Personnel. Volunteers can be counted in the ratios. Volunteers will not act as Activity Leaders. The Activity Leader is responsible for the supervision of volunteers. The EVC will talk through this policy and the school's expectations with any volunteer joining a school trip for the first time. The Activity Leader is responsible for briefing the volunteer about the details of the trip and their specific role/responsibilities.

**8. INCLUSION:**

This policy endorses the following principles:

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- a presumption of entitlement to participate;
- accessibility through direct or realistic adaptation or modification;
- integration through participation with peers.

The school is committed to taking reasonable steps to ensure disabled pupils are not placed at a substantial disadvantage without justification.

#### **9. LEGISLATION / GUIDANCE:**

This Policy is in line with the national guidance from the Outdoor Education Advisory Panel and is consistent with the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974).

It also meets Health and Safety expectations in:

- “Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits “ (DfE1998)
- “Health and Safety: Roles and Responsibilities” (DfE 2001)
- “Standards for LEAs in Overseeing Educational Visits” (DfE 2002) and Kent County Council’s guidance on Risk Assessment.

#### **10. APPROVAL AND REVIEW OF THIS POLICY:**

Governors approve this policy. It will be subject to bi-annual review and re-approval.

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