



St Mary's
Colchester

EDUCATIONAL VISITS PROCEDURE (including EYFS)

This procedure has been set out following the guidance of:

- DfE Health and Safety on Educational Visits (2018) (HASPEV)
- Responsibilities and duties for schools (2018)
- DfE Guidance on the requirements of driving minibuses

Aims

St Mary's recognises that learning outside the classroom helps to bring the curriculum to life – it provides deeper subject learning and increases self-confidence. It also helps pupils develop their risk awareness and prepares them for their future working lives. Striking the balance between protecting pupils from risk and allowing them to learn from school trips is challenging, but getting this balance right is essential for realising all these benefits in practice.

Each year the school organises a number of activities which take place both in school and off site.

The activities/visits are organised in order to:

- Support specific curriculum areas
- Encourage independent learning
- Provide new experiences
- Develop personal and social skills

Trips are open to all pupils.

The Principal has ultimate responsibility for ensuring staff meet the arrangements and follow the guidelines in this procedure. The Educational Visits Coordinators take responsibility for the review of this procedure and ensure that staff are aware of its contents.

Teachers who plan a day or residential visit are designated as the group leader and, as such, have responsibility to make sure that the visit is properly organised.

Educational Visits Co-ordinators (EVCs):

- Anwen Jones, Director of Senior School
- Emma Stanhope, Director of Lower School

Procedures

Sources of Information

The procedures to be followed by staff in planning trips are contained in the Educational Visits folder within the staff portal

Insurance

Every authorised visit led by school staff is usually covered by the school's annual travel insurance. The cover extends to all accompanying adults, provided that their participation has been approved by the Principal.

Planning and organising a visit

All trips must have the prior approval of the Principal and Director of Senior/Lower School (EVC), before they can be offered to pupils.

The Principal/Directors of Senior/Lower School will ensure

- Staff have considered the real risks of the trip
- Staff have a thorough understanding of their roles, are supported, and are competent to lead or take part in them;
- That real risks are managed during the trip; and
- Learning opportunities are experienced to the full

Parents must be given sufficient details about the trip to enable them to make an informed decision as to whether or not their child should participate. Parents should be informed of trips via a letter home.

External Activity Providers

When planning a trip, staff should ensure that the external provider has been awarded the Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge (LOtC). Where the organisation does not hold the badge, the school must check that it is an appropriate organisation to use. This will include checking

- Insurance
- Legal requirements are met
- Health and safety emergency policies
- Risk assessment and control measures
- Use of vehicles
- Staff competence
- Safeguarding
- Accommodation
- Any sub-contracting arrangements they may have
- Licence if needed

When planning an activity that will involve caving, climbing, trekking, skiing or water sports the school will check that the provider holds a licence as required by the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 2004. These regulations apply to adventure activities that take place in England, Scotland and Wales.

Parental Consent to off-site activities

Written consent is not required for pupils to take part in the majority of off-site activities organised by the school (except EYFS) as most of these activities take place during school

hours and are a normal part of a child's education at school. However, parents will be informed where their child will be at all times and of any extra safety measures required.

Written consent must be obtained for activities which are outside the school hours as well as those activities that need a higher level of risk management.

At the Senior School a consent form will be sent home at the beginning of a school year enabling the parents to sign for activities within the school day.

If it is a trip involving additional payment parents will be informed and consent will be needed for the pupil to attend.

At the Lower School written consent will be requested for each school visit.

For residential visits, a separate consent form must be completed along with up-to-date medical, dietary and emergency contact information for the pupil specific to that trip.

If a trip involves swimming or water-based activities parents must be asked for written confirmation of their daughter's swimming ability and specific consent for the activities concerned.

Health and Safety

The lead member of staff is responsible for ensuring the health and safety of pupils on a school trip and have regard for the guidance set out in the handbook when planning a visit. See **Group Leader's Checklist**.

First Aid

The Senior School party leader must ensure that responsibility for First Aid during the trip is delegated to a suitable member of the school's staff, who must take with them an adequately stocked first aid kit.

At the Lower School any EYFS/KS1 school trip must have a member of staff who is paediatric trained. At KS2 the lead member of staff is responsible for First Aid during the trip.

Risk Assessments

Every visit must have a full risk assessment which will be reviewed by the Director of Senior/Lower School (EVC) in advance of the visit.

Risk Assessments should be prepared by the lead member of staff.

All risk assessments must be specific to the trip concerned, and take into account the age of the pupils, the degree of adult supervision and the nature of the environment and activities involved. The party leader should contact the venue/accommodation/activity provider, for any relevant information which should be included in the risk assessment. In some cases a copy of the venue's own risk assessment may be available to assist in the school's own risk assessment process.

The lead member of staff and accompanying staff are responsible for carrying out an ongoing (dynamic) risk assessment of the trip as a whole for its duration, and must be prepared to modify or cancel activities if they are deemed too hazardous. Any deviation from the planned activities must be subject to a risk assessment by the lead member of staff, before alteration takes place.

The lead member of staff must take a copy of the risk assessment on the trip, and all staff and other adults accompanying the trip must ensure that the requirements of the risk assessment are followed.

Emergency contacts and procedures

The lead member of staff will always carry a school mobile phone during a visit.

The lead member of staff is responsible for ensuring that for each trip they take with them:

- The emergency contact information sheet
- A complete list of all pupils, staff and other adults on the visit, (including pupils medical details, with care plans for pupils with particular medical needs), and emergency contact telephone numbers

The lead member of staff must pass a copy of the above information to the member of the SLT on call for the duration of the visit, and leave a further copy in the school office.

The SLT emergency telephone number must be given to parents in advance of each residential trip. In the event of a home-based emergency arising during a visit, parents may make contact with the lead member of staff via the SLT.

The lead member of staff will check that all essential medication has been brought.

The school has procedures in place for handling a major emergency arising in the course of an educational visit, as set out in the Guidance for procedures in the event of a critical incident on all Off-Site Visits.

Supervision

Ratios of staff to pupils.

The school will ensure that all pupils on trips are well supervised, and that there is a sufficient ratio of adults to pupils on any visit to ensure the safety of the pupils.

Ratios (as a minimum)

EYFS – 1:4

KS1 – 1:6

KS2 – 1:8

KS3 – 1:10

KS4 – 1:15

Staff must take into account:

- The age of the pupils on the visit
- The presence of pupils with Special Needs
- The nature of the activity and the environment
- The experience of the adults in off-site supervision
- First Aid cover

DBS Clearance

Any non-teaching adults accompanying a residential trip must have an enhanced DBS check which has been approved by the School.

Behaviour

Pupils will be expected to maintain the standards associated with the good name of the school and necessary for the safety of all those on the visit. The Senior School girls sign a contract of behaviour before going on a residential trip ensuring they understand the expectations of them.

Evaluation

All visits should be evaluated after completion and records kept of incidents, accidents and near misses.

Transport

The party leader is responsible for ensuring that transport is hired from a reputable company. Only coaches with seatbelts should be hired and the member of staff in charge on the coach must ensure that pupils use them.

Use of School Mini-Bus

Staff wishing to drive the minibus must hold a full driving license with a category 'D1' and will need to undertake a minibus familiarisation session.

In addition, staff will need to complete a Driver Declaration Form (Appendix 4 of minibus policy and handbook) and show your original driving licence to the Estates/ Health & Safety Manager, who will take a photocopy and keep it on file. An online check of your licence will also be carried out by the school. In order to do this you will need to provide the School with a Licence Check Code, which is obtained by visiting <https://www.gov.uk/view-driving-licence> and following the instructions. You must inform the Estates/Health & Safety Manager if there is a change of circumstances e.g. endorsements, fines or driving bans and in any event all drivers will be required to produce their license at a frequency decided by the School.

You should always make sure that you have a fully-charged mobile phone with you in case of emergencies, and a torch and spare batteries if you are likely to be travelling at night. A torch and First Aid kit is kept in the minibus.

Wherever possible, staff taking groups out in the School minibus should be accompanied by a second responsible adult who has the required safeguarding clearances. If the group leader is male, this should always be a female member of staff. The second person does not necessarily have to be able to drive the minibus, although this could be an advantage. The main role of the accompanying member of staff is to supervise the children, thus leaving the driver free to concentrate on the driving.

Where the school minibus is used for a journey the driver is responsible for checking the condition of the vehicle before departure and must ensure that all passengers use the seatbelts provided.

Further information for booking minibuses can be found in the staff handbook.

Reviewed/Approved: October 2020
Next Review: Autumn 2021