



ST MARY'S RC HIGH SCHOOL

EDUCATIONAL TRIPS AND VISITS POLICY

Document/Policy owner: Student services coordinator

Document/Policy approver: Safeguarding committee

Document/Policy approved: 16 June 2022

Review frequency: 3-yearly

Next review date: 3 years on from document/policy approved date.

1. SAFEGUARDING OF STUDENTS

A school visit is any time students are taken 'off-site' and approval must be sought along with consent from parents. The Governing Body recognises the valuable contribution that the wide range of additional activities including visits, sporting activities, clubs, exchange and residential experiences, make towards students' academic, personal and social education. Safeguarding of students participating in a Trip or Visit is to be afforded the highest priority.

2. EDUCATIONAL TRIPS AND VISITS POLICY

This policy covers all types of educational visits, including:

- Out of hours clubs (where these involve off-site activities);
- School teams visiting other schools or venues;
- Regular nearby visits (libraries, shops, parks, place of worship);
- City visits;
- Visits to other education providers; schools, colleges and universities;
- Day visits for particular groups;
- Residential Visits;
- Overseas visits; and
- Adventure Activities - these will be classed as higher risk and treated accordingly.

The Governing Body aims to promote and provide such activities both as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for students and as optional activities.

The School policy for trips and visits follows the model offered in the DFES publication "Health and Safety of Students on Educational Visits", 1998 with reference to "School trips and outdoor learning activities - Tackling the health and safety myths" (HSE 2011).

The school has a designated Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) - Joanne Hayden.

The organiser of any school journey/visit/activity is responsible for ensuring that proper health & safety and financial arrangements are carried out. Trip leaders must read and implement all stages of the instructions. They are mandatory and not optional.

3. EDUCATIONAL TRIPS AND VISITS PROCEDURE

Prior to placing any booking, or informing students or parents, the process below is to be followed:

- a) Obtain a Trips costing sheet from finance office.
- b) Obtain approval from the headteacher. Check the school diary and consult with others to ensure that the proposed dates are appropriate.
- c) Clarify the category of the trip. All trips will need EVC approval. Certain trips will also need additional approval through the local authority.
- d) All staff members accompanying the trip or visit should complete the School Visit or Trip - Staff checklist.
- e) When approval has been granted the trip may be booked and parents may be informed.
- f) If the trip is out of school hours ensure that you have a member of SLT/EVC as an emergency contact and that they are provided with details of students and a contact number for the teacher in charge of the visit.
- g) Approval for trips and visits should be sought from the EVC at least three weeks in advance. For residential visits, this should be 6 weeks in advance to allow for adequate communication with the Local Authority Outdoor Education Advisor.

4. INFORMATION TO PARENTS/CARERS

The letter to parents/carers/students should be copied to the headteacher, EVC and the Assistant Bursar.

This letter must include full details of the proposed trip/visit/journey/activity, together with the total cost to be charged. Reference should be made to the School Charging and Remissions Policy, a copy of which is on the school website.

The letter to parents must make clear:

- a) The nature, purpose and schedule of the event.
- b) Whether the activity is compulsory or voluntary.
- c) The request for parental approval.

- d) That parents should provide any necessary medical or dietary information pertaining to their child. Please also refer to the medical policy with regard to procedures for administration of medicines to students.
- e) Whether any charges are compulsory or voluntary. (If the latter, mention should be made that the trip will only be able to proceed should sufficient voluntary contributions be forthcoming.)
- f) What the charges include and, where appropriate, a breakdown of such charges (particularly in respect of board and lodging).
- g) What the arrangements are for paying for the activity as well as liabilities in respect of any loss of deposit (e.g. for non-payment by specific dates).
- h) Whether any financial support is available, and in what circumstances.
- i) If required by the trip leader, some or all students may be asked to sign a code of conduct agreement.
- j) Parents will be asked to collect any students whose behaviour warrants it.
- k) Consent must be given before a child is included in any educational trip or visit. For sporting participation, general consent can be obtained covering fixtures across the year. In such cases, additional consent is not required although parents/carers must always be advised when a child is to participate in a fixture.

5. CALCULATING THE COST OF THE TRIP/VISIT

NOTE: ALL TRIPS AND VISITS MUST BE SELF-SUPPORTING AND NOT RUN AT A LOSS.

- a) Final debit balances are not allowed. Your planning must take into account of this when calculating the costs to students. Advice is available from the Bursar/Assistant Bursar when calculating the cost of a trip or visit.
- b) You must include in your costing at the planning stage ALL known costs, including those relating to printing, postages, telephone calls, bank charges.
- c) The costing must include cost of cover generated by the proposed trip or visit where appropriate for information purposes although this cannot be passed on to students. If in doubt, the organiser should discuss this with the EVC.

6. FINANCIAL PROCEDURES FOR SCHOOL JOURNEYS, VISITS AND ACTIVITIES

All money for any visit/activity must be paid in ahead of or during the week of the activity but not after the event.

Each activity account will have its own unique number. Accounts will be opened by the Assistant Bursar on production of a copy of the letter which has been sent to parents/students about the activity.

Payments in

- a) All cash collected from students for any activity must be paid into the Finance Office.

Under no circumstances should a trip or visit organiser borrow and/or use the money collected to pay for items relevant to the trip, or give refunds to students.

- b) A receipt will be given by the Finance office to students for all monies paid in for any activity.

Payments out

- a) All payments out are to be made by the Finance staff.

Advance notice of at least a week is necessary if large sums of cash are required on the day of your activity. Such requests should be kept to a minimum for security reasons.

Final account

It is important to remember that:

- a) There should not be a substantial planned final credit balance. Any credit remaining in excess of £5 per pupil should be returned. Lower balances will be paid into the School Fund.
- b) A full list of names of students and staff participants and the income received from each participant must be prepared. It should also show clearly the names of those withdrawn, the incomes received and any monies refunded.
- c) At the conclusion of the visit, a final account sheet should be completed for audit.

7. CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY

In accordance with DfE Departmental Advice 'Charging for School Activities' dated October 2014, the Governing Body has approved a Charging and Remissions Policy.

A copy of the policy is on the school website.

8. VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS

Voluntary contributions may be invited for any materials and an activity whether during or outside school hours, residential or non-residential. The terms of any request to contribute must make it clear that:

- a) There is no obligation to contribute.
- b) Students will not be treated differently according to whether or not their parents have made any contribution in response to the request.

9. SCHOOL CONTRIBUTIONS

Pupil Premium funding can be used to subsidise costs of school trips and visits for eligible students. The maximum contribution that can be made to a trip or visit is 50% of the cost up to a maximum of £100. For students not in receipt of Pupil Premium funding, funding is available through the Financial Assistance Fund. For further information, refer to the Charging and remissions policy, a copy of which is on the school website.

10. QUALIFICATIONS OF SUPERVISORS AND STAFF TO STUDENT RATIOS

To assist schools when carrying out a risk assessment on a proposed educational visit, the following information on qualifications and numbers of supervisors is provided.

Supervisory provision should be appropriate to the number in the group, the age, ability and genders of the students and the activities to be undertaken. At least one supervisor or leader of each gender should accompany mixed groups.

While the ratio of staff to students may vary according to the nature of the visit, it is generally recognised that a teacher, or other adult, to pupil ratio should be a minimum of 1:12 for most activities and particularly on visits overseas, although it may be a little less generous than this on local visits with older, more responsible students, for example, up to 1:15 ratio. Certain hazardous ventures will require rather greater supervision with fully trained personnel accompanying groups. If in doubt, advice from the EVC should be sought.

Where adventurous activities are to be undertaken, there must be a level of supervisor qualification which is commensurate with the most hazardous of the intended activities. All trips involving adventurous activities must have Local Authority approval.

Likewise, unless an "opting out" system can be arranged whereby pupil numbers are reduced for a particularly hazardous activity, it is necessary to consider, for the whole expedition, ratios of staff to students appropriate for the most hazardous elements.

11. INSURANCE COVER

The school has in place an insurance policy for all trips and visits, including visits abroad and adventurous activities. If booking with a specialist provider, care should be taken not to pay for extra insurance where it is not required. A copy of the insurance schedule is available from the Bursar.

Parents should be advised that students are covered under the school's policy 'Comprehensive School Journey Insurance', through Zurich Municipal, which covers the following:

Cancellation and other expenses (when cancelled by school or at instruction of Foreign Office or other appropriate body);

Medical and associated expenses;

Personal accident;

Personal effects and money.

Insured journeys are any trip or excursion (including exchange visits and work experience placements) which are specifically authorised by the school involving travel outside the school boundaries but excluding trips and excursions where insurance is provided as part of a package.

12. CANCELLATIONS

If the school cancels the trip, refunds will automatically be made.

If a parent chooses to withdraw a student from a trip, any refund is discretionary and depends on the circumstances and any non-recoverable, direct costs that have already been paid. The school cannot be expected to support a financial loss.

School trips must be financially viable. The school is unable to support any financial loss as this would impact on funding available for the core purpose of teaching and learning.

Letters to parents for all trips should specify that the deposit is non-refundable. However, a refund may be made if the cancelled place on the trip is resold.

If student withdraws voluntarily, eg 'doesn't want to go' – no refund will be made and the full cost of the school trip will need to be paid.

If covered by insurance – ie for medical reasons – a refund will be arranged.

If the reason for cancellation is not covered by insurance – the cost of the trip is to be paid.

13. SURCHARGES

Travel companies often reserve the right to apply a surcharge to a trip after payment has been received. This covers increases in fuel costs, airport taxes etc. This does not often happen, but if it does, the increase in cost will be passed on to parents/carers so that the trip remains financially viable.

14. MASS ATTENDANCE

All Catholics have an obligation to participate at Mass on Sundays and other Holy days, and this must be taken into account when planning a trip. The obligation can be fulfilled on the day itself or the preceding evening.

A trip could interfere with the ability to fulfil this obligation if, for example, it was a residential trip across the whole of a weekend. In such a case, provision must be made for Catholic students and staff to attend Mass as part of the trip schedule.

In another example, if a trip involves participants being away for all of one Sunday, then it is reasonable to expect any Catholics to attend Mass on the Saturday evening. In this case it might be helpful to point this out in the trip information.

If there are any questions relating to this, or help required, then please contact the head of RE.

15. ANNUAL REPORT TO GOVERNING BODY

The governing body will receive an annual report of all trips and visits that the school has run over the preceding school year together with any additional recommendations arising from these.

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years.

This document/policy was approved at the meeting of the safeguarding committee of the governing body at their meeting on 16 June 2022

Signed:  Name: Pete Fawcett Chair of safeguarding committee

CONSENT FORM FOR SCHOOL TRIPS AND OTHER OFF-SITE ACTIVITIES

Please sign and date the form below if you are happy for your child,
..... year.....

- a) To take part in school trips and other activities that take place off school premises;
and
- b) To be given first aid or urgent medical treatment during any school trip or activity.

Please note the following important information before signing this form:

- The trips and activities covered by this consent include;
 - all visits (including residential trips) which take place during the holidays or a weekend
 - adventure activities at any time
 - off-site sporting fixtures outside the school day,
 - all off-site activities for nursery schools.
- The school will send you information about each trip or activity before it takes place.
- You can, if you wish, tell the school that you do not want your child to take part in any particular school trip or activity.

Written parental consent will not be requested from you for the majority of off-site activities offered by the school – for example, year-group visits to local amenities – as such activities are part of the school’s curriculum and usually take place during the normal school day.

Please complete the medical information section below (if applicable) and sign and date this form if you agree to the above.

Medical information

Details of any medical condition that my child suffers from and any medication my child should take during off-site visits:

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Signed.....

Date.....