

# **St Matthew's Church of England Primary School**



## **Educational Visits Policy**

## **Preface**

At St Matthew's C of E Primary School, we believe that activities that are outside the normal curriculum are an important additional experience for young people. They enhance the pupils' development in terms of learning new skills, broadening their horizons and encountering new personal, social and educational experiences. However, for such activities to be successful they require proficient preparation and management. The more complex the activity the more potential there is for mishap. The aim of this document is to provide guidance to ensure that all such activities are carried out safely.

**St Matthew's C of E Primary School has adopted the official Sandwell policy for off site activities and onsite adventures.**

## **Aims and Objectives**

The purpose of this policy is to provide staff with the appropriate guidelines that they require for planning off site activities and onsite adventures so they meet the requirements of the local authority and the Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel.

## **Legal requirements**

All legal requirements are set out in the adopted Sandwell Policy. Employees of the local authority and school have a duty of care to the children (this will be overseen by the teacher). At all times a teacher has a duty of care for young people under his/her supervision.

The law expects "effective supervision" for off site activities and onsite adventures so therefore it is the schools' responsibility to ensure the correct level of supervision is provided. The nature and location of the activity, the competence and experience of staff, together with the age and ability of the young person, determine the degree of supervision required.

The adopted Sandwell policy states:

- 1:5 - 1 adult for every 5 children for under 5s (Nursery and Reception)
- 1:6 - 1 adult for every 6 children in school Years 1 and 2.
- 1:10 - 1 adult for every 10 children in school Year 3.
- 1:15 - 1 adult for every 15 children in school years 4 to 6.
- Where there is a mixed gender group every effort should be made to ensure male and female staff attend.
- In the instance that a child is in need, two adults must be available to accompany.

There will, however, be occasions when these ratios are not sufficient to ensure effective supervision. It should be noted that these are minimum levels and all the factors above should be considered when setting a proper supervision level.

## **Split site**

As St Matthew's Church of England Primary School is a split site, there will be occasions when children will move between the buildings. When children move between the buildings, they will be escorted by adults within the ratio above. There are two roads that need to be crossed: Windmill Lane has a zebra crossing and the group will cross the road there; Croxall Way is a one-way road and the adult will station themselves at the top of junction to warn any oncoming vehicles turning into the road to stop while group crosses the road.

## **Responsibilities**

The following section identifies the functions, roles and responsibilities that key people hold.

### **Local Authority:**

- Ensuring that EVCs, visit leaders and other establishment staff involved in educational/off site visits are assessed as competent in their specific tasks.
- Monitoring the work of EVCs in schools/establishments to help identify training needs and appropriate levels of delegation.

### **Governors:**

- Ensure that the headteacher and the EVC are supported in matters relating to educational/off site visits and that they have the appropriate time and expertise to fulfil their responsibilities.
- Ensure that the headteacher and the EVC have taken all reasonable and practicable measures to include participants with special educational needs or medical needs on a visit.

### **Headteacher:**

- Ensure teachers/leaders are made aware of and understand LA guidance on emergency planning and procedures. Training and briefing sessions must be provided for school staff.
- Ensure that the EVC briefs the leader and supervisors have ready access to them during the visit.

### **Educational Visits Coordinator:**

- Assess the competence of leaders and other adults proposed for a visit and change accordingly if required.
- Organise the training of leaders and other adults going on a visit. This will commonly involve training such as first aid, hazard awareness etc.

### **Visit Leader:**

- Undertake and complete the planning and preparation of the visit including the briefing of group members and parents.
- Ensure the ratio of supervisors to participants is appropriate for the needs of the group.

## **Staff conduct**

While on an educational visit/off site activity staff will remain professional and act as role models at all times. While on residential visits it is the staff's responsibility to ensure an adequate number of adults are on duty at all times. This includes ensuring that the appropriate ratios are met and staffs do not leave the site if these are not met. While off duty staff will not be able to drink alcohol; as in case of an emergency they may be needed to be back on duty.

Staff who are supervising children on a trip will also need to dress appropriately for the task and activities in hand. If the children are asked to be in school uniform then staff should dress as they would for a usual school day.

## **Submitting an application**

An Evolve application for an off site visit must be put in at least 3 weeks prior to the departure date. If it is an out of hours, adventurous activity or residential trip then an application must be submitted at least 8 weeks before the departure date. This is because the LA requires 6 weeks to approve the application.

The following order will be followed when submitting an application:

- Visit leader to submit the application.
- EVC will assess and approve/decline the visit.
- Headteacher approval.
- Governor approval.

### **Approval Procedures**

All off site activities and on-site adventurous activities or residential stays should take place with the knowledge and approval of the headteacher and EVC. An EVOLVE application and risk assessment will need to be completed for each activity. If it is a repeating activity it will need to be completed on a termly basis.

### **Risk assessment responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of the visit leader to carry out the risk assessment. The EVC will support and assist where necessary.

When using an external provider the school will not request a risk assessment when the external provider is leading the activity, but they will request to have in writing that the provider has an up to date risk assessment. The school will put their own risk assessment into place.

### **Staff checklist**

The following outlines what the visit leader is responsible for and what should happen before, during and after a visit.

| <b>Before the visit</b>  |  |             |
|--|--|-------------|
| <b>What</b>  | <b>When</b>  | <b>Tick</b> |
| Identify the need for a trip and the possible outcomes.  | When the need arises.  |             |
| Discuss the trip with the EVC to discuss viability of the trip, its purpose and the necessary pupil: staff ratio.  | Once the need has been identified (at least 2 months before departure. Longer if it is a residential). |             |
| Through discussion with the EVC appoint: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A visit leader</li> <li>• A deputy group leader</li> <li>• A first aider (with overall first aid responsibility)</li> </ul> Other staff and volunteers to be involved in the trip. | Within a week of the initial discussion with the EVC.  |             |
| Discuss transport requirements with office staff and request provisional costing.  | Within a week of the initial discussion with the EVC.  |             |
| Discuss requirements with venue and request provisional costing.   | Within a week of the initial discussion with the EVC.  |             |
| Discuss all aspects of the trip with the EVC and/or head teacher including the purpose, the outcomes, the destination, projected costs and the necessary staff ratios.   | 7 weeks before the departure date.   |             |
| Confirm bookings for transport and venue. Ensure confirmation of all bookings is received in writing including the number of seats on the coach.   | 6 weeks before the departure date.   |             |
| Undertake and complete the planning and preparation of the visit. Confirm plans with the EVC.  | Once the trip has been confirmed.  |             |

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| Send out parental confirmation and medical letters.  | As soon as the trip has been confirmed.              |  |
| Complete the necessary forms on Evolve and undertake and complete a comprehensive risk assessment. Where necessary, the RA should be based on a pre-visit. The RA should be completed by more than one person. Attach all documents to Evolve. | 3 weeks before departure date (earlier if possible). |  |
| Provide kitchen staff with provisional details of the trip.  | Following return of permission letters.              |  |
| Re-confirm bookings with transport and venue.  | 2 weeks before departure.                            |  |
| Allocate groups of children to staff.  | 2 weeks before departure.                            |  |
| Brief all staff involved ensuring they are clear about their responsibilities.   | 1 week before departure.                             |  |
| Ensure pupils are aware of their responsibilities and information they need to know (e.g. money, clothing etc.)  | At least one day before departure.                   |  |
| Ensure all paperwork is ready (Visit summary sheet, RA, Emergency contact, original consent forms (a copy left at school), staff medical forms, staff contact numbers).  | At least one day before departure.                   |  |

| During the visit  |      |
|---|------|
| What  | Tick |
| Oversee the loading of the coach on the day, including lunches for children.              |      |
| Ensure children are appropriately seated.   |      |
| Complete a double head count before departure.  |      |
| Meet the appropriate person at the venue and organise children.                           |      |
| Confirm lunch arrangements on arrival.  |      |
| Ensure groups are in the appropriate place at the appropriate time.                       |      |
| Ensure double head counts occur throughout the day.                                       |      |
| Ensure children are back on the coach ready for the departure time.                       |      |
| Contact the headteacher/EVC to notify when the coach departs. Discuss arrival time.       |      |
| If the coach will be arriving late notify the school again.                               |      |
| Supervise the children disembarking the coach. Ensure all valuables are collected.        |      |
| Ensure all children are collected.  |      |
| Ensure any incidents are reported to the headteacher/EVC and correct paperwork completed. |      |

| After the visit (to be completed within 1 week of arrival)                                    |      |
|---|------|
| What  | Tick |
| Liaise with First Aid leader to ensure stock is replenished and put away.                     |      |
| Complete evaluation forms on Evolve.  |      |
| File 1 consent form (give one hard copy to the EVC).  |      |
| Feedback to EVC/headteacher/children and parents (where necessary) on any successes/problems. |      |

### **Monitoring**

Monitoring of educational visits will take place on a regular basis. This is so that the headteacher is confident in knowing that pupils are safe at all times and that proposed outcomes are met. Monitoring will be the responsibility of the headteacher and the EVC.

The following areas will be monitored:

- The planning and approval process
- Evaluations of visits
- Observation of visit leaders in action (field monitoring)
- Accidents/incidents

### **Record Keeping**

Records relating to educational visits need to be kept for 14 years after a visit. If there is an incident on a trip it needs to be kept for 25 years. However, as St Matthew's C of E Primary School has adopted the Sandwell policy and therefore Evolve all records will be stored electronically. The only hard copy that needs to be kept is one sample consent form. Risk assessments for trips that occur on a regular/yearly basis can be used again, however they will need to be updated and amended accordingly and annually.

### **Mandatory forms**

When carrying out an educational visit/activity it is the responsibility of the visit leader to take the following forms on the visit/activity:

- Copy of the application form from EVOLVE
- List of pupils
- Consent form / emergency contact information for EVERY pupil
- Risk Assessment or Risk Management checklist/s
- Incident / Accident Form – SMBC document or schools own accident form
- Staff/adult medication details and next of kin forms

All of the above forms are available on Evolve under the pink resources tab.