



## EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY

At St Bede's we plan, organise, conduct and review all visits, trips and off-site activities in line with the Worcestershire LA Policy. Worcestershire County Council has formally adopted "OEAP Employer Guidance" as "Worcestershire Employer Guidance for the Management of Visits and Learning outside the Classroom". A copy of this Guidance can be found on the following website [www.oeapng.info](http://www.oeapng.info)

The school's current EVC (Educational visits coordinator) is **Mr Joe Stenning**.

Some extra-curricular activities, such as workshops and clubs, are undertaken on the school premises. Although these activities are not covered by this policy it is expected that members of staff organising them will evaluate the hazards and ensure that residual risks are 'low'. It is expected that formal risk assessments will be completed by the organising member of staff and filed within the appropriate department.

This policy also seeks to recognise that the school organises a variety of types of trip/activity that can be categorised as follows:

- 1) **Evolve trips/activities** – ALL trips that are residential or further than 50 miles away from school or high risk or involve travel abroad
- 2) **Standard trips/activities** – trips requiring student transport that do not meet Evolve criteria (also excludes local sporting fixtures organised by the PE department)
- 3) **Local trips/activities** – trips not requiring student transport (except for a small number with walking difficulties)
- 4) **PE department trips/activities** – trips to sporting fixtures (that do not meet Evolve criteria)

The following appendices (which may be updated by the Principal and EVC as appropriate) form an integral part of this policy.

Appendix 1 – Key to identify the correct trip/activity procedure

Appendix 2 – EVOLVE trip/activity check list

Appendix 3 – STANDARD trip/activity check list

Appendix 4 – LOCAL trip/activity check list

Appendix 5 – PE department trip/activity check list (not subject to EVOLVE criteria)

Appendix 6 – Potentially 'high risk' activities and environments

Appendix 7 – Parental permission summary

Appendix 8 – Letter for new starters

Appendix 9 – Costing/approval sheet

Appendix 10 – Risk assessment form

Appendix 11 – Return to school after 15:30

## 1. Aims

The Principal and Academy Representatives recognise the value and importance of learning outside the classroom and encourage staff to organise educational visits that enrich the curriculum and enhance the learning development of our students. The policy of our school is to offer students a broad and balanced curriculum that promotes their spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development, and prepares them for adult life. Our specific aims are to:

- strengthen personal development and the process of self-discovery, enhancing self-discipline and self-esteem
- develop a sense of responsibility towards the environment, as well as the ability to co-operate with others in a team context
- nurture an understanding, tolerance and respect for people from other countries and cultures

## 2. Roles and Responsibilities

2.1 The **Principal** is the responsible officer for ensuring visits are approved as necessary, that all visits approved can be accommodated within the timetable, that the ethos of each visit is one with which the school wishes to be associated and that the designated Visit Leader and deputy are competent and have the capacity to undertake the visit. It is also the responsibility of the Principal to submit EVOLVE on-line documentation once it has been approved by the EVC. The Principal will ensure that Academy Representatives are informed about residential visits prior to them taking place and provide them with reports detailing the school visits that have taken place, numbers, venue and year group

2.2 The **EVC** is a senior staff member who has an active involvement in organising and managing educational visits/activities. The EVC has received relevant training and induction and is delegated with the following tasks:

- to communicate with staff who are planning educational visits in order to ensure that the activity is thought through in an appropriate level of detail and that paperwork is completed in accordance with this policy. For further guidance on the role of the EVC refer to OEAP eg section 3.4j.
- to ensure (in conjunction with the Principle) that the designated Visit Leader and deputy are competent and have the capacity to undertake the visit
- to check that all paperwork and forms are completed as per this policy
- to check that any additional EVOLVE requirements (for residential visits or trips more than 50 miles from base or foreign travel or high-risk activities) have been completed.
- to grant final permission for a visit when all organisation and planning are complete and to signify this by signing the risk assessment form and check list

- to ensure that the annual record of visits and activities where parental contributions are requested is updated and posted onto the website, ideally by the end of September
  - to ensure that all members of staff are aware of the requirements of this policy and any changes that are made when the policy is reviewed.
- 2.3 The designated **Visit Leader** must have attended the Visit Leader training delivered by Worcestershire County Council or an accredited alternative provider. The Visit Leader takes full responsibility for the group they lead and will ensure that they have planned the visit in accordance with the St. Bede's Educational visits policy, their training and guidance on OEAPNG (NG stands for national guidance). The Visit Leader will only lead visits that they are competent to lead and will only use competent providers. They will also ensure that the visit is fully risk assessed based on the STAGED method (see section 4.5) including information on individual students where required. In addition, they will ensure that they have emergency plans in place and will evaluate the visit afterwards. On the return from a trip/activity the Visit Leader should only leave the school premises when the last student has been picked up unless arrangements have been made for students to make their own way home. The Visit Leader will also ensure that all appropriate paperwork is given to the EVC for filing and understands that the visit must not go ahead unless the risk assessment and check list has been signed by the EVC. For further guidance about the role of the Visit Leader please refer to OEAP eg section 3.4k.
- 2.4 The designated **deputy Visit Leader** must ensure that they are fully informed of the plans and actions of the designated Visit Leader so that they can fulfil the role outlined in 2.3 in the event of the designated Visit Leader becoming incapacitated or unable to discharge their obligations.
- 2.5 The **Business Manager** will collect and bank payments for visits where charges are permissible; provide Visit Leaders with accurate reports on monies outstanding and give advice and guidance on insurance and legal matters. The Business Manager will also communicate with parents about outstanding monies and any issues pertaining to refunds.
- 2.6 The **member of SLT** with responsibility for the pupil premium budget (or any future funding that replaces pupil premium) will advise the Visit Leader and Business Manager of any subsidies available for qualifying students.
- 2.7 The **member of SLT** with responsibility for CPD is to ensure that all staff are adequately trained to lead and organise a trip; training will be revalidated where necessary and kept on record. For further guidance on monitoring refer to OEAP eg section 3.2b.
- 2.8 The **board of Academy representatives** are responsible for ensuring that St Bede's has effective health and safety policies in place which meet all statutory requirements, county council and national guidance.

### 3. Procedural Requirements

- 3.1 **Underpinning Legal framework Duty of Care:** Visit Leaders must have read and understood the Underpinning Legal framework and Duty of Care section from the OEAP eg section 3.2a.
- 3.2 **Risk Assessments:** A risk assessment is to be completed for every trip/activity that involves students leaving the school premises on educational business. The process of a

risk assessment should be to evaluate the students attending eg medical, special needs or behavioural issues, transport, location and the possible hazards and/or risks that may be encountered. Staff should always be prepared to adapt as necessary according to unexpected conditions and always have a 'Plan B'. Risk assessment should be carried out by the Visit Leader in conjunction with the other staff on the visit and possibly students. Risk assessments should be shared with all parties on the visit. To assess the competence of a provider, Visit Leaders should sample their risk assessment to be aware of risks that may need to be managed prior to the visit. Blanket risk assessments for some activities may be used – see procedures. Also refer to OEAP eg section 4.3c for more information on risk assessment.

- 3.3 **Variations to plan:** Visit Leaders are expected to adhere to their plan unless a situation arises where a change is deemed to be necessary. Any change must be carefully considered and be communicated to the deputy Visit Leader and team as appropriate.
- 3.4 **First Aider:** It is school policy that a qualified first aider must accompany students on trips/visits unless the Principle **AND** EVC has good reason to allow this condition to be relaxed. A first aid kit must be taken on all off-site activities, visits and trips. The school recognises the value of all accompanying staff being first aid trained and will endeavor to work towards this ideal goal subject to resource and other constraints.
- 3.5 **Mobile Phones (staff):** The Visit Leader needs to have mobile phone contact, live and accountable to the school, at all times of the trip/visit, except in certain circumstances eg whilst driving, in areas of poor reception or at venues such as churches or theatres. However, the Visit Leader, when it is safe to do so, should check for messages or missed calls on a regular basis. Visit Leaders should ensure that the mobile phone is fully charged and operational. This area of the policy must be read in conjunction with the school Minibus Policy.
- 3.6 **Mobile Phones (students):** The Visit Leader has discretion as to whether students are allowed to take mobile phones on a trip/visit. Staff should be particularly aware of the need to control the taking of photographs, preventing contact with other students at school and ensuring that mobile phones are not used to contact parents in the event of an 'emergency'.
- 3.7 **Senior Leadership:** It is school policy that one member from the Senior Leadership Team should attend the week-long residential visits if possible. Every member of SLT should be trained in critical incident procedures and be able to act as school contact.
- 3.8 **Continuing Faith Development whilst on visits:** It is seen as good practice by the school that whilst on residential visits Catholic students are actively encouraged to reflect and engage with prayer.
- 3.9 **Evaluation of external providers:** It is good practice that Visit Leaders have prior knowledge of the location they are visiting. This will assist with risk benefit management. If a visit prior to the arranged date is not permissible, then full research on the location should be carried out. Evaluation of competence can be carried out by researching websites or brochures, by using a provider with a quality badge (lotc or adventure mark), by looking at visitor risk assessments or by sampling the risk assessments, by accessing data on past visits or by consulting other schools (evolve), preliminary visits or Governing Bodies for the activity. The WCC Offsite Visit Adviser must always be consulted.

- 3.10 **Parental Consent:** No student will be allowed off the school premises for any off-site activity, visit or trip without full parental consent in the form of a reply slip. Blanket consents for sporting activities, visits to Mount Carmel and the sponsored walk around Arrow Valley Lake are obtained for all students joining the school. It is the responsibility of the Parents/Carers to inform the school of any changes eg medical needs, contact numbers and address.
- 3.11 **Residential Visits:** A Parental Information Meeting must be held before any residential visit takes place. This should be included in the visit planning process of that particular visit.
- 3.12 **Information about participants, medical conditions, special needs etc:** Students should be identified and the appropriate measures put in place to deal with emergencies and/or incidents. An appropriate staff to student ratio should exist on every trip to include cover, should a member of the trip/visit team be drawn away to deal with a specific situation
- 3.13 **Volunteers:** It is school policy that volunteers are to be over the age of 25 years old and will hold a relevant DBS. Volunteers are, under no circumstances, to assume the positions of Visit Leader or deputy Visit Leader. Volunteers can be Academy Representatives, members of the PTFA, Staff from partnership schools or any other person deemed responsible at the Principal's discretion. Provided that EVC agreement is obtained it may be considered appropriate for staff to be accompanied on a trip/activity by their child/children or a relative (eg work experience). This opportunity would be granted on the strict understanding that the member of staff must remember that their primary focus is on the students on the trip/activity and that the accompanying person must not take responsibility for students unless they are deemed to be a volunteer.
- 3.14 **Insurance:** The school is covered by Public Liability Insurance and Off-Site Activities Travel and Personal Insurance Policy held by Worcestershire County Council. Employer's liability Insurance is a statutory requirement and Worcestershire County Council holds a policy that indemnifies it against all claims for compensation for bodily injury suffered by any person employed by it. This cover should extend to those persons who are acting in a voluntary capacity as assistant supervisors. Worcestershire County Council also holds public liability insurance, indemnifying it against all claims for compensation for bodily injury from persons not in its employ, as well as for the accidental loss of, or damage caused to, property. Employees (as agents of the employer) are indemnified against all such claims, as are voluntary helpers acting under the direction of staff. The indemnity covers activities such as off-site activities and visits organised by all establishments and settings for which the employer is responsible. The EVC and Visit Leader must be made aware if any student going on an overseas educational visit has had any incidents of self-harm or attempted suicide as insurance would not cover such acts when abroad. A risk assessment of such students may mean that they are not allowed to attend.
- 3.15 **Charging for School Visits:** It is the policy of the school's Academy Representative Body to:
- Ask for contributions from parents for school trips and visits, for which compulsory charges cannot be made, but which are not viable otherwise. Students will not be excluded from such activities because of inability to make a contribution.
  - Apply a charge for all board and lodging costs on residential visits except where students are entitled to statutory remission.

**NB: The following statement must be used in all correspondence relating to charging of activities to students**

*“If you feel you may require some assistance with the cost of this activity, please let us know on the return slip.”*

For further guidance please refer to the OEAP eg section 3.2c Charges for outdoor learning.

- 3.16 **Registers:** A register of students must be taken prior to departure, during and after all visits, trips and off-site activities.
- 3.17 **Emergencies:** Visit leaders and their deputies organising EVOLVE and STANDARD trips/activities should take with them at all times the designated emergency contact numbers for the school and Worcestershire County Council (red critical incident folder). Staff are to be made aware that the emergency number 112 called from a mobile phone acts as a GPS location signal for emergency services in the UK and in other EU countries. For critical incidents please refer to the Worcestershire County Council “Coping with Emergencies/Critical Incidents in Schools” document. This can be found on Policy Share.
- 3.18 **Expectations of Students and Behaviour:** The schools Behaviour Code of Practice applies on all trips and educational visits. Appropriate sanctions will be applied on the visit or on the return should any issues occur. Parents will be informed, as soon as possible, of any significant issues. Poor behaviour on any trip or visit may result in students being excluded from future trips or visits or being returned home at parental cost. Alcohol is not permitted on any trips or visits by students or staff.
- 3.19 **Inclusion:** The school will endeavour to include all students in trips and educational visits where reasonably possible (venue access, behaviour etc). If a student is in danger of being refused access to a trip/visit then parents/carers will be informed by letter. Any refusal must be made with reference to the school’s SEN policy which covers inclusion.
- 3.20 **EVC organised trips:** In order to ensure that there are no conflicts of interest any trip/activity organised by the EVC must be signed off by the Principal or vice Principal – this includes signing the checklist and risk assessment.

#### **4. Planning and organising a visit**

- 4.1 Staff wishing to plan and undertake a visit should apply verbally to the Principal for permission to plan the visit. Once granted they should submit the details to the Principal using the costing sheet (even if parents are not being asked for a contribution) and receive permission to undertake the visit. They MUST have had the relevant Visit Leader training and be familiar with the use of the critical incident procedures plan.
- 4.2 Permission will be granted when it has been confirmed that the visit can be accommodated within the school timetable and the ethos of the visit is one with which the school wishes to be associated.
- 4.3 When the visit involves additional or high-risk activities, foreign travel, travel of more than 50 miles or is a residential visit then details of the visit will also be sent to the County Council Educational Visits Advisor by the Principal for confirmation that all the procedures have been satisfactorily completed on the EVOLVE website.

- 4.4 Some regularly repeated visits and off-site sporting events may receive block annual approval subject to parents being made aware of every visit, especially any involving a return time outside the normal school day. A list of activities that fall into this category will be held by the EVC and the consent letter issued to parents of new starters will be modified annually to reflect any changes. Parents/carers will be notified of visits to Mount Carmel during school hours via the newsletter and web site.
- 4.5 The 'STAGED' procedure will be used as the basis for planning visits:
- STAFF Competent? Trained? Experienced? Ratio of staff to students? Back-up in case of emergency/illness?
  - TRANSPORT Getting to the venue?
  - ACTIVITY Simple? Complex? Training required? Consent? Insurance? Licensable?
  - GROUP Prior experience? Behaviour? Medical and/or Special Needs?
  - ENVIRONMENT Same as previous times? Weather Forecast? Water Levels?
  - DISTANCE How Far? Residential?
- 4.6 Visit leaders need to use the key (Appendix 1) to identify the appropriate check list to use. The checklist forms part of the final approval process and must be signed by the EVC (together with the completed risk assessment). It is the Visit Leader's responsibility to ensure that visits are planned in accordance with this policy. Advice can be sought from the EVC at any time during the process and dialogue is to be actively encouraged.
- 4.7 The Visit Leader must discuss staffing implications with the appropriate member of SLT at the earliest opportunity in order to ensure that cover needs are fully understood.
- 4.8 The Visit Leader must ensure that lists of students and staff attending a visit/activity are handed to the school office prior to it taking place. For residential trips a copy of student and staff details must also be given to the nominated school contact.
- 4.9 Following each visit the Visit Leader will give verbal feedback to the EVC so that lessons can be learned for the benefit of future trips. Any incidents or accidents will be reported in accordance with the reporting requirements. The EVC can at his/her discretion and with approval of the Principle visit a venue to monitor the organisation of the activities that are students are involved in. This may be deemed necessary when a new venue is used.
- 4.10 The Visit Leader will ensure that all adults accompanying the trip are DBS checked and the safeguarding policy for the venue will be obtained prior to the trip. The Visit Leader must also ensure that contact details for staff Next of Kin (even for a day trip) are handed into the office.
- 4.11 For each residential trip priority will be given to those pupils who have not accessed any previous residential trips.
- 4.12 If a pupil with specific needs wishes to go on a residential trip then one of their parents will be invited to attend as they are so familiar with the condition, routines and the extra care needed.
- 4.13 The visit will not be allowed to proceed if the consent form, appropriate trip checklist and risk assessment have not been signed by the authorised persons.

## 5. Emergency Procedures

- 5.1 The Visit Leader must follow the Critical Incident Procedures in the event of an emergency and both the leader and their deputy will have a copy for every EVOLVE AND standard trip.
- 5.2 For visits that involve transporting all the students to an event a school contact (member of SLT who has received critical incident planning training) will be designated to act as a link between the group, the parents, the school and the County Council in the event of an emergency.
- 5.3 In the event of a delay (of more than 1 hour), or of an incident to any attending participant, staff member or volunteer, then the school must be contacted as soon as possible to inform the designated school contact or Principal so that they can decide:
- A) If the incident is of a less serious nature then the next of kin or parents of those affected will be informed about what has happened (e.g. that the party will be returning late or that an incident has befallen a party member) and the action that has been taken so far. In appropriate circumstances the Visit Leader will be designated to undertake this task.
  - B) However, if the incident is very serious (e.g. involves a disabling or life threatening accident, or a fatality) then the Principal, deputy or the school contact will inform the designated senior officer of the Education Service (Director or Deputy Director 01905 728848 out of office hours is 079624 909756) and the school will instigate its critical incident plan. Officers of the authority will be allocated to support the school with the immediate incident, any necessary follow up or inquiry.
- 5.4 In the event of a group being overdue and without contact of more than 1 hour the Principal or designated contact will contact the visit leader and put 5.3A or 5.3B into place.

**Date of Policy: September 2019**

**To be reviewed September 2021 or earlier if there is a significant change to County guidance or the named EVC changes.**

Signature:..... Name:.....

Date:.....

Academy Representatives (Chair)

Signature:..... Name:.....

Date:.....

Principal

Signature:..... Name:.....

Date:.....

EVC