St Michael’s CE Bamford Primary School

Educational Visits Policy 2020

**Mission Statement**

**At St. Michael’s every child is enveloped in a warm, safe, Christian embrace. We face our challenges together and enjoy our educational adventure. We believe and trust in each other. Our children shine brightly. High expectations, endless encouragement and quality teaching enable us all to believe in, dream of and aspire to reaching our full potential in every way. Children leave St. Michael’s knowing that with effort, commitment, engagement and self-belief they are ready to spread their wings and fly.**

**Context**

We believe that educational visits are an integral part of the entitlement of every pupil to an effective and balanced curriculum. Appropriately planned visits are known to enhance learning and improve attainment, and so form a key part of what makesSt. Michael’sa supportive and effective learning environment. The benefits to pupils of taking part in visits and learning outside the classroom include, but are not limited to:

* The development of independence.
* Improvements in their ability to cope with change.
* Increased critical curiosity and resilience.
* Opportunities for meaning making, creativity, developing learning relationships and practicing strategic awareness.
* Increased levels of trust and opportunities to examine the concept of trust (us in them, them in us, them in themselves, them in each other).
* Improved achievement and attainment across a range of curricular subjects. Pupils are active participants not passive consumers, and a wide range of learning styles can flourish.
* Enhanced opportunities for ‘real world’ ‘learning in context’ and the development of the social and emotional aspects of intelligence.
* Increased risk management skills through opportunities for involvement in practical risk-benefit decisions in a range of contexts. ie. encouraging pupils to become more risk aware as opposed to risk averse.
* Greater sense of personal responsibility.
* Possibilities for genuine team working including enhanced communication skills.
* Improved environmental appreciation, knowledge, awareness and understanding of a variety of environments.
* Improved awareness and knowledge of the importance and practices of sustainability.
* Physical skill acquisition and the development of a fit and healthy lifestyle.

**Application**

Any visit that leaves the school grounds is covered by this policy, whether as part of the curriculum, during school time, or outside the normal school day.

In addition to this Educational Visits Policy,St. Michael’s:

1. Adopts the Local Authority’s (LA) document: **‘Guidance for Educational Visits and Related Activities with National Guidance & EVOLVE’** (All staff have access to this via EVOLVE.
2. Adopts National Guidance [www.oeapng.info](http://www.oeapng.info), (as recommended by the LA).
3. Uses EVOLVE, the web-based planning, notification, approval, monitoring and communication system for off-site activities.

All staff are required to plan and execute visits in line with school policy (ie this document), Local Authority policy, and National Guidelines. Staff are particularly directed to be familiar with the roles and responsibilities outlined within the guidance.

**Types of Visit & Approval**

There are three ‘types’ of visit:

1. **Visits/activities within the ‘School Learning Area’ that are part of the normal curriculum and take place during the normal school day.**

These follow the ‘School Learning Area’ Operating Procedure (Appendix 1).

1. **Other non-residential visits within the UK that do not involve an adventurous activity.**

These are entered on EVOLVE by the visit leader and submitted to the EVC who is also the headteacher for checking and approval.

1. **Visits that are overseas, residential, or involve an adventurous activity.**

As above, but the Head authorises and then submits to the LA for approval.

**Roles and responsibilities**

**Visit leaders** are responsible for the planning of their visits, and for entering these on EVOLVE (where required). They should obtain outline permission for a visit from the Head Teacher / EVC prior to planning, and certainly before making any commitments. Visit leaders have responsibility for ensuring that their visits will comply with all relevant guidance and requirements.

**The Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC)** is Melanie Barratt, who will support and challenge colleagues over visits and learning outside the classroom (LOtC) activities. The EVC is the first point of contact for advice on visit related matters, and will check final visit plans on EVOLVE before approving them as the Head. The EVC sets up and manages the staff accounts on EVOLVE, and uploads generic school documents, etc.

**The Head Teacher** has responsibility for authorising all visits, and for submitting all overseas, residential or adventurous activity visits to the LA for approval, via EVOLVE.

**The Governing Body**’s role is that of a ‘critical friend’*.* They oversee all visits but delegate some responsibility for checking and advising for residential visits to the LA Advisor.Individual governors may request ‘read-only’ access to EVOLVE.

**The Local Authority**is responsible, by delegation by the Governing Body, for the final approval (via EVOLVE) of all visits that are either overseas, residential, and/or involve an adventurous activity.

**Staff Competence**

We recognise that staff competence is the single most important factor in the safe management of visits, and so we support staff in developing their competence in the following ways:

* An apprenticeship system, where staff new to visits assist and work alongside experienced visit leaders before taking on a leadership role.
* Supervision by senior staff on some educational visits.
* Support for staff to attend training courses relevant to their role, where necessary.

In deciding whether a member of staff is competent to be a visit leader, the Head Teacher will take into account the following factors:

* Relevant experience.
* Previous relevant training.
* The prospective leader’s ability to make dynamic risk management judgements, and take charge in the event of an emergency.
* Knowledge of the pupils, the venue, and the activities to be undertaken.

**Emergency procedures**

**A critical incident is any incident where events go beyond the normal coping mechanisms and experience of the visit leadership team.**

The school has an emergency plan in place to deal with a critical incident during a visit (see Appendix 2). All staff on visits are familiar with this plan and it is tested at least bi-annually and following any major staffing changes.

When an incident overwhelms the establishment’s emergency response capability, or where it involves serious injury or fatality, or where it is likely to attract media attention then assistance will be sought from the local authority.

**Educational Visits Checklist**

St. Michael’s Educational Visits Checklist forms part of the risk management process for visits and off-site activities. This has been adapted from the LA’s generic checklist. A visit should only go ahead if the answer to all relevant questions is ‘YES’. St. Michael’s Educational Visits Checklist may be downloaded from EVOLVE Resources.

**Parental Consent**

Consent is not required for activities within the School Learning Area that are part of the normal curriculum during normal school time.

The school obtains blanket consent at the start of each year for certain other routine activities, eg. after school fixtures, etc. Parents consent through a traditional paper consent form.

Specific, (ie. one-off), parental consent must be obtained for all other visits. For these visits, sufficient information must be made available to parents (via EVOLVE, letters, meetings, etc), so that consent is given on a ‘fully informed’ basis. As above, parents consent through a traditional paper consent form.

**Inclusion**

St. Michael’s does everything possible and reasonable to ensure that every child can take part in activities with the rest of their class including modifying visits, seeking parental advice and support, seeking support from other professionals and outside providers.

**Charging / funding for visits**

St. Michael’s provides a budget per class towards the cost of Educational Visits and uses Pupil Premium to subsidise children with that entitlement in consultation with the parents. The rest of the cost depends upon voluntary parental contributions. Should there be a significant shortfall in contributions school would have to question the viability of a visit.

**Transport**

Visit transport uses reputable coach companies, public transport and mini-buses hired through Rochdale LA.

In the case of coaches and mini-buses, children are closely supervised by staff spread through the coach or by the front seat adult passenger in the case of mini-bus use. These adults ensure that children are counted onto and off the vehicles, ensure that seatbelts are worn continually, that noise levels are kept to reasonable levels to enable the driver to focus, and stand at the foot of the steps on exit to prevent any falls on the steps. This forms our normal operating procedure when using vehicles.

**Use of staff cars to transport pupils –** Only staff with correct insurance and DBS transport pupils in their own vehicle, and only on local visits with the permission of parents. LA guidance is followed.

**Insurance**

We take out LA insurance for visits and follow LA guidance.

**Other topics**

Swimming Lessons – children are transported by coach, two adults accompany the class so that both changing areas are supervised. High expectations of behaviour and following safety rules such as walking at all times are insisted upon.

Dismissal of pupils after evening activities – children are taken to sporting events by parents, grandparents or by the parent of another pupil by private arrangement between parents. Children remain with the teacher until collected unless written permission has been given for older children to walk home.

**Appendix 1 – School Learning Area**

**General**

Visits/activities within the ‘School Learning Area’ that are part of the normal curriculum and take place during the normal school day follow the Operating Procedure below.

These visits/activities:

* do not require parental consent
* do not normally need additional risk assessments / notes (other than following the Operating Procedure below).
* do not need to be recorded on EVOLVE

**Boundaries**

The boundaries of the School Learning Area are detailed below. This area includes, but is not limited to, the following frequently used venues:

* Queens Park
* St. Michael’s Church
* Bamford Chapel
* The sports field opposite Queens Park
* The woodland area on the school side of Queens Park Road down to the river path, and under the bridge that takes Queen’s Park Road.

**Operating Procedure for School Learning Area**

**The following are potentially significant issues/hazards within our School Learning Area:**

* Road traffic.
* Other people / members of the public / animals.
* Losing a pupil.
* Uneven surfaces and slips, trips, and falls.
* Weather conditions.
* Activity specific issues when doing environmental fieldwork (nettles, brambles, rubbish, etc).

**These are managed by a combination of the following:**

* The Head, must give verbal approval before a group leaves.
* Only staff judged competent to supervise groups in this environment are approved. All teachers are currently listed as approved staff.
* The concept and Operating Procedure of the ‘School Learning Area’ is explained to all new parents when their child joins the school, and a synopsis is in the School Prospectus.
* There will be a minimum of two adults.
* Staff are familiar with the area, including any ‘no go areas’, and have practiced appropriate group management techniques.
* Pupils have been trained and have practiced standard techniques for road crossings in a group and younger year groups such as Reception have extra staff to provide greater guidance.
* Where appropriate, pupils are fully briefed on what to do if they become separated from the group.
* All remotely supervised work in the School Learning Area is done in ‘buddy’ pairs as a minimum.
* Pupils’ clothing and footwear is checked for appropriateness prior to leaving school.
* Staff are aware of any relevant pupil medical information and ensure that any required medication is available.
* Staff will deposit in the office a list of all pupils and staff, a proposed route, and an estimated time of return.
* A mobile is taken with each group and the office have a note of the number.
* Appropriate personal protective equipment is taken when needed (eg gloves, goggles)
* Roads are only crossed at the Traffic Lights on Bury and Rochdale Old Rd/ Queens Park Junction or at the pelican crossing on Queen’s Park Rd.

**Appendix 2 – Emergency Procedure**

The school’s emergency response to an incident is based on the following key factors:

1. There is always a nominated emergency base contact for any visit (during school hours this is the office).
2. This nominated base contact will either be an experienced member of the senior management team, or will be able to contact an experienced senior manager at all times.
3. For activities that take place during normal school hours, the visit leadership team will be aware of any relevant medical information for all participants, including staff.
4. For activities that take place outside normal school hours, the visit leadership team and the emergency contact/s will be aware of any relevant medical information and emergency contact information for all participants, including staff.
5. The visit leader/s and the base contact/s know to request support from the local authority in the event thatan incident overwhelms the establishment’s emergency response capability, involves serious injury or fatality, or where it is likely to attract media attention.
6. For visits that take place outside the School Learning Area, the visit leader will carry either:
7. An LA Emergency ‘Card’ (see EVOLVE Resources)
8. This Emergency Procedure is tested through both desk top exercises and periodic scenario calls from visit leaders.