



Educational Visits Policy 2019-2020



"Guided by God, St Gerard's Catholic Primary and Nursery School is an inspiring and aspirational community where we learn to love, hope, dream and achieve."



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Introduction

St. Gerard's Catholic Primary & Nursery School is committed to providing a broad, balanced curriculum for all pupils, and outdoor learning and educational visits is a key feature of our provision. We are committed to providing inspirational, real-world educational experiences for our pupils through visits and visitors to enrich and enhance their learning experiences, deepen knowledge and understanding and increase skills and confidence. This policy will set out the key procedures that need to be followed when planning and undertaking outdoor learning and educational visits, in order to ensure they are not only worthwhile learning experiences, but also undertaken in a safe and responsible manner.

This policy will set out the key procedures that need to be followed when planning and undertaking outdoor learning and educational visits including residential both in the United Kingdom and overseas, in order to ensure they are not only worthwhile learning experiences, but also undertaken in a safe and responsible manner.

This policy covers all Educational Visits that occur outside the school premises. This ranges from walks around the locality to residential visits of several days' duration and residential overseas. It includes outdoor, water and Adventurous Activities.

The policy must be read in conjunction with the LA's 'Policy for the Management of learning outside the Classroom' (available on the Evolve website: www.haltonlotc.org.uk)

Aims and Objectives for Educational Visits

Educational Visits in the UK and overseas and outdoor and Adventurous Activities are an integral part of the children's education at St. Gerard's Catholic Primary & Nursery School. They offer opportunities to enrich the curriculum, enabling the children to have first-hand experience of a wide range of topics and activities. On residential visits especially, there is opportunity to develop social skills which have a long-lasting beneficial effect.

Our fundamental aim at St. Gerard's School is to provide the best possible education for all our pupils. It is the aim of the school to place a high value on diversity, treating every member of the school community as an individual, and meeting the needs of all, taking account of gender, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, sexual orientation, age, ability, disability and social circumstances. In doing this, we aim, therefore, to raise the achievement of all the children in the school.

Definition

This Educational Visits Policy refers to all activities that take place outdoors, on-site and offsite, including residential and overseas. Educational visits provide a context for learning, requiring children to use their skills, knowledge and understanding in real, and often complex, situations; this helps them understand and remember what they are learning about in a meaningful way and brings the curriculum to life. We believe that there are several key outcomes from high quality outdoor education (in line with OEAP guidance):

- Enjoyment and fulfilment: children enjoy participating and adopt a positive attitude to challenge and adventure.
- Confidence: children gain personal confidence and self-esteem
- Social awareness: children develop their self-awareness and social skills; they appreciate the contributions and achievements of themselves and others.
- Environmental awareness: children become alive to the environment, natural and man-made, in which they live, and understand important concepts including sustainable development and conservation.
- Activity skills: young people have the opportunity of developing a range of skills
- Personal qualities: children demonstrate increased initiative, self-reliance, responsibility, independence, perseverance and commitment.
- Key skills: children develop and extend their skills of communication, problem solving, leadership and teamwork.
- Health and fitness: children learn to appreciate the benefits of physical exercise and activity and the lifelong value of participation in leisure activities
- Motivation for learning: children display an increased motivation and appetite for learning that contributes to raised levels of attainment and achievement in other aspects of their education
- Broadening horizons: children broaden their experiences and become open to a wider range of opportunities and life chances.

Nature of Educational Visits

The school runs a wide range of Educational Visits.

These include:

- Walks around the local area including library visits, superstores, Victoria Park, High Schools
- Full-day visits by coach to places of interest to support the curriculum.
- Day visits to places of historical, environmental, religious or other interest to support specific curriculum areas.
- Annual Residential abroad for years 5 & 6
- Annual residential visits for children in Years 2, 4, and 6

Health & Safety

In addition to the LA's 'Policy for the Management of Learning Outside the Classroom' reference is also made to three further documents:

- Health and Safety Advice on Legal Duties and Powers (Feb 2014) [DfE advice template](#)
- School trips and outdoor learning activities: Tackling the health and safety myths <http://www.hse.gov.uk/services/education/school-trips.pdf>
- Group Safety at Water Margins <http://www.rospa.com/leisuresafety/info/watersafety/groupsafety-watermargins.pdf>

The LA has a named Outdoor Education Adviser, Bethan Cooper, who is able to give support and advice, and who has the responsibility of approving listed Adventure Activities.

Learning Outside The Classroom

Whitby Hall Lodge

Whitby Park

Stanney Lane

Ellesmere Port

CH65 6QY

0151 541 2170

Adviser Bethan Cooper

E-mail: bethan.cooper@edsential.co.uk

Roles and Responsibilities

The school's Educational Visits coordinator's (EVC) are Mr Daniel McCabe and Miss Jane Gilbert. For each visit, of whatever duration, a Group Leader is identified. School staff are Visit Leader Trained when starting out at St. Gerard's Catholic Primary & Nursery School.

The Governing Body also has a specific role to play in all Educational Visits.

The Governing Body is responsible for:

- ensuring that guidance is available to inform the school policy, practices and procedures relating to the Health & Safety of pupils on Educational Visits;
- ensuring that the Headteacher is supported in matters relating to educational visits and that they have the appropriate time and expertise to fulfil their responsibilities;
- asking questions about a visit's educational objectives and how they will be met;
- ensuring that visits are approved as necessary by the LA before bookings are confirmed;
- ensuring that the Headteacher has taken all reasonable and practicable measures to include pupils with special educational needs or medical needs on a visit;
- ensuring that they review procedures with the Headteacher on an annual basis.

The function of the EVC is to:

- ensure educational visits meet the employer's and school's requirements;
- support the Governors with approval and other decisions;
- assess the competence of prospective leaders and staff;
- ensure that the Risk and Benefit Assessment meets requirements;
- organise training and induction;
- ensure parents are informed and have given consent;
- organise emergency arrangements;
- keep records of accidents or incident reports;
- review systems and monitor practice.

The **Headteacher** is responsible for:

- ensuring approval for visits is given, including liaising with the LA where appropriate;
- ensuring that the Governing Body is made aware of visits;
- ensuring that arrangements are in place for the educational objectives of a visit to be inclusive;
- being aware of the need for Best Value;
- ensuring that all accreditation or verification of providers has been met;
- ensuring that visits are evaluated to inform the operation of future visits;
- ensuring that each visit has an appropriately competent Group Leader;
- ensuring that all teachers are aware of the LA guidance;
- ensuring that the school has an emergency procedure in case of a major incident, which has been discussed and reviewed by staff. This emergency procedure must include getting support from the LA's public relations unit. See also the school's Critical Incidents Procedures.

The **Group Leader** has overall responsibility for the supervision and conduct of the visit, including direct responsibility for the pupils' health, safety and welfare. The Group Leader must:

- be approved to carry out the visit, suitably competent and knowledgeable about the school and LA's policy and procedures;
- plan and prepare for the visit and assess the risks;
- define the roles and responsibilities of other staff and pupils and ensure effective supervision of what they do.

Appendix 3 provides a useful aide memoire for use by Group Leaders throughout all stages of planning a visit.

Adult volunteers who are not teachers at the school must:

- familiarise themselves with Appendix 4 of this document (Guidelines for Parents / Helpers who Accompany School Trips)
- understand and agree expectations of them;
- sign screening document
- understand their relationship to the pupils, teachers and visit leaders;
- recognise the limits of their responsibility;
- ensure that they are not left in sole charge of pupils unless this has been formally agreed through a risk and benefit assessment;
- follow instructions from teachers;
- raise concerns for pupil welfare with the Group Leader.

Procedure for Running Educational Visits

A set procedure is followed for all Educational Visits, although the nature of each visit will determine the level of preparation required. Each Group Leader will, in liaison with the EVC, complete the online Visit Form - www.haltonlotc.org.uk. A visit will proceed only when the EVC is satisfied that all reasonable preparations have been made.

Risk and Benefit assessment

Risk and Benefit assessments are made for all Educational Visits (see Appendix 2 - Risk and Benefit assessments pro forma). This necessitates that the Group Leader, where possible, has made a pre-visit in order to be able to plan for the visit and to conduct a Risk and Benefit Assessment appropriately. The school aims to make its Risk and Benefit assessments simple, manageable, proportional, suitable and sufficient. The assessment system:

- outlines the educational benefits of the trip
- identifies significant hazards;
- assesses the risk of harm;
- puts control measures in place;
- checks if anything else is needed;
- uses a simple assessment language – high/medium/low.

Risk and Benefit assessments considers the site and its environment, the group, the activity and the leaders.

Financing Educational Visit

As a school we are fully compliant with the law relating to charging for school activities, as set out in sections 449 to 462 of the Education Act 1996. Our Charging and Remissions Policy, available on our school website or in paper copy upon request, details our approach to charging for school trips and residential. Our Pupil Premium policy also states our inclusive approach to providing access to school trips and visits

First Aid

All staff at St. Gerard's Catholic Primary & Nursery School have been First Aid trained. A School first aid kit will always be taken on any educational visits

Emergency Procedures

It is the responsibility of the EVC/Headteacher to ensure that emergency arrangements are in place for all Educational Visits. This includes:

- ensuring that all involved know who is the emergency contact point in the school, for each visit, and in the LA.
- having access to an emergency (Critical Incidents) plan appropriate to the visit;
- ensuring that the contact point – or rota – is effective throughout the visit;
- ensuring that parental contact information is up to date and accessible.

Policy Review

As with all policies, it is the responsibility of the Governors to evaluate the effectiveness of this policy and the practice that it describes. On a day to day basis this responsibility is delegated to the Headteacher who will report back to the governing body as appropriate.

This policy is a working document, and will be reviewed every three years.

Top Tips for Completing a Visit Form on the EVOLVE web based visits approval system

EVOLVE is a web based package and not an intranet package, therefore, it can be accessed anywhere

Web address - www.haltonlotc.org.uk

Getting started

Once you have logged in you can amend your user details by clicking on this icon . At this point you can change:

- password
- user name
- add email address - this is important - please do it. If you forget your log in details this allows you to access them without having to contact your EVC or the LA.

If you need help and can't get in contact with your EVC, you can get help by clicking on this icon .

Entering a Visit

You should be able to find useful planning documents by going to the pink 'Planning' tab and clicking on this icon.  Here you should find your school visits policy, generic risk assessments which you can adapt to meet your own needs etc.

All visits that fall into the following categories will be approved by the Head of the Establishment and the Outdoor Education and Visits Adviser on behalf of the Local Authority:

Residential, Adventurous and Overseas

- All other visits will be approved by the Head of the Establishment and notification will be sent to the Local Authority
- To input a visit you need to go to the blue 'Add Visit' tab. Follow the instructions inputting data as requested however, some top tips to help this are:
- Visit Name - give as much detail as possible - this helps the EVC and the LA if the visit requires LA approval e.g. River Study of River Mersey rather than River Study. This gives a clearer picture of what the visit is about.
- Intended Outcomes - this is a change from the old system where you input the purpose - you can use up to four and you have a very limited amount of space
- Staffing - some confusion arose with the old system and staff were not inputted at this point. If staff have a log on they will be available from the drop down menu. If their name is not there it can be added by the EVC.
- Emergency Contacts - please ensure that two are given and different contact numbers should be used where possible. If the visit occurs when the establishment switchboard is closed the emergency contact detail should work. Please don't assume that because you have the number stored in your mobile phone others will also.
- Last Visit Date - If you haven't been before please state 'No pre-visit'. Where this is the case you should ensure that you have found out about the place you are visiting.

Attachments - please ensure that you attach a transport risk benefit assessment (RBA) that is specific to your establishment/visit, if the visit is going to the LA for approval. **When adding attachments it is incredibly useful to appropriately name the attachment.**

A common question is 'What an adventurous activity?' the current list includes:

Multi Activities - use this if you're going to Conway Centre, Burwardsley, PGL etc	Go-Karting	River/Gorge Walking/Scrambling
Abseiling	High Level Ropes Courses	Rock Climbing (including Climbing Walls)
Air Activities (not commercial flights)	Hillwalking and Mountaineering	Sailing/Windsurfing/Kite Surfing
All activities in 'Open Country'	Horse Riding	Sea Fishing
All forms of boating (not commercial transport)	Hovercrafting	Skiing/Snowboarding (including indoor/dry slopes)
Archery	Ice Skating	Snorkel/Aqualung Activities
Camping	Motor Sport - all forms	Swimming (not public pools)
Canoeing	Mountain Biking/Off-Road Cycling	Use of powered Safety/Rescue Craft
Caving/Potholing/Mine exploration (not show caves)	Quad Biking	Water Skiing
Coasteering/Coastal Scrambling/Sea Level Traversing	Rafting/Improvised Rafting	Extreme' Sports

Tracking a Visit

If you want to see the progress of your visits, click the green **'Track Visits'** tab. Select the staff icon and you will then see your visits. Clicking view will allow you to see the visit form. If you want to edit the visit form this can be done from this tab.



Evaluating a Visit

This is an underused element of the visit planning process and has now been made simpler and given a raised profile with the new 'Evolve' interface. To do this click on the yellow **'Evaluate'** tab, select your visit to be evaluated and follow the on screen instructions.

1. Risk Assessment Key

Likelihood

Probable = 3
Possible = 2
Unlikely = 1

Severity

Fatality 3
Serious Injury/Time lost 2
Minor Injury 1

2. **Likelihood x Severity = Risk Ranking**

Actions based on Risk

		Consequence		
		Minor (1)	Serious Injury (2)	Fatality (3)
Likelihood	Unlikely (1)	1	2	3
	Possible (2)	2	4	6
	Probable (3)	3	6	9

Required Ranking

	Low
	Medium
	High

Score	Rating	Actions Required
1	Insignificant	No action required and no records needed
2 – 3	Low	No additional controls required. Consideration may be given to a more cost-effective solution of improvement that imposes no additional cost. Monitor to ensure control measures are maintained.
4	Medium	Efforts should be made to reduce the risk with costs taken into consideration. Give a time period and identify a person responsible.
6	Medium	Work should not be started until the risk has been reduced. If the work is in progress, urgent action should be taken.
6 – If Fatality	High	Work should not be started or continued.
9	High	Work should not be started or continued.

Contact Details		
School	Coach company	Venue
St. Gerard's Catholic Primary School 0151 424 2879	Ashcroft Travel 0151 420 2220	

Itinerary

To include times for departure, arrival and return etc.

GENERIC BENEFITS - WHY ARE WE DOING THIS?	SPECIFIC OUTCOMES
e.g. Comparing and contrasting environments	e.g Young people experience an environment they may never otherwise access

POTENTIAL HAZARDS	CONTROL MEASURES TO BE CONSIDERED	ESTABLISHMENT SPECIFIC CONTROL MEASURES, ARRANGEMENTS AND/OR ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN BY	RISK RATING
1 ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES e.g. Weather	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weather forecast checked were appropriate • Activities programme amended where necessary 		
2 TRANSPORT e.g. vehicles, drivers, arrival and departure of vehicles breakdowns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Driving hours limited, with back-up driver on long journeys • Seat Belts used at all times • Marshalling as group leaves coach, etc • Appropriate stops for eating and care arrangements en route • LEA guidance on transport in private cars, minibuses, and public transport followed. 		
3 EQUIPMENT CLOTHING SUBSTANCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All clothing appropriate to the activities and location, including the use of weatherproof clothing • Appropriate footwear worn • Special equipment checked • All equipment appropriate to the activities and location 		
4 ACTIVITIES and PROCEDURES e.g. Programme of activities, free time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed programme, including alternatives for bad weather • 'Free time' arrangements • Adequate supervision at all times, with a duty rota in place • Agree standards of behaviour and conduct • Equipment suitable for activities and abilities of pupils 		
5.SUPERVISION COMPETENCE DISCIPLINE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prior assessment of leaders and helpers in relation to the visit, the pupils involved and the activities taking place • Supervision ratio to keep sufficient check on all the party- including accompanying children other than pupils • Code of conduct established and maintained • Adequate staffing numbers available • Appropriate voluntary helpers used and fully briefed on their responsibilities • Police check for helpers under the Child Protection Act 		

<p>6 OVERALL PLANNING MONITORING AND CONTROL</p> <p>e.g. Accommodation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency • Contacts and • Communication • Insurance • LEA Notification • Medical • Arrangements • Parental • Information • Research • Special Needs • Visits Abroad 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only suitable accommodation used and checked for appropriate facilities. Fire precautions and certification checked and a fire drill carried out • Emergency arrangements include carrying the contact numbers for all the participants, the emergency contact person at the establishment and for emergency services maintained by the leader of the party • Mobile telephone available for emergency use • Established appropriate emergency contacts with schools and parents • Critical incident procedure functions properly • Set up effective communication procedures with the group • Insurance cover checked and parents informed of the limits of cover provided • Prior approval/notification of adventurous activities, overseas visits or visits to challenging geographical areas carried out • Specific adventure activity guidelines being followed • All relevant medical information of all participants maintained • All appropriate medical arrangements, including first aid • Special potential health hazards associated with the site • Is it necessary to notify parents. Check this document and local policy • Have you provided appropriate information for parents <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting with parents • Parental Consent • Do you need and have they given their consent • Researched the area, site accommodation, company • Pre visit carried out • Full account taken of any special needs involved 		
<p>OTHER</p>			

A COPY OF THIS RISK ASSESSMENT, WITH VISIT SPECIFIC CONTROL MEASURES, IS TO BE PROVIDED TO THE EVC/ HEADTEACHER AND ADDED AS AN ATTACHMENT TO THE EVOLVE VISIT FORM

Please ensure that the risk benefit assessment actually relates to this visit or Learning Outside the Classroom activity i.e. it reflects this activity/these activities, at this location/these locations, led by these staff with these young people. Account has been taken of any young people with particular needs and an informed judgment regarding weather and water levels (if relevant) has been made. Please ensure this is shared and understood by all involved in leading the visit.

- Relevant information has been provided to parents/carers and young people, and pre-visit information meetings have been arranged where appropriate.
- All aspects of the visit (both during and after the event) are evaluated
- Staff and other supervisors have been appropriately briefed on:
The nature of the group, including age, health characteristics, capabilities, special educational needs, likely behaviour and any other information relevant to the planned activities.
- The nature and the location of the visit.
- the visit is effectively supervised – staffing ratios meet requirements of good practice.
- staff and third party providers have access to emergency procedure details.

Guidelines for Parents/Helpers who Accompany School Trips

Thank you for offering to accompany St. Gerard's children on a school trip. We ask you to read the following guidelines before you depart.

- We expect all trips to be pleasurable for all concerned; however, accompanying a group is very hard work and is not to be undertaken lightly. Please ensure you understand what you will be required to do and ask any questions you may have about the trip before it takes place.
- You are covered by the school's insurance policy which is overseen by Halton Borough Council. You will be required to complete a screening document.
- You will receive an itinerary, notes about the trip and any worksheets for the children before the trip. Please read through the "pack" so that both you and the children you are with gain maximum benefit from the visit.
- You may receive details of medical conditions as long as it complies with the Data Protection Act. You will also be told the name of the First Aider on the trip. You will be expected to respect the confidential nature of some information that may be made available to you.
- You will be asked to wear fluorescent yellow bibs for the duration of the trip. Please ensure that both you and the children in your care can be easily identified and be vigilant at all times.
- You are not expected to deal with disciplinary issues. If you find yourself needing to reprimand a child please inform the Trip Leader, who will take the necessary action.
- Serious incidents are very rare but appropriate action is essential when they occur. In the first instance, you should inform the Trip Leader of any problems. They will be equipped with a mobile phone and should take full responsibility for any remedial action, including (in conjunction with the First Aider) advising on medical issues. The school may also be contacted on 0151 4242879 if the Trip Leader considers it necessary.
- You will be advised by the Trip Leader about refreshment breaks; the nature of school trips means that it is unlikely that you will have more than a few minutes to yourself during the day.

We value your assistance; trips could not run without adult helpers.

We would ask you to take a few minutes after the trip to comment on what was good and what can be improved on.

For further information about accompanying children on trips, please refer to the following webpage:
<http://oeapng.info/parents/>