

# St Bede's School

# Educational Visits Policy

## **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 Educational visits are those activities arranged by or under the auspices of the school, which take place outside the boundaries of the school.
- 1.2 At St Bede's School, we have a strong commitment to the added value of learning beyond the statutory school day and beyond the school premises by the use of carefully planned educational visits. We believe that these visits can complement and enhance the curriculum of the school. They offer pupils new learning opportunities and the chance to develop personal and social skills in an alternative environment.
- 1.3 The value of off-site educational visits is well recognised and fully supported throughout the school. It is emphasised that a culture of safety must prevail and there is a need for careful planning and adherence to statutory Health and Safety procedures. Off-site educational visits must be well managed, information communicated and responsibilities recognised.

## **2 Senior Roles and Responsibilities**

- 2.1 The Proprietors/Directors have a responsibility that the appropriate procedures, risk assessments and control measures are in place and that the documented guidance notes are being followed.
- 2.2 All off-site visits that are residential, abroad or hazardous need to be approved by the Proprietors/ Directors. Such visits involve a period of time for more than 24 hours, an overnight stay or journey by sea or air. The Headmaster will seek the approval of the Proprietors/Directors before sanctioning these visits, and retain overall responsibility for the health, safety and welfare of pupils.
- 2.3 The Headmaster approves all off-site educational visits of a perceived low risk, local or regular nature. He is responsible for ensuring that the visit is worthwhile and that the staff are competent and will pay due regard to the health and safety of all participants, the risks involved, the adequacy of adult supervision and the need to communicate clearly with parents, pupils and staff about the implications of the visits, including contingency plans for unforeseen circumstances.
- 2.4 The Headmaster should:
  - ensure that visits comply with the school's policy document
  - ensure accreditation of external providers
  - ensure that there is a contingency plan in place
  - ensure emergency procedures are in place
  - allocate time and resources for staff training

## **3 Guidance for Staff**

- 3.1 Risk Assessments should be completed for new offsite Educational Visits.
- 3.2 New visits may require the party leader to visit the venue prior to the visit.
- 3.3 We have a duty of care towards pupils and in an activity where there is an element of risk, you will need to show that you have considered, and as a result taken 'all reasonable precautions'.

- 3.4 A risk assessment for a visit need not be complex but it should be comprehensive. It does not generally require technical formulae or professional health and safety expertise, although specialised information may be needed for some visits.
- 3.5 Parents should be informed as soon as possible of any off-site activity or visit unless it is a regular part of the school curriculum which is to be expected. Organisers should also consider whether a meeting should be held with parents to discuss the arrangements for the visit. A meeting with parents is essential for all residential trips.
- 3.6 Correct school uniform is always the preferred dress code. This includes a school blazer. Visits which involve outdoor, practical activities or physical activities may be the exception. Approval for this should be sought from the Headmaster. When pupils are in school uniform, teaching staff will dress appropriately. When visits require non-uniform for pupils, teaching staff should dress for the conditions of the visit while maintaining a smart-casual standard of dress.
- 3.7 The cost of all visits should be met by parents unless sanctioned by the Headmaster.
- 3.8 For all visits both pupils and staff are covered by the school's own insurance.

#### **4 Health and Safety Related Details**

- 4.1 All St Bede's School staff are DBS checked. Adults, not including school staff, do not need DBS clearance providing they will not have sole responsibility for any pupils or be alone with them. Parents may accompany the pupils at the Headmaster's discretion.
- 4.2 Staff / Pupil Ratio responsibility remains with the Headmaster and Party Leader to ensure adequate supervision for the particular group and for the particular activity. St Bede's School suggested ratios are set out below, but the final ratio will be arrived at after careful consideration. The quality and nature of the supervision must be planned and active i.e. is more important than merely having the correct supervisory ratio. Members of staff from other schools may be included in ratios if appropriate. A member of staff with paediatric first aid training will accompany each visit for EYFS pupils:
  - EYFS, Prelim, Form I – at least 1:7
  - Form II, III, IV, V – at least 1:10
  - Residential visits (age 8 and over) within UK and abroad – at least 1:10
    - St Bede's School does not normally encourage residential visits with participation with children under the age of 8
- 4.3 Only transport with seat belts will be used. Each child must have their own seat and seat belt. It is the responsibility of staff to check that pupils are wearing a good fitting properly fastened seat belt before the journey commences. Pupils should be made aware of the importance of keeping the seat belt fastened during the journey.
- 4.4 Staff eligible to drive the school minibus must be trained to the current standards and guidelines. There should be two adults when transporting children in the school minibus.
- 4.5 The carrying of pupils in cars should be avoided and only undertaken in an emergency. A booster must be provided for pupils less than 1.3 metres in height.
- 4.4 A complete list of all members of the party, including staff, showing emergency contact numbers is to be left with the School Office.
- 4.5 Emergency procedures are an essential part of planning a school visit. The Party Leader will take charge in an emergency and will ensure that emergency procedures are in place. If an accident happens with injury, the priorities are to:
  - Assess the situation
  - Safeguard the uninjured members of the group
  - Attend to the casualty
  - Inform emergency services and any other people who need to know about the incident in priority order

If an emergency occurs on a school visit, the main factors to consider include:

- Establish the nature and extent of the emergency as quickly as possible
- Ensure that all the group are safe and looked after
- Establish the names of any casualties and get immediate medical attention for them
- Ensure that all group members who need to know are aware of the incident and that all group members are following the emergency procedures
- When the safety of the remaining members of the group allows, ensure that a teacher accompanies casualties to hospital and that the rest of the group are kept together and adequately supervised at all times
- Notify the police if necessary
- Notify the British Embassy / Consulate if the emergency occurs abroad
- Inform the School Contact, providing: nature, date and time of incident; location of incident; names of casualties and details of their injuries; whether medical help via insurers may be required; names of others involved so parents can be reassured; action taken so far; action yet to be taken; contact numbers for future calls
- Write down all relevant facts and witness details and preserve any vital evidence
- Keep a written account of all events, times and contacts after the incident
- Ensure no-one in the group speaks to the media. In particular, names of those involved should not be given to the media as this could cause distress to their families. All media enquiries should be referred to the Headmaster
- Ensure no discussion takes place with other parties concerning legal liability

The main factors for the School Contact to consider include:

- Ensuring that the Party Leader is in control of the emergency and establishing if any assistance is required from the school
- Contacting parents
- The School Contact should act as the link between the group and the parents
- Parents should be kept as well informed as possible at all stages of the emergency
- The Headmaster should liaise with the School Contact, the Party Leader and, where appropriate, the emergency services. All media enquiries should be referred to the Headmaster. The name of any casualty should not be given to the media.

## **5 Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)**

- 5.1 St Bede's School places great value on educational visits for all of its pupils, including the very youngest, recognising that they provide a unique opportunity to enhance the curriculum and to extend and support class-based work. They provide opportunities which cannot be provided on site and can extend the knowledge and understanding of our youngest pupils.
- 5.2 Close supervision and appropriate clothing are essential for even the shortest of excursions. The children are always briefed in advance and of the standards of behaviour which we expect.
- 5.3 We operate a minimum staffing ratio of 1:7 for all off-site visits although each trip is carefully assessed and the staffing ratio amended accordingly. There is always at least one teacher, one of whom will have been designated in charge of the visit. The teacher is accompanied by at least one qualified teaching assistant and other adults who may be other teachers from the school or parent volunteers. Parent volunteers are thoroughly briefed about their roles beforehand and will never be allowed to supervise the children alone if they have not been DBS checked. One of the teaching assistants is qualified in paediatric first aid.

## **6 Missing Child Policy**

- 6.1 Safety is our top priority and even the shortest of visits needs to be thoroughly planned.
- 6.2 The teacher in charge conducts, or arranges for another teacher or teaching assistant to conduct a head count of the children:
- Before leaving school
  - On sitting down in the coach, if applicable
  - On arrival at the destination
  - On leaving the destination
  - On arrival back at the school
  - At other points throughout the trip, as appropriate
- 6.3 Our procedures are structured to ensure that no child will go missing, but in the event that a child is missing – either from school, or on a visit, we follow procedures set out in our Missing Child policy.

Headmaster  
January 2017

Director of Studies  
January 2017