

English Martyrs Catholic Voluntary Academy  
EVC Policy



“ We learn and grow as a family in the footsteps of Jesus”

**Approved by:** Head Teacher **Date:** 7.12.2020

**Last reviewed on:** December 2020

**Next review due by:** December 2022

### Intent

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 makes English Martyrs a 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:

- 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.
- Enhancing cultural capital for all children in the school.

## 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, English Martyrs CVA:

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 this school policy, 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 only involving walking. Parents sign a permission slip at the beginning of the academic year allowing their children to walk to a local building or experience eg St Joseph's church, local library. This generic risk assessment has been uploaded onto Evolve.**
2. **Other non-residential visits within the UK that do not involve an adventurous activity. Eg. visits to museums, farms, theme parks, theatres, etc.**  
These are entered on EVOLVE by the visit leader and submitted to the EVC for checking. The EVC then submits to the Head for approval.
3. **Visits that are overseas, residential, or involve an adventurous activity.**  
These follow 2 above, but the Head then submits the visit to the accredited adviser via Evolve (Nottingham based 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 or EVC prior to planning, and before making any commitments. Visit leaders have responsibility for ensuring that their visits will comply with all relevant guidance and requirements, and should seek advice from the EVC where necessary.

**The Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC)** is *Jeff Hodgson*, 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 submitting them to 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 those that are overseas, residential or adventurous to the accredited LA for approval.

**The Governing Body's** role is that of a 'critical friend' *and should view their main function as being able to enable and ensure good practice is being carried out in all aspects. Monitoring of procedures will be carried out during the academic year and the check list produced through the national guidance will be used.*

## **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 please refer to separate policy. All staff on visits are familiar with this plan.

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 trust.

## **Educational Visits Checklist**

*English Martyrs CVA* Educational Visits checklist forms part of the risk management process for visits and off-site activities, and may be downloaded from EVOLVE Resources. 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'.

## **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, walking within our local town Oakham. Parents will have completed a paper consent form via our parent mail facility. 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 parent mail and meetings etc), so that consent is given on a 'fully informed' basis. Consent must be given via a paper copy or electronically through parent mail.

## **Inclusion**

Every effort should be made to ensure that outdoor learning activities and visits are available and accessible to all, irrespective of special educational or medical needs, ethnic origin, gender or religion. If a visit needs to cater for young people with special needs, every *reasonable* effort should be made to find a venue that is both suitable and accessible and that enables the whole group to participate fully and be actively involved. Schools should take all *reasonably practicable* measures to include all young people. The principles of inclusion should be promoted and addressed for all visits and reflected in establishment policy, thus ensuring an aspiration towards:

- an entitlement to participate
- accessibility through direct or realistic adaptation or modification
- integration through participation with peers

Under the Equality Act 2010, it is unlawful to:

- treat a disabled young person less favourably;
- fail to take reasonable steps to ensure that disabled persons are not placed at a substantial disadvantage.

## **Charging / funding for visits**

Please refer to our charging policy.

## **Transport**

Transport for off site visits is provided as much as possible by VAR (Voluntary Action Rutland) who comply completely with all necessary regulations.

Private bus companies and minibus companies may be used if VAR is unavailable and again they comply with all necessary regulations.

We do not have a school minibus.

Use of staff cars to transport pupils – Any members of staff transporting children have the necessary business insurance to do this and this is checked and recorded by the administration team. Evidence is also collected in connection with a current MOT and road worthiness.

## **Insurance**

This is covered by the trust and we are covered currently through Zurich for off site visits.

## **Swimming Lessons**

KS1 children swim at Oakham C of E and at least one member of staff accompanying them has the correct lifesaving qualification for this pool's procedures.

KS2 children swim at Oakham School and there is a paid lifesaver present during all lessons.

All children are supervised during changing time by adults working at the school.

## **Dismissal of pupils after evening activities**

All after school clubs are run by school staff or an external provider with the necessary qualification for the activity and an up to date DBS.

Children are matched up with a named adult at the end of the session unless permission has been given for a child to travel home unaccompanied. External coaches are supported by an on site sponsor where necessary to aid with this.