

St. Michael's CE Primary School Sydenham



Educational Visits Policy

Agreed by the Governing Body on: Autumn 2023

Signed (Chair): Beryl Fielder

Scheduled Review Date: Autumn 2026

Mission Statement

At St Michael's our school life is founded on our Christian ethos and in our vision statement - *for every child to live an abundant life* - we try to consider the development and potential of the whole child and not just their academic achievements. The school aims to serve our community by providing an education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. At St. Michael's school we aim to enhance the first-hand experiences of all children by providing opportunities for learning outside the classroom by day and residential visits.

Opportunities for outside visits support the social, moral, physical and academic needs of the children. All visits will be well planned, organised and worthwhile, with clear links to the curriculum planned for the children. Visits will seek to be a stimulus for a new topic, or consolidate work already covered as part of the curriculum. At all times the safety and welfare of the children will be paramount, and any arrangements made should take this into account.

The purpose of this policy is to clarify the roles, responsibilities and procedures for all concerned in organising visits.

The Governing Body as employer has the ultimate responsibility for the safety, welfare and education of children at the school and delegates management responsibility for all external visits to the Headteacher. The Headteacher will be assisted by the Educational Visits Coordinator (as applicable) who will liaise with staff concerning arrangements and advise the Headteacher with recommendations as appropriate. The Headteacher will approve all visits and ensure that the contents of this policy are observed.

Aims and Objectives

Visits, both day and residential, are an integral part of life at St. Michael's. They serve to provide experiences that will aid the acquisition of new skills and attitudes, and a better understanding of the wider world.

Visits aim to:

- provide first-hand experience
- enhance the learning of the curriculum and improve academic outcomes
- foster a concerned awareness and sensitivity about the environment, including how to stay safe
- develop co-operation
- enhance personal and social development
- maximise every child's potential through a variety of learning experiences
- develop skills of observation, research and recording
- show that life outdoors can be a source of continuous enjoyment and contribute to overall health.

Guiding Principles

The school will adopt and follow the guidance and recommendations contained in the London Borough of Lewisham's guidance document "There and Back Again" (TABA).

Responsibilities

Head Teacher

- Update, communicate and discuss School policy in relation to trips / visits
- Provide support for staff planning and organising trips
- Advise and liaise on current DfE guidelines, especially Health and Safety issues
- Monitor the work carried out during and as a result of the visits
- Oversee the balance of visits within a year group, and in a child's time at St. Michael's.

Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC)

The EVC at St. Michael's and will ensure that:

- all necessary actions have been completed before the visit begins
- a suitable group leader has been appointed
- a risk assessment has been completed by the Group Leader, reviewed and that it is safe to make the visit;
- the group leader has considered emergency arrangements.
- training needs have been met;
- the group leader has experience in supervising and controlling the age groups going on the visit and will organise the group effectively;
- the group leader has relevant skills, qualifications and experience if acting as an instructor, and knows the location of the activity;
- all supervisors on the visit are appropriate people to supervise children and have appropriate clearance in line with current guidance and practice as issued by the DfE;
- parents have signed appropriate consent forms (where required);
- there is adequate and relevant insurance cover;

Pupil Manager/Office Manager

The Pupil manager will support and advise the Headteacher, the EVC and the group leaders as necessary on educational visits as well as ensuring that:

- The mode of travel is appropriate and that travel times out and back are known;
- The staff have the address and phone number of the visit's venue and have a contact name;
- The staff have the names of all the adults and pupils in the travelling group and, for residential visits, the contact details of parents and the staff's and volunteers' next of kin.
- Arrangements have been made for all the medical needs and special educational needs of all the children;
- Keeping records of all off-site visits, activities, accidents, near misses, staff experience and qualifications.
- Liaising with the Headteacher to assess the competence of group leaders and other adults. Ensuring only competent people lead and supervise off-site visits.
- Liaising with Headteacher to organise the training of group leaders and supervisors, if necessary, (i.e. first aid) and maintain records of this.
- Monitoring and reviewing off-site visits, visit reports and management practice.

Group Leader

One teacher will be the appointed group leader and is responsible for the overall supervision and conduct of the visit. The Group Leader should:

- appoint a deputy to assume control of the group in the event of an accident/incident affecting the group leader
- be able to control and lead pupils of the relevant age range;
- be suitably qualified if instructing an activity and be conversant in the good practice for that activity if not;

- undertake and complete the planning and preparation of the visit including the briefing of group members and parents;
- undertake and complete a comprehensive risk assessment;
- have regard to the health and safety of the group at all times;
- Not allow any member of the group to engage in any unplanned (and therefore not risk-assessed) activity;
- know all the pupils proposed for the visit to assess their suitability & any relevant additional needs;
- observe the guidance set out for teachers and other adults below ;
- ensure that parent volunteers have been given a leaflet to explain their duties
- ensure that pupils understand their responsibilities (see responsibilities of pupils below).
- Liaise with the EVC regarding emergency arrangements.
- Equip themselves with the school mobile phone.

Other teachers and adults involved in a visit

Teachers on school-led visits act as employees of the Governing Body. They will therefore be acting in the course of their normal employment during their normal hours. They will be acting under an agreement with their Head Teacher and Governors if some of their time on the visit falls outside normal hours.

Teachers and other adults on the visit must:

- do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group;
- care for each individual pupil as any reasonable parent would;
- follow the instructions of the leader and help with control and discipline.
non-staff adults should generally not have sole charge of pupils except where risks to health and safety are minimal;
- consider stopping the visit or the activity if they think the risk to the health or safety of the pupils in their charge is unacceptable.

Responsibilities of pupils

The group leader should make it clear to pupils that they must:

- not take unnecessary risks;
- follow the instructions of the leader and other adults;
- dress and behave sensibly and responsibly;
- look out for anything that might hurt or threaten anyone in the group and tell the group leader about it;
- not undertake any task or activity that might be dangerous.

Any pupils whose behaviour may be considered to be a danger to themselves or to the group may be stopped from going on the visit or future visits. At no cost to the school, during any residential visits, parents / guardian may be asked to collect their child if their behaviour is deemed to be a danger to themselves or to the group, during the trip.

Parents

The group leader should ensure that parents are given information about the purpose and details of the visit (published in leaflet) and are invited to any briefing sessions for longer visits. The group leader should also tell parents how they can help prepare their child for the visit by, for example, reinforcing the visit's code of conduct. Special arrangements may be necessary for parents for whom English is a second language;

Parents must:

- provide the group leader with emergency contact number(s);
- sign the consent form (when required);
- give the school and/or group leader information about their child's health which might be relevant to the visit.

Before the visit and during the visit

The organisation of an educational visit is crucial to its success. With rigorous organisation and control, a visit should provide a rich, learning experience for the pupils.

The following guidelines support the planning and implementation of educational visits organised at St. Michael's CE Primary School.

Planning off-site visits

Whether the visit is to a local park, museum, swimming pool, or includes a residential stay, it is essential that careful planning takes place. This involves considering the dangers and difficulties which may arise and making plans to avoid them.

The group leader is responsible for planning all off-site visits, but the Head Teacher must be satisfied that the person planning the visit is qualified to do so and has the necessary experience. The organiser / group leader must seek advice from the EVC and agree all plans with the Head Teacher.

Exploratory visit

The group leader should undertake an exploratory visit to help them complete a risk assessment, as well as to:

- ensure that the venue is suitable to meet the aims and objectives of the school visit;
- assess potential areas and levels of risk;
- ensure that the venue can cater for the needs of the staff and pupils in the group;
- ensure that transport arrangements are suitable;
- identify alternative places of safety in the event of an emergency or incident
- ensure that the group leader is familiar with the area before taking a party of young people.

Risk Assessment

A risk assessment should always be carried out before setting off on a visit, using St. Michael's Risk Assessment Evaluation Form (Appendix 1). The risk assessment will inform and help determine the adult:child ratio for each visit. (See Guidance under 'Supervision').

The risk assessment should include the following considerations:

- what are the significant risks? (these should include activity-based risks as well as transport, organizational, environmental [e.g. cold, heat/sun, wet, wind], health and terrorist risks)
- who may be affected by them?
- what safety (control) measures need to be in place to reduce risks to an acceptable level?
- can the group leader guarantee that these control measures will be provided?
- what steps will be taken in an emergency?
- what is the appropriate ratio of adults to children for this visit? (See section on Supervision.)

The group leader and other supervisors should continually reassess the risks throughout the visit and take appropriate action if pupils are in or may come into danger.

The group leader should take the following factors into consideration when assessing the risks:

- the type of activity and the level at which it is being undertaken;
- the location;
- the competence, experience and qualifications of supervisory staff;
- the group members' age, competence, fitness and temperament;
- pupils with special educational or medical needs;
- the quality and suitability of available equipment;
- environmental/seasonal conditions, weather and timing.

Several generic risk assessments have been provided for part or entire visits that the school regularly undertake. These do not need to be written in full in your risk assessment: instead make a note of the generic risk assessment (Appendices 2-10) at the appropriate stage (Example appendix 1.1).

Health and Safety

It is essential, that the health and safety of all children is of paramount importance during all visits. When *in loco parentis* all teachers must take the same care that a reasonably prudent and careful parent would take in the same circumstances.

Any staff taking part must have the confidence of the Headteacher and Governing Body. The lead member of staff will appoint a deputy. Non-teaching supervisors will need to be as well informed about the proposed visit as the leader. They will need preparation before the visit.

First Aid & Medical Provision

First Aid provision should be considered when assessing the risks of the visit. For adventurous activities, visits which involve overnight stays, or visits abroad, it is advisable to have at least one trained first-aider in the group. The group leader should have a working knowledge of first aid and all adults in the group should know how to contact the emergency services.

All staff involved in visits should be aware of any medical issues regarding the children. This information is given in a medical/consent form. Medicines relating to particular children and information regarding administration should be given to the designated member of staff. Children with severe allergy reactions should carry their auto-adrenaline injectors (epipen or equivalent) with them (a spare being carried by a member of staff). Children with epilepsy medication will have their medication carried by a designated staff member who needs to be aware that they are in possession of a controlled drug. Children with asthma or similar respiratory conditions should carry their own asthma inhalers with them.

For day visits, suitable first aid kits will be made available to enable each pupil sub-group leader to carry a kit, and a more comprehensive kit will be used on residential visits. The School office will ensure the contents are complete and up-to-date. Any accident must be recorded in the School Accident Book upon return to the school. Parents should be informed of accidents and any other health issues related to their children.

The minimum first-aid provision is:

- suitably stocked first-aid kits – one for each pupil sub-group,
- the school's mobile phone,
- a person appointed to be in charge of first-aid arrangements.

First-aid should be available and accessible at all times. If a first-aider is attending to one member of the larger group, there should be adequate first-aid cover for the other pupils. The Head Teacher should take this into account when assessing what level of first-aid facilities will be needed. The contents of a first-aid kit will depend on what activities are planned.

Supervision

It is important to have a sufficient ratio of adult supervisors to pupils for any off-site visit. The factors to take into consideration include:

- sex, age and ability of group;
- behavioural, learning and physical special needs of pupils;
- nature of activities to be undertaken;
- experience of adults in off-site supervision;
- route, duration and nature of the trip/journey;
- type of any accommodation;
- competence of staff, both general and on specific activities.

There should always be enough supervisors to cope effectively with an emergency. When visits are to remote areas or involved hazardous activities, the risks may be greater and supervision levels should be set accordingly.

For visits to local sites, museums and walks please use general guidelines – the following ratio of adults to children should be used as a basis for determining the supervision levels:

Early Years, visits off-site may be as low as:	1:6 + 1 additional adult
Key Stage One, visits off-site on foot:	1:10 + 1 additional adult
Key Stage One, visits off site involving transport:	1:8 + 1 additional adult
Key Stage Two, visits off-site on foot:	1:15 + 1 additional adult
Key Stage Two, visits off-site involving transport:	1:10 + 1 additional adult
Residential visits in Key Stage Two, should be	1:10 + 1 additional adult
Visits abroad in Key Stage Two, should be	1:8 + 1 additional adult

Classes can be combined to achieve a ratio of 1:10/1:15, dependent on where they go and the risks involved with the activities they will undertake on the trip. Regardless of these suggested ratios, each visit must be assessed individually through the school's risk assessment procedure for educational visits.

Where a high adult:pupil ratio is required, it is not always feasible to use school staff alone. Parents (and/or other adults with appropriate clearance, by DBS checks), may be used to supplement the supervision ratio. They should be carefully selected and ideally they should be well known to the school and the pupil group.

All adult supervisors, including school staff and parent and/or adult helpers must understand their roles and responsibilities at all times. In particular, all supervisors should be aware of any pupils who may require closer supervision, such as those with special needs or those with behavioural difficulties. Teachers retain responsibility for the group at all times.

For the protection of both adults and pupils, all adult supervisors should ensure that they are not alone in a one-to-one situation with a pupil.

If the school is leading an adventure activity, such as canoeing, the LA or Governing Body must ensure that the group leader and other supervisors are suitably qualified to lead and instruct the activity before they agree that the visit can take place. Qualifications can be checked with the National Governing Body of each sporting activity. The Governing Body and the Local Authority must be advised in advance of all residential visits and overseas visits.

Whatever the length and nature of the visit, regular head counting of pupils should take place. The group leader should establish rendezvous points and tell pupils what to do if they become separated from the party.

A mobile phone will be taken on all visits. Any delay in return times should be communicated to the Headteacher and/or School office, and parents will be informed by a notice, website updates and/or text messages. Each leader and accompanying staff and adults should be aware of the procedures regarding emergencies.

Preparing Pupils

Providing information and guidance to pupils is an important part of preparing for a school visit. Pupils should have a clear understanding about what is expected of them and what the visit will entail. Pupils must understand what standard of behaviour is expected of them and why rules must be followed. The lack of control and discipline can be a major contributory factor when accidents occur. Pupils should also be told about any potential dangers and how they should act to ensure their own and other's safety.

Pupils should be involved in planning, implementing and evaluating their own curricular work and have opportunities to take different roles within an activity. This could include considering any health and safety issues via a child friendly risk assessment form (see Appendix 2 for an example).

After the Visit

An evaluation of each visit should be made and published via the school blog. Any appropriate letter of thanks should be written and sent. Accounts should be checked, finalised and closed.

Liaising with parents

It is imperative that parents are given full and complete written details regarding the organisation of any visit off the School site. For local School outings, not involving transport e.g. to church, museums, swimming or Mayow Park and within 1 mile of the School, a letter will be sent to parents obtaining local trip permission when children join the school so that it is not necessary to obtain consent for these 'local' trips when they occur. Parents should, however, be informed that the children will be going off-site.

For other visits, including residential stays, the letter will be pertinent to that visit. Copies of such letters should be prepared by the Admin Manager and the Headteacher. Residential and/overseas visits should involve a parent/teacher meeting where information is reiterated and emergency procedures explained. A Parental Consent Form should be completed for each pupil.

Financial and Charging arrangements

The school office keeps official and separate accounts for all costs and payments. Residential visit payments may be paid in instalments but full payment must be paid in advance.

A costing for the visit/trip should be prepared before the event is published. Trips should normally be self-financing (i.e. all costs are paid for by planned parental contributions), however, in some cases the school may subsidise a trip to encourage every child to be able to participate. The forecast subsidy must be agreed in advance by the Business Manager and Headteacher to ensure that the subsidy is covered by the school's budget.

On residential visits there may be a non-refundable deposit and details of this will be given with the payment advice.

Costs itemised for a visit are: transport, entrance fees for all involved and in the case of residential visits, extra staffing/supply cover, board and lodgings, materials, hire of equipment, any additional insurance or charges for activities. Parents, wherever possible, are given details of the cost of a residential trip at least two months beforehand. A reduced rate is charged for pupils entitled to free school meals, as their board and lodgings are provided for free.

When organising school trips or visits which enhance the curriculum and educational experience of the children, parents are invited to contribute to the cost. All contributions are voluntary, but if the school does not receive sufficient voluntary contributions, the trip may be cancelled. If a parent wishes their child to take part in a school trip, but is unwilling or unable to make a voluntary contribution, the child may still be allowed to participate fully in the trip as long as parental consent is given. The governors will make every effort to financially support a child's participation in a visit, where parents are undergoing financial difficulty. Parents can discuss any difficulties in confidence with the Headteacher. Although board and lodging will normally be requested, the governors will observe the statutory requirements to remit any charges for board and lodging in the case of pupils whose parents are in receipt of free school meals, where the activity is deemed to take place in school hours.

Transport

The School office will arrange for an appropriate coach company or public transport for day visits; residential visits may be booked by the leaders involved, or the tour operator. All children will wear seatbelts and staff must ensure these are secure at the start of each journey and during the journey at reasonable intervals. Children should be made aware of basic safety rules for travel. Children should not sit in the front or in the central seat in the back row of the coach. Adults should be seated throughout the coach. The use of staff members' cars for shorter visits and sporting activities can be considered if the driver's insurance covers business use and must check their policy before transporting any pupils. A note referring to this point should be included on each letter where transport is needed.

Insurance

The school arranges insurance for off-site activities with the local authority. A copy of this is available in the school office. The Headteacher's signature on every risk assessment ensures that all of those on the trip are covered by the insurance.

Inclusion – equal opportunities

Every effort will be made to ensure that School journeys, visits and activities are available and accessible to all who wish to participate, irrespective of special or medical needs, ethnic origin, gender, sexuality etc.

Pupils with Special Educational and Medical Needs

Wherever it is feasible, pupils with special needs should be included, whilst maintaining the safety of everyone in the group. Any problems/limitations should be considered at the planning stage and when carrying out the risk assessment. Special attention should be made to supervision ratios.

Each leader, for information, should hold summary sheets containing details of the child/children's special needs. The group leader should discuss the visit with parents of those children with special needs to ensure sufficient support is in place for each child and the teacher.

Adults – Medical Information

Teachers and other adult supervisors should complete a form with details of any medical needs and submit it to the party/group leader in a sealed envelope. If the group leader has any ongoing medical needs, his/her form should be given to another teacher/adult in the group/party.

Medical Information – General (Confidentiality)

Medical information and other personal data is confidential. Staff with responsibility for holding this information during a visit must ensure that it is kept secure.

Action in the case of an emergency

The Headteacher will ensure that emergency arrangements are in place for all off-site visits and activities, known to staff. This will include emergency contact numbers for designated senior members of staff, or the Governing Body, including out of school hours time.

The designated contacts must hold all details of the visit i.e. names, contact numbers etc.

Staff, helpers and pupils should not speak to the press. The press should be referred to the Media Relations Team at the London Borough of Lewisham, Catford.

Accidents, 'near misses' and Incidents

Any accidents, incidents and near misses that occur during off-site visits and activities must be reported, and recorded in accordance with the school health and safety policy.

In the case of a fatality the Health and Safety Executive must be informed immediately. Accidents and incidents will subsequently be reviewed within the school to identify any learning points.

Child Safeguarding

All off-site visits and activities will adhere to the school's Safeguarding policy. Assurances will be sought from any external providers that their staff are suitably cleared for work with children.

Monitoring and Review

The Governors will review this policy:

- Every three years.
- At such time as there are significant changes to guidance from the LA.
- Should significant issues be brought to the Governors' attention through the report of the Headteacher.

St. Michael's Step by Step Planning Guide

PLAN WELL AHEAD IN ORDER THAT:-

1. Staff who are leading or otherwise involved in off-site activities have time to familiarise themselves with the regulations, advice and procedures as set out in this policy and the Lewisham guidance contained in 'There and Back Again'.
2. The pre-visit and risk assessment has been undertaken
3. The 'Party Leader's Checklist' is completed and ACTIONED
4. Enough time is allowed for the required documentation to be carried out and passed to the EVC and/or Headteacher and/or LA in the required time frames (e.g. at least 2 months before residential visits).

NB It is recognized that some parents may be late in returning the permission slips, for example because they are absent or on holiday. Obviously, this would mean the documents could not be processed and in turn deadlines not be met, and the visit would be unable to take place. Therefore, the documentation must be sent to the EVC or Headteacher before all parental responses have been received as it is understood that no child will go on an educational visit unless permission has been received.

5. The kitchen has at least one full weeks' notice of changes to meal numbers or requirements to produce packed lunches.

WHEN THE VISIT HAS BEEN APPROVED

6. The Headteacher will inform the group leader of approval,
7. The approved documentation will be passed to the Pupil Manager.
8. The Pupil Manager will
 - cancel school meals if necessary and order packed lunches as required
 - inform Senior Midday Supervisor if necessary
 - contact and book transport with TfL or the bus / coach company as necessary
 - inform the party leader of above
9. Contact parents who have offered to assist with the trip and confirm whether or not they are required

BEFORE LEAVING SCHOOL

10. Check that ALL permission slips have been returned.
11. All necessary medication and first aid provision has been obtained
12. Brief parents/accompanying adults with general & safety instructions. Hand out copy of guidance leaflet.
13. Ensure office has details of itinerary. Check out (i.e. ensure office is informed that you have left).

AFTERWARDS

14. Inform office that you are back in school
15. Review and Evaluate – note any changes that should be incorporated into future visits to same venue

School Trip / Outside Visit Proposal

Proposed Venue/Location	
Topic of visit/trip	
Proposed date	
Class(es) / Year Group(s)	
Number of children (if all go)	
Teacher (Party Leader) in charge	
Deputy Leader (proposed)	
Proposed number of other adults/helpers	

Purpose of Trip/Visit	<i>Tick as appropriate</i>
Link to curriculum/topic	
SMSC Development	
Pupil Premium Development	
Reward/other	

Particular Risks/Hazards related to this trip/visit (discuss first with Educational Visits Coordinator)

(NB this may relate to environmental factors, activity(ies) to be undertaken, location, age of participants or the persons involved)

Proposals discussed with EVC: _____ (signed by EVC)

Proposed trip/visit approved (subject to detailed Risk Assessment(s) and Itinerary)

_____ (Headteacher)

Appendix 2

St Michael's School

Completed by: _____

Assessment Date: _____

Date Reviewed: _____

Risk Assessment Title (trip) _____

Activity: _____

Reviewed by: _____

No of Pupils

No of Staff

Person in charge of the activity:

Hazard <i>List significant hazards which may result in serious harm or affect several people.</i>	Who may be affected	Control Measures List existing controls or note where the information may be found. (e.g. Information, instruction, training, systems or procedures)	Any Further Action <i>List the risks which are not adequately controlled and proposed action where it is reasonably practicable to do more.</i>

SCHOOL TRIP INFO for OFFICE

Date of Trip & Day of week	
Venue	
Year(s) / class group(s)	
Visit/Trip Leader	
Leader's mobile number	

Planned departure time from school	
Planned arrival time at venue	

Planned departure time from venue	
Planned arrival time back at school	

Actual departure time from venue	
ETA at school based on actual departure time from venue	
Arrival at Sydenham/Lower Sydenham Station (if travelling by rail)	
Returned to school	

Journey Updates

Time	Description/notes