



# Educational Visits Policy

## St Saviour's Church of England Junior School

<b>Policy:</b>	Visits Policy
<b>Review Period:</b>	Annual
<b>Ratified by Governing Body:</b>	February 2025
<b>Date of next review:</b>	February 2026

### Rationale

- All children are unique in the eyes of God and are entitled to a broad and rich curriculum. Children should be safe when experiencing their curriculum. All visits inherently carry some risk, rather than being deterred from activities, it is the school's responsibility to manage and minimise this risk.
- For the purposes of this policy 'visits' will include trips outside school, visitors and themed days within school.
- Visits should be linked to classroom learning or have a clear aim (such as developing social skills or group cohesion).
- Our Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) is Sam Hudson. Miss Hudson is responsible for using Kent's e-GO visits notification system. Approval for visits rests with Nick Bonell (HT). Residential trips require prior approval from the LEA, as do those involving water (rivers, ponds, lakes or the sea) or adventurous activities. The LEA must be notified of but does not need to approve visits outside Kent.
- This policy has been written in order to ensure that children are safe, are learning and enjoying themselves when they participate in a visit.

### Visit Planning and Preparation

- Discuss the visit with year group colleagues and ensure that the visit has a specific objective. Make an initial enquiry (not a booking) with the venue or provider to find out availability and approximate price. At this point seek advice and approval from Nick Bonell.
- After approval from the Headteacher, check the diary to ensure that any proposed date does not clash with any events in school (such as testing, staff unavailability etc.).
- Inform Miss Hudson (EVC).

- See Mrs Hearn to arrange transport costing and availability.
- Complete a purchase order for the cost of the trip and transport, submit to Wendy Vinson (Bursar) to be signed off by Nick Bonell. If you do not complete a purchase order, Mrs Vinson may be unable to process payment, due to financial compliance rules.
- Book the visit with provider / venue, confirm with Mrs Hearn so she can book transport.
- Provide a per-pupil costing to Headteacher and Bursar who will then set a contribution amount for parents. Pupils in receipt of Pupil Premium would not be asked to pay and, with the exception of the Year 6 residential, charges are voluntary. PP children are charged a discounted fee for the Year 6 residential trip.
- When timings and cost have been confirmed, inform parents by letter. Please give parents as much notice as possible (two weeks minimum) so that families can arrange payment and drop-off / collection. Changes to drop-off / collection times can be challenging for families with work or caring commitments so advance notice is key.
- Inform Mrs Hearn a week ahead of the trip so that she can arrange for packed lunches for specific children.
- Group leader (normally the Year Group Leader) liaise with Miss Hudson (EVC) to enter trip details into the e-GO system.
- At least ten days ahead of the visit, the visit leader (usually the Year Group Leader) should visit the venue in order to write an informed risk assessment. For enclosed, educational settings (such as Kent Life) you do not need to repeat these pre-visits year on year. For public places such as galleries and museums, a pre-visit is always advisable. Always check exits, toilets and specify an emergency muster point.
- Complete a risk assessment using the St. Saviour's pro forma (in the 'Visits' folder of the shared drive). The risk assessment should be shared with all adults who will be attending the visit – including volunteer / parent helpers. A copy of the risk assessment should be saved to the shared drive. Copy the Risk Assessment to EVC.
- Arrange for adequate staffing and volunteers. Please bear in mind that if staff will have to go over their contracted hours, this incurs a high cost to the school. Volunteers do not need a police check for a one-off visit. Check with year group and office colleagues about who our regular volunteers are. If any children need intimate care or support around going to the toilet, ensure that this is provided by a staff member and not a parent helper.
- Agree with SLT and office staff a procedure or contingency plan for travel delays.

### **During the Visit**

- Distribute class / group lists and copies of the risk assessment to all adults.
- Collect first aid kits, sick bags and any medication (inhalers etc.).
- Remind children of safety information and expectations. Ensure children go to the toilet before the journey.
- Ensure that staff have each other's mobile phone numbers, don't give your mobile number to volunteers.
- Do a headcount and get an adult to check it.
- On the outward journey to any big attraction or city (if you are going to London or a museum etc.) one staff member should check a news website en route to make sure you are not driving towards a major incident.
- When you arrive, make sure children and adults know where the emergency muster point is.
- Do regular head counts during the day and a final headcount on the coach or train prior to departure; get another adult to check the headcount.

- Upon return, feedback to SLT and year group colleagues about the venue, is it to be avoided, was it value for money? If a provider is not offering safety, value, educational value, we need to feed this back to the venue (to keep other children safe) and avoid in future.

### **Governors**

- Governors need to ensure that school staff follow this policy.
- Governors should ensure that the Headteacher is checking that visits comply with policy. Governors may wish to check risk assessments periodically as part of a safeguarding visit.
- Governors should ask questions about the effectiveness and value for money of visits. Are all pupils able to access the visits?
- Investigate comments and complaints from parents.
- Annually review the policy.

### **Headteacher**

- HT should ensure that the Educational Visits Co-ordinator has had adequate training and is competent.
- Check that visits comply with this policy, safeguarding should be the primary concern of all staff.
- Check that group leaders are competent to organise and supervise trips and are given the time to organise the trip.
- The Headteacher is responsible for the safety of all pupils – this doctrine applies to visits.
- Check that all risk assessments are completed, are fit for purpose and that staffing ratios are in line with this policy.

### **Risk Assessments**

- Staff must complete a risk assessment at least a week before the day of the visit.
- The risk assessment must give an overview of the day. Local authority training states that, in many cases, injuries or fatalities during visits have been caused by staff deviating from the plan. Risk assessment should be informed by a pre-visit.
- The risk assessment must be copied to the Headteacher and EVC at least a week ahead of the visit. Please save the risk assessment in the 'Visits' folder on the shared drive.
- Risk assessments should take account of: potential hazards, the activity being undertaken, the location, route to venue and mode of transport, staff to child ratio, age/ behaviour / additional needs of children, suitability and safety of any equipment used, weather, emergency plan, containment of children (preventing children wandering off / being left behind / being abducted).
- Careful consideration should be given to how parent volunteers are deployed. Parent volunteers should only be left in sole charge of a group if they are in close proximity to a teacher or if the visit site is secure enough to minimise risk.
- Risk assessments should be given to all staff on the visit.
- In extreme cases, children who might pose a risk to themselves or others (generally through poor or reckless behaviour) by attending a visit will not be allowed to attend. Every effort should be made in the weeks prior to the visit for a child to be helped to improve their behaviour. Parents should, if possible, be given advance warning that their child may not be allowed to attend unless behaviour improves. Children should not be excluded from curricular trips because of SEND / medical needs or inability to pay. In some cases, children with medical needs or a disability may be accompanied by a parent or carer, if this is mutually agreed. This conversation should take place well in advance of the visit.

- Children with additional needs should be considered at the planning and risk assessment stage as they may need additional staffing, equipment or time during a visit. Additional needs must not be a barrier to children attending a visit.

### **Supervision ratios**

- Ratios depend on the location of the activity and level of risk. Minimum ratios are: Year 3 – 1 adult for every 8 children. In Year 4, 5 and 6 – 1 adult for every 10 children. At St. Saviour's we seek to provide more adults than these ratios dictate in order to minimise risk to children.
- There should always be a mix of genders when accompanying a mixed-gender group of children (children may need to be taken to the toilet). This rule is particularly important for residential visits. At least one member of staff should hold a first aid certificate.

### **Duties and Responsibilities**

- Act in the interests of children. Health and safety is the paramount concern. Adults are effectively acting in 'loco parentis' (in place of the parent) for children.
- Notify the group leader if there are concerns about the safety of any location or activity.
- St. Saviour's staff have the ultimate responsibility to stop an activity if they feel it is unsafe.
- Report any concerns regarding behaviour of children or adults to the group leader. Do not be afraid to contact the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher or Assistant Headteacher for assistance or advice if you have a concern.
- The use of parent volunteers as supervisors should be considered in the risk assessment.
- All adults should follow the instructions of the group leader and stick to the plan for the day. Acting on a whim and diverging from the plan presents unknown risks.

### **Pupils**

- Pupils must follow instructions. As stated previously, adults (the class teacher or group leader) should make expectations very clear to children and inform them of muster points or emergency procedures.
- Pupils should behave in accordance with St. Saviour's Christian values. Children and staff are representing the school. If pupils are at risk of endangering themselves / others or risking reputational damage to the school, staff have authorisation to remove the child from activities. Staff also have authorisation to request that a child be removed from the visit. If practical, a member of SLT and another member of school staff may travel to the visit site and transport the child back to school.

### **Communication with parents**

The most common complaint from families about schools is about a perceived or actual lack of communication. Parents need to have ample notice of a visit. Parents need to understand that school staff will be acting in loco parentis. Parents and carers should provide consent, an emergency contact number and details about any health need which may affect their child during the visit.

### **Charging for visits**

Visits enhance the curriculum and add value for children. St. Saviour's often asks for a voluntary contribution for visits. Failure or the inability to pay must not prevent children from attending a visit. Parents and carers should be informed that, under exceptional circumstances, the visit may be cancelled.