

Bishop Vaughan Catholic School

Educational Visits Policy

Educational Visits Policy



Educational visits offer an invaluable opportunity to enrich young peoples' learning, raise their self-esteem, increase their motivation and appetite for learning, and improve their health and wellbeing.

This policy is written in line with the DfES Good Practice Guide *Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visit* and our LA guidelines. The recommendations made in those documents are reflected in this policy.

School Visits are an integral part of life at Bishop Vaughan Catholic School, furthering the education of the pupils. When visits are arranged for pupils they support the social or academic needs of the pupils. The visit should be well organised, stimulating and worthwhile.

Teachers who plan a day or residential visit are classed as the group leader and, as such, have responsibility to make sure the visit is properly organised. The arrangements and procedures ensure the well-being and safety of all on the visit.

The Headteacher bears ultimate responsibility; all staff liaise with the Headteacher concerning the arrangements and follow the guidelines in this policy.

General Information

Early planning is essential for any visit. Plans for residential visits are formulated approximately twelve months in advance and, for one-day visits, approximately one month ahead.

All visits and activities off the school site are approved by the Headteacher and EVC, who are kept fully informed throughout the planning stages.

Any outdoor/adventure activity should be within the ability of the children participating and the accompanying staff.

Risk Assessments

Each visit planned must have an appropriate, up to date risk assessment that is submitted to the Headteacher/EVC prior to the visit. The Headteacher/EVC informs the LA as appropriate. Risk assessments should be shared with any adult going on the trip.

Planning Educational Visits

All visits require approval via the Headteacher/ EVC through the Evolve electronic system (<https://evolve.edufocus.co.uk/evco10/unknown.asp>). Guidance on how to complete these forms is on the staff V drive in the Educational Visits folder.

For all visits away from school that **do not** require LA notification or approval. These include your everyday visits such as Museum, Theatre, Park, Village, Castell Henllys, Folly Farm etc. all forms must be completed and submitted on Evolve for approval by the Headteacher no less than 2 weeks before the planned trip.

For visits abroad that **do not** contain elements of adventure/demanding environments. All forms must be submitted on Evolve for **LA Notification at least 28 days before visit** (Excluding school holidays)

For visits UK and abroad that contain elements of adventure/demanding environments. All forms must be submitted on Evolve for **LA Approval at least 28 days before visit** (Excluding school holidays). If a member of staff is leading an activity that would require specialist skills an **EV3/D1/2** form needs to be completed, which includes:

- Application for registration as an LA approved leader - Log of experience
- Copy of route if leading a journey or expedition

For Overseas Expeditions. Initial **LA and Governor approval is needed 12 months before expedition**. The following forms must be completed when organising trips within this category:

All forms must be approved by EVC/Headteacher and LA (If needed) before the visit and a copy of all forms and relevant paper work should be given to the EVC before departing. All staff attending the visit must be aware of all information on the risk assessment and carry a copy of the paper work if necessary.

Preliminary Planning

A visit checklist can be found in **Appendix 2**. This checklist is intended for use as an *'aide-mémoire'* for the main elements of visit organisation as set out in the *Educational Visits* guidance. Visit leaders are encouraged to modify this list to suit their needs.

One or more meetings of all those involved are held to formalise the administration and organisation of the visit. Specific duties, and the names of the pupils for whom each person is responsible, are identified.

The educational opportunities of the area/educational centre should be obtained, and all information about the proposed visit collated, before submitting risk assessments to the Head Teacher/EVC.

Outdoor activity centres must be licensed under the provision of the *Activity Centres (Young Persons Safety) Act 1995*, and the associated *Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 1996*. The contractual implications of using any outside bodies must be identified and confirmed in writing: the substance of any telephone calls should be logged.

It is vital that information concerning staff qualifications, equipment to be used and safety procedures to be followed, are obtained in writing from any of the bodies that will be concerned with the teaching of risky or high-risk activities to children, to ensure that these fall within the guidelines. Similarly, written confirmation is sought about the criminal background and medical fitness of all staff who will have substantial access to, or contact with, the children.

Insurance

Educational visits are covered by an *Off-site Activities Travel and Personal Injury Insurance Group Policy*: arranged by City & County of Swansea insurance section.
Company: Ace European Group

- Ace Assistance **must** be notified by school, prior to any visit, of any pupil, member of staff or adult acting in an authorised supervisory capacity as a volunteer, assistant or helper who has a **pre-existing medical condition**.
- Ace Assistance does **not** need to be notified of educational visits unless the above point is relevant.
- A copy of Ace Insurance emergency contact numbers should be distributed to group leaders.
- Pre travel advice and information may be sought directly from Ace Assistance.
- LA insurance department does **not** require notification of educational visits.
- LA contact details - Perry Morgan, Insurance Officer, Civic Centre. Tel. 01792 636741 E-mail: perry.morgan@swansea.gov.uk

Preliminary Visit

For a residential visit or before travelling abroad, an exploratory visit is may be made by the teacher/leader of the group. This is to acquire knowledge at first hand:

- that the venue is suitable
- that the venue can cater for the needs of pupils and staff
- to assess potential areas and levels of risk, completing a Risk Assessment Form
- to be given to the Head Teacher/EVC
- to become familiar with the area before taking the children
- to obtain information concerning staff qualifications and licences
- To ensure the centre is licensed in accordance with *Activity Centres (Young Persons Safety) Act 1995*.

In the cases of LA Outdoor Education Centres, the dangers of an area are well known to the local specialist staff. In such cases, a preliminary visit is not always necessary.

If it is not possible to make a preliminary visit, every endeavour is made to acquire information about the accommodation and the area, before the visit.

If a preliminary visit has not taken place, as a matter of priority when the party arrives, a member of staff inspects the accommodation and any areas where there might be dangers or potential hazards.

Financial arrangements

- Following approval by the Headteacher/ EVC the trip leader must inform the finance officer who will set up an account for the trip. All payments must be made in the school finance office prior to the departure of the trip.
- Trips will only be approved by the Headteacher/ EVC if a trip is financially viable. Any shortfalls will be taken out of departmental budgets.

- Maximum security of money and other valuable documents is essential at all times. Money and passports are placed in the school safe, or the centre's safe on a residential visit.

In certain circumstances, parents who are in receipt of Income Support, Jobseeker's Allowance, Family Credit or Disability Working Allowance might qualify to have board and lodging costs remitted.

Liaison with Parents

It is imperative that parents are given full and complete written details regarding the organisation and administration of a visit to include:

- ✓ activities and venues, including any special risk inherent in the activities undertaken
- ✓ specialist equipment and/or clothing necessary for activities
- ✓ code of conduct expected of the children
- ✓ packed meal requirements
- ✓ teachers/leaders, their experience and expertise
- ✓ total costs and methods for payment
- ✓ passport/ EHIC requirements, if any.

Near the date of a residential visit, a meeting is sometimes held for all parents, their children, the staff, and any voluntary helpers concerned with the visit. The information above is reiterated and the emergency procedures explained. There is an opportunity for questions and discussion at the meeting. A Parental Consent Form should be completed for each pupil.

Staffing Requirements

Person in Charge

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for the planning and arrangements of any day or residential visits. If a qualified teacher wishes to take a group of pupils out of school, responsibility for the planning and arrangements will be delegated to that teacher. However, that person should be prepared to accept all reasonable/legal responsibility for the well-being and safety of the children at all times.

If more than one class/school is involved in a visit, an overall leader of the combined party is identified. This is normally the one with the most appropriate experience. It is expected that the overall leader should, at least, have assisted an experienced colleague on a previous visit. An accompanying teacher is nominated as deputy leader. For any day visit to go ahead, there must be at least two staff.

If a child has SEN support for a behavioural or medical need, their Support Staff should accompany them on the visit. If this is not possible, another member of staff or the child's parent is assigned to supervise the pupil.

It is desirable that, on any visit by a party consisting of boys and girls, there are accompanying staff and/or voluntary helpers of both genders. While this might not always be possible on day visits, there should always be staff of both genders on any residential visit.

Voluntary Helpers

Voluntary Helpers are selected carefully and are well known to the school and the pupils going on the visit. The school makes checks, through the LA, to ensure the voluntary helpers are not barred from working with children. A person who does not have this clearance is not accepted as a volunteer.

All voluntary helpers should let the school know as soon as possible if they are unable to accompany the children for any reason, so that a replacement can be found. Any documentation already given to them should be returned to school.

A meeting is held, before the visit, with voluntary helpers and other staff, to discuss arrangements.

Voluntary helpers are made aware of the extent of their responsibilities and given a copy of them.

Organisers/Leaders are made aware of the responsibilities of voluntary helpers and should implement them.

First Aid

On any visit, at least one of the supervisory staff will be a competent First Aider, holding a valid first-aid certificate and carrying an appropriate first-aid kit.

Medical Fitness

There are detailed and specific regulations concerning the medical fitness of staff and it is important that all third-party staff that comes into contact with children are medically fit. Headteachers/group leaders seek written confirmation from independent centres and organisations that all their staff is medically fit.

Transport

It is the responsibility of the group leader, with the assistance of the Main Office, to book the coach/ minibus, confirm the booking and telephone the coach firm a few days beforehand to make the final arrangements.

Supervision

- At least two members of staff should supervise the pupils getting on and off the coach – one on the coach and one by the steps.
- Check numbers on outward and return journeys.
- Pupils **must** wear their seat belts throughout the journey unless told to remove them in an emergency.
- When leaving the coach, check for lost property and litter.
- At least one teacher should be on each coach or minibus and have a mobile phone with them. Contact details for the school/ trip leader should be handed to the driver of each coach/minibus. When walking all adults should be familiar with the route and a Teaching assistant may be asked to lead. **No**

child should walk ahead of the leading adult and the teacher should be at the back of the line so that he/she has full view of the group.

- An adult should sit at the front or half way up the bus with another adult sitting at the back in order to have full view of the group.

Equal Opportunities / Disability

As part of our overarching aim for pupils to fulfil their full potential across the curriculum we will endeavour to ensure that all children are given the necessary support to access learning in this area in line with our equal opportunity and disability scheme.

Pupil Organisation

Regular sessions are held with pupils to prepare them for the visit, so that they obtain maximum benefit. Children will be assigned to their groups early on, so that teachers and voluntary helpers can establish a relationship with them.

Adult: Pupil Ratios

For day trips a minimum ratio of 1:15 is acceptable. For any residential trips there must be a minimum ratio of 1:10.

It is desirable that for all trips to have at least 1 male and 1 female member of staff for mixed sex groups. This is a requirement for all residential trips.

Teachers/group leaders are reminded to avoid any 1:1 situations with pupils that might be open to misinterpretation.

Pupil Control

All accompanying adults have a duty of care. Teachers should remember that they are in *loco parentis* at all times on the visit and thus are legally responsible for the well-being and safety of the children.

A system of pupil recall is essential with work in an open environment. This system should be simple, understood by all and practiced beforehand. A system is implemented to attract the attention of children when it is necessary for the pupils to re-join the main group.

Children should never be on their own and always remain in a group. Groups and their leaders should be decided in advance.

Close supervision of the pupils in the hostel, centre or hotel during the night on residential visits is maintained. Adults sleep in close proximity to the children's rooms. Staff retain pass keys in order to gain entry to all self-locking doors in an emergency. Children and staff will occupy separate rooms/tents on residential visits, according to gender. On camping expeditions, staff tents should be sited near pupils' tents.

Information Available at School

Final details of the visit are submitted to, and retained by, the Headteacher and EVC the day before the visit. This is critical, if the visit is when the school is normally closed.

The group leader and deputy leader hold the same information for the duration of the visit. The information should contain details of:

- itinerary
- contact points
- mobile phone number(s)
- staff – teacher in charge, deputy, helpers, etc.
- emergency contacts
- copies of Parental Consent Form
- copies of any insurance documents, contracts, etc.
- emergency procedures.

Emergencies

Despite good planning and organisation, emergencies that require immediate response by the leaders, sometimes occur. Whilst still controlling and supervising the rest of the group, leaders should contact the appropriate emergency/rescue service immediately. The Headteacher/ EVC should be contacted at the earliest possible opportunity.

Unofficial Visits

The above guidelines relate only to activities connected to the work of the school. Where a teacher takes charge of children voluntarily on an activity out of school hours – one which is not organised by the school (and not approved by the Governors) but involves children from the school – no responsibility is accepted by the Headteacher or the Swansea LA.

Reporting Accidents

The standard procedures for reporting accidents are followed, as stated in the Accident Reporting Booklet, including the completion of the relevant pro-formas.

Extra-curricular Activities

The following rules apply when taking a group of pupils out to another venue after school hours to take part in an activity.

- Consent from Headteacher/ EVC through Evolve. These can cover a series of events/ visits/ activities.
- Thorough risk assessments must be completed and submitted through Evolve.

Letter to parents advising:

- venue
- time of departure from school
- time of return

- pick-up place

Parental Consent Forms should be completed. These can cover a series of events / visits / activities.

A list of pupils attending the activity should be left in the **Main Office**.

Transport

- ✓ If school staff use their own cars to transport children they should have appropriate car insurance and booster seats.
- ✓ If parents are transporting children, their cars should be fully insured; the pupils should sit in the back and wear seatbelts.
- ✓ Parents should be fully informed of the time and place to collect the children.
- ✓ A mobile phone should be taken to the event in case of emergency.
- ✓ If the activity is cancelled, parents should be informed as soon as possible, so that they can collect their children at the usual home time.
- ✓ It is the responsibility of the organiser to look after pupils not collected after an activity. Do not leave pupils unsupervised, e.g. at school or at pick up point.

Swimming

- ✓ Staffing – two adults, one of each gender if possible. SEN support for behavioural or medical needs, if appropriate.
- ✓ Supervision ratio at the pool for older pupils and for younger pupils is decided by the swim leaders in charge of lessons.
- ✓ The pupils are fully supervised on the minibus or coach. All seat belts should be fastened. Staff sit amongst the pupils, not at the front. No child or member of staff should stand in the aisle when the coach is moving, unless there is an emergency.
- ✓ Duty of care and responsibility for the safety of the pupils apply.

Leptospirosis

There are two types of leptospirosis infection. **Weil's disease** is a waterborne infection that is transmitted to humans by contact with urine from infected rats. **Hardjo** form of leptospirosis is transmitted from cattle to humans.

Information relating to leptospirosis is available on HSE website. www.hse.gov.uk
EVCs should ensure that risk assessments for visits involving open water activity should consider the factors associated with catching leptospirosis and include appropriate control measures.

When a private company is providing a water based activity where this issue is a concern, schools are advised to engage in dialogue with the provider so that both parties can make appropriate considerations where this particular risk is concerned.

Emergency Procedures

If an accident or other emergency occurs, the group leader or supervisor should do the following:

1. Assess the situation.
2. Safeguard the uninjured members of the group.
3. If there are injuries, establish immediately the names of the injured people and the extent of their injuries.
4. Attend to the casualty/ies.
5. Inform the emergency services and everyone who needs to know, about the accident.
6. Notify the police if necessary.
7. Share the problem; advise all other group staff that the accident/emergency procedure is in operation. Make sure **every** member of the group is accounted for.
8. Ensure that the injured are accompanied to hospital (preferably by an adult whom they know).
9. Ensure that the rest of the group understands what has happened, is adequately supervised and kept together.
10. Inform the appropriate school contact and pass on all the details, including names of casualties, their injuries, action taken and names of others involved. The contact will initiate this policy, if the accident/emergency warrants.
11. If abroad, contact the British Embassy/Consulate, if advisable.
12. Notify insurers, especially if medical assistance is required.
13. Notify tour operator.
14. Ascertain telephone numbers for future calls.
15. As soon as possible, write down accurately relevant facts and witness details.
16. Preserve any vital evidence.
17. Keep a written account of subsequent events, times and contacts after the incident.
18. Complete accident report forms, contacting the LA HSE, if necessary.
19. No one in the group should speak to the media. Media enquiries should be referred to the Headteacher in school.
20. No one in the group should discuss legal liabilities with other parties.

Copies of this policy are available on our website, in policy folders on the school network and can be made available on request.

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Policy Next Review Date: November 2027

Appendix 1 Types of Adventurous Activity.

Adventurous Activities

Important note: This list is not exhaustive. Any visit leader unsure of whether or not an activity should be classified as an adventure activity should seek the advice of the Outdoor Education Adviser.

Land Based Activities	Water Based Activities
Rock climbing and abseiling	Kayaking and canoeing
Mountaineering	Sailing and windsurfing
Hill walking	White water rafting
Ice climbing	Waterskiing
Gorge or coastal scrambling/sea cliff traversing/coasteering	Snorkel and aqualung diving
Underground exploration – cave or mine	All forms of boating (excluding commercial transport)
Skiing (snow/dry slope)	Improvised rafting
Air activities (except commercial flights)	Kite surfing
Horse riding and pony trekking	Surfing and body boarding
High ropes courses	Dragon boating
Indoor climbing walls	Wave skiing
Quad biking/ATV's	Jet skiing/personal water craft
Orienteering	
Mountain biking	
Any activity (including camping, fieldwork and non-adventure activities) taking place in demanding environments as defined in Table Pii above	
Other activities (e.g. problem solving exercises) if they involve activities and risks of a similar nature to the activities listed above.	

Appendix 2 Planning Checklist

Visit planning checklist

This checklist is intended for use as an 'aide-mémoire' for the main elements of visit organisation as set out in the Educational Visits guidance.

Schools/centres/EVC's/visit leaders are encouraged to modify this list to suit their needs.

Purpose of visit

What are the aims of the visit?

Where and when do you intend to go?

- ✓ Are venue, activities and time of year appropriate to aims and age/ability of group?
- ✓ Have you planned alternative activities (plan B) in case you need to abandon your planned programme for any reason?
- ✓ Does the visit involve the use of an independent provider?

Have you gained approval from your EVC/Head/Governors (and LA if required) prior to making any financial commitment?

Risk management

- ✓ Have you carried out an exploratory visit?
- ✓ What are the main hazards (including for any plan B)?
- ✓ Are the main hazards covered by the LA/school/centre risk assessment for this type of activity/visit?
- ✓ If yes, have you discussed these with other leaders and young people?
- ✓ If there are additional hazards and safety measures above and beyond the risk assessment, have you completed a specific risk assessment that details these additional risks and safety measures?
- ✓ Have you shared this with other leaders and young people and filed a copy?

Overseas visits

- ✓ Have you notified the LA at least 28 days before the visit using Evolve.
- ✓ Have you gained LA approval at least 28 days before the visit?

Required for:

Visits involving adventure activities

Visits to demanding environments

Staffing

- ✓ Are adequate staffing numbers available, taking into account any special needs?
- ✓ Have you checked the advice on typical young person: staff ratios?
- ✓ Are staff competent for their roles on the visit?
- ✓ If establishment staff are planning to lead activities which require LA approval, have they obtained LA leader approval?
- ✓ Are Voluntary helpers being used? Are they appropriate?
- ✓ Are they insured, by being entered on the school/centre list of voluntary helpers?
- ✓ Are they aware of their responsibilities?

- ✓ Is a police check necessary for your helpers under the Child Protection Act?
- ✓ Are any of the activities offered licensable under the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations, 1996?
- ✓ If so, is the provider licenced by the Adventure Activities Licensing Authority to provide these?
- ✓ Does the visit involve young people working without the direct supervision of staff at any time?

Finance

- ✓ Is a charge or voluntary contribution involved? If so, have you set up an account with the finance office?
- ✓ Are the costs of the trip being met by pupil contributions?
- ✓ Are you using a commercial operator or company? Is there financial security e.g. ABTA/ATOL?
- ✓ If relevant, does the visit conform to Package Travel regulations?

Insurance

- ✓ Is personal insurance cover for young people/staff provided?
- ✓ Have you checked any cover automatically provided by, say, a tour company?
- ✓ Are parents aware of the insurance position?

Parent/carer information and consent

- ✓ Have you provided parents/carers with full information regarding the visit and all planned activities (including plan B activities)?
- ✓ Have you met with parents/carers?
- ✓ Have they given appropriate written consent?
- ✓ Have you filed copies of the consent forms?
- ✓ Are they aware of the consequences of any misbehaviour by their child?

Special Needs

- ✓ Have you taken account of any special needs of young people/staff?
- ✓ Have you made all staff (including independent providers) aware of relevant special needs?

Programme

- ✓ Does your programme include alternatives (plan B) in case the original programme needs to be abandoned for any reason?
- ✓ Have you planned 'Down-time' arrangements?
- ✓ Have you arranged adequate supervision at all times?
- ✓ Duty rota for staff?
- ✓ Have you agreed standards of behaviour and conduct?

Clothing and Equipment

- ✓ Are clothing and equipment appropriate to the activities and location?
- ✓ Has young peoples' essential clothing been checked?

Medical arrangements

- ✓ Do you have a record of relevant medical information of all the young people and staff?
- ✓ Have you made appropriate medical arrangements, including first aid?

- ✓ Are there any special potential health hazards associated with the site?
- ✓ Are all staff involved aware of the above?

Accommodation

- ✓ Suitability?
- ✓ Pre-visit check?
- ✓ Fire precautions and certification?
- ✓ Fire drill?
- ✓ Young people security?

Transport

- ✓ Driver suitability?
- ✓ Drivers' hours?
- ✓ LA minibus regulations?
- ✓ Insurance?
- ✓ Adequate stops, eating and care arrangements en route?

Visits Overseas

- ✓ Passports?
- ✓ Visas?
- ✓ EHIC?
- ✓ Health/medical arrangements in place?
- ✓ Minibus Regulations (Tachographs)?
- ✓ Exchange visits: child protection procedures?
- ✓ Cultural issues?

Emergency procedures, contacts and communication

- ✓ Have you planned what to do in the event of an emergency during the visit?
- ✓ Have you established appropriate emergency contacts (24 hrs) with your base establishment and parents/carers?
- ✓ County press/media officer?
- ✓ Have you set up effective communication procedures with the group?
- ✓ Are you aware of establishment/LA emergency procedures?

Mobile phones

- ✓ Have you agreed a mobile phone use policy with parents and young people?

Post-visit review arrangements

- ✓ Review risk assessment and update if necessary – involve EVC.
- ✓ Review other arrangements and evaluate whether the visit met the intended aims
- ✓ Outstanding invoices paid
- ✓ Borrowed equipment returned
- ✓ Displays
- ✓ Parents'/carers' evening
- ✓ Report to Governors
- ✓ Thank you letters
- ✓ Article with photographs to the local media

Appendix 3

Areas of Responsibility for Voluntary Helpers

(This page should be printed out and handed to Voluntary Helpers when appropriate.)

You should attend meetings before the visit, if appropriate.

You should be aware of the itinerary for the day/visit and receive a copy of the itinerary, names of the pupils and details of the groups.

You should stay in close proximity to a teacher on the visit. You should not take a group away to another area.

When walking you should be familiar with the route and may be asked to lead. No child should walk ahead of you and the teacher should be at the back of the line so that he/she has full view of the class.

You should sit at the front or half way up the bus with the teacher sitting at the back in order to have full view of the class.

You should be given a small group of children to look after and should know who they are. (The leader should check on a regular basis that the children are behaving themselves and that they are safe and feeling well.)

You should keep the children with you at all times.

You should not assume any responsibility for an activity for which you are not qualified, e.g. rock climbing.

You should be aware that the pupils must wear seatbelts at all times on a coach, unless told to remove them by a teacher or in the case of an emergency.

You should tell a teacher if a pupil does not wear his or her seatbelt or interferes with that of another pupil.

You should tell the teacher/leader if a pupil is misbehaving or will not do as asked.

You should accept you have a duty of care to make sure the children in your group are safe and well.

You should report any accident to the teacher/leader immediately. You should be familiar with the risk assessment for the excursion.