



ST. THOMAS MORE CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY

MISSION STATEMENT

I have come so that they may have life and have it to the full - John 10:10

As a Catholic school, God is at the heart of all we do. We believe that each person is made in His image, deserving to be treated with respect and dignity.

Showing respect, love and care for everyone and everything, we aim to develop harmony between pupils, parents, the school and Parish and grow as a Christian community.

We aim to embed the virtues in every child to believe in themselves to be the best that they can be and leave school as well-rounded individuals who care about themselves, others, and the world.

This policy must be read in conjunction with the
Safeguarding Policy, Supporting children with Medical Needs Policy
and First Aid Policy

Date drafted: September 2024

Date ratified by the Governing Body:

Date for review by Staff and Governors: September 2025

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1. Introduction

At St Thomas More Catholic Primary School, we believe that Educational Visits are an integral part of the curriculum and learning experience for every child. We believe appropriately planned visits (including experiential experiences) enhance learning and improve attainment and contribute to the development of a variety of skills including:

- making links with the curriculum
- ability to cope with change
- curiosity
- resilience
- creativity

We also recognise that there are certain risks associated with off-site visits and seek, through the guidance given in this policy, to minimise any such risks and ensure the safety and peace of mind of any pupils, parents/ carers, helpers and staff members organising and participating in off-site visits.

Our priorities are to make sure all visits are safe, educational and enjoyable experiences. This policy document should be followed for any off-site visit involving pupils of St Thomas More Catholic Primary School. Any questions or queries should be directed to the Head Teacher (prior to finalising the arrangements for any visit).

2. Risk assessment

A comprehensive risk assessment is carried out by the group leader before the proposed visit. It will assess the risks which might be encountered on the visit, and will indicate measures to prevent or reduce them. The risk assessment should be based on the following considerations:

- What are the hazards?
- Who might be affected by them?
- What safety measures are needed to reduce risks to an acceptable level?
- Can the group leader put the safety measures in place?
- What steps will be taken in an emergency?

It is important to assess and record any health, safety or security issues that are identified during the preliminary visit.

3. Before the Visit

- Staff planning an off-site activity should, wherever possible, make a preliminary visit to the venue in order to carry out an on-site risk assessment.
- It is important to take into account the probable weather conditions at the time of year proposed for the trip. The visit leader should take careful account of the facilities available, with due regard to the proposed size of the group.
- The visit leader should also assess the site's suitability with regard to the age and any particular needs of the children.
- Venues providing instructor-led activities will have their own risk assessments for particular sessions, and these assessments may be adopted if it is impractical for the visit leader to experience the activity beforehand, or if s/he lacks the skills required to make informed judgements about the risks it may involve. The LA will not have given its approval for the visit unless it is satisfied with the venue, its instructors and their risk assessment procedures.
- The visit leader must ensure that all procedures and risk assessments are done in line with Gloucestershire County Council's 'Offsite Visit Manual'.
- Agree with the Head Teacher how much voluntary contribution to ask for. The visits will be cancelled if there are not enough voluntary contributions and this will be made clear to parent/carers (see the Charging & Remissions Policy) and to follow up any missing payments.
- Book the visit and inform the School Administrator of coach requirements and any advance payments required (e.g. cheques/cash for entrance fees).
- Send out letters where possible, one month before and where this is not possible parents will be notified as soon as possible and no later than 3 days before the trip and ensure the letter states whether or not children need to wear school uniform and whether a packed lunch is needed.
- Check whether any child has a particular medical need. Only medication agreed with the parent/carers and Head Teacher prior to the visit may be administered by the teacher in charge. No one else has authorisation to administer medication. An appropriate First Aid Kit should be carried in case of emergency (see First Aid Policy). Should a child not have the appropriate medication as per care plans held at school, they will not be able to go on the trip. (See Supporting Children with Medical Needs Policy).
- Organise sufficient adult help.

4. Ratios

There is no such thing as a definitive ratio. Actual ratios for any visit must always be determined through a process of risk assessment by the visit leader or Education

Visit Co-ordinator. The risk assessment should take account of all risk factors and specifically ensure there is sufficient staff to deal with normal group management, any Special Educational Needs and be able to deal with emergencies.

The following examples of supervision ratios can be applied when planning their visit, but it should be noted that these are given as a starting point only and are not statutory. The final decision rests with the school.

Foundation Stage	1 adult to every 3-4 pupils
Years 1-3	1 adult to every 6 pupils
Years 4-6	1 adult to every 10-15 pupils

Swimming:

Years 1-3	1 adult to every 10 pupils
Years 4-6	1 adult to every 12

There should be a minimum of one teacher in charge of any visit/activity. In addition, there should be enough supervisors to cope with any emergency. The lead teacher must take a pack with them, which includes a class list and signed permission slips for every pupil on the trip including parent/carer contact numbers. They must also have a mobile phone with them at all times and be contactable throughout the whole trip.

Parents/carers/volunteers may be used to supplement supervision ratios, but they must be known to the school and carefully selected. Anyone who has not been DBS checked must not be left in sole charge of pupils (a regulated activity) and must be accompanied by a member of school staff at all times.

50% of supervisors should be school staff. Teaching Assistants supporting a child with an EHCP for behaviour should not be asked to supervise other pupils – or factored into the required ratio.

Arrange adult helpers in the following order of priority:

1. School Staff
2. Governors
3. Parents/ carers – children should be in their parent's/care's group only if the teacher feels this is appropriate. Siblings may not accompany parents. Siblings who do not attend the school cannot accompany parent/carers.
4. Other Volunteers. People who do not normally have any link or contact with the children should be used only in emergencies and after relevant checks have been made.

Any person transporting pupils as part of an educational visit must have fully comprehensive and business insurance. It is the responsibility of the teacher in charge to check these details.

It is the Visit leader's responsibility to advise the School Administrator in good time to:

- Arrange hire of coaches in accordance with details provided by the teacher in charge or visit leader.
- Arrange for entrance fees etc. required to be paid in advance to be dealt with in good time. Otherwise, to make ready cash/cheques on the day of the outing.
- Cancel school meals and check whether any child on free school meals, needs a packed lunch provided.

5. Communication with Parents

- The parents of children taking part in an off-site activity should be provided with all appropriate information about the intended visit. Parents must give their permission in writing before a child can be involved in any off-site activities.
- All parents are given a letter to sign with a blanket permission for their child to go on local visits within school hours, which they will be walking to. If the visit requires transport or is out of school hours, an additional letter and permission slip will be sent home.
- Funding for off-site activities is provided mainly by parental contributions (voluntary except in the case of residential visits). This must be made clear to parents in all correspondence about an educational visit at the planning stage.
- No child may be excluded from an activity because of the unwillingness or inability of the parent to make a contribution. Parents will be informed of this principle through the school website and letters sent home about intended visits.
- The timetable for the payment of contributions should allow for the Head Teacher to make a decision about the financial viability of the activity in reasonable time.

6. On the Day of the Visit

- First Aid Kit to be collected from First Aid Room (See First Aid Policy for minimum requirements).
- Ensure a signed copy of the Risk Assessment is with the School Administrator, EVC and the Visit Leader.
- Collect bucket, tissues, gloves and entrance money (unless already paid by cheque in advance).
- List the children into groups with helpers. Give each helper a copy of this list.
- Parents/ carers and volunteers should have a briefing of arrangements before leaving and be given a 'Briefing Paper' to read on the coach (if necessary/ relevant).
- Make sure that everyone has a packed lunch and water and that children go to the toilet before they get on the coach.
- If spending money is allowed, then children must be responsible for their own spending money. This should be in a labelled purse/ wallet/ envelope.

7. Health and Safety

- Risk Assessments in line with Gloucestershire County Council Guidelines must be completed.
- Make sure that all seat belts have been fastened before the coach moves.
- On arrival, an adult should be the first off the coach and line up the children away from the road.
- When crossing a road, the teacher should stand in the middle until all the children are safely across.
- There should always be adults at the front and rear of the children.
- Children are not allowed near water, unless already agreed with the Head Teacher, and a full Risk Assessment completed. Children must always be accompanied by an adult to the toilet facilities.
- If there is an emergency and a child needs individual attention, other children must never be left unattended. This also applies if a child gets lost. □ In case of emergency, the teacher in charge should contact the school.
- On return to the school there should be a round up of feedback to discuss and note any issues.
- If an individual child's behaviour is deemed a sufficient risk, the school reserves the right to deny permission for the child to take part in the visit.

8. Children's Behaviour

Children should be clear about what is expected of them. All pupils should be fully briefed before departing school and on arrival at the venue. They should:

- Be aware whose group they are in and stay with that adult.
- Sit on the coach with seat belts on.
- Children must not eat on the coach unless given special permission.
- Carry their own lunch box and belongings.
- Walk on the side of the pavement furthest from the road.

If any child's behaviour is of a level where they or others would be put at risk by them attending an educational visit, the school has the right to refuse their attendance on the trip unless they are accompanied by their parent/carer.

If a child displays this level of behaviour on a Residential Visit and they need to be sent home, parents must collect their child from the location.

8. Advice to Helpers

Children's safety should be paramount at all times. You should:

- Be aware of where the children in your group are at all times and count them regularly.
- Keep your hands free, e.g. do not carry children's lunch boxes, so that you are able to react quickly in an emergency.
- Immediately inform the teacher in charge / visit leader if you have any concerns or if any incidents occur.
- Be proactive and engage the children in what they are experiencing.

Safety, Health and Environment (SHE) at Gloucestershire County Council

The school is supported in its arrangements for educational visits and off-site activities by Safety, Health and Environment (SHE) at Gloucestershire County Council. Where necessary the school will seek advice from SHE.

All visits that involve an overnight stay, going abroad and any that involve adventurous activities will be submitted to SHE on eVisit prior to departure. SHE will provide an independent reassurance check of the plan and the precautions and safety measures that will be taken. Any advice provided will be fully considered prior to the trip taking place.

Where staff have any queries or concerns in relation to this policy and when planning Educational Visits, they will contact she@gloucestershire.gov.uk or phone 01452 425350 and the SHE Advisers will be able to help and support.

Further Guidance

Documents relevant to this Policy can be found by logging into the E-Visit Online System. They are not included within this policy document as it is ESSENTIAL that Visit Leaders use the most up to date documentation available at:

<https://www.e-visit.co.uk/Gloucestershire/eVisit>

Useful documents (correct as of September 2023) may include:

Appendix 01 - Model Policy for Offsite Visits Sept 2024
 Appendix 02 - Single Consent Form Sept 2024
 Appendix 03 - Personal & Medical Information Form Form Sept 2024
 Appendix 04 - Independent Providers' Questionnaire Sept 2024
 Appendix 05 - Emergency Procedures Template Sept 2024
 Appendix 06 - Example Code of Conduct Sept 2024
 Appendix 07 - Model Letter to Drivers Transporting Young People Sept 2024
 Appendix 08 - Leaders Planning Checklist Sept 2024
 Appendix 09 - Evaluation Form Sept 2024

GCC Model Risk Assessments from September 2023

	Activity	Provider	Visits	Risk	Assessment	Sept
	2023.docx					
	<u>Camping Trip (School Led) Risk Assessment Sept 2023.docx</u>					
	Countryside	Walks	Risk	Assessment	Sept	
	2023.docx					
☐	Cycling Risk Assessment Sept 2023.docx					
☐	Day Trips Risk Assessment Sept 2023.docx					
☐	Farm Visits Risk Assessment Sept 2023.docx					
☐	<u>Residential Trip (School Led) Risk Assessment Sept 2023.doc x</u>					
☐	<u>Routine Educational Visits in the Local Area Risk Assessment Sept 2023.docx</u>					
☐	Seaside	Day	Trips	Risk	Assessment	Sept
☐	2023.docx					
☐	Sports Fixtures Tournaments and Events Risk					
☐	<u>Assessmen</u>					
	t Sept 2023.docx					

Appendix 1

Please see Educational Visits Flow Chart