

# ST FRANCIS OF ASSISI CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL



*Rooted in faith  
Growing in love  
Learning for life*

## EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY

# **Educational Visits Policy**

## **Nature and Aims of Educational Visits at St Francis of Assisi Catholic Primary School**

The value of class visits in extending and enriching classroom learning and experience has long been recognised. At St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Primary School, planned educational visits form an essential part of the learning programme.

At St Francis of Assisi Catholic Primary School, we aim to:

- Ensure that the children experience a variety of educational trips during their time at St Francis and extend their activities and learning experience if revisiting.
- Provide links between the 'real' world and the classroom and make learning more effective by putting it in context.
- Provide first-hand experience where this cannot be done in the classroom.
- Fulfil National Curriculum requirements for field studies in Science, Geography, History and PE.
- Encourage pupils to give the same standards of behaviour, responsibility and work in out-of-school learning as they do in school.
- Help the children gain and benefit from an increasing measure of independence from home by developing a programme of visits throughout the school, which builds a progression as to the nature, location and length of time away.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

If visits are to take place safely and efficiently all those involved need to take account of their responsibilities.

Governors:

- Ensure that guidance is available to inform the school policy
- Ensure that the Headteacher and EVC are supported in matters relating to educational visits.

The Headteacher:

No visits should take place without the knowledge of the Headteacher.

Headteachers should:

- Delegate tasks to the EVC (Frances Date)
- Ensure that where necessary, visits have been approved

- Ensure adequate Safeguarding procedures are in place
- Ensure that visits are inclusive
- Ensure risk assessments have been completed
- Allow sufficient time for induction and staff training
- Ensure that the school has an emergency action plan in place
- Ensure accident/injury and death are reported as required
- Help to ensure that serious incidents, accidents and near accidents are investigated
- Ensure that all necessary actions have been completed before the visit takes place
- Sign off the 'visit' (Evolve) once notified by West Sussex

The Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) should:

- Have an overview of all activities that take place
- Provide advice and support for staff
- Ensure that visits comply with school procedures
- Send to 'Evolve'
- Organise induction and staff training
- Keep records of visits
- Review systems regularly
- Monitor practice and procedures.

Teachers should:

- Obtain the Headteacher's agreement from the Assistant head and complete the 'Initial Approval for Educational Visits Form' before any off-site visit takes place. See Appendix 1
- Have a clear objective for the visit
- Undertake and complete the planning and preparation for the visit
- Complete risk assessments
- Provide detailed information for the parents
- Gain parents written consent
- Have an alternative plan
- Ensure that pupils are well prepared for the activities they will do
- Ensure that the ratio of adults to pupils is appropriate for the needs of the group
- Ensure that the group supervisors are fully aware of what the visit entails e.g. the purpose, the timetable for the day, their role and responsibilities etc...
- Ensure group supervisors have a copy of the emergency procedures
- Ensure that each group supervisors are aware of any special educational/medical needs that the pupils may have and know how to deal with them.
- Consider stopping the visit if the visit becomes unacceptable.

Adult volunteers should:

- Be clear of their role and responsibilities throughout the visit
- Do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in their group
- Not be left in sole charge of the pupils except where it has been agreed through risk assessment
- Follow the instructions of the teacher
- Speak to the teacher if concerned about the health and safety of the pupils.
- Sign agreement which states that they will not use phones to take pictures of children or upload any material on social media.

The pupils should:

- Behave sensibly and in a responsible manner
- Follow the instructions of the teacher and other supervisors including those at the venue
- Not take unnecessary risks
- Look out for anything that might endanger themselves or others and inform the group leader or supervisor

Parents/Carers should:

- Complete and return to school the parental consent slip
- Provide up to date medical/contact details as necessary
- Attend briefing meetings for high risk/residential visits
- Be aware of additional costs for the trip
- Make arrangements for dropping off and collection from rendezvous points which are different to normal school practise

### **Planning for Educational Visits**

Thorough preparation for a visit will include a pre-visit by teacher/s to:-

- Confirm suitability.
- Confirm its intrinsic interest.
- Help determine its position in the unit of study.
- Establish the focus for the trip.
- Help determine the suitable preparation and follow- up, and kind of work to be done on the site.
- Give opportunity for the collection and possible purchase of relevant study material, both for the immediate use of the class and to augment the school's resources.
- Help teachers determine how children are grouped so that they can gain the maximum benefit, both educational and social.
- Carry out risk assessment.

Educational visits give many and varied opportunities for pupils to learn, practise and develop skills in practical ways, for example in:-

- Literacy – listening to guides, asking questions, taking notes, reading information, writing letters.
- Numeracy – following/preparing a timetable, deciding how to spend their money (money not encouraged by school but depending on visit and members of staff)
- Science – ‘hands on’ experience/investigations, visits related to topics.
- ICT – creating guides, studying publishing techniques.
- DT – looking at designs and making models.
- History & Geography – studying the local area, enhancing the topics, home region and other localities, the seaside, finding their way about.
- Art – studying original works, seeing art not just decorative but useful, functional, enhancing the environment, as an end in itself.
- Music, Drama, Dance – practising for a concert, attending live music making, seeing professional actors, dancers and musicians supporting our local Brit School in its many exhibitions and performances.
- P.E. – taking part in tournaments, being spectators at local events. Participating in Outdoor Adventurous Activities.
- R.E. – visits to church, learning about other religions.

### **Organisation**

Most class trips will take place within the school day and are planned well in advance. Children are organised into groups (taking into account adult: pupil ratios and pupils with special needs), which are best suited to the type of work to be carried out and the nature of the visit.

The school is supported with voluntary helpers on the trips. The member of staff, (all who have current DBS checks), leading the trip will ensure that a voluntary helper who is not DBS checked is not left alone with the children unsupervised.

Prior to the visit, children take a letter home, which contains details of the place, date, times of departure and return, the reason for, the cost, a suggested amount of spending money (if allowed by staff and if appropriate) and any special requirements of the visit.

Costs are kept to a minimum and cover the price of entry and travel.

The children in Year 6 have the opportunity to participate in a residential visit in the Autumn Term. The visit is organised by PGL, a well-known activity group, who carry all the required safety awards. The preparation for the children and parents for this visit commence in the Year Five.

The school does not wish to exclude anyone from educational visits on financial grounds and the letter therefore includes an invitation to parents to discuss any financial difficulties.

A permission slip is attached to the letter, which the parent/carer should sign before the visit. A list will be kept by the class teacher indicating which parents have sent the slip back. The school office will contact the parents who have not returned the slip to remind them about the trip.

Where pupils are required to attend a series of meetings, e.g. rehearsals, sports meetings etc. parents/carers will be advised separately. Details of time, place, method of transport and arrangements for meeting the children afterwards will be sent home with the children concerned.

### **Procedures for Planning off-site visits**

Careful planning for educational visits is essential and a procedure must be followed.

#### **Approval**

Notice of an intended visit, with initial arrangements and costs, must be approved, other than exceptional circumstances, by the Assistant Head at least five weeks in advance and the booking form completed.

#### **Information and consent**

Information letters and requests for contributions and consent must be sent to parents/carers at least four weeks in advance. Sufficient contributions for the visit to go ahead must be received no less than one week in advance. Consent forms must be signed and returned to school at least two days ahead of the visit.

#### **Risk Assessment**

A risk assessment must be carried out before a visit and handed to the Assistant Head for checking at least two weeks before the visit. The venue to be visited will be contacted for its own site risk assessment and the school's assessment will be written in conjunction with the site assessment.

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

#### **Safeguarding**

The Group Leader should ensure that all necessary safety checks (DBS) have been obtained for the other adults in the group, and that they are aware of Child Protection guidelines.

#### **Exploratory visit**

Wherever possible the group leader should undertake an exploratory visit 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 the group leader is familiar with the area before taking a party of pupils.

If it is not feasible to carry out an exploratory visit, a risk assessment, as a minimum measure, should be obtained from the venue, seeking assurances about the venue's appropriateness for the visiting group.

### **First Aid**

First Aid provision should be considered when assessing the risks of the visit.

For adventurous activities, visits which involve overnight stays, or visits abroad, where possible at least one trained first-aider will be included 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 emergency services. Suitably stocked first-aid box/bag will be available.

A person should be appointed to be in charge of first-aid arrangements.

### **Residential visits**

Consideration will be given to:

- appropriate room allocation for pupils and adults, with sufficient opportunity for supervision
- the immediate accommodation area should be exclusively for the use of the group;
- access by staff to student rooms must be available at all times;
- ensure the lay-out of the accommodation, its fire precautions/exits, its regulations and routing, and key personnel are known by all in the party;
- appropriate security arrangements should be in place
- storage of clothes, luggage, equipment etc
- provision for sick, disabled pupils or those with special educational or medical needs;
- safety in rooms (electrical connections, secure balconies)
- recreational accommodation/facilities for the group.

### **Contact Details**

On the day of the visit, relevant information must be lodged with the school office:-

- relevant insurance cover
- contact details of the venue
- Names of all pupils on the visit
- Names of all adults and pupils in the travelling group, plus contact details of their next of kin.
- Notification to school cook of arrangements for the class (this may be an early or late lunch).
- Name and contact details of a school governor

## **Safety Considerations**

The safety of the children is given the highest priority and is a prime consideration in all preparation. First aid equipment accompanies the children on every visit.

The staffing ratio will vary with each activity and the age and ability of the participants. The final ratio will be identified by the risk assessment and should be recorded. A basic guide is: -

- i. 1 adult to 6 participants for up to, and including, Year 3
- ii. 1 adult to every 10 participants in Years 4 to 6

Very young children and those with special needs may need a higher staff ratio.

Regardless of these suggested ratios, each visit will be assessed individually through the school's risk assessment procedure for educational visits.

\*These ratios do not include residential visits.

Adults with appropriate DBS clearance 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 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 or medical 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, the Head Teacher and Governing Body must ensure that the group leader and other supervisors are suitably qualified to lead and instruct the activity before agreement is given that the visit can take place. Qualifications can be checked with the National Governing Body of each sporting activity.

## **Conclusion**

The purpose of all educational visits is to enhance children's learning experiences, to give opportunities for sensitive and purposeful interaction with peers and other adults in a safe and supportive framework. When carefully prepared and sufficiently supervised, they provide long lasting memories for all who took part.

Please also see the school's Charging and Remissions Policy.

**Reviewed June 2025**