



St Margaret Clitherow
Catholic Primary School

St Margaret Clitherow Educational Visits Policy September 2024

Approval Information

Reviewed by:	Headteacher Mrs A Mulholland	
Approved by:	C&S	LGB
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Document History

V1.0	Original
V1.1	Re-format of page 1 to include MTCAT logo, page footer to include filename and version number along with minor formatting improvements.

For reference: 'Parents' includes all natural parents, any person who has parental responsibility for a child or care of a child. The latter means the person who the child lives with.

Our Aim:

The aims of our off-site visits are to:

- Enhance curricular and recreational opportunities for our pupils;
- Provide a wider range of experiences for our pupils than could be provided on the school site alone;
- Promote the independence of our children as learners, and enable them to grow and develop in new learning environments

Curriculum links:

For each subject in the curriculum there is a corresponding programme of activities (which includes visits to the school by specialists).

- English – theatre visits, visits by authors, poets and theatre groups;
- Science – use of the school grounds, visits to the Look Out and / or the Discovery Centre, pond dipping and environmental studies, Hindleap Warren;
- Mathematics – use of shape and number trails in local environment
- History – visits to Windsor Castle, South Hill Park, study of local housing patterns, local museums;
- Geography – use of locality for fieldwork, Hindleap Warren;
- Art and Design – South Hill Park, use of the locality;
- PE – Hindleap Warren, a range of sporting fixtures, extra-curricular activities, visits by specialist coaches;
- Music – specialist music teaching, choir, local school's singing and orchestra concerts for parents to hear;
- RE – visits to centres of worship, visits by the Deacon and/or parish priest;
- PSHE – visits by the fire brigade and police, carol concerts at old peoples' home, visits by NSPCC.

Residential Activities:

Children in Year 6 have the opportunity to take part in a residential visit. This enables children to take part in outdoor and adventure activities as part of their PE work, as well as having links with PSHE, Science and Geography. We undertake this visit with the written agreement of the governors. Qualified instructors are provided by the centre in order to support children in the specialist activities on offer.

How the visits may be authorised:

The Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) will appoint a party leader to be responsible for running the activity. This will normally be a teacher employed by the school.

The school's EVC, who may be the head teacher, will be involved in the planning and management of off-site visits. S/he will:

- Ensure that risk assessments are completed;
- Support the head teacher and governing body in their decisions on approval;
- Organize related staff training, if necessary;
- Verify that all accompanying adults, including private car drivers and coach drivers have DBS checks;
- Make sure that all necessary permissions and medical forms are obtained;
- Keep records of visits and ensure there are regular generic assessments of the risks (for example road-crossing) where there are frequent visits to local venues.

Staff arranging or otherwise involved in off-site activities must familiarise themselves with the regulations, advice and procedures published by the LA/Mother Teresa Trust. All off-site activities must take place in accordance with the LA or FACT's instructions.

Where staff are proposing to arrange an off-site activity, they must seek and obtain the approval of the EVC before any commitment is made by the school. A comprehensive visit plan should be provided by the member of staff to allow an informed decision to be made. When a residential trip is involved, the school should seek approval from the LA/Trust.

It is our policy that all children should be able to participate in educational visits. Where a child with a disability is eligible for a trip, we will make every effort to ensure that s/he is included. We may seek guidance from parents to help us to adapt to our programme, and we will make any reasonable adjustments to our itinerary to include a child with disabilities. Any such adjustments will be included in the assessments.

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?

Staff planning an off-site activity should 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, and the party leader should take careful account of the facilities available, with due regard to the proposed size of the group. They should also assess the site's suitability with regard to the age and any particular needs of the children. They will also consider the venue's own approach to security and to health and safety. Venues providing instructor-led activities will have their own risk assessments for particular sessions, and these assessments should be adopted if it is impractical for the group 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.

It is important to assess and record any health and safety or security issues that are identified during the preliminary visit. Any such issues will be taken into account when the final decision is taken on whether the visit should proceed, and the Visit Plan must state both the extent of any risks involved, and the measures that will be taken to reduce and eliminate them. The cost of these preliminary visits will be borne by the school, and should be built into the overall financial arrangements for the visit itself.

An activity should normally have sufficient adults taking part to provide the correct ratios (see Appendix 1). Any trip will require a minimum of 2 adults. However, these are minimum requirements, and may not provide adequate supervision in all classes.

The risk assessment must also cover transport to and from the venue. The coach company we use on a regular basis has provided us with a letter detailing all the health and safety measures it routinely takes, including:

- The provision and required use of seatbelts and booster seats (if required);
- Proper vetting of the driver by the police;
- proper insurance for the driver;
- details of first aid and emergency equipment;
- breakdown procedures

The group leader will double-check that all adults helping to supervise the trip have been subject to police checks.

A copy of the completed risk assessment will be given to the EVC and all the adults supervising the trip.

Transport:

The costing of off-site activities should include any of the following that apply:

- transport
- entrance fees
- insurance
- provision of any special resources or equipment
- cost related to adult helpers
- any refreshments the school has opted to pay for.

Transport arrangements will allow a seat for each member of the party. It is our policy only to use coaches fitted with seat or lap belts, and to insist that they be worn by all those participating in the visit.

Where private cars are used for transport, the group leader is responsible for checking that the insurance of each driver covers such journeys, and double-checking that each driver has been the subject to the normal police checks.

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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.

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 prospectus and letters sent home about intended visits.

The timetable for paying contributions should allow the Head teacher to decide about the financial viability of the activity in a reasonable time.

Further health and safety considerations

All adults accompanying a party must be made aware, by the party leader, of the emergency procedures which will apply. Each adult should be provided with an emergency telephone number. This will normally be the school number, but where an activity extends beyond the normal school day the home telephone number of a designated emergency contact should be provided. Before a party leaves school, the school office should be provided with a list of everyone, children and adults, traveling with the party, together with a programme and timetable for the activity.

The safety of the party, and especially the children, is of paramount importance. During the activity, the party leader must take whatever steps are necessary to ensure safety. This involves taking note of any information provided by medical questionnaire returns and ensuring that children are both safe and well supervised at all times.

Prior to an activity, if it is felt that the behavior of an individual child is likely to compromise the safety of others or the good name of the school, the party leader should discuss with the head teacher the possibility of making additional arrangements for that child.

More detailed guidance on procedures and requirements can be obtained from the LA's Off-Site & Hazardous Activities file.

Group Leader's Planning

Group leaders must read thoroughly the appropriate guidance for off-site activities:

They must consult the LA's documentation detailing procedures and requirements, including guidance on Emergency Planning and Crisis Line organization, and must draw up a Visit Plan which records in writing (including standard forms where appropriate) the arrangements that have been made.

Visit Plan

The visit plan for intended educational visits must include the following:

- risk assessment
- report on preliminary visit
- applications for approval of visit
- general information
- names, ages, contact details, permission forms, medical records and other relevant details of all those going on the visit
- travel schedule
- accommodation plan (if applicable)
- full plan of activities
- fire precautions and evacuation procedures
- intended arrangements for supervision
- insurance arrangements for all members of the group
- emergency contacts and procedures
- general communications information
- guidance for party leaders
- guidance for the emergency contact and head teacher
- medical questionnaire returns
- first-aid boxes

Monitoring and Review

Visit leaders are encouraged to review visits, taking into account the successful and less successful parts of the visit, and considering ways in which the visit could have been improved. Informal conversations might take place between the visit leader(s) and the EVC or Head teacher regarding the outcome of the visit.

This policy is monitored by the governing body and will be reviewed every two years, or before if necessary.

Appendix 1

STAFF AND STAFF RATIOS

Ratios for specific adventure activities can be found in Section A7 Outdoor Leadership and Activities.			
Activity	Age of young people	Staff: young person ratios – typical range NB actual ratios must be determined by a process of risk assessment	Visit Leader competence
Category A and B1 i.e. visits in the UK but not: residential adventurous	Nursery	1:2-3 (minimum 2 staff)	Previous experience
	Reception	1:3-6 (minimum 2 staff)	
	Years 1-2 (KS1)	1:6-10 (minimum 2 staff)	
	Years 3-6 (KS2)	1:10-12 (minimum 2 staff) occasionally 1:15, see note below*	
	Special schools	1:6-10 (minimum 2 staff)	
Category B2 and C i.e. visits abroad or adventurous and residential visits	All years	1:10-12 (but minimum 2 staff)	Previous experience and qualified where adventurous
	Special schools/centres	1:5-8 (but minimum 2 staff)	

***Note** for KS2 local visits to AT7, or similar, 1:15 ratio is appropriate