



St Matthew Academy

EDUCATIONAL TRIPS & VISITS

Policy

Our motto is 'Let your light shine'. It is taken from St Matthew's Gospel and captures our belief in the uniqueness of each individual. Our aim is to ensure that the talents and strengths of each pupil are encouraged, developed and celebrated

Successful, confident learners

High expectations, outstanding achievements

Inclusive, caring, Catholic community

Nurturing talent, cultivating ambition

Excellence for all

Date of Approval	Autumn 2018
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1.0 PURPOSES

Well planned and executed educational visits provide our pupils with valuable experiences which enhance their learning at the academy. Providing a variety of 'real-life' opportunities for our pupils enables them to achieve a fuller understanding of the world around them through direct experience.

Educational visits are an essential element of good academy practice. This Policy applies to all off-site visits and all adventurous activities carried out with young people, with the exception of work experience placements.

2.0 POLICY LINKS TO ACADEMY ETHOS AND VALUES

- Purposeful educational visits can provide stimulus and support to work being covered as part of the academy curriculum. Wherever or whatever the venue, teachers should ensure that the educational benefits to the pupils are maximised.
- Every pupil should experience the world beyond the classroom as an essential part of learning and personal development, whatever their age, ability or circumstances
- Learning beyond the classroom is the use of places other than the classroom for teaching and learning. It is about getting pupils out and about, providing them with challenging, exciting and different experiences to help them learn.
- Learning beyond the classroom is about raising achievement through an organised, powerful approach to learning in which direct experience is of prime importance. This is not only about what we learn but importantly how and where we learn.

3.0 IMPLEMENTATION

3.1 Roles and Responsibilities

Key personnel within the academy are:

Educational visits admin support

EVC (Educational Visits Co-ordinator)

Educational Visits Co-ordinator The EVC will endeavour to ensure that:

- A suitable group leader has been appointed
- All necessary actions have been completed before the visit begins
- The risk assessment is complete and that it is safe to make the visit
- Training needs have been met
- The group leader has experience in supervising and controlling the age groups going on the visit and will organise the group effectively
- The group leader has relevant skills, qualifications and experience if acting as an instructor, and knows the location of the activity
- All supervisors on the visit are appropriate people to supervise pupils and have appropriate clearance.

Group Leader One member of staff, the group leader, is responsible overall for the planning, coordination and supervision of the visit. The Group Leader should:

- Appoint a deputy
- Liaise closely with the Educational visits admin support to ensure all stages of the admin process are carried out at each stage
- Be able to control and lead pupils of the relevant age range
- Be suitably qualified if instructing an activity and be conversant in the good practice for that activity if not

- Undertake and complete the planning and preparation of the visit including the briefing of group members and parents
- Undertake and complete a comprehensive risk assessment
- Have regard to the health and safety of the group at all times
- Know all the pupils proposed for the visit to assess their suitability
- Observe the guidance set out for teachers and other adults below
- Ensure that pupils understand their responsibilities (see responsibilities of pupils below).

Other teachers and adults involved in a visit Teachers on academy led visits act as employees of the Academy. They will therefore be acting in the course of their normal employment during their normal hours. They will be acting under an agreement with their Headteacher and Governors if some of their time on the visit falls outside normal hours. Teacher and other adults on the visit must:

- Do their utmost to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group
- Care for each individual pupil as any reasonable parent would
- Follow the instructions of the leader and help with control and discipline.

Responsibilities of pupils The group leader should make it clear to pupils that they must:

- Not take unnecessary risks
- Follow the instructions of the leader and other adults
- Dress and behave sensibly and responsibly
- Look out for anything that might hurt or threaten anyone in the group and tell the group leader about it
- Not undertake any task that they fear or that they think will be dangerous. Any pupils whose
- behaviour may be considered to be a danger to themselves or to the group may be stopped from going on the visit. The safety of all members of the academy is a priority. The curricular aims of the visit for these pupils should be fulfilled in other ways.

Parents The group leader should ensure that parents are given information about the purpose and details of the visit and are invited to any briefing sessions for longer visits. The group leader should also tell parents how they can help prepare their child for the visit by, for example, reinforcing the visit's code of conduct. Special arrangements may be necessary for parents for whom English is a second language.

Parents must:

- Provide the group leader with emergency contact number(s)
- Sign the relevant consent forms
- Give the group leader relevant information about their child's health which might be relevant to the visit.

3.2 Planning off-site visits

Whether the visit is to a local park, museum, swimming pool, or includes a residential stay, it is essential that careful planning takes place. This involves considering the dangers and difficulties which may arise and making plans to avoid them. In practice, the detailed planning is delegated to the organiser of the visit or the group leader, but the EVC must be satisfied that the person planning the visit is qualified to do so and has the necessary experience. The Educational Visits Coordinator is available to liaise with and support the planning of visits.

Risk Assessment

A risk assessment should always be carried out whilst planning an educational visit. Generic Risk Assessments are available on the T-drive but these should be changed in order to ensure that they are appropriate for the visit. The risk assessment should include the following considerations:

- What are the risks?

- Who is affected by them?
- What safety measures need to be in place to reduce risks to an acceptable level?
- Can the group leader guarantee that these safety measures will be provided?
- What steps will be taken in an emergency?
- What is the acceptable ratio of adults to pupils for this visit? (See section on Supervision.)

The group leader and other supervisors should continually reassess the risks throughout the visit and take appropriate action if pupils are in danger. The group leader should take the following factors into consideration when assessing the risks:

- The type of activity and the level at which it is being undertaken
- The location
- The competence, experience and qualifications of supervisory staff.
- The group members' age, competence, fitness and temperament
- Pupils with special educational or medical needs
- The quality and suitability of available equipment
- Seasonal conditions, weather and timing.

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 academy 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 young people. If it is not feasible to carry out an exploratory visit, a minimum measure should be to contact the venue, seeking assurances about the venue's appropriateness for the visiting group. In addition, it may be worth seeking views from other schools who have recently visited the venue. In some cases, such as when taking walking parties to remote areas, it may be appropriate to obtain local information from the Tourist Boards.

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 it is sensible to have at least one trained first-aid trained member of staff in the group. The group leader should have a clear understanding of how to access first aid and all adults in the group should know how to contact emergency services. The minimum first-aid provision is:

- A suitably stocked first-aid box
- A person appointed to be in charge of first-aid arrangements.

First-aid should be available and accessible at all times. The group leader should take this into account when assessing what level of first-aid facilities will be needed. The contents of a first-aid kit will depend on what activities are planned.

Supervision

It is important to have a sufficient ratio of adult supervisors to pupils for any off site visit. The factors to take into consideration include:

- Sex, age and ability of group
- Special needs pupils
- Nature of activities
- Experience of adults in off-site supervision

- Duration and nature of the journey
- Type of any accommodation.

Competence of staff, both general and on specific activities

There should always be enough supervisors to cope effectively with an emergency. When visits are to remote areas or involved hazardous activities, the risks may be greater and supervision levels should be set accordingly. As general guidelines, the following minimum ratio of adults to pupils should be used:

- Low risk local visits on foot: 1:15
- Low risk local visits by coach/minibus: 1:15
- Medium risk visits/ low risk visits which are not local: 1:15
- High risk visits/ medium risk visits which are not local: 1:10

Regardless of these suggested ratios, each visit will be assessed individually through the academy's risk assessment procedure for educational visits. These ratios do not include residential visits. At St Matthew Academy wherever possible the ratio should include an extra member of staff in case of illness or accidents.

For all trips there should be one member of support staff to one teacher in order to keep cover to a bare minimum.

All supervisors should be aware of any pupils who may require closer supervision, such as those with special needs or those with behavioural difficulties. The group leader retains responsibility for the group at all times. If the academy is leading an adventure activity, such as canoeing, the Head Teacher must ensure that the group leader and other supervisors are suitably qualified to lead and instruct the activity before they agree that the visit can take place. Qualifications can be checked with the National Governing Body of each sporting activity. Whatever the length and nature of the visit, regular head counting of pupils should take place. The group leader should establish rendezvous points and tell pupils what to do if they become separated from the party. An academy mobile phone should be taken on all trips unless the trip leader would prefer to use their own.

3.3 Preparing Pupils

Providing information and guidance to pupils is an important part of preparing for an educational visit. Pupils should have a clear understanding about what is expected of them and what the visit will entail. Pupils must understand what standard of behaviour is expected of them and why rules must be followed. The lack of control and discipline can be a major contributory factor when accidents occur. Pupils should also be told about any potential dangers and how they should act to ensure their own and other's safety. This could include considering any health and safety issues.

It is the responsibility of the group leader to decide how to provide information, but they should be satisfied that the pupils understand key safety information. Pupils should understand:

- The aims and objectives of the visit / activity
- Background information about the place to be visited
- How to avoid specific dangers and why they should follow rules. Why safety precautions are in place
- Why special safety precautions are in place for anyone with disabilities
- What standard of behaviour is expected from pupils
- Who is responsible for the group
- What to do if approached by a stranger
- What to do if separated from the group
- Emergency procedures

- Rendezvous procedures.

Transport and pupils

Pupils using transport on a visit should be made aware of basic safety rules including:

- Arrive on time and wait for the transport away from the road, track, etc.
- Do not rush towards the transport when it arrives
- Wear your seatbelt and stay seated while travelling on transport
- Make sure your bags do not block aisles on the transport
- Never attempt to get on or off the moving transport
- Never throw things out of the transport vehicle's windows
- Never get off a vehicle held up by traffic lights or in traffic
- Never run about while transport is moving or pass someone on steps or stairs
- Never kneel or stand on seats or otherwise impede the driver's vision
- Never distract or disturb the driver
- Stay clear of automatic doors / manual doors after boarding or leaving the transport
- After leaving the vehicle, always wait for it to move off before crossing the road
- If you have to cross roads to get to the transport always use the Green Cross Code
- If you feel unwell while travelling, tell a teacher or the person who is otherwise responsible for the group.

Participation

Pupils should be assessed to ensure that they are capable of undertaking the proposed activities. During the visit they should not be coerced into activities they fear. Pupils whose behaviour is such that the group leader is concerned for their, or others' safety, should be withdrawn from the activity. On residential visits the group leader should consider whether such pupils will return home early.

Pupils with protected characteristics, special educational and medical needs

The Headteacher will not exclude pupils with special educational or medical needs from academy visits. Every effort will be made to accommodate them whilst maintaining the safety of everyone on the visit. Special attention should be given to appropriate supervision ratios and additional safety measures may need to be addressed at the planning stage.

We endorse the following principles for young people:

- A presumption of entitlement to participate
- Accessibility through direct or realistic adaption or modification or by integration through participation with peers.

We acknowledge that it is unlawful to:

- Treat a pupil with a protected characteristic less favourably
- Fail to take reasonable steps to ensure that pupils with protected characteristics are not placed at a substantial disadvantage without justification.

We also acknowledge that expectations of staff must be reasonable, so that what is required of them (to include a pupil) is within their competence and is reasonable.

3.4 Communicating with Parents / Guardians

Parents need to be aware that the teachers on the visit will be acting in their place in loco parentis' and will be exercising the same care that a prudent parent would.

The following information on matters that might affect pupils' health and safety is useful to parents, and will be included in letter to parents / guardians prior to a visit:

- Dates of the visit
- Times of departure and return
- Mode(s) of travel including the name of any travel company
- Details of accommodation with security and supervisory arrangements on site
- Names of leader, or other staff and of other accompanying adults
- Visit's objectives
- Details of the activities planned
- If appropriate insurance taken out for the group as whole in respect of luggage, accident, cancellation and medical cover. Any cover to be arranged by the parents if appropriate will be requested.
- Clothing and equipment to be taken
- Money to be taken
- The information to be given by parents and what they will be asked to consent to.

Parental consent

St Matthew Academy will seek consent for:

- Adventure activities
- Visits abroad
- Other residential visits.

A consent form is completed during Year 7 transition interviews in order to authorise low risk visits and it is the responsibility of the group leader to ensure that any pupil attending the visit has had this form signed.

It is the parent's responsibility to inform the academy of any changes to their personal circumstances including current medical issues.

If parents withhold consent absolutely the pupil should not be taken on the visit, but the curricular aims of the visit should be delivered to the pupil in some other way, wherever possible. If the parents give a conditional consent the Headteacher will need to consider whether the child may be taken on the visit or not.

3.5 Residential visits

Hostels and Hotels The academy will bear in mind the following:

- The group leader should ideally have adjoining rooms with staff quarters next to the young people's – and will endeavour to obtain a floor plan of the rooms reserved for the group's use in advance
- 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
- Separate male and female sleeping areas for pupils and adults
- Ensure that the whole party are aware of the layout of the accommodation, its fire precautions / exits, its regulations and routing, and that everyone can identify key personnel
- Security arrangements where the reception is not staffed 24 hours a day, security arrangements should be in force to stop unauthorised visitors
- Ensure that locks / shutters etc. work on all the rooms used by the group
- Storage of clothes, luggage, equipment etc., particularly safekeeping of valuables
- Adequate lighting – it is advisable to bring a torch
- Provision for sick, disabled pupils or those with special needs
- Safety in rooms (electrical connections, secure balconies)
- Recreational accommodation / facilities for the group.

3.6 Coastal visits

Group leaders and other teachers should be aware that many of the incidents affecting pupils have occurred by or in the sea. There are dangers on the coast quite apart from those incurred in swimming. The group leader should bear the following points in mind in the risk assessment of a coastal

activity:

- Tides and sandbanks are potential hazards so timings and exit routes should be checked
- Ensure group members are aware of warning signs and flags
- Establish a base on the beach to which members of the group may return if separated
- Look out for hazards such as glass, barbed wire and sewage outflows etc.
- Some of a group's time on a beach may be recreational. Group leaders should consider which areas of the terrain and sea are out of bounds
- Cliff tops can be highly dangerous for academy groups even during daylight. The group should keep to the path at all times. Group leaders should consider whether it is safe for pupils to ride mountain bikes on coastal paths.

3.7 Swimming

Swimming and paddling in the sea or other natural waters are potentially dangerous activities for pupils. Swimming in the sea on a coastal visit should not be allowed. Paddling will only be allowed as part of a supervised activity, preferably in recognised bathing areas which have official surveillance. Pupils should always be in sight of their teachers. One teacher should always stay out of the water for better surveillance. Where paddling is to be allowed on a visit, a ratio of 1 adult:4 pupils is a minimum.

3.8 Farm visits

St Matthew academy recognises that farms can be dangerous even for the people who work on them. Taking pupils to a farm will be very carefully planned, and the risks to be assessed should include those arising from the misuse of farm machinery and the hazards associated with E coli 0157 food poisoning and other infections. The proposed farm will be checked to ensure that it is well managed, that it has a good reputation for safety standards and animal welfare and that it maintains good washing facilities and clean grounds and public areas. An exploratory visit should be carried out. The basis for a farm visit will be: We never let pupils:

- Place their faces against the animals or their hands in their mouths after feeding them.
- Eat until they have washed their hands
- Sample any animal foodstuffs
- Drink from farm taps (other than in designated public facilities)
- Ride on tractors or other machines
- Play in the farm area.

4.0 APPLYING FOR AN EDUCATIONAL VISIT OR TRIP

See Appendix 1 for how to apply for an educational trip and visit at St Matthew Academy

5.0 LINKS WITH OTHER POLICY AREAS

- Behaviour Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Teaching and learning and assessment policy

6.0 LINKS WITH EXTERNAL PARTNERS/AGENCIES WHERE RELEVANT

We believe that effective partnership working is key to the implementation of our aims, values and policy aspirations. In particular this policy relates to our working closely with the LB Lewisham

St Matthew Academy School Trips Process

Step 1: Application

- From September 2018 all trips should have been planned in advance as part of a Curriculum Plan and have been agreed in principle with Line Managers. Planned school trips should be placed provisionally on the school calendar when the Curriculum Plan is completed
- Notify the administrator responsible for trips via email with details of the proposed trip **for the next** academic year and where this has not been possible, 8 weeks before the date the event is to take place – details must include the date, destination, cost, year group/class, reason for the trip and the category of risk
- The administrator will print out the application and notify **the EVC** who will take the proposal to **the HT** for consideration/approval if appropriate
- **IT IS IMPORTANT TO NOTE THAT NO BOOKINGS SHOULD BE MADE UNTIL THE TRIP HAS BEEN APPROVED BY the ECV**



Step 2: Planning and Booking

- **The Educational visits administrator will inform the group leader whether the trip has been approved**
- If the trip has been approved, the group leader must complete and submit a **Risk Assessment, to the EVC**
- The Educational visits administrator will arrange a standard letter to be sent to parents and make any bookings necessary including Transport for London tickets. The administrator will also organise FSM for eligible students.
- A trips checklist is available in Trips Folder. The Educational visits administrator should use this to ensure all aspects of the trips have been organised in time and effectively.
- The group leader must take full responsibility for checking that all aspects of the trip are in place, well before the day of the trip and that admin support has carried out all the necessary tasks to ensure that the trip is a success.
- The group leader should consult the director of learning to determine whether any pupils have been banned from trips
- The group leader should consult with the Educational visits administrator to ensure that those pupils chosen to attend the trip have not attended more than one other trip this academic year. All pupils should be given an equal opportunity to attend a trip
- The group leader must also have consulted the medical list held in the Trips folder before completing the risk assessment and planning in advance for those risks.
- If applicable, the group leader will provide a **Purchase Order** form with a **full break down of costs** where applicable. The signed PO should be taken to finance who will process the PO.
- The group leader will submit a notice including a brief description of the trip and the names of the students going on the trip, to be placed in **Staff Announcements** the week before the trip is due to take place
- On the day of the trip, a register must be taken by the trip group leader and handed into reception **as the trip is departing**, along with a contact phone number for the group leader. The list should also be given to the **attendance officer before departure**.
- **No student will be allowed to go on a trip without prior written consent**



Step 3: Evaluation and Write-Up

- Within a week of the trip taking place, the trip leader will complete and submit a **Trip Evaluation Form**, to be filed for future reference
- The trip leader will write and submit one news article and images about the trip and send it **to IGU for the website and the St Matthew Academy Newsletter** for publication at the end of term and also to **CFR for Twitter**.