

St Matthew's RC High School

# Off-Site Activities & Educational Visits Policy

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Last reviewed: March 2017

To be reviewed: March 2019

## **Introduction**

St Matthew's RC High School provides many opportunities to enrich the curriculum for its students through off-site activities and educational visits. These include field trips, theatre trips, trips abroad and many others.

The value of off-site activities and educational visits is well recognised by the Governing body and fully supported throughout the school. Safety is recognised as paramount and careful planning and adherence to statutory procedures is required. Off-site activities and educational visits must be well managed and responsibilities recognised.

This document outlines the specific policy and procedures for St Matthew's RC High School. It supplements and follows the guidance, regulations and advice contained within significant publications by the Department for Education and Manchester City Council particularly their Educational Visit Policy published October 2012.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the full intent of the Safeguarding policy and the Supporting Pupils in school with medical conditions policy. The St Matthew's suite of policies is integral to the support of the students and staff within the school community, in which child protection is at the heart of the happiness and safety of our students.

## **Purpose**

To ensure that St Matthew's RC High School has a robust approach to the management of Educational Visits.

This will be achieved by:-

1. The provision of suitable support and guidance to all staff to allow them to adequately assess risk, effectively plan and manage Educational Visits;
2. Providing a robust approval process for all Educational Visits;

## **Scope of Policy**

This policy applies to all staff and volunteers working at or with St Matthew's RC High School. As a Voluntary Aided School St Matthew's has embodied much of the guidance given by MCC's policy on Educational Visits published in October 2012.

The policy applies to all aspects of the educational visit and off-site activities. It includes planning, the journey, any residential element and the activities undertaken.

## **Terminology**

The following is a list of commonly used terms within this Policy

- Adventure Activities - includes activities such as caving, water sports, trekking, climbing and skiing etc.
- Licensed Provider – when planning an activity that will involve adventurous activities the school must check that the provider holds a current license for the activities they offer, as required by the Adventurous Licensing Regulations.
- Caving Activities - Caving covers most activities done underground in natural caves or in mines, including variants described as pot holing, cave diving and mine exploration. It does not include visits to the parts of show caves or tourist mines which are open to the public or to the parts of mines (underground excavations made for the purpose of getting minerals) which are still being worked.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **The Governing Body will:**

- Assign, determine and keep under review the school's policy on educational visits that will detail the scope and range of visits normally conducted by the school and the procedures by which visits are proposed and approved.
- Ensure that the Headteacher is supported in matters relating to educational visits.

### **The Head Teacher will:**

- Appoint an educational visits coordinator normally the school business manager
- Assign competent people to lead and supervise visits.
- Be aware of the Department for Education advice on legal duties and powers for local authorities, head teachers, staff and governing bodies.
- Oversee the management of educational visits in school
- Ensure that appropriate documentation is completed and records are maintained of educational visits

### **The Department Director or Head of department will:**

- Be responsible for guiding, co-ordinating and overseeing the Group Leader ensuring all aspects of this policy are implemented.
- Follow the governing body instructions, guidelines and policies.

### **The Group Leader will:**

- Obtain prior agreement from the head teacher and the educational visits coordinator before any off-site visit takes place.
- Follow the governing body instructions, guidelines and policies.
- Be a member of staff who is suitably qualified and experienced to lead the specific visit.

### **The Educational Visit Approval Process**

All Educational Visits are required to have been through the approval process within school to ensure that the relevant people are satisfied that the visit has been adequately planned and organised.

**Step 1** - The Group Leader obtains permission in principle to organise the trip from the head teacher and the EV coordinator using form EV1

**Step 2** - The Group Leader plans and completes the Educational Visit documentation and presents these for approval by the EV coordinator, the head teacher and an appropriate governor – form EV2a (provisional) – this should be done early in the planning process together with a draft business plan for the trip and any proposed letter to parents and carers.

**Step 3** - The EV coordinator, the head teacher and, when necessary, an appropriate governor provisionally approve the visit documentation after satisfying themselves that the visit has been adequately planned and organised – form EV2a (provisional). Once this is approved then the parental letter may be sent out.

**Step 4** – The EV coordinator informs the school's insurers of any visit that is overnight, overseas or hazardous activity.

**Step 5** - The Group Leader updates the plans and documentation and presents these for final approval by the EV coordinator, the head teacher and an appropriate governor – using form EV2b (final)

### **Notes :**

1. Forms EV2a and EV2b are the same form – the information is updated on the same form.

2. The EV2a and EV2b form should be used to plan and approve a series of trips within one season (e.g. a term, a school year). Obviously the exact dates, numbers and locations etc. may not be known before the season a Form EV3 should be used to detail certain information on each trip within the season and to highlight any amendments necessary to the risk assessment

### **The MCC Education Visit Guidance Notes**

These should be used to help Group Leaders define terminology, e.g. what is hazardous, and to assist in the planning process as to what needs to be planned, risk assessed and organised. The MCC Education Visit Guidance Notes are located on the intranet in Grades, School policies.

### **Currency, passports and other travel documentation**

The group leader is responsible for the safe keeping of currency, passport and other travel documents. These should normally be kept on the school premises in a secure place i.e. an official safe until the trip is due to depart.

### **Mobile phones**

A school mobile must be taken by the group leader, or one of the leaders in the party, on all overseas and overnight trips.