

St. Michael's CE Aided Primary School

Educational Visits and Outdoor Learning Policy

Rationale

At St Michael's CE Aided Primary School we value the role of educational visits and opportunities to learn in the outdoor environment. We believe that every young person should experience the world beyond the classroom as an essential part of learning and personal development, whatever their age, ability or circumstances.

Learning outside 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 when we learn.

Each year the school will arrange a number of activities that take place on or off the school site and in or out of school hours, which support the aims of the school.

The Governing Body has given its approval to the following types of activities being arranged in support of the educational aims of the school:

- School teams away friendly fixtures and local tournaments.
- Regular nearby visits (woodlands, place of worship, swimming, local museums and galleries)
- Day visits for particular year groups
- Residential visits
- Adventure Activities.

In addition the Governing Body supports the use of the school environment as a resource for outdoor learning opportunities. This includes, the use of the copse for Forest Schools and the grounds for activities across the curriculum.

St Michael's Primary School has formally adopted, through its Governing Body, the Oxfordshire Guidance on Educational Visits and Learning Outside the Classroom Activities.

To enable children and staff to gain a full and enjoyable educational visit it is essential that the following guidelines are adhered to.

POLICY

All visits must have an identifiable educational benefit, with clear objectives linked to St Michael's CE (Aided) Primary School's aims.

All visits must be led by a competent Group Leader and accompanying adults.

All those involved in the organisation and running of educational visits will comply with the National, LA and St Michael's CE School's guidelines on the health and safety of participants on educational visits.

It is the responsibility of all staff to ensure that the risk to the health and safety of participants is minimised by a process of continuous vigilance and ongoing risk assessment.

PRACTICE

St Michael's CE Primary School will:

Appoint a trained Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) who will ensure that educational visits follow National, LA and establishment guidelines and that the Group Leader and accompanying adults are suitably competent to run the visit.

Develop and implement procedures to monitor all educational visits.

Develop and implement an approval system for Category A and B visits, whilst referring Category C visits (including visits abroad) to Oxfordshire County Council for approval. (Refer to the **Oxfordshire visits / Employer Guidance**) Guidance can be found on the 'Advisory Teacher for EVC information' section of the Oxfordshire Outdoor Learning Service website: www.oxfordshireoutdoors.co.uk (Forms and essential information can be found in appendix 1 of this document)

Develop and implement a procedure for dealing with emergency situations, including having a named home-base contact for each visit and a home based emergency plan (Refer to the **Oxfordshire visits / Employer Guidance – Guidance Document – Risk Management**)

Develop and implement a procedure for the investigation of and reporting on accidents, incidents and near misses (Refer to the **Oxfordshire visits / Employer Guidance – Critical Incident Management for Visits**)

Ensure that Outdoor Learning activities which take place on the school site are carefully planned and compliment learning inside the classroom.

Ensure that Forest School activities are run by a fully trained member of staff who will ensure that all aspects of the environment have been risk assessed.

During the planning of a visit the Group Leader will:

Ensure that the visit is planned and risk assessed, including an exploratory visit whenever it is possible.

Ensure that the visit complies with National, Oxfordshire County Council and St Michael's CE Primary School guidelines.

Ensure that a parent / guardian is made fully aware of the nature, purpose and detail of a visit and that permission including all relevant information is obtained for any off site activity.

Ensure that appropriate enquiries are made of any establishment or company being used for residential or outdoor adventurous activities.

Ensure that provision is made for any incident, including First Aid and a procedure to follow in the event of any emergency or other serious incident.

Ensure that all necessary forms are completed for an education visit (Refer to Essential Forms / Documents for Planning Off-Site Visits and Activities – Appendix 1) and the appropriate consents and approvals are obtained.

Ensure that all staff are briefed when they take up a post at St Michael's and on an annual basis with regard to procedures for planning educational visits and outdoor learning. This information will be disseminated through the annual review of the Staff Handbook and will include risk assessment, pupil ratios, first aid arrangements and staff duty of care during visits / outdoor learning experiences.

Ensure that all accompanying adults are selected on the basis of their competence and suitability to undertake the tasks they are allocated. Ensure those adults are fully briefed prior to the visit and that they understand their role and are fully conversant with the school's 'Protocol for Volunteers'. (See Staff Handbook)

Ensure all pupils are informed of the nature and purpose of the visit and that they follow school rules, guidelines and policies, e.g. behaviour, appropriate to the activity.

During the visit / outdoor learning activity the Group Leader will:

Ensure that the visit / activity is as safe as practicable.

Curtail the visit or stop the activity if the risk to health and safety of any participant reaches an unacceptable level.

Ensure that participants are aware of the need to be involved in the process of ongoing risk assessment, including the reporting of hazards and potential risks.

Inclusion:

In line with all policies at St Michael's Primary School we aim to include all pupils in educational visits and outdoor learning opportunities. In line with our Charging Policy we will ensure that funding is not a barrier to participation and in line with SEN and Equality Policies we will ensure that reasonable steps are taken to make visits and learning opportunities accessible to all.

	Staff	Curriculum Committee	Full Governing Body
Policy agreed	21.05.07	16.05.07	20.06.07
Policy reviewed	03.12.12	22.01.13	30.01.13
Coordinator	Sue Grundy		