

# **ST VINCENT'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**



## **EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY**

**Review: May 2027**

## **Mission Statement**

### **Caritas Christi Urget Nos**

***The love of Christ urges us to care for each other and strive for***

***excellence in everything we do.***

## **EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY**

### **Context**

We believe that educational visits are an integral part of the entitlement of every pupil to an effective and balanced curriculum. Appropriately planned visits are known to enhance learning and improve attainment, and so form a key part of what makes St Vincent's a supportive and effective learning environment. The benefits to pupils taking part in visits and learning outside the classroom include, but are not limited to:

- Improvements in their ability to cope with change.
- Increased critical curiosity and resilience.
- Opportunities for meaning making, creativity, developing learning relationships and practising strategic awareness.
- Increased levels of trust and opportunities to examine the concept of trust (us in them, them in us, them in themselves, them in each other).
- Improved achievement and attainment across a range of curricular subjects. Pupils are active participants not passive consumers, and a wide range of learning styles can flourish.
- Enhanced opportunities for 'real world' 'learning in context' and the development of the social and emotional aspects of intelligence.
- Increased risk management skills through opportunities for involvement in practical risk-benefit decisions in a range of contexts. ie. encouraging pupils to become more risk aware as opposed to risk averse.
- Greater sense of personal responsibility.
- Possibilities for genuine team working including enhanced communication skills.
- Improved environmental appreciation, knowledge, awareness and understanding of a variety of environments.
- Improved awareness and knowledge of the importance and practices of sustainability.
- Physical skill acquisition and the development of a fit and healthy lifestyle.

### **Application**

Any visit that leaves the school grounds is covered by this policy, whether as part of the curriculum, during school time, or outside the normal school day.

In addition to this Educational Visits Policy, St Vincent's:

1. Adopts the Local Authority's (LA) document: '**Guidance for Educational Visits and Related Activities with National Guidance & EVOLVE**' (All staff have access to this via EVOLVE.)
2. Adopts National Guidance [www.oeapng.info](http://www.oeapng.info), (as recommended by the LA).
3. Uses EVOLVE, the web-based planning, notification, approval, monitoring and communication system for off-site activities.

All staff are required to plan and execute visits in line with school policy (ie this document), Local Authority policy, and National Guidelines. Staff are particularly directed to be familiar with the roles and responsibilities outlined within the guidance.

### **Types of visit**

There are three types of visit:

1. Routine local visits in the 'School Local Learning Area' (See Appendix 1).
2. Day visits within the UK that do not involve an adventurous activity.
3. Visits that are overseas, and/or residential, and/or involve an adventurous activity.

### **Roles and responsibilities**

**Visit leaders** are responsible for the planning of their visits, and for entering these on EVOLVE (where required). They should obtain outline permission for a visit from the Head Teacher or EVC prior to planning, and certainly before making any commitments. Visit leaders have responsibility for ensuring that their visits will comply with all relevant guidance and requirements.

**The Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC)** is **Sandra Pereira**, who will support and challenge colleagues over visits and learning outside the classroom (LOtC) activities. The EVC is the first point of contact for advice on visit related matters, and will check final visit plans on EVOLVE before submitting them to the Head. The EVC sets up and manages the staff accounts on EVOLVE, and uploads generic school documents, etc.

**The Head Teacher** has responsibility for authorising all visits, and for submitting all overseas, residential or adventurous activity visits to the LA for approval, via EVOLVE.

**The Governing Body's** role is that of a 'critical friend'. Individual governors may request 'read-only' access to EVOLVE.

**The Local Authority** is responsible for the final approval (via EVOLVE) of all visits that are either overseas, residential, and/or involve an adventurous activity.

## **Staff Competence**

We recognise that staff competence is the single most important factor in the safe management of visits, and so we support staff in developing their competence in the following ways:

- An apprenticeship system, where staff new to visits assist and work alongside experienced visit leaders before taking on a leadership role.
- Supervision by senior staff on some educational visits.
- Support for staff to attend training courses relevant to their role, where necessary.

In deciding whether a member of staff is competent to be a visit leader, the Head Teacher will take into account the following factors:

- Relevant experience.
- Previous relevant training.
- The prospective leader's ability to make dynamic risk management judgements, and take charge in the event of an emergency.
- Knowledge of the pupils, the venue, and the activities to be undertaken.

## **Approval**

The approval process is as follows for each type of visit:

1. Local visits follow the 'School Local Learning Area' policy (Appendix 1).
2. Day visits within the UK that do not involve an adventurous activity. These are entered on EVOLVE, and must be submitted to the EVC for checking at least 14 days in advance, and then forwarded to the Head for approval.
3. Visits that are overseas, residential, and/or involve an adventurous activity (see LA guidance for definition of 'adventurous') are then submitted by the Head to the LA for approval.

## **Emergency procedures**

**A critical incident is any incident where events go beyond the normal coping mechanisms and experience of the visit leadership team.**

The school has an emergency plan in place to deal with a critical incident during a visit (see Appendix 2). All staff on visits are familiar with this plan and it is tested at least bi-annually and following any major staffing changes.

When an incident overwhelms the establishment's emergency response capability, or where it involves serious injury or fatality, or where it is likely to attract media attention then assistance will be sought from the local authority.

## **Educational Visits Checklist**

St Vincent's Educational Visits Checklist forms part of the risk management process for visits and off-site activities. This has been adapted from the LA's generic checklist. A visit should only go ahead if the answer to all relevant questions is

'YES'. St Vincent's Educational Visits Checklist may be downloaded from google drive.

## **Parental Consent**

The school obtains blanket consent at the start of each year for activities that fall within the 'Extended learning locality' (see Appendix 1).

Specific, (ie. one-off), parental consent must be obtained for all other visits. For these visits, sufficient information must be made available to parents (via letters, meetings etc), so that consent is given on a 'fully informed' basis.

## **Inclusion**

St Vincent's school complies with the Equality Act 2010 and the New SEND Code of Practice 2014. All children will be expected to be included in all educational visits. If individual adjustments need to be made these will be assessed as part of the risk assessment procedures outlined in this policy.

**Use of staff cars to transport pupils** – Refer to the LA's guidance document.

## **Other topics**

### **Swimming Lessons**

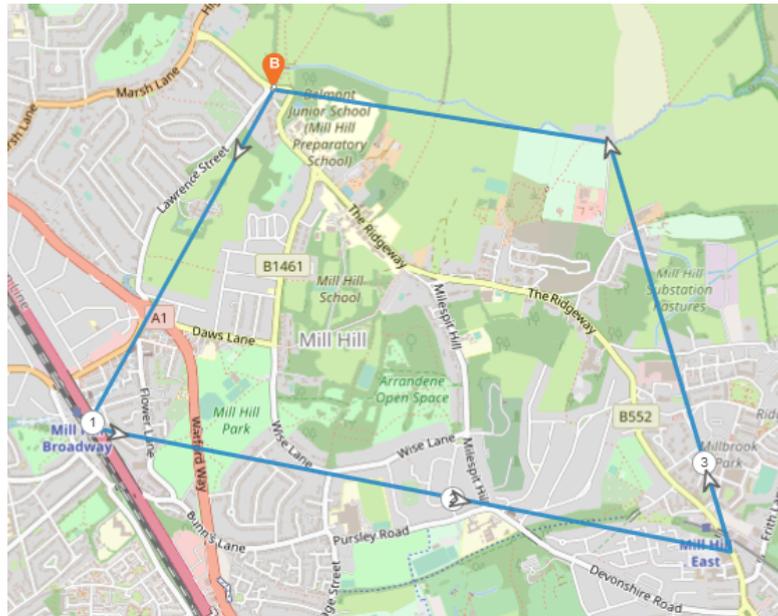
Children in Y3-6 have swimming lessons at Oakleigh Pool. They are taken by coach and accompanied by at least 2 members of staff. One member of staff will supervise each changing area and extra staff will accompany any child with specific needs as outlined on their care plans.

## Appendix 1 – School Local Learning Area Policy

### Boundaries

The boundaries of the locality are shown on the attached map. This area includes the following frequently used venues: *e.g.*

- Mill Hill Park
- Sacred Heart Church
- Garden Centre
- Pizza Express



We use this extended area on a regular basis for a variety of learning activities, and approved staff are allowed to operate in this area without completing a risk assessment form, provided they follow the below Operating Procedure and record it as a Local Area Trip on EVOLVE.

### Operating Procedure for Extended Learning Locality

**The following are potentially significant issues/hazards within our extended locality:**

- Road traffic.
- Other people / members of the public / animals.
- Losing a pupil.
- Uneven surfaces and slips, trips, and falls.
- Weather conditions.
- Activity specific issues when doing environmental fieldwork (nettles, brambles, rubbish, etc).

**These are managed by a combination of the following:**

- The Head or EVC must give verbal approval before a group leaves.
- Only staff judged competent to supervise groups in this environment are approved.

- The concept and Operating Procedure of the 'School Learning Area' is explained to all new parents when their child joins the school.
- There will normally be a minimum of two adults.
- Staff are familiar with the area, including any 'no go areas', and have practised appropriate group management techniques.
- Pupils have been trained and have practised standard techniques for road crossings in a group.
- Where appropriate, pupils are fully briefed on what to do if they become separated from the group.
- All remotely supervised work in the extended learning locality is done in 'buddy' pairs as a minimum.
- Pupils' clothing and footwear is checked for appropriateness prior to leaving school.
- Staff are aware of any relevant pupil medical information and ensure that any required medication is available.
- Staff will deposit in the office a list of all pupils and staff, a proposed route, and an estimated time of return.
- A mobile is taken with each group and the office has a note of the number.
- Appropriate personal protective equipment is taken when needed (eg gloves, goggles)

## **Appendix 2 – Emergency Procedure**

The school's emergency response to an incident is based on the following key factors:

1. There is always a nominated emergency base contact for any visit (during school hours this is the office).
2. This nominated base contact will either be an experienced member of the senior management team, or will be able to contact an experienced senior manager at all times.
3. For activities that take place during normal school hours, the visit leadership team will be aware of any relevant medical information for all participants, including staff.
4. For activities that take place outside normal school hours, the visit leadership team and the emergency contact/s will be aware of any relevant medical information and emergency contact information for all participants, including staff.
5. The visit leader/s and the base contact/s know to request support from the local authority in the event that an incident overwhelms the establishment's emergency response capability, involves serious injury or fatality, or where it is likely to attract media attention.
6. For visits that take place outside the 'extended learning locality', the visit leader will carry an LA Emergency 'Card'. either:
7. This Emergency Procedure is tested through both desk top exercises and periodic scenario calls from visit leaders.

### **Equal Opportunities**

In making decisions about educational visits, all staff will take into account any special educational needs, disabilities, gender, and cultural differences that may be relevant to the case and ensure that the physical environment of the school enables all students to have equal access to continuity of education.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation of this policy**

The governor curriculum Committee and staff wellbeing working party will, in consultation with the Head teacher, monitor and evaluate the implementation of this policy. It will be reviewed at least every 2 years to ensure it reflects current practice.

Member of staff/group with Lead Responsibility for this policy:	Deputy Head, Educational Visits Coordinator (Sandra Pereira) + Wellbeing Group
Date for Review:	May 2027