

EDUCATIONAL VISITS PROCEDURE (including EYFS)

This procedure has been set out following the guidance of:

- DfE Health and Safety on Educational Visits (2018) (HASPEV)
- Responsibilities and duties for schools (updated 5 April 2022)
- DfE Guidance on the requirements of driving minibuses
- OEAP National Guidance

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
Health and Safety Policy
First Aid Policy
Medical Conditions Policy
Risk Assessment Policy

Aims

St Mary's recognises that learning outside the classroom helps to bring the curriculum to life – it provides deeper subject learning and increases self-confidence. It also helps pupils develop their risk awareness and prepares them for their future working lives. Striking the balance between protecting pupils from risk and allowing them to learn from school trips is challenging but getting this balance right is essential for realising all these benefits in practice.

Each year the school organises a number of activities which take place both in school and off site.

The activities/visits are organised in order to:

- Support specific curriculum areas
- Encourage independent and increased motivation and appetite for learning
- Provide new experiences and broaden horizons
- Develop health and well-being
- Develop personal and social skills
- Develop activity skills
- Build confidence and character
- Support environmental awareness
- Visits are open to all pupils

Roles and Responsibilities

Governors

Governors have oversight of the Educational Visits Policy, procedures and implementation as part of their overview of Health and Safety.

The Principal

The Principal is responsible for ensuring that St Mary's staff are competent for the roles allocated to them, and that there is a robust system in place for approving leaders and approving plans for activities and visits. The Principal is also responsible for ensuring staff meet the arrangements and follow the guidelines in this procedure.

The day-to-day tasks associated with managing visits and trips has been delegated to the Educational Visits Coordinators (EVC)/Outdoor Learning Adviser

Outdoor Education Adviser

The role of the adviser is to

- Advise about compliance with relevant legal requirements
- Interpret, refine and present national guidance at a local level
- Advise SLT about the appointment of EVCs and support the induction of newly appointed EVCs
- Provide advice and support to those involved in outdoor learning and off-site visits
- Monitor the work of EVCs and support establishments to ensure that their EVCs' training needs are identified and met
- Provide advice on appropriate leader competence for all types of outdoor learning and off-site visits, and ensuring that this is appropriately assessed
- Provide advice on safeguarding during outdoor learning and off-site visits, including about requirement for Disclosure and Barring Service checks
- Engage actively with appropriate networks and organisations, so as to have access to advice about areas in which they are not personally knowledgeable
- Maintain and have knowledge of national requirements and initiatives, and of national schemes such as Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge, national governing body accreditation schemes and AALA licensing
- Implement effective and proportionate policies and procedures for the notification and approval of outdoor learning activities and off-site visits
- Approve (or disallow) plans for activities and visits on behalf of the employer, where this has not been delegated to establishment level
- Monitor the provision of outdoor learning and off-site visits, including whether risks are appropriately assessed and managed
- Review policies and procedures in the light of lessons learned, and sharing good practice wide
- Contribute to the investigation of serious accidents and incidents.

EVC

The role of the EVC is to

- Be a champion for all aspects of visits and outdoor learning
- Challenge colleagues across all curriculum areas to use visits and outdoor learning effectively in order to provide a wide range of outcomes for pupils and contribute towards establishment effectiveness
- Take responsibility for the review of this procedure and ensure staff are aware of its content
- Support/oversee planning so that well considered and prepared arrangements can lead to well-managed, engaging, relevant, enjoyable and memorable visits/outdoor learning
- Support the Principal in ensuring that the school fulfils its duty of care and complies with legal requirements regarding outdoor learning and off-site visits
- Ensure good practice in the provision of visits and outdoor learning

- Mentor visit leads, supporting their ongoing development and training and sample monitor their activity to identify any further training needs
- Ensure that leaders are competent to lead the activities and visits to which they are assigned
- Ensure that Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) disclosures are in place as necessary
- Ensure that emergency arrangements are sufficient, and that there is an emergency contact for each visit
- Ensure that an incident management contingency plan is in place for each visit and that all responsible adults are fully conversant with its content.
- Monitor provision in the establishment to ensure good practice and compliance with the school's requirements, and to identify any training needs
- Ensure that planning complies with the school's requirements and that, where required, the arrangements are submitted for approval within agreed timescales
- Support the Principal in approval decisions so that all those with responsibility have the competence to fulfil their roles
- Ensure all activities are reviewed and evaluated, that good practice is shared, and any issues followed up
- Keep records of individual visits including reports of accidents and near-misses
- Keep the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) informed about the visits and outdoor learning taking place and their contribution to establishment effectiveness
- Ensure all key staff have access to the final arrangements for all educational visits
- Ensure GDPR compliance
- Learning opportunities are experienced to the full (evidenced through the educational visits review form)

Teachers who plan a day or residential visit are designated as the group leader.

Educational Visits Co-ordinators (EVCs):

- Emma Stanhope, Vice Principal
- Emma Hawkwood, Head of Faculty

Visit Leader

The Visit Leader is the person who has overall responsibility for supervision and conduct of each visit. This includes the learning, development, supervision and welfare of the participants and the health and safety of all, including any other leaders and helpers. To ensure accountability and to avoid potential confusion, there is a single Visit Leader for each visit. All leaders have a legal duty of care and must comply with the School's policies and guidance. The Visit Leader should work closely with the EVC when planning a visit taking into consideration the STAGER Diagram which can be found in the appendices An appropriate planning period must be considered for every visit ensuring that all relevant paperwork is completed in a timely manner.

Planning and organising a visit

All trips must have the prior approval of the Principal/Vice Principal before they can be offered to pupils. The procedures to be followed by staff in planning visits are contained in the Educational Visits folder within the staff drive.

Parents must be given sufficient details about the trip to enable them to make an informed decision as to whether or not their child should participate. Parents should be informed of trips via a letter home.

Assessing Venues and Providers

Visit Leaders have a responsibility to thoroughly research the suitability of venues and check that facilities and third-party provision meet the groups' needs and expectations.

When working with third-party activity providers Visit Leaders must ensure that the relative roles and responsibilities of School staff are clear, and that there is a clear handover when there is a change of leader,

Should a provider run an activity in a way that causes concern, the accompanying leader(s) should consider whether to intervene at the first appropriate moment. This should be done with sensitivity and discretion to ensure that it does not result in young people being put at greater risk.

When planning a trip, staff are encouraged to take advantage of nationally accredited provider assurance schemes. Examples of such schemes include:

- Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) Quality Badge (covers both quality and safety of all activities offered)
- Adventure Activities Licensing Authority (AALA) licence (this statutory scheme covers only safety management)
- Adventuremark (covers only safety)
- National Governing Body centre approval schemes (applicable where the only provision is a single, specialist activity)

Where an organisation does not hold the LOtC badge, the school must ensure that it is an appropriate organisation and it meets the required standards: -

- Insurance cover meets the required activity
- Legal requirements are met
- Health and safety and emergency policies are present
- Risk assessment and control measures are appropriate for the activity taking place
- Vehicles are roadworthy and are in date
- Staff competence
- Safeguarding
- Accommodation
- Any sub-contracting arrangements they may have
- Licence if needed

Please also request for a copy of their liability insurance for school records.

When planning an activity that will involve caving, climbing, trekking, skiing or water sports the school will check that the provider holds a licence as required by the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 2004. These regulations apply to adventure activities that take place in England, Scotland and Wales

Risk Assessments

Every visit must have a full risk assessment which will be reviewed by the EVC lead and signed off by the schools' external outdoor advisors. Risk Assessments should be prepared by the Visit Lead and any members of staff who are involved in the visit.

All risk assessments must be specific to the trip concerned, and take into account the age of the pupils, the degree of adult supervision and the nature of the environment and activities involved. The Visit Lead should contact the venue/accommodation/activity provider, for any relevant information which should be included in the risk assessment. In some cases, a copy of the venue's own risk assessment may be available to assist in the school's own risk assessment process.

The Visit Lead and accompanying staff are responsible for carrying out an ongoing (dynamic) risk assessment of the trip as a whole for its duration and must be prepared to modify or cancel activities if they are deemed too hazardous. Any deviation from the planned activities must be subject to a risk assessment by the lead member of staff, before alteration takes place. Any changes made to a risk assessment must be documented on return of the trip.

The Visit Lead must have access to all the risk assessments via the external advisors APP during the visit/trip.

Parental Consent to off-site activities

Written consent is not required for pupils to take part in the majority of off-site activities organised by the school (except EYFS) as most of these activities take place during school hours and are a normal part of a child's education at school. However, parents will be informed where their child will be when not on school premises and of any extra safety measures required.

Written consent must be obtained for activities which are outside the school hours as well as those activities that need a higher level of risk management. At the Senior School a consent form will be signed on entry to the school to support the PE provision for off-site activities, including fixtures. If it is a trip involving additional payment parents will be informed and consent will be needed for the pupil to attend. At the Lower School written consent will be requested for each school visit.

For residential visits, school will use the medical, dietary and emergency contact information which it holds in school for the pupil, therefore it is imperative that school is kept updated of any changes. If a trip involves swimming or water-based activities, by consenting to your child's attendance on the trip, we take that as confirmation that your child can swim competently for a distance of at least 50 metres unaided.

Health and Safety

The lead member of staff is responsible for ensuring the health and safety of pupils on a school trip and have regard for the guidance set out in the handbook when planning a visit. See **Visit Leader's Checklist**.

Insurance

Every authorised visit is covered by the school's annual travel insurance. The cover extends to all accompanying adults, please contact the Assistant Head of Operations who can advise if required.

First Aid

The Visit Leader must delegate First Aid responsibility to a suitable member of staff, this individual needs to ensure that the first aid kit is complete.

At the Lower School any EYFS/KS1 school trip must have a member of staff who is paediatric trained. AT KS2 the Visit Leader (or delegated person) is responsible for First Aid during the visit.

Medication

The Visit Lead will check that all essential medication has been handed to the delegated person responsible for medication on the visit. The delegated person is also responsible for ensuring any medication taken is documented in-line with school procedure.

Administration of medicines on a school residential trip

All medication held at school will be taken together with all Individual Health Care Plans (IHCPs) on residential trips. Prior to a residential visit, parents will be asked to complete a separate consent form for any additional prescription medication that will need to be taken during the trip.

Certain non-prescription medicines will be taken on residential trips by the school to treat minor ailments: headaches, fever, pain, mild allergic reactions and (if a parent expressly asks, medicine for travel sickness on the return journey). No other non-prescription medicines will be administered by staff. The medicine will be administered in accordance with the instructions on the packet if a supervising teacher feels it is needed and they will keep parents informed until the pupil feels well again.

Additional prescribed and non-prescription medicines as detailed above will only be administered on receipt of a signed consent form received from parents prior to each residential visit. A register of all medicines administered will be kept.

Pupils who require regular medication for an ongoing medical condition or those who may require emergency medication will only be given these medications as detailed in the pupil's IHCP, and when parents/carers complete and sign a medication consent form.

The school keeps an accurate record of all the medication administered, including the dose, time, date and supervising staff. Records offer protection to staff and children and provide evidence that agreed procedures have been followed.

The school makes sure that a risk assessment is carried out before an educational visit. The needs of pupils with medical conditions are considered during this process and plans are put in place for any additional medication, equipment or support that may be required. This will require consultation with parent/carers and pupils and may require advice from the relevant healthcare professional to ensure that pupils can participate safely.

Mental Health/Multiple or Serious Medical Issues

Parents and the school will work together to ensure that the needs of the pupils can be met through amended risk assessments for trips or residential visits. Where possible, these should be made prior to commitment of the trip.

If the school deems the risk level cannot be mitigated with reasonable adjustments pupils will not be permitted to participate.

School has the right to review their decision if circumstances change for the pupil.

Emergency contacts and procedures

The Visit Lead will always carry a school mobile phone during a visit.

The Visit Lead is responsible for ensuring that for each visit they take with them:

- The emergency contact information sheet
- A complete list of all pupils, staff and other adults on the visit, (including pupils medical details, with care plans for pupils with particular medical needs), and emergency contact telephone numbers

The Visit Lead must pass a copy of the above information to the member of the SLT on call for the duration of the visit and leave a further copy in the school office.

The SLT emergency telephone number must be given to parents in advance of each residential visit. In the event of a home-based emergency arising during a visit, parents may contact the lead member of staff via the SLT.

Data Protection

It is vital for the health and safety of those involved in visits that relevant information is available to leaders and external providers for planning activities, and in the event of an emergency. Under UK GDPR, policies allow appropriate sharing of personal data for visits and sets out procedures for handling it.

Critical Incident Response

A critical incident is an incident where any member of a group undertaking an off-site activity has:

- Either suffered a life-threatening injury or fatality
- Is at serious risk
- Or has gone missing for a significant and unacceptable period

To activate support the following telephone numbers should be used:

Plumsun Office hours: 0845 8622684

Plumsun outside normal office hours: 07885 909761 & 07885 647345

Plumsun will be the critical incident responder for the school.

Supervision

Ratios of staff to pupils.

The school will ensure that all pupils on trips are well supervised, and that there is a sufficient ratio of adults to pupils on any visit to ensure the safety of the pupils.

Ratios (as a minimum)

EYFS – 1:4

There are no set ratios for visits. Consideration will be given to:

- The age of the pupils on the visit (including their developmental age)
- Gender issues
- Ability of the group (including special learning needs, behavioural, medical and vulnerability characteristics etc)The nature of the activity and the environment (including the type of activity, duration, skill levels involved, as well as the time of year and prevailing conditions)
- Staff competence
- First Aid cover

Sufficient ratios will be confirmed between the EVC and the group leader and will be documented in the risk assessment.

DBS Clearance

Any non-teaching adults accompanying a residential trip must have an enhanced DBS check which has been approved by the School.

Behaviour ([link to Behaviour Policy](#))

Pupils will be expected to maintain the standards associated with the good name of the school and necessary for the safety of all those on the visit.

Generic and specific consent forms require parents to acknowledge that they have read and understood the general conduct always expected from the pupils. For foreign visits parents are aware that in the unlikely event of a gross breach of the behaviour expectations, a pupil might be repatriated. This would be the decision of the Nominated Contact and Senior Management Team and would be at the parents' expense.

Alcohol

Alcohol must not be consumed by any member of staff who is supporting a school visit or residential.

Evaluation

All visits should be evaluated against the intended learning outcomes, including the venue and provider, after completion and records kept of incidents, accidents and near misses.

Transport

The Visit Lead is responsible for ensuring that transport is hired from a reputable company. Only coaches with seatbelts should be hired and the Visit Lead must ensure that pupils use them. Please contact the Assistant Head of Operations who can offer advice if required.

Use of School Mini-Bus

Staff wishing to drive the minibus must hold a full driving license with a category 'D1' and will need to undertake a minibus familiarisation session. In addition, staff will need to complete a Driver Declaration Form (Appendix 4 of minibus policy and handbook) and show your original

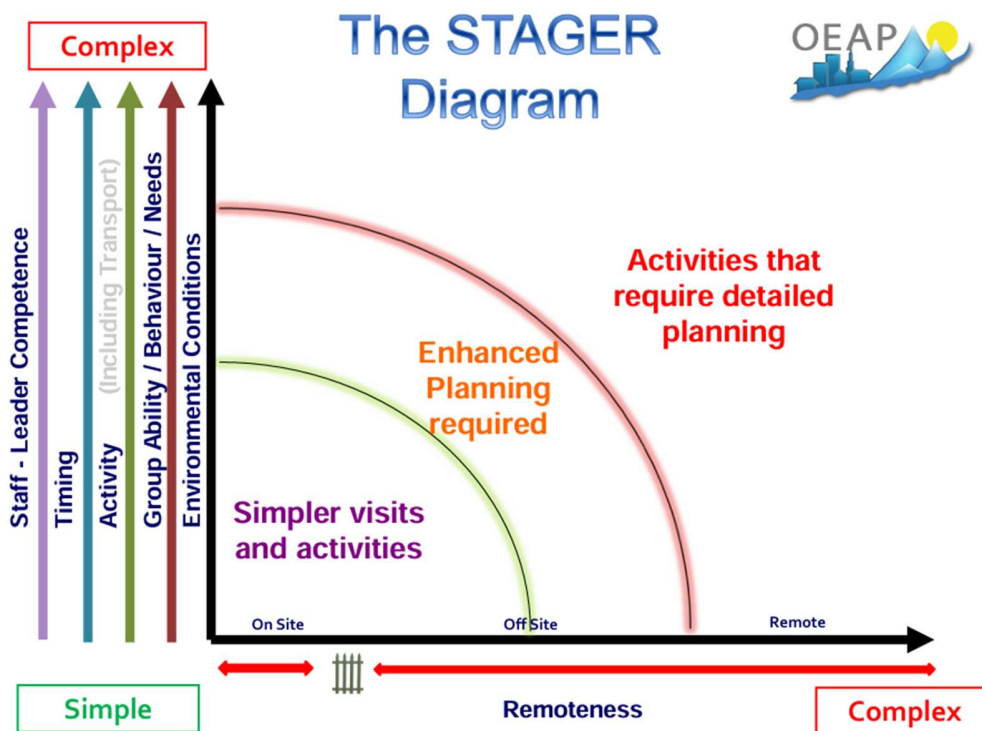
driving licence to the Assistant Head of Operations Manager, who will take a photocopy and keep it on file. An online check of your licence will also be carried out by the school. In order to do this, you will need to provide the School with a Licence Check Code, which is obtained by visiting <https://www.gov.uk/view-driving-licence> and following the instructions. You must inform the Assistant Head of Operations Manager if there is a change of circumstances e.g. endorsements, fines or driving bans and in any event all drivers will be required to produce their license at a frequency decided by the School.

You should always make sure that you have a fully charged mobile phone with you in case of emergencies, and a torch and spare batteries if you are likely to be travelling at night. A torch and First Aid kit is kept in the minibus.

Wherever possible, staff taking groups out in the School minibus should be accompanied by a second responsible adult who has the required safeguarding clearances. If the group leader is male, this should always be a female member of staff. The second person does not necessarily have to be able to drive the minibus, although this could be an advantage. The main role of the accompanying member of staff is to supervise the children, thus leaving the driver free to concentrate on the driving.

Where the school minibus is used for a journey, the driver is responsible for checking the condition of the vehicle before departure and must ensure that all passengers use the seatbelts provided. Further information for booking minibuses can be found in the staff handbook.

Reviewed/Approved: November 2025
Next Review: Autumn 2026



The STAGER variables

- **Staff** Experience/training? Competent? Vetted? Approved?
Staff/participant ratio? Know each other?
- **Timing** Time of year? Daylight hours? Likely weather/travel conditions?
Availability of facilities? Curriculum constraints? Religious days/festivals?
Term time/holiday? Day/evening/weekend? Cost variation? Staffing issues? Availability of support/emergency response?
- **Activity** Suitability? Complexity? Adventure activities? Residential?
Transport? Staff/participant training? Equipment? External provider?
- **Group** Age? Gender? Number? Behaviour? Individual needs/abilities?
Experience/training? Known to staff? Consent?
- **Environment** Weather? Ground conditions? Water levels? Tides? Pandemic?
Accommodation? Other hazards? Disabled access?
- **Remoteness** Travel distance/time/cost? Routine/emergency communications?
Emergency access? Overseas? Language?