

Thomas More Catholic School



Policy, Practice and Procedure Educational Visits and School Journeys

Mission Statement

To Care for, respect and value all people and or environment.

To Learn that justice and love are the foundations of our Faith.

To make these the guiding principles of our community in its commitment to academic excellence and personal integrity.

To Achieve beyond our highest expectations, creating challenging opportunities, which take us all confidently into the 21st Century.

Aims

To educate in an atmosphere where learning is stimulating, enjoyable and valued, so fostering a lifelong love of learning and an aspiration towards academic excellence.

To ensure that students receive a rounded educational experience which will enable them to go out, as confident young adults, into further or higher education and the world of work with the values and experiences they need to make a positive contribution to society- caring for others, respecting their environment and bearing witness to God's love

To provide all members of the community openings for personal fulfilment through the nurturing of their talents and the opportunity to reach their full potential

To give to the students in our care a pride in themselves as citizens of the future, celebrating their background, abilities and ethnicity, so that they will be able to live their lives, make choices and take opportunities with wisdom and compassion

From these, we derive the priority, which we ascribe to the extension of the learning process out of school, which can be stimulating and enjoyable. This can be enhanced by curricular and extra-curricular visits and journeys, which students undertake in the care of our staff. We wish to enrich the education of the children in our care and to do this through safe, careful and well-planned visits and journeys.

DfE guidance booklet Health and Safety of Pupils on educational visits (HSPEV)
Standards for LAs in overseeing Educational Visits – Good Practice Supplement

Amendments will be made from time to time and can be checked via the web version at www.teachernet.gov.uk/visits

Note – *Health and Safety: Responsibilities and Powers* sets out the legal framework in which **employers** and **employees** work. It applies to all educational visits. The same principles apply for Governors of voluntary aided schools.

LAs have no legal responsibility for the Health and Safety of students on educational visits in voluntary aided schools.

Purpose

To ensure that all parties are aware of their responsibilities and that:

They are carried out appropriately.

To provide framework that will enable staff to organise an educational visit

To put the health and safety of students as the highest priority in planning a visit.

Principles

Students derive a good deal of educational benefit from taking part in Educational Visits. In particular, they have the opportunity to undergo experiences not available in the classroom.

Visits help to develop students' investigative skills; longer visits in particular encourage greater independence.

Responsibilities:

The Governing Body should:

- ✓ Ensure that the visit has a specific and stated objective
- ✓ Satisfy themselves that appropriate safety measures are in place and any training needs have been addressed
- ✓ Ensure that the risk assessment has been carried out
- ✓ Maintain appropriate insurance cover
- ✓ Assess proposals for certain types of visits e.g. overnight stay or travel outside the UK

The Head Teacher (or a person designated by her) should ensure that:

- ✓ The group leader is competent to monitor the risks throughout the visit
- ✓ The group leader has the experience in supervising the age groups going on the visit and will organise the group effectively
- ✓ The risk assessment has been completed and appropriate safety measures are in place
- ✓ Training needs have been assessed by a competent person and the needs of the staff and students considered
- ✓ Ratio of supervisors to students is appropriate
- ✓ The governing body has approved the visit
- ✓ Parents have signed the consent forms
- ✓ Child protection procedures are in place
- ✓ Adequate first aid provision will be available

- ✓ Arrangements have been made for the medical and special needs of all the students
- ✓ Mode of travel is appropriate and times out and back are known
- ✓ There is adequate and relevant insurance cover
- ✓ A school contact has been nominated who has the address and phone number of the visit's venue and a contact name
- ✓ The group leader, supervisors and school contact have emergency contact details of all participants of the trip

The Group leader should:

- ✓ Have overall responsibility for the supervision and conduct of the visit
- ✓ Prioritise the health and safety of the group
- ✓ Obtain the Head Teacher's prior agreement before any off site visit takes place
- ✓ Appoint a Deputy and define for all supervisors their roles and responsibilities
- ✓ Be aware of child protection issues
- ✓ Ensure that adequate first aid provision will be available
- ✓ Ensure that a system is in place for regular register checks to be made
- ✓ Undertake and complete the planning and preparation of the visit including briefing group members and parents
- ✓ Ensure that a comprehensive risk assessment is undertaken and completed
- ✓ Ensure that the ratio of supervisors to students is adequate
- ✓ Consider stopping the visit if the risk to the health and safety of the students is unacceptable and have procedures in place for such an eventuality
- ✓ Ensure that the group supervisors have details of the school contact and any medical or special educational needs of the students
- ✓ Pass information to the kitchens and arrange for provision to be made for those students in receipt of free school meals
- ✓ Remain with students if they return after school hours until all of them have safely been collected or have left for home
- ✓ Take a school mobile phone, if it is available, so that the school can easily contact the group

Teachers must do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group and act as any reasonable parent would do in the same circumstances.

They should:

- ✓ Follow the instructions of the group leader and help with control and discipline
- ✓ Alert the Head Teacher and notify the group leader, if they think the risk to the health and safety of the students in their charge is unacceptable
- ✓ Make regular register checks
- ✓ Tell the students explicitly what the expectations are of behaviour and standards

Adult volunteers should be clear about their role and responsibilities.

They must:

- ✓ Do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group
- ✓ Not be left in sole charge of pupils unless previously agreed
- ✓ Follow the instructions of the group leader and help with control and discipline
- ✓ Speak to the group leader if concerned about health and safety at any time

Students should:

- ✓ Not take unnecessary risks
- ✓ Follow the instructions of the leader and supervisors
- ✓ Dress and behave sensibly and responsibly
- ✓ Look out for anything that might hurt or threaten themselves or anyone in the group and tell the group leader about it

Any student/s whose behaviour may be considered to be a danger to themselves or to the group may be stopped from going on it. The curricular aims of the visit for these students should be fulfilled in other ways wherever possible.

Parents and carers should:

- ✓ Be able to make an informed decision on whether their child should go on the visit. The group leader should ensure that parents are given sufficient information in writing and are invited to any briefing sessions.
- ✓ Be asked to agree the arrangements for sending a student home early and who will meet the cost
- ✓ Make arrangements to meet and collect their children promptly at the end of a visit.

Parents and carers will need to:

- ✓ Provide the group leader with emergency contact numbers
- ✓ Sign the consent form
- ✓ Give the group leader information about their child's emotional, psychological and physical health, which might be relevant to the visit.

Planning the visit

This involves considering the dangers and difficulties, which may arise, and making plans to reduce them. Neither students nor staff must be placed in situations, which expose them to an unacceptable level of risk. Safety must always be the prime consideration. If the risks cannot be contained then the visit must not take place.

The **risk assessment** should be based on the following considerations:

- What are the hazards?
- Who might be affected by them?
- What safety measures need to be in place to reduce risks to an acceptable level?
- Can the group leader put the safety measures in place?
- What steps will be taken in an emergency?

The school will provide a *proforma* for making a risk assessment. The person carrying out the risk assessment should record it and give copies to all teachers/supervisors on the visit, with details of the measures they should take to avoid or reduce the risks.

Before booking a visit the group leader should obtain a written or documentary assurance that, providers such as tour operators have themselves assessed the risks and have appropriate safety measures in place.

Exploratory visit

The group leader should undertake an exploratory visit, wherever that is possible to:

- ✓ Ensure at first hand that the venue is suitable to meet the aims and objectives of the visit
- ✓ Obtain advice from the manager
- ✓ Assess potential areas and levels of risk
- ✓ Ensure that the venue can cater for the needs of the staff and students in the group

If an exploratory visit is not feasible the group leader will need to consider, obtaining specific information by letter from the venue, from other schools and from local organisations and tourist boards.

Financial Planning

The Party Leader should ensure that parents have early written information about the costs of the visit; they should be given enough time to prepare financially for the visit.

The Party Leader is required to produce a budget plan, which includes a breakdown of all costs to be incurred. Receipts should be kept for all expenditure. Once the journey has taken place and invoices paid, any excess funds should be distributed between the students who had paid and the account closed.

The Head Teacher should ensure that banking arrangements are in place to separate the visit receipts from other school funds and within private accounts.

The Head Teacher may not impose a charge on parents for any visit that occurs during school hours. A **Voluntary contribution** however, may be asked for. It is permissible to ask parents to contribute more than the minimum amount in order to subsidise those students whose parents have not contributed.

First Aid

On any kind of visit, the group leader should have a good working knowledge of emergency procedures and ensure that an adequate first aid box is taken. For adventurous activities, visits abroad or residential visits, it is sensible for at least one of the group's teachers to be a fully trained first aider.

Supervision

Group leaders should assess the risks and consider an appropriate safe supervision level for their particular group.

Unless exceptional permission is given we would expect the ratios for Years 7 – 11 to be as follows:

For visits to local historical sites and museums or local walks, in normal circumstances
1 adult for every 15 students in Year 7 onwards.

For visits abroad and residential trips

A minimum ratio of 1 adult to 10 pupils – but at least 2 of the adults should be teachers

There is an expectation that male and female teachers will accompany a mixed group of students from TMCS

Transport: Legislation – Seatbelts: *all minibuses and coaches, which carry groups of three or more children aged between 3 and 15 years inclusive must be fitted with a seat belt for each child. The seats must face forward and seat restraints must comply with legal requirements.*

The Party Leader is responsible for ensuring that coaches and buses are hired from a reputable company. The group leader should check that the company has appropriate insurance.

Private cars

Teacher and others who drive students in their own cars must ensure their passengers' safety, that the vehicle is roadworthy and that they have the appropriate licence and insurance cover for carrying the students.

The driver is responsible for making sure that students have a seat belt and use it at all times.

Vehicles without seat belts should not be used.

Insurance

The group leader should write to parents to tell them which responsibilities the school accepts and the scope of any insurance cover the school is to arrange. It is advisable to make copies of the insurance schedule available to parents.

Communicating with parents and carers

Parents must be informed in writing of any offsite activity or visit.

Before residential visits or when the students are to travel abroad or engage in adventure activities, parents must be invited to attend a **briefing meeting** where written details of the proposed visit should also be provided.

A **parental/guardians consent form** should be completed for each student in the group. This can also be used to gain **medical consent**. Parents should be asked to agree to the student's receiving emergency treatment. Parents should also complete a **medical information form**.

Group leaders should arrange for parents to be told by the school of the group's safe arrival. E.g. a "telephone tree"

Emergency Procedures: All those involved in the school trip should be informed of who will take charge in an emergency, the named back up cover and what they are expected to do in an emergency.

The main factors to consider include:

- ✓ Assess the situation
- ✓ Safeguard the uninjured members of the group
- ✓ Establish the names of any casualties and get immediate medical attention for them
- ✓ Inform the emergency services and everyone who needs to know of the incident
- ✓ ensure that a teacher accompanies casualties to hospital and that the rest of the group are adequately supervised at all times and kept together
- ✓ Ensure that, if someone is missing, a responsible adult
- ✓ Inform the school contact
- ✓ Notify insurers
- ✓ write down accurately and as soon as possible all relevant facts and witness details
- ✓ Complete an accident report form
- ✓ No-one in the group should speak to the media or discuss legal liabilities with other parties

Planning the visit

Step 1 Outline proposal to Head teacher seeking approval in principle

- Visit's objectives
- Likely date, duration, venue
- Student group, staffing
- Resources, estimate of costs

Step 2 Planning:

- **Check the school diary** (available in the Main Office). If there are clashes with other events already in the diary, a professional discussion regarding the viability of the visit will need to be had with the HT / DHT.
- 'Rarely Cover' needs to be borne in mind i.e. the visit needs to have been in the School Diary for half a term so that necessary arrangements can be made regarding cover of absent colleagues' lessons
- Collect and complete appropriate forms available from the Main Office - an Education Visit or Education Event Approval and Agreement Form, a Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment Form and an Evaluation / Incident Form
- Obtain a Visit Number.
- Contact venue – suitability and availability
- Transport options considered
- Party leader and supervisors selected (check availability and suitability)
- Costs
- Risk Assessment
- Exploratory visit

Step 3 Substantive Proposal to Head Teacher or Governing Body (*Curriculum Committee*):

- Submit completed proposal forms and risk assessment
- Visit approved
- Date secured in school diary

Step 4

Day Visits

- Obtain approval and parental consent
- Brief students and staff/supervisors
- Collect monies
- School contact
- Group list finalised and published
- Go on visit monitoring the risks at all times
- Emergency contact numbers collected
- Group list finalised and published
- Evaluate

Residential Visits

As above

Also to include:

Briefing meeting for Parents / carers

Outline Procedure to be followed for an Educational Visit / Off Site Visit / School Public Event e.g. Year 11 Prom.

TMCS follows the LA's guidance for arranging out of school visits

IMPORTANT NOTES

- a) An Education / Off Site Visit is any activity organised under the jurisdiction of the school that involves student(s) being taken off site (out of the school grounds).
- b) BEFORE organising a visit staff MUST familiarise themselves with the relevant sections in the folder – “Guidance for Educational Visits” – held in the Mian Office.
- c) Only the Governing Body / Head teacher can give approval / agreement for a visit or an event to take place and this approval MUST be obtained BEFORE arrangements are made.
- d) The person leading the visit is the person legally responsible and accountable for the visit. To plan a successful, ‘incident free’ visit and to safeguard yourself, other colleagues taking part in the visit and the school, must be organised in line with the “Guidance” from Croydon LA and DfE Regulations and Guidance (see TeacherNet website at www.teachernet.gov.uk/visits).

Details of other useful publications are given on pages 162 & 163 of the Croydon Guidance Folder. Health and Safety arrangements are of paramount importance and completion of the Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment Form is central to this.

Further Information regarding planning an out of school visit

Initially, any proposal to arrange an out of school visit should be discussed firstly with the Head teacher and may only take place once approved.

The Party Leader is responsible for ensuring the visit is thoroughly organised and appropriate procedures are followed. Health and safety issues are top priority in all cases

Aide-memoire

Please note that changes are constantly being made to improve this system.

1. Prepare letters and other information to parents, send letters, collect consent forms. Copies of any correspondence should be handed to Mrs Thornton.
2. Prepare a proposed register of students and adults attending the visit or event and provide a staff emergency contact number for the occasion. Please also be aware of those having “free school meals may require packed lunches – see Catering Manager.
3. The Attendance Office will need to be advised on how the registers will be completed and attendance recorded.
4. On the day of the visit an accurate register of students and adults actually attending the visit MUST be left with Mrs Thornton and a copy for Reception and Attendance Office in the School Office.
5. Copies of all documentation, including emergency contact numbers of students and staff MUST be left in the Main Office.
6. On return from the visit the Evaluation / Incident Form must be completed and returned to Mrs Thornton for the file.
7. Ensure that the Main Office has a copy of all required information as a record to file.
8. Certain visits fall into the category of “Insurable Visits” – for these visits special arrangements are required. See the sections in ‘Guidance for Educational Visits’.