

Michaela Community School

## **Educational Visits Policy**

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### **1. Introduction**

This policy has due regard to the DfE Guidance; 'Health and Safety Advice on Legal Duties and Powers for Local Authorities, Head Teachers, Staff and Governing Bodies'. It also draws on the previous guidance; 'Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits' (HASPEV). Accordingly, all preparation and risk assessments will be proportionate to the level of activity, number of pupils and location of the educational visit.

Michaela Community School recognises the importance of school trips and visits to improve the quality of children's education and also improve children's social skills. School visits are an integral part of school life, furthering the education of the pupils. They support the social or academic needs of our pupils. The school aims to give pupils experience of a number of curricular and extra-curricular off-site visits during their time at the school.

### **2. Roles and responsibilities**

#### **The Governing Body**

The Governing Body has the ultimate responsibility for authorising all trips and visits, to ensure the safety of all pupils and staff. The GB will approve all overseas visits and residentials involving one or more nights' stay. It delegates approval for all other trips and visits to the Senior Team.

#### **The Senior Team**

A designated member of the ST will work closely with Governors and staff to ensure that for every trip and visit all pupils and staff will be safe. Approval in principal for all trips and visits must be sought by the ST staff member before firm bookings are made. All staff will liaise with him/her concerning the arrangements and follow the guidelines in this policy.

#### **Trip Leader**

The trip leader will be a qualified teacher with the appropriate experience and skills who will be appointed by the ST staff member to lead a particular visit. The role of the trip leader is important,

with this person having full operational control during the visit, with those staff involved on the trip in higher leadership positions deferring to the trip leader.

- Teachers who plan a day or residential visit have responsibility to make sure the visit is properly organised
- The trip leader is responsible for completing a full risk assessment of the trip. This must be approved by the ST before bookings and firm arrangements for the proposed trip can go ahead
- The trip leader will be responsible for co-ordinating and delegating tasks to all staff participating in the visit
- Staff accompanying children on visits will ensure that they are familiar with national guidelines and best practice and that they fully comply with the responsibilities and roles assigned to them by the trip leader

For curricular visits, clear aims and objectives must be identified by the trip leader and clearly communicated to the other accompanying adults, parents and pupils.

Visits are not taken in isolation. Pupils will be well-prepared for the visit and, subsequently, put the experience to good effect as a stimulus for work in class.

### **3. Health and Safety**

The health and safety of every child and member of staff will be the prime consideration when planning or carrying out a school trip: all appropriate health & safety and child protection procedures must be followed.

All risks will be assessed and reported prior to the event and all possible measures to minimise risk will be taken.

Staffing will adhere to recommended supervisor: child ratios (see DfE HASPEV guidance for details). The trip leader will consider whether the nature of the activities requires the normal ratios to be exceeded.

Staffing for every off-site visit must include an adult who has an appropriate first aid qualification.

Appropriate first aid provision will be available at all stages of the trip. Teachers, assistants and volunteers accompanying school trips will be suitably DBS checked\* (\*The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) replaced the CRB in late 2012) and appropriately trained in procedures.

All transport arrangement and venues will be checked for suitability and safety beforehand. Risk assessments will be completed and approved for all aspects of the trip.

### **4. Communications with parents and carers**

- The trip leader will complete a written evaluation form after the visit, reporting back to ST any problems/issues and particular successes
- Children participating on the visit
- Michaela's Behaviour Policy applies to all pupils on off-site visits. The trip leader is responsible for good behaviour on all visits

### **Educational Value**

The involvement and agreement of parents and carers is critically important, so the school will arrange for every educational visit a programme of information and, where appropriate meetings. Completion of additional parental agreement forms may be required which go beyond the annual consent form. This particularly applies to medical consent forms and information about dietary needs and medical conditions.

At the start of each academic year parents will be asked to sign a consent form for their child to participate in regular off-site activities such as visits to local sports amenities, churches and for sports fixtures against other schools. Such regular events do not then require further parental consent but are otherwise regulated by this policy.

- Parents will be notified about the details of all other school visits well in advance and permission for any school trip must be received from parents/guardians in writing prior to the visit date. In practice, Michaela has parental permission from families' admission forms for trips which occur entirely within the school day and do not require a higher level of risk management
- Parents will be told specifically if a day visit involves a return to school after the end of the normal school day
- Parents will be required to notify the trip leader of their child's special or medical needs and of any other considerations affecting the welfare and safety the child and of staff and other pupils
- Parents are asked to sign a consent form for emergency medical treatment
- For residential visits and trips overseas, the school will hold an information meeting for parents and pupils at the early stages planning. An information meeting may be held for other visits as appropriate
- Pupils' emergency contact details, medical information and any other relevant information will be collected prior to the visit. This information will be taken on the visit. The admin team will collate this information onto a single spreadsheet for distribution to staff participating on the trip. The trip leader will take copies of parents' consent forms
- Costs for visits will be calculated in advance. Parents will be notified of the cost of the trip well in advance to enable them to make suitable arrangements to pay for the trip. The school will make arrangements for parents to pay trips over several weeks. (Trip leaders should refer to the school's Charging and Remissions policy to ensure the correct protocols are followed.) All trips must be paid for prior to departure

The school will provide parents with full and complete written details regarding the organisation and administration of a visit. This will normally include:

- Activities and venues
- Specialist equipment and/or clothing necessary for activities
- Packed meal requirements
- Teachers/leaders, their experience and expertise when required
- Total costs and methods for payment
- Insurance cover, including medical cover and exemptions
- Passport requirements, if any

A signed parental consent form must be obtained for each participating pupil, agreeing to emergency treatment and medication to be given if needed and for staff to act in 'loco parentis'.

## **5. Procedures for organising a visit**

## **General Information**

Early planning is essential for any visit. Plans for residential visits and overseas trips are formulated well in advance. All off-site visits and activities must be approved by ST, who are kept fully informed throughout the planning stages. Residential visits and trips overseas must be authorised by the Governing Body, who must be kept informed of progress in planning to facilitate continued approval.

Activities of an outdoor pursuits or adventure nature must be within the ability of the children participating and the accompanying staff, although it is appreciated that in the majority of such trips external outdoor pursuits leaders will be appointed.

## **Preliminary Planning**

A written outline plan will be presented to ST for approval prior to more detailed plans being made. Once outline permission has been granted and any particular conditions set, one or more meetings of the proposed staff involved will be held to formalise the administration and organisation of the visit. Specific duties, and the names of the pupils for whom each person is responsible, are identified if necessary.

Discussions will take place with ST about any other school events or trips which may be occurring at a similar time in order to ensure that the school is not overstretched.

Once the trip is approved, parents will normally be informed and provided with as much information as is appropriate. Greater detail will be expected for trips overseas or involving overnight stays. Preparing for such trips will include an information meeting for parents.

The provision of information to parents will normally include the following, as appropriate:

- Information about accommodation
- Itinerary
- Emergency Contacts/Medical Forms
- Staffing/Grouping Details
- Personal Items/luggage requirements
- Insurance Details
- Finance Arrangements
- Spending Money
- Information about the tube/coach company and any other transport arrangements

## **Insurance**

The trip leader will liaise with the School Finance Manager to check that insurance cover for all children and adults involved in the visit is appropriate. Extra insurance cover may be needed for residential visits, trips abroad and any activities of a hazardous nature. If insurance cover is not provided by the commercial centre or tour company, it will be arranged by the Finance Manager and added to the cost of the visit. Parents and school leaders will be provided with precise details of the insurance policy, so that there is no doubt about the cover and, in particular, what eventualities fall outside such cover.

## **Preliminary Visits**

Except in the case of repeated visits, an exploratory visit by the trip leader or another designated member of the accompanying staff will usually be made. In the case of repeat visits, the trip leader

should contact the venue(s) to establish that there have been no significant changes to the premises or arrangements, which may affect the organisation of the visit.

A preliminary visit should establish at first hand:

- That the venue is suitable
- That the venue can cater for the needs of pupils and staff
- An assessment of potential areas and levels of risk, completing Risk Assessment with details being given to the Assistant Headteacher. This will incorporate any risk assessment provided by the venue/tour operator
- Familiarity with the area before taking the children
- Information concerning staff qualifications, if not already known
- Confirmation regarding DBS-checking of staff at the venue to ensure that they are suitable to work with children

In certain circumstances, for example when all the activities are run by the centre's own staff, to whom the risks and area are well known, a preliminary visit is not always necessary. Nevertheless, a visit may be needed to establish such matters as a safe place for a picnic lunch, the safe use of toilet facilities, distances to walk from car parks etc.

If it is not possible to make a preliminary visit, every endeavour must be made to acquire information about the accommodation and the area, before the visit.

If a preliminary visit has not taken place, as a matter of priority when the party arrives, the trip leader will inspect the facilities and accommodation and any areas where there might be dangers or potential hazards. Where necessary, risk assessments will be revised following the visit.

### **Staffing**

The trip leader will liaise with ST to ensure that the adult: pupil ratios for the visit are appropriate. These will take account of:

- Appropriate legislation
- The ages of the children involved
- Whether the nature of the activity and/or the pupils involved require the ratio to be exceeded. A common example would include activities involving water

The DfE document Health and Safety for Pupils on Educational Visits (HASPEV) gives general guidelines which need also to reflect the unique challenges and demands for each visit:

In normal circumstances, all adults accompanying a visit will have an enhanced CRB clearance.

### **Supervision**

ASCL (SHA) have published the following guidance which visits and trips organisers are required to follow:

**1:10** for trips abroad with minimum of 2 adults of opposite sexes if the group is a mixed party

**1:15** for other residential visits with minimum of 2 adults of opposite sexes if the group is a mixed party

**1:20** for day visits outside the walking distance of the school with minimum 2 adults of opposite sexes if the group is a mixed party

**1:25** for a short local visit (perhaps during a lesson) where one teacher might be sufficient even for a mixed party

If an adult does not have such clearance, his or her participation must be approved by ST following a risk assessment.

In such situations, the trip leader must make necessary arrangements so that the adult does not have any unsupervised access to the children.

For visits which involve children working with staff at another venue or organisation, the trip leader must obtain written confirmation from the organisation that it has undertaken all appropriate checks on its staff and that they are appropriately qualified and suitable to work with children. The centre may make a statement to this effect in its publicity materials.

When planning an activity involving caving, climbing, trekking, skiing or water sports, the group leader must check that the provider holds a licence as required by the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 2004 (for England, Scotland and Wales).

On trips involving both boys and girls, staff must include men and women.

Staffing must be appropriate, in terms of ratios and qualifications, to cope with any child on the trip with special or individual medical needs.

The trip leader will gain ST's agreement regarding cover arrangements for all adults involved in the visit; classes to be covered in the absence of staff, work set, duties needing cover etc.

### **Financial Arrangements**

Records of all payments by individual pupils will be kept by the trip leader (or nominated member of staff) and school Finance Manager. At the Finance Manager's discretion, residential visit payments may be made in stages. All payments should be made by cheque or bank transfer. Payments by the school in advance for trip costs will be made by the Finance Manager. For payments and other sundry expenses during the visit, including, if appropriate, issuing of pocket money, the trip leader should make appropriate arrangements with the Finance Manager. Similarly, the trip leader should liaise with the Finance Manager when foreign currency is required. The trip leader must ensure maximum security for money, passports and other valuable documents before and throughout the visit.

### **Calculating Costs**

Factors to be taken into account in calculating the cost of the trip include:

- Travel, transport and parking
- Entrance fees for staff and pupils
- Hire of equipment (for activities)
- Insurance
- Preliminary visits
- Extra staffing and supply cover at school
- Meals
- Materials
- Rewards, incentives, prizes for pupils' work, conduct etc.
- Spending money
- Contingency fund

## **Pupil Behaviour and Supervision**

The trip leader has responsibility for the good conduct of pupils on the trip. All accompanying adults have a duty of care and it is expected that the majority of adults will be teachers. Teachers should be briefed that they are in loco parentis at all times on the visit and thus are legally responsible for the well-being and safety of the children and also for their behaviour, which should be impeccable at all times.

Children should never be on their own, but always remain in a group, and must be supervised by an adult at all times. Groups and their leaders should be decided in advance and well publicised.

On residential visits, close supervision of the pupils in the hostel, centre or hotel during the night must be maintained. Adults' rooms must be located in close proximity to the children's rooms. Staff should be allocated 'on call' responsibilities on a rota basis and those adults should refrain from the consumption of alcohol in order to be able to perform their duties properly in the case of an emergency.

## **Risk Assessments**

To ensure the safety of all pupils and staff and also give 'peace of mind', trips and visits will only be approved after an assessment of the risks involved has been carried out.

Risk assessment is the normal day to day activity which we undertake without conscious effort, such as crossing roads, driving etc. The risk assessment forms enable the trip leader to apply the same thought processes to the trip being planned. What is required is an understanding of the potential risks involved and the actions required to minimise those risks. Completing the forms will better enable the school to safeguard the children, thus giving the trip leader peace of mind. If you, as trip leader, feel unsure about anything, please ask.

The school's arrangements for risk assessments for off-site educational visits are as follows:

The trip leader will prepare written risk assessments for individual visits and activities. The appropriate proformas and the bank of risk assessments for repeated activities (travelling by public transport, crossing the road, escorting children along a footpath at a roadside etc.) are available from the school office and these should help trip leaders to consider the risk factors and plan contingency measures to prevent or deal with such eventualities. (Where necessary, staff training will be provided).

Final authorisation for each visit will be made by ST and only then if she is satisfied that an adequate risk assessment has been carried out.

In order that the safety of pupils and staff can be as thorough as possible, the following time scales must be adhered to:

### **At least 1 week prior to the trip**

Risk Assessments, including those from the place to be visited, must be handed to ST with a completed Off Site Visits Form, list of pupils involved, details of any particular requirements for pupils with special or medical needs, parental consent forms and all letters sent to parents. This will form part of the information file detailed under 'information and final arrangements' below.

In the event of consent forms not being returned by the specified time, the pupil will not be allowed to travel.

### **At least 2 full days before the trip**

The risk assessments and forms noted above, having been checked and signed by ST should be copied for staff on the trip and the school office.

In the case of residential visits and trips taking place outside term time, these should also be copied to the nominated contact at school. Staff on the trip (excluding the Leader who should be in possession of them all) need only the consent forms of the children in their care for the trip, plus the summary sheet of pupils' details.

It is the responsibility of the trip leader to check that all the consent forms and medical details for each child have been successfully collected by the deadline. It is the responsibility of ST to give final consent to the trip going ahead after reading the Risk Assessment.

If there are any worries or uncertainties, the trip leader should always ask ST or Finance Manager for help.

### **Information and final arrangements**

Final details of the visit, including the final version of the risk assessment, must be submitted to ST for approval one week before the visit. This information will be retained for future reference. The trip leader will hold the same information for the duration of the visit and will check immediately prior to departure for any late changes, for example due to pupil illness or absence. Such changes will be noted and an amended copy submitted to ST. As a minimum, the information should include details of:

- Itinerary
- Contact points
- Pupils' and staff emergency contacts
- Contact information for staff while on the trip
- Copies of Parental Medical Consent Forms
- Information about any children with individual special or medical needs, including their medical plans as appropriate
- Copies of any insurance documents, contracts, etc
- Emergency procedures
- Risk assessments

### **6. On departure and during a visit**

**Communication** The trip leader must take a school-provided working mobile phone (plus phone charger) in which all relevant numbers have been entered by the admin team, to save time for the trip leader.

In advance of the trip, pupils should be given clear safety instructions based upon the nature of the activities and the associated risks.

#### **First Aid**

All accompanying adults must be familiar with the school's first aid and medication policy, a copy of which should be included in the trip leader's information file.

On departure, the trip leader or staff nominee must collect the first aid kit for school visits from the Office. This must be returned to the Office after the visit together with details of any items used.



The trip leader must also ensure that any special medical equipment or medication such as inhalers, EpiPens, etc, are taken on the trip. The regulations for the reporting of accidents (RIDDOR) apply to educational visits and can be found in the school's first aid and medication policy.

When the trip involves the use of a venue which provides first aid facilities, the group leader must ensure that all adults are aware of the arrangements and the location of first aid points.

### **Transport**

It is the school's policy that only tube/coaches or minibuses with seat belts are booked. Vehicles used should comply with the current requirements on seat belts. All seats should be forward-facing and seat restraints should comply with legal requirements. Occasionally a trip may be organised to a country where legislation does not require tube/coaches to be fitted with seatbelts and such a tube/coach may not be available. In such circumstances the group leader must endeavour to book a tube/coach fitted with seat belts and must do everything possible to ensure the safety of staff and pupils. Parents must be made aware of such circumstances.

### **Supervision on Transport**

- At least two members of staff should supervise the pupils getting on and off the tube/coach – one on the tube/coach and one by the steps
- A roll call must be taken at regular intervals, including each occasion when pupils embark and disembark
- Pupils should not sit on the first two seats facing the front window or next to the emergency exit
- Staff should sit at intervals spaced through the tube/coach to ensure proper supervision
- All pupils must be settled before setting off and must wear their seat belts throughout the journey, unless told to remove them in an emergency
- The trip leader should delegate an adult to check for lost property and litter when the group leaves the tube/coach
- At least one qualified teacher should be on each tube/coach or minibus and have a mobile phone with them (Ideally a school-provided mobile)

### **Other Transport:**

- If school staff use their own cars to transport children they must have appropriate car insurance. Staff concerned must liaise with the Finance Manager to ensure that their own insurance is appropriate (e.g. Social, domestic and business use), with documentary proof provided to the Finance Manager. Specific written permission must be obtained from parents. Other than in exceptional circumstances, a teacher should never use their own cars to transport a single pupil.
- If parents are transporting children, their cars should be fully insured; relevant legislation relating to pupils sitting in the front and the use of booster seats must be followed. Seatbelts must be worn. Specific written permission must be obtained from other parents and documentary proof of insurance must be provided to the Finance Manager.
- Parents should be fully informed of the time and place to collect the children.
- A school mobile phone by staff should be taken to the event in case of emergency.
- It is the responsibility of the trip leader to look after pupils not collected after a visit. Pupils must not be left unsupervised and appropriate efforts should be made to contact parents if no information has been received about their late arrival. Reference should be made to the school's policy for the failure of a parent to collect a child.

- For transport by other means (train, ferry, aeroplane etc.) detailed risk assessments must be included in the overall risk assessment for the trip.

### **Emergencies**

Despite the best planning and organisation, emergencies still arise that require a speedy and safe response by the trip leader and other staff. While ensuring that pupils are safe, leaders should contact the appropriate emergency/rescue service immediately either by dialling 999 or by sending a message with suitable adult team members. The Head should be contacted as soon as possible.

### **Emergency procedures**

If an accident or other emergency occurs, the trip leader or teacher in charge should do the following:

1. Assess the situation
2. Safeguard the uninjured members of the group
3. If there are injuries, establish immediately the names of the injured people and the extent of their injuries
4. Attend to the casualty/ies, liaising with the group's trained first aider
5. Inform the emergency services, and everyone who needs to know, about the accident
6. Follow the school's first aid and medication policy as appropriate including, when possible, the procedures for recording the accident and contacting parents
7. Notify the police if necessary
8. Share the problem; advise all other group staff that the accident/emergency procedure is in operation. Make sure every member of the group is accounted for
9. Ensure that the injured are accompanied to hospital, preferably by an adult whom they know
10. Ensure that the rest of the group understands what has happened, is adequately supervised and kept together
11. Inform the Deputy Headteacher and pass on all the details, including names of casualties, their injuries, action taken and names of others involved. If abroad, contact the British Embassy/Consulate, if advisable Notify insurers, especially if medical assistance is required
12. Notify tour operator
13. Ascertain telephone number for future calls
14. As soon as possible, write down accurately relevant facts and witness details
15. Preserve any vital evidence
16. Keep a written account of subsequent events, times and contacts after the incident
17. Complete accident forms
18. No-one in the group should speak to the media. All media enquiries should be politely referred to the Head

19. No-one in the group should discuss legal liabilities with other parties As soon as possible, liaise with the school's appointed lead first aider to fulfil the school's legal requirements in relation to reporting of accidents (RIDDOR)

20. Where pupils have mobile phones insist that they do not ring home or friends, as inaccurate or incomplete information is likely to cause unnecessary concern and upset

## **7. After a visit**

After the visit the trip leader must complete a visit evaluation form, which is submitted to the Head.

The views of other adults accompanying the visit should be taken into account. This should identify any area for improvement, including the guidance on organising trips, and should also highlight the successes of the trip.

The risk assessments for the visit should be reviewed to enable any necessary improvements to be made for future visits.

It is expected that the majority of trips are organised to stimulate and motivate pupils in aspects of the curriculum. Follow-up classwork should therefore be undertaken.

It may also be appropriate to organise an assembly or a meeting for parents after the trip enabling the pupils to share their experiences, follow-up work and for photography and video footage to be displayed.

## **8. Monitoring and Evaluation**

This policy will be reviewed every year as a minimum or as soon as possible after any changes

**Approval by Governing Body and Review Date**

This policy and plan has been formally approved and adopted by the Local Governing Body at a formally convened meeting.

Signed:  \_\_\_\_\_  
Chair of Governing Body

Date: 7 July 2016

Review date: July 2017

**End of Statement**