

St Vincent's School for Blind and Partially Sighted Children

Policy Document Title:	Educational Visits Policy
To be read in conjunction with:	Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits (DfEE. A Good Practice Guide). Charging and Remissions Policy Health, Safety and Security Policy Mobility Policy Staff Handbook
Updated:	07/09 SR/JA
To be reviewed:	07/10

St. Vincent's School Mission Statement:

Inspired by the example of St. Vincent, we work together in a safe and caring atmosphere, where a high standard of education and care are provided.

We encourage a sense of achievement, self-worth, moral responsibility and mutual respect, honouring all faith traditions and beliefs. Each one of us in our community is special and unique. Gifts and talents are valued and nurtured through all our work.

We are outward looking in our approach to the wider educational and social community and we encourage all our young people to become independent and to integrate fully into society.

The Governing Body has approved this policy, which is based on the document 'Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits' (DfEE. A Good Practice Guide). A copy of the document is kept in the staff resource area. Further school procedures have been agreed with the Governing Body to ensure that this policy is adhered to.

Aims and purposes of educational visits

The school has a strong commitment to the added value of learning beyond the statutory school day and beyond the school premises.

Each year the school will arrange a number of activities that take place off the school site and/or out of school hours, which support the aim of the school to offer a wide and varied

24-hour curriculum, and opportunities for experiential learning. The methods by which parents will be notified and asked for their consent are given within this policy.

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

- ❖ Regular nearby visits (e.g.: shopping centres, libraries, shops, woodlands, place of worship, farms) – part of the regular curriculum
- ❖ Day visits for particular year groups – part of the regular curriculum
- ❖ Activities week – whole school, summer term
- ❖ After school evening activities – residential pupils and day pupils by arrangement
- ❖ Residential Visits – Geography, Science, PE
- ❖ Overseas visits – History, PE
- ❖ Adventure Activities, which might be classed as higher risk
- ❖ Visits and activities to support Work Related Learning

Approval procedure and consent

The Deputy Principal and the Pastoral and Independent Skills Manager act as Educational Visits Co-ordinators (EVC). The Governing Body has delegated the consideration and approval of educational visits and other offsite activities to the Pupils, Curriculum and Premises sub-committee (P,C&P) and has nominated the Principal as signatories, as necessary, on behalf of the governing body.

Before a visit is advertised to parents the Principal, the P,C&P and EVC must approve the initial plan. They will also approve the completed plan and risk assessments for the visit at a later date.

Where external contractors are involved in organising all or part of the visit the contract will be made with the school on behalf of the pupils. All payments for the visit will be made through the school's accounts.

For external activities, school teams and nearby visits, parents will be asked to sign a general letter of consent for participation in these activities when their son/daughter enters the school. Parents will be given the timetable for the activities that pupils are involved in and will be informed by letter or phone call if an activity has to be cancelled.

For any visit lasting a day or more parents will be asked to sign a letter, which consents to their son/daughter taking part. The school has a standard model letter, which should be used for this purpose.

As part of the parents' consent they will be fully informed of the activities and arrangements for the visit. For all residential visits, parents will be invited to ask for clarification of any aspect of the itinerary and organisation of the visit.

The school has separate policies for 'Charging and Remissions' and 'Health, Safety and Security' which applies to all educational visits.

All risk assessments are kept in the main school office and electronic versions, from July 2009, are stored on the school intranet. Individual risk assessments for each pupil are kept in the staff resource area. Guidelines from the Mobility Policy are taken into consideration, and the school Health Care Co-ordinator gives advice on medical issues.

Staffing

The school recognises the key role of accompanying staff in ensuring the highest standards of learning, challenge and safety on a school visit.

Staff are encouraged and supported to develop their abilities in organising and managing pupils' learning in a variety of environments through induction and training. The selection of staff for educational visits will be a key priority in the initial approval of any proposed visit.

Where it is appropriate the school will ensure that enhanced CRB screening is available for volunteer adults assisting with educational activities and visits.

The appointed Group Leader will be fully supported in the tasks required to arrange the visit. This will include, making time or finances available to conduct an exploratory-visit, briefing teachers and other staff, accessing training courses, reviewing and evaluating the visit or identifying time when the leader and EVCs might work in partnership to undertake planning and risk assessments.

The expectations of pupils and parents

The school has a clear code of conduct for school visits. This code of conduct will be part of the condition of booking by the parents, and include the potential of withdrawal of a pupil prior to and during the visit if such conduct would have led to a temporary exclusion from school.

Emergency Procedures

The school will appoint a member of the SMT as the emergency school contact for each visit. All major incidents should immediately be relayed to this person, especially those involving injury or that might attract media attention.

The Group Leader will leave full details of all pupils and accompanying adults on the visit with the emergency school contact, including the home contact details of parents/guardians and next-of-kin, as appropriate.

The Group Leader will take with them a copy of the school's 'Emergency Procedure' document. (Appendix 1).

All incidents and accidents occurring on a visit will be reported back through the school systems.

The school will have emergency funding available to support the Group Leader in an emergency. School will decide the limitations of such a system as appropriate for the visit, but group leaders should be reassured in advance.

Evaluation

The Group Leader with the EVCs will evaluate all visits. A short evaluation report will be made available for the Governing Body.

The EVCs will ensure that any risk assessments on the trip are dated as having been evaluated and/or modified as a result.

The Group Leader is responsible for presenting a financial account for the visit, which will be audited as part of the schools' procedures.

Appendix 1

Emergency procedures framework during the visit

If an emergency occurs on a school visit the group leader should maintain or resume control of the group overall. The main factors to consider include:

- ❖ establish the nature and extent of the emergency as quickly as possible;
- ❖ ensure that all the group are safe and looked after;
- ❖ establish the names of any casualties and get immediate medical attention;
- ❖ ensure that a teacher accompanies casualties to hospital with any relevant medical information, and that the rest of the group are adequately supervised at all times and kept together;
- ❖ notify the police if necessary;
- ❖ ensure that all group members who need to know are aware of the incident;
- ❖ ensure that all group members are following the emergency procedures and the roles allocated to them – revise procedures and re-allocate roles as necessary;
- ❖ inform the school contact and provider/tour operator (as appropriate). The school contact number should be accessible at all times during the visit;
- ❖ details of the incident to pass on to the school should include: nature, date and time of incident; location of incident; names of casualties and details of their injuries; names of others involved so that parents can be reassured; action taken so far; action yet to be taken (and by whom);
- ❖ school contact should notify parents, providing as full a factual account of the incident as possible;
- ❖ notify insurers, especially if medical assistance is required (this may be done by the school contact);
- ❖ notify the British Embassy/Consulate if an emergency occurs abroad;
- ❖ ascertain phone numbers for future calls. Try not to rely solely on mobile phones;
- ❖ write down accurately and as soon as possible all relevant facts and witness details and preserve any vital evidence;
- ❖ keep a written account of all events, times and contacts after the incident;
- ❖ complete an accident report form as soon as possible.

- ❖ no-one in the group should speak to the media. Names of those involved in the incident should not be given to the media as this could cause distress to their families. Refer media enquiries to a designated media contact in the home area;
- ❖ no-one in the group should discuss legal liability with other parties, nor sign anything relating to accident liability without clear advice from the school Principal;
- ❖ keep receipts for any expenses incurred – insurers will require these.