

Educational Visits Policy

St Thomas Leesfield

C of E Primary School



Approved by: Rebecca Ashton

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Educational Visit Policy

MISSION STATEMENT:

To be the best we can in the sight of God

St Thomas' CE Primary School promotes Christian values through the experiences it offers to all children. As an intrinsic part of the community we aim to provide high quality teaching and learning where each and every child matters. We endeavour to create an atmosphere in which excellence and quality are paramount because everyone is encouraged to be the best they can in the sight of God.

OUR SIX AIMS

Aim 1: (Standards) To ensure that each child achieves their highest standard and makes good progress in all areas of school life.

Aim 2: (Teaching and Learning) To provide pupils with high quality teaching in order to meet each child's learning needs by means of a broad, balanced curriculum.

Aim 3: (Environment) To provide a secure, well resourced, high quality learning environment.

Aim 4: (Management) To support the work of the school by effective management of finance, curriculum, administration and personnel.

Aim 5: (Ethos) To create a happy, positive, inclusive school culture in which to promote our children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and in which all children feel valued.

Aim 6: (Partnership) To promote a mutually supportive learning partnership with governors /parents and to extend children's skills and interests to the wider community.

INTRODUCTION

Everybody who is associated within St Thomas' Leesfield School wants it to be a place where each child can learn and grow in a calm and safe Christian atmosphere, a place where people care for each other and where we all feel good about ourselves. To make sure this happens we need to ensure that we create a happy, positive, inclusive school culture in which to promote our children's moral development (see Aim 5). We promote tolerance and mutual respect within the British values, encouraging children to make reflective choices. (see Aim 5) A happy school is where quality teaching and learning can occur (see Aim 2) thus each child will be able to strive for the highest standards. We know that learning and teaching cannot take place without appropriate behaviour. We should **reward and praise** all forms of **positive behaviour**. This policy explains how we try to encourage positive behaviour in our school.

1. Rationale

- 1.1. St Thomas' Leesfield CE Primary School Curriculum Policy commits us to providing effective teaching and learning so that **all** children reach their full potential with a relevant and engaging curriculum. This is important for all groups of learners. We believe that learning is an enjoyable, lifelong process through which everyone can achieve their potential and exceed their expectations. We challenge and support our students to do their very best by providing an extensive range of learning experiences beyond the statutory requirement.
- 1.2. An essential element of this commitment is to provide educational visits to enhance all aspects of our curriculum. St Thomas' Leesfield CE Primary School is committed to inclusion and will include all students in our offsite activities wherever this is reasonably practicable.

2. Introduction

- 2.1. This policy applies to all staff and volunteers involved in organising, running and assisting with offsite / educational visits from St Thomas' Leesfield CE Primary School.

3. Procedures for educational visits

- 3.1. St Thomas' Leesfield CE Primary School has adopted Oldham Council's procedures for planning and managing educational visits.
 - 3.1.1. All staff involved in running or helping with visits have done Risk Assessment training and have access to the Evolve system for managing visits via our EVC.
 - 3.1.2. The Governing Body has adopted Oldham's 'Guidance for Off Site Visits and Adventure Activities' (GOVAA). This document together with St Thomas' Leesfield CE Primary School Policies gives local arrangements and variations where necessary to complement "**National Guidance** for the Management of Outdoor Learning, Off-site visits and Learning Outside the Classroom". Together these documents summarise the arrangements for educational visits at St Thomas' Leesfield CE Primary School and are all available to staff via the First Class – Lees Conf H&S.
 - 3.1.3. **If staff members ever feel there appears to be a conflict between advice in these documents, then the Oldham's 'Guidance for Off Site Visits and Adventure Activities' (GOVAA) document must be followed and clarification should be sought from the Educational Visit Coordinator.**

4. Clarification of roles

- 4.1. The key roles with regard to visits at St Thomas' Leesfield CE Primary School relate to: The Governors; Headteacher; Educational Visit Coordinator and Visit Leaders. The responsibilities of these roles are outlined in 'National Guidance' with a brief summary (including some specific local variations) below.

4.2. Governors

- 4.2.1. In line with advice in 'National Guidance' the Governing Body will:

- 4.2.1.1. Adopt and periodically review this policy, as required.
- 4.2.1.2. Ensure there is a competent Headteacher in place who meets the requirements for 'Headteacher' outlined in the '**National Guidance**' and

has completed the Local Authority EVC Training Programme and any updates as required.

4.2.1.3. Ensure there is a competent Educational Visit Coordinator (EVC) in place who meets the requirements outlined in 'National Guidance and has completed the Local Authority EVC Training Programme and any updates as required.

4.2.1.4. Review the range of visits provided by the school via a report submitted once an academic year by the EVC.

4.3. Headteacher

4.3.1. The role of the Headteacher is summarised in the National Guidance ([click here](#)) (see also the Headteacher Checklist: [click here](#)).

4.3.2. The Headteacher will

4.3.2.1. Ensure they are familiar with the School and Local Authority policies, and National Guidance and Regulations.

4.3.2.2. Ensure all activities and visits comply with these policies, guidance and regulations.

4.3.2.3. Appoint a competent Educational Visit Coordinator (EVC) who meets the requirements outlined in the '**National Guidance**' and has completed the Local Authority EVC Training Programme and any updates as required.

4.3.2.4. Formally 'sign-off' all visits via the Evolve visit management system as the 'Headteacher', confirming competence of staff as required for the planned visit. These visits are also reviewed by the Local Authority via the Evolve system.

4.3.2.5. Periodically review this policy, as required.

4.3.3. In the event of an absence of the Headteacher, a member of staff who is identified as the Acting Headteacher will have temporary delegated responsibility for approving all visits – Evolve account changes can be arranged with the Outdoor Education Adviser at the LEA.

4.4. Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC)

4.4.1. The role of the EVC is summarised in National Guidance ([click here](#)) (see also EVC Checklist: [click here](#)). The EVC has delegated responsibility for overseeing the arrangements for educational visits. All visits are vetted by the EVC prior to approval by the Headteacher (as outlined above).

4.5. Visit Leader

4.5.1. The role of the visit leader is summarised in 'National Guidance' ([click here](#)). Visit leaders must ensure they have met all relevant requirements of the Leader's Checklist in National Guidance ([click here](#)).

4.5.2. The Visit Leader has the overall responsibility for supervision and conduct of the visit. To ensure accountability and to avoid potential confusion, a single Visit Leader should be appointed. If this role changes during a visit, a clear handover should be made.

4.5.3. All visits must be planned and recorded on the Evolve visit management system.

4.5.4. Visits must not proceed without approval – the visit leader should check his/her Evolve account to ensure this has been confirmed.

5. Procedural requirements

- 5.1. St Thomas' Leesfield CE Primary School uses the Evolve system to plan, manage and record all educational visits.
- 5.2. Visit Leaders should plan and prepare visits allowing time for internal and external vetting and approval as required. Normally this will mean that visit plans should be submitted to the EVC by the following deadlines:
 - 5.2.1. 3 to 6 months before departure for Overseas Visits.
 - 5.2.2. 4 weeks before departure for Residential.
 - 5.2.3. 4 weeks before departure for Adventure Activities.
 - 5.2.4. 2 weeks before departure for other types of visit.
- 5.3. If for any reason these deadlines cannot be met, clarification and approval should be sought from the EVC.

6. Risk management

- 6.1. This is an important element of planning for visits. Visit leaders are normally responsible for assessing and managing the risks of visits they are planning – involving where possible / relevant other staff and the young people involved in the visit. Staff should follow advice on risk management included in GOVAA and National Guidance. Training is also included within the Visit Leader training programme. Advice and support is available from the EVC and other experienced staff.
- 6.2. All everyday activities include inherent risks and St Thomas' Leesfield CE Primary School recognises that experiencing and learning to manage risk within an appropriate framework is an important part of growing up. We aim to have procedures which are effective and proportional to the risks involved in a visit and recognise the important learning opportunities and benefits involved in visits that include inherent risks (for example, sports activities or adventurous activities on a residential). Where activities include inherent risks, the following statement should form part of the information to pupils, parents and staff:

“Staff at St Thomas' Leesfield CE Primary School plan and prepare visits carefully and aim to take good care of all participants. However, parents must understand that well run activities can still include inherent risks and learning to cope with these sensibly is an important part of education and growing up.”

- 6.3. Generic risk assessments may be available for visits previously run in which case **the visit leader is responsible for reviewing and modifying these as required**, to allow for the specific circumstances of the visit. Significant factors (not already recorded on a generic risk assessment form or within this policy) must be recorded via:
 - 6.3.1. A standard risk assessment form (Schools can upload model forms to the 'Establishment Documents' area of Evolve).
 - 6.3.2. A supplementary note on the Evolve visit form.
 - 6.3.3. For routine local visits, the lesson plan.
 - 6.3.4. Or another suitable format agreed with EVC.
- 6.4. Where external providers are used they are responsible for risk assessing the activities they provide. Where necessary this should be confirmed on the Provider Form (not required for providers with a LOTC Quality Badge).

7. Approval of staff to lead activities and visits

7.1. All visits require written approval prior to departure – via the Evolve visit management system.

8. Evaluation of external providers and venues

8.1. Visit Leaders are responsible for ensuring that external providers and venues can meet the learning outcomes required for the group of pupils identified to attend and (where appropriate) they offer reasonable value for money. 'Provider Forms' should be completed by external providers where required (see GOVAA for guidance). These should be checked as part of the planning and safety checks for the visit.

8.2. Visit Leaders should **not routinely** ask for copies of providers' risk assessments, but it is appropriate to ask for any information that they publish specifically aimed at helping Visit Leaders to manage their visit and assess the risks of any school led activities.

9. Preliminary visits

9.1. The **National Guidance** on visits states:

"While the internet and the LOtC Quality Badge scheme have an important part to play in information gathering, there can be no substitute for a preliminary visit. This will back up research and enable you to clarify issues face-to-face. So, wherever reasonably practicable, it is good practice to carry out a preliminary visit to any unfamiliar facility or venue, including those used by a provider. The cost of this can be built into the pricing of the visit".

9.2. Pre-visits should normally be made for new visits or if a venue has not been used in some time.

9.3. In some cases (for low risk visits or if for some reason a pre-visit is not reasonably practicable) a preliminary visit may not be required. Staff should contact the EVC for clarification.

9.4. If for any reason a pre-visit is not possible the visit leader should research the venue carefully and contact staff who have been to the venue for advice.

10. Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge (LOtC Quality Badge), AALA assessment and Adventuremark

10.1. Holding one of the above is a credible assurance of appropriate Health and Safety management systems, and no further verification of these systems should be necessary. The LOtC Quality Badge also covers learning quality. Providers that hold a LOtC Quality Badge are not normally required to submit a Provider Form but Public Liability insurance levels should be checked out on the LOtC Badge website. ([click here](#))

10.2. The provider must have Public liability cover for at least £5 million.

11. Parental consent

11.1. St Thomas' Leesfield CE Primary School asks Parents/Guardians to complete annual consent forms covering the majority of visits (see Model Annual Consent Form in the Resources / Key documents section of Evolve).

11.2. Specific consent forms are required for the following types of visit:

- 11.2.1. Residentials
- 11.2.2. Overseas visits
- 11.2.3. Adventure activities (including DofE activities)

(see Model Consent Form in the Resources / Key documents section of Evolve).

11.3. Parents / guardians should be provided with information on visits in one or more of the following formats:

- 11.3.1. Information letter to parents;
- 11.3.2. Parents' evening;
- 11.3.3. Termly newsletter;
- 11.3.4. School website;
- 11.3.5. Or in suitable circumstances, text message.

11.4. Information to parents should remind them of the need to update any details that have changed by including the following statement:
"Consent for this visit is covered by the form you completed at the beginning of the school year. Please let us know about any change to contact details (new mobile phone numbers etc) changes to medical information or allergies, or parental arrangements.

If you have questions or concerns about any aspect of this educational visit, please contact _____ (Name of Visit Leader)."

12. 'Checking out' and 'checking in' before, during and after a visit

- 12.1. Prior to departure the visit leader must provide the School Attendance Officer with a list of participants taking part in the visit.
- 12.2. The visit leader is responsible for ensuring that all participants are returned to school safely and either dismissed at the end of the day, or continue to subsequent lessons.
- 12.3. Pupils should not normally be dropped at locations other than school unless this has been approved in advance and agreed with parents.
- 12.4. For overseas and residential visits the visit leader should confirm safe return by phone call or text message to the EVC.

13. Emergencies

- 13.1. All visit leaders must ensure that adequate arrangements are in place for first aid and emergency numbers are carried (Refer to National Guidance for model documents for Visit Leader and Home / Emergency Contact).
- 13.2. The school should be notified at the earliest opportunity in the event of an emergency.
- 13.3. **In the event of an emergency the School's critical incident team will assess and respond to the situation with support from Oldham Council if required.**
- 13.4. The EVC will normally act as the 24/7 emergency contact, with support from other senior staff as required. The Emergency Contact(s) will have 24/7 access to all details of the visit, including medical and next-of-kin information regarding staff and

young people (via Evolve or hard copies), and the Emergency Card for Home Contacts.

14. Monitoring

- 14.1.** The running of visits is an important professional role for all staff and monitoring the running of educational visits in the field may form part of the professional assessment of staff. This may be undertaken by the EVC or other senior staff.

15. Evaluation

- 15.1.** All visits should be evaluated to monitor and develop the quality of provision. This evaluation can be done in a number of ways according to the circumstances.

15.1.1. For routine, regular visits this might involve a department having a periodic review involving all staff who lead this visit. The Evolve system includes a very quick and easy assessment tool which focusses on the learning outcomes of a visit. This is a simple way of evaluating 'everyday' visits and outcomes can be summarised in a report to Governors

15.1.2. For new visits and those involving complex arrangements this might require a meeting of all staff involved with the involvement of the Special Educational Needs Coordinator or Senior Leadership.

- 15.2.** Outcomes from evaluations might include:

15.2.1. Amendments to risk assessment for future visits.

15.2.2. A decision not to use a venue again.

15.2.3. Cascading good practice to other staff.

15.2.4. Identifying training or support needs for staff.

15.2.5. Passing on issues and concerns to other staff.

16. Staff induction and training

- 16.1.** St Thomas' Leesfield CE Primary School recognises that staff may require training and experience to maximise learning outcomes from educational visits and to operate safely. Certain kinds of visits (especially residential and overseas visits) may require that staff obtain practical experience as assistant leaders alongside experienced staff as part of an 'apprenticeship model' prior to taking on the role of visit leader. This approach also helps to ensure continuity if key staff running annual / regular visits leave, retire or are unable to attend.

- 16.2.** St Thomas' Leesfield CE Primary School will actively promote professional development by providing opportunities for a wide range of training for staff involved in running and supporting visits including;

16.2.1. First aid courses.

16.2.2. Visit Leader Training (theory and practical).

16.2.3. Educational visit coordinator (EVC) Training.

16.2.4. Evolve training.

- 16.2.5. MIDAS training for minibus drivers.
- 16.2.6. Snowsport England Snowsport Course Organiser (SCO) for staff involved in running snow sport trips.

16.3. Relevant Training will be recorded on the Evolve system.

17. Induction requirements

17.1. Checklist for Senior Leadership inducting new staff:

17.1.1. Ensure staff member has Evolve log-in (available from the EVC) and understands how to use the website.

17.1.2. Staff member to familiarise themselves with St Thomas' Leesfield CE Primary School and GOVAA requirements.

17.1.3. Provide / arrange support when planning first visit.

17.1.4. Arrange mentoring opportunities as appropriate.

18. Transport arrangements

18.1. Transport arrangements must be approved as part of the visit planning process

18.2. Use of staff cars

18.2.1. Use of staff cars must be approved.

18.2.2. Staff must:

18.2.2.1. Fill in a registration form (renewable each year).

18.2.2.2. Produce a clean driving licence (if staff have endorsements on their licence, approval to drive is required from the Head of School).

18.2.2.3. Produce evidence of insurance cover for carrying students whilst at work (business use cover on insurance certificate).

18.2.2.4. Ensure students wear seatbelts on journeys.

18.3. School and rented minibuses

18.3.1. Drivers must hold a current MIDAS certificate.

18.3.2. Driving licence requirements are as above.

18.3.3. Regulations related to license requirements for driving vehicles with more than 8 passenger seats are complex. Staff should check eligibility to drive with the **EVC**.

18.4. Coaches / Minibuses with drivers

18.4.1. Coaches and minibuses with drivers are booked via the school finance office to ensure they meet required standards and to obtain best value.

18.5. Taxis

18.5.1. Taxis should be booked through the school finance office to ensure they meet required standards and to obtain best value.

19. Volunteers

19.1. Volunteers assisting with visits will normally need DBS checking – check with the EVC well ahead of the visit. Visit leaders are responsible for briefing and supervising volunteers.

19.2. Visit leaders are responsible for ensuring that volunteer staff on visits:

19.2.1. Have clearly defined roles.

19.2.2. Are clear about expectations of them.

19.3. The school has a duty of care for all participants including volunteers and the visit leader should ensure this is considered as part of the planning and risk assessment.

19.4. Where appropriate the competence of volunteers should be verified by the EVC.

19.5. Regular volunteers should be listed on the Evolve system.

20. Behaviour

20.1. The school's Behaviour Policy applies off site as well as in school. Staff should apply the same behaviour management principles and pupils must understand that the same expectations apply.

20.2. In addition St Thomas' Leesfield CE Primary School has adopted a Code of Conduct for visits (National Guidance has a model Code – [click here for details](#))

20.3. Consent forms for residential and overseas visits should require parents and pupils to sign confirming acceptance of this Code.

21. Inclusion

21.1. Visits should be planned with a presumption of entitlement to participate, ensuring integration through participation with peers wherever possible. Accessibility should be ensured through direct or realistic adaptation or modification if required. Advice is available from the EVC where necessary.

22. Insurance

22.1. St Thomas' Leesfield CE Primary School currently buys into an annual policy with Oldham Council which provides personal insurance for all educational visits.

23. Finance

23.1. Policy for dealing with finance for visits, including:

23.1.1. School Charging policy (see National Guidance – [click here](#)).

23.1.2. Any arrangements in place for young people unable to afford a visit.

23.1.3. Requirements for accounting, banking and reporting.

24. Data Protection Statement

24.1. The procedures and practice created by this policy have been reviewed in the light of our Data Protection Policy.

24.2. All data will be handled in accordance with the school's Data Protection Policy.

Data Audit For This Policy					
What ?	Probable Content	Why ?	Who ?	Where ?	When ?
Child's Name	Name	Well-Being of Your Child Communication	All Staff (Where Necessary)	Kept in children's file or shredded.	Kept in children's file or sent home.
Child's Address	Addresses	Well-Being of Your Child Medical Communication Residential trips	All Staff (Where Necessary)	Kept in children's file, Visit Leader or shredded.	Kept in children's file, Visit Leader or shredded.
Medical Information	Medical Information	Well-Being of Your Child Medical Communication Residential trips	All Staff (Where Necessary)	Kept in children's file, Visit Leader or shredded.	Kept in children's file, Visit Leader or shredded.

24.3. As such, our assessment is that this policy :

Has Few / No Data Compliance Requirements	Has A Moderate Level of Data Compliance Requirements	Has a High Level Of Data Compliance Requirements
	✓	