Christ the King Catholic Academy and St Cuthbert's Catholic Academy

Care - Courtesy - Concern

Standard Operating Procedures

For Educational Visits

January 2024

Effective date: January 2024
Version 1.3
Blessed Edward Bamber Catholic Multi Academy Trust

Context

Christ the King Catholic Academy and St Cuthbert's Catholic Academy believes that educational visits are an integral part of the entitlement of every pupil to an effective and balanced curriculum. Appropriately planned visits are known to enhance learning and improve attainment and so form a key part of what makes *Christ the King Catholic Academy and St Cuthbert's Catholic Academy* a supportive and effective learning environment. We believe:

- Pupils should be able to experience a wide range of activities. Health and Safety measures should help them to do this safely, not stop them;
- It is important that children learn to understand and manage the risks that are a normal part of life;
- Common sense should be used in assessing and managing the risks of any activity. Health and safety procedures should always be proportionate to the risks of an activity;
- Staff have access to appropriate training they may require in order to keep themselves and pupils safe as well as manage risks effectively.

Any visit that leaves the school grounds is covered by this guidance, whether as part of the curriculum, during school time, or outside the normal school day.

Christ the King Catholic Academy and St Cuthbert's Catholic Academy

1. Follow the Blessed Edward Bamber Multi Academy Trust Policy and Guidance for Offsite Visits and Related Activities (Visit leaders have access to this via EVOLVE).
2. Adopt National Guidance www.oeapng.info
3. Uses EVOLVE, the web-based planning, notification, approval, monitoring and communication system for off-site activities.

All staff are required to plan and carry out visits in line with the above. Staff are particularly directed to be familiar with the roles and responsibilities outlined within National Guidance.

Categories of Visit & Approval

There are three categories of visit:

1. Visits/activities within the Local Learning Area that are part of the normal curriculum and take place during the normal school day. These follow the Local Learning Area Operating Procedure and be added to Evolve as Local Area Visits

2. Other non-residential visits within the UK that do not involve an adventurous activity, e.g..visits to museums, farms, theme parks, theatres, etc. These are entered on EVOLVE by the visit leader and submitted to the EVC for checking. The EVC then submits to the Executive Head for approval.

3. Visits that are overseas, residential, or involve an adventurous activity. These are the same as other non-residential visits (detailed above), but the Executive Head then submits the visit form to the Trust Adviser for approval.

   Staff must not spend any money or inform pupils or parents that a trip or visit is going ahead until it has been given initial approval by a senior leader.

Roles and responsibilities

Visit leaders are responsible for the planning of their visits, and for entering them on EVOLVE (where required). They should obtain outline permission for a visit from a member of the senior leadership team prior to planning, and before making any commitments. Visit leaders have responsibility for ensuring that their visits will comply with all relevant guidance and requirements, and should seek advice from the EVC where necessary.

The Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) is *Mr Tony Mitchell,* who will give guidance and challenge to colleagues over visits and learning outside the classroom activities. The EVC is the first point of contact for advice on visit related matters, and will check final visit plans on EVOLVE before submitting them to the Executive Head. The EVC sets up and manages the staff accounts and volunteer lists on EVOLVE, and uploads generic school documents. The EVC will also communicate with staff any updated guidance as appropriate.

The Executive Head has responsibility for authorising all visits, and for submitting those that are residential or adventurous to the Trust for approval.

The Governing Body's role is that of a 'critical friend' for overnight visits. The Chair of Governors or governor designated is asked for approval prior to any extended visit or overnight.

The Adviser to the school *(EdVisits Advice)* is responsible for the final approval (via EVOLVE) of all visits that are either residential, and/or involve an adventurous activity.

Timing of visits

It is essential to the smooth running of the rest of *Christ the King Catholic Academy and St Cuthbert's Catholic Academy that* educational visits are properly planned and arranged to ensure minimal disruption to all, both those on the trip and those remaining in school.

Staff are strongly encouraged to plan their pattern of trips and visits for the coming academic year as early as they can.

Staff organising a trip must consult as widely as possible with colleagues who might be affected and think carefully about the possible impact of a trip. It is essential that all people concerned with the trip are fully informed at appropriate times. Once the planning has been completed and the trip has been approved, the full details of the trip must be prepared. These details, together with copies of letters for parents, must be submitted to the appropriate key stage team leader before being sent out.

Parental Consent

Christ the King Catholic Academy and St Cuthbert's Catholic Academy requires consent for all offsite visits. Blanket consent is required for local, low-risk visits and obtained from parents/carers at the start of each academic year or when a child joins the academy. Visit leaders much check for this consent before a visit takes place.

Parents must be informed of these activities in advance, and given the opportunity to withdraw their child from any particular visit or activity covered by the form. It is acceptable for this permission to be gained through an 'opt out' system rather than by informing parents of a local visit via text/push notification or internal social medium platforms

However, where smaller numbers are involved, where a trip leaves very early or returns very late, and **for all residential visits and adventurous activities**, specific signed permission must be obtained from parents. Trip leaders must have an alternative option planned for any pupil whose parents decline permission to go on a trip.

If a trip involves overnight accommodation, parents must be given full details of the type of accommodation provided and the security arrangements which are in place to ensure the safety of their child. They must be fully informed as to the nature of the trip, with a clear indication if the students may be unaccompanied while away from school.

Parents must acknowledge that their child is fit enough to go on the trip, outline any health problems and authorise the leader of the party to act on their behalf in an emergency. They must also provide a contact number for the duration of the trip.

For longer trips, *Christ the King Catholic Academy and St Cuthbert's Catholic Academy will* hold a Parents' Information session a few weeks before departure. This allows information to be shared, questions to be asked and answered, and reassurance to be given where appropriate.

Risk Management Plans

A risk assessment is a careful examination of what could cause harm to people, so that control measures can be put in place to manage the risk at an acceptable level. These control measures are then recorded on a risk management plan.

Risk assessment must be carried out for all visits however generic risk management plans are available via Evolve Resources as a starting point for visit leaders.

Emergency procedures

Staff who are in charge of pupils have a duty of care to make sure that the pupils are safe and healthy. They also have a common law duty to act as a reasonably prudent parent. Visit leaders also have a duty of care towards the adults on the visit.

Emergency procedures are an essential part of planning a school visit. **A critical incident is any incident where events go beyond the normal coping mechanisms and experience of the visit leadership team.**

Blessed Edward Bamber Catholic Multi Academy Trust has an emergency plan in place to deal with a critical incident during a visit. All staff on visits must be familiar with this plan.

When an incident overwhelms the establishment's emergency response capability, or where it involves serious injury or fatality, or where it is likely to attract media attention then assistance will be sought from the Executive Headteacher and or Chief Executive Officer.

Inclusion

At Christ the King and St Cuthbert's Catholic Academies we ensure that we offer an all-inclusive approach to education visits and comply with the Equality Act 2010.

Charging / funding for visits

School request voluntary contributions to cover the cost of any visit as well as seeking charitable donations to keep costs for families low. Should funds not sufficiently cover the cost of a trip parents are informed on the consent letter that the trip may be cancelled.

Transport

The school has access to three trust minibuses (two stored at St Mary's Catholic Academy and one at St Cuthbert's Academy) as well as on occasion loaning other minibuses from other local charities, schools and academies.

Drivers are required to hold a valid/current MIDAS certificate and hold a current, clean driving license with D1 and appropriate permissions. Considerations for minor driving offences can be approved following discussion with the Executive Headteacher.

At Christ the King Catholic Academy and St Cuthbert's Catholic Academy we follow a set of guidelines that support the safe transportation of children and staff on educational visits:

- *Driver and staff members should not be directly related to any pupil on the same minibus or within the allocated group during the visit.*
- *Minimum supervision is one driver and one support assistant. Where the driver is not a staff member, then the additional adult within the minibus must be a staff member.*
- *Minibus pre-drive checks are the responsibility of the driver reporting any defects or issues in a timely manner.*

Booster Seats

Booster seats are available for children who are under the height of 135cm and travel in staff vehicles that are insured to carry pupils.

Height-appropriate seatbelts are fitted to the school minibus, and therefore booster seats are not required. Visit leaders are responsible for ensuring the adjustable seatbelts are set correctly.

Visit leaders can choose to use booster seats if required. This may be for early years/KS1 classes where it would be appropriate to use booster seats, especially when children need to have a clear view through the windows.

Loose booster seats must not be within the floor space or overhead compartments when travelling and must be removed from the vehicle when not in use.