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Directors' Meeting  
**17 July 2023**

St John the Baptist



Catholic Multi Academy Trust

Review  
Resources Committee

## **LEARNING BEYOND THE CLASSROOM (OFFSITE VISITS) POLICY**

### **THE TRUST MISSION STATEMENT**

*Inspired by the life of Christ we provide an exceptional education in our Catholic schools  
which enables our children:*

- to fully embrace all possibilities
- to flourish
- to develop their faith

*and therefore to choose a path that enables them to be a positive influence upon our world.*

*'Prepare the Way' The Gospel of St Mark 1:3*

**St John the Baptist Catholic Multi Academy Trust**  
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# Policy for Offsite Visits

## Learning Beyond the Classroom

Within the St John the Baptist Catholic MAT we believe that every young person should experience the world beyond the classroom as an essential part of learning and personal development, whatever their age, ability or circumstances. We define learning outside the classroom as:

“The use of places other than the classroom for teaching and learning.”

As part of learning outside of the classroom we want students to:

**Experience** – a range of experiences, frequent and progressive

**Develop** confidence, self-awareness and skills (e.g. responsibility for self and others, working in a team, leadership, communication, problem solving)

**Learn** new ideas, facts, and concepts in a real-world context






**Grow** through challenge and become more independent

**Demonstrate achievement** – through awards, school displays, presentations by young people

**Increase their motivation** and willingness to learn – contributing to raised levels of attainment

**Broaden horizons and raise aspirations** – believing they can achieve

Prospective parents of students within the St John the Baptist Catholic MAT should to be aware that students will participate in a range of activities beyond the classroom, including, but not limited to:

-  Visits to local Churches, Cathedrals and places of worship, including participation in services and retreats
-  Visits to museums and places of interest in the local area
-  Sporting activities at local schools and sporting providers
-  Visits to other educational establishments, such as schools and colleges
-  Visits to businesses related to curriculum areas.

All local low risk visits will comply with national guidance, monitored by the school Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC). For these low risk visits no additional parental consent will be required or collected. For all other educational visits (regional, residential, overseas, adventurous etc) a process of approval via the EVC in the school is used, and the school charging policy may be applicable. Support and external verification will be purchased from an external provider, such as the Evolve system underpinned by Local Authority advice (either Norfolk, for schools in Norfolk or North Suffolk, or Peterborough).

## Aims and purposes of Offsite Visits

The schools within the MAT have a strong commitment to the added value of learning outside the classroom and beyond the school premises. We will seek to provide a broad & balanced range of Learning Outside the Classroom opportunities for all its pupils.

Each year every school will arrange a number of activities that take place off the school site and out of school hours, which support the aims of the school. The range of activities to which the Directors has given its approval includes:

- Out of hours Clubs (music, drama, art, science, sport, homework etc)
- School sports teams
- Regular local visits (places of worship, swimming, other local amenities)
- Day visits for particular groups
- Residential visits
- Overseas visits
- Adventurous Activities.

### **Approval Procedure**

The Directors have delegated the consideration and approval of offsite visits and activities to the relevant Headteacher. The Headteacher will nominate an Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC), or undertake the role themselves, and the EVC will receive training by the LA (Norfolk or Peterborough).

Before a visit is advertised to parents the Head teacher / EVC will approve the initial plan. The Headteacher/EVC will also approve the completed plan and risk assessments for the visit before departure. This will be undertaken using EVOLVE as the planning and approval system. [www.norfolkvisits.org.uk](http://www.norfolkvisits.org.uk) or [www.peterboroughvisits.org.uk](http://www.peterboroughvisits.org.uk)

The MAT has agreed a policy for categorising its visits in line with NCC / PCC guidance i.e.:

Level 3 visits must be approved via Evolve and the LA's on-line approval gained.

Level 2 Day visits approved at school level on Evolve by EVC / Head.

Level 1 Local regular day visits - this MAT has chosen to use Evolve to record & approve all these visits, but they only need to be input once into Evolve

### **Definition of Levels:**

**Level 3** = Overseas, Residential or Adventurous visits

**Level 2** = Day visits not in your establishments list of Level 1.

**Level 1** = Local & regular visits that you have generic risk assessments' & standard operating procedures.

### **Staffing**

The MAT 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 visits. There will be a system within each school to allow less experienced members of staff to work alongside more experienced colleagues on visits. The selection of staff for offsite visits will be a key priority in the

initial approval of any proposed visit. Staff will be suitably qualified and experienced for proposed activities.

The school values and recognises the contribution of volunteer adults and parent helpers assisting with offsite activities and visits. Any volunteer will be approved by the Head and / or Visit Leader and is entered on the voluntary helpers list kept by each School. They will be carefully briefed on the scope of their responsibility. Where it is appropriate the school will ensure that DBS screening is available for volunteers.

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

Visit staff will not be under the influence of alcohol or other drugs such that their ability to recognise hazards or respond to emergencies is in any way restricted.

### **Risk Assessment**

The Visit Leader will seek to identify any significant risks from any activity that is under their control and take appropriate steps to ensure all participants are safe. Good practice precautions and safety measures will be taken and this will be recorded in a risk assessment.

### **National Guidance**

Staff are required when planning and taking a visit to follow the National Guidance for the Management of Outdoor Learning, Off-site visits and Learning Outside the Classroom which can be found in the resources section on the Evolve website.

### **External Activity Providers**

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 accounts.

The Visit Leader will make appropriate checks before committing the school to the contract. This will include seeking assurances about health and safety, and any accreditation and licensing. Wherever possible the school will seek to use holders of the Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge for which no Providers Contracts or other assurance checks are required.

### **Parental Consents**

Written consent from parents will not be required for pupils to take part in the majority of off-site activities organised by the school as most of these activities take place during school hours and are a normal part of a child's education at school. However, parents will be told where their child will be at all times and of any extra information or measures required.

Written consent will be requested for activities that need a higher level of risk management or those that take place outside school hours.

As part of the parent consent they will be fully informed of the activities and arrangements for the visit. For all residential visits parents will be invited to a briefing meeting where they can ask for clarification of any aspect of the itinerary and organisation of the visit.

### **Emergency Procedures**

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

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

All incidents and accidents occurring on a visit will be reported back and recorded following normal school procedures for reporting and investigating accidents.

### **Review by the Local Authority**

The school is supported in its arrangements for offsite visits by the appropriate LA (Norfolk or Peterborough). Where necessary the school will seek advice from the Adviser for Outdoor Learning.

All visits that involve an overnight stay, going abroad and any that involve adventurous activities will be notified to the LA prior to departure. The LA will provide an independent reassurance check of the plan and the precautions and safety measures that will be taken.

Some sample monitoring will also be undertaken by the LA & the school agrees to facilitate this when & where required. Any advice provided will be fully considered prior to the trip taking place.

### **Other school policies that this Educational Visit policy relates to are:**

- School Charging Policy
- Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy
- Single Equalities Scheme
- Behavior for Learning Policy