



Our Lady of Mount Carmel
Catholic Primary School

Our Lady of Mount Carmel

A Catholic Voluntary Academy

Off Site Educational Visits Policy

Signed off by: P. Martin (Headteacher) C. Stephenson (Chair of Governors)

Date from: November 2024

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Our Mission Statement

Our Lady of Mount Carmel Roman Catholic Primary School is a community centred in Christ. Teaching is permeated by the Gospel values and the traditions of our Catholic faith.

We seek to promote a happy, stimulating and caring environment in which each person is valued as an individual with unique talents. The curriculum and activities of the school are carefully framed so that each pupil may fulfil his or her potential and know success. Each will grow in awareness of his or her role within the family, the school and society and be sustained by a deepening relationship with God.

Centred in Christ

We are...

HAPPY - We make new and happy memories together.

CARING - We are caring, kind and amazing just like Jesus.

VALUED - Each of us is an important part of the jigsaw, which makes up our school family.

UNIQUE - We are all special and respect each other's differences.

SUCCESSFUL - We never give up on our journey to success.

For with God nothing is impossible. Luke 1:37

Context

Our Lady of Mount Carmel believe 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 Our Lady of Mount Carmel a supportive and effective learning environment. The benefits to pupils of taking part in visits and learning outside the classroom include, but are not limited to:

- Improvements in their ability to cope with change.
- Increased critical curiosity and resilience.
- Opportunities for meaning making, creativity, developing learning relationships and practicing strategic awareness.
- Increased levels of trust and opportunities to examine the concept of trust (us in them, them in us, them in themselves, them in each other).
- Improved achievement and attainment across a range of curricular subjects. Pupils are active participants not passive consumers, and a wide range of learning styles can flourish.

- Enhanced opportunities for 'real world' 'learning in context' and the development of the social and emotional aspects of intelligence.
- Increased risk management skills through opportunities for involvement in practical risk-benefit decisions in a range of contexts. i.e. encouraging pupils to become more risk aware as opposed to risk averse.
- Greater sense of personal responsibility.
- Possibilities for genuine team working including enhanced communication skills.
- Improved environmental appreciation, knowledge, awareness and understanding of a variety of environments.
- Improved awareness and knowledge of the importance and practices of sustainability.
- Physical skill acquisition and the development of a fit and healthy lifestyle.

Application

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

In addition to this Educational Visits Policy, *Our Lady of Mount Carmel*

1. Adopts the Local Authority's (LA) document: 'Educational Off-site Visits and Adventurous Activities Guidance' with reference to OEAP National Guidance.
2. Uses 'Exeant', the web-based planning, notification, approval, monitoring and communication system for off-site activities.

All staff are required to plan and execute visits in line with school policy (i.e. this document), DMBC policy and guidance, and National Guidelines. Staff are particularly directed to be familiar with the roles and responsibilities outlined within the guidance.

Types of visit

There are three types of visit:

1. Routine local visits in the local area [can be covered by an 'Extended Learning Locality Statement' (See Appendix A)] – Cat. A
2. Day visits within the UK (outside of London) that do not involve an adventurous activity – Cat. B
3. Visits to London, and/or that are overseas, and/or residential, and/or involve an adventurous activity, and/or take place in a challenging environment- Cat. C

Roles and responsibilities

Visit leaders are responsible for the planning of their visits, and for entering these on 'Exeant' (where required). Using the 'Exeant' system, they are to obtain initial approval for a visit from the EVC and Head Teacher prior to formally planning, and certainly before making any commitments. Visit leaders have responsibility for ensuring that their visits will comply with all relevant guidance and requirements.

The Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) is Michelle Nadolny who will support and challenge colleagues over visits and learning outside the classroom (LOtC) activities. The EVC is the first point of contact for advice on visit related matters. Initial approval requests for visits will go through to the EVC via the 'Exeant' system. At the point of initial approval the decision is made by the EVC as to whether the visit requires the approval of the Head. The EVC is the main point of contact between the

LA and the establishment with specific reference to the 'Exeant' system and is responsible for the management of the 'Exeant' system with regards granting access to the system for establishment staff.

The Head Teacher has responsibility for authorising all visits via 'Exeant'.

The Governing Body's role is that of a 'critical friend'. That the school has an effective policy in place for off-site activities

- The school has an acceptable code of conduct for both leaders and young people (more on this below)
- The school's procedures for visits comply with safeguarding and health and safety policies
- The school leaders carry out risk assessments to make sure appropriate safety measures are in place
- Ensure the school has a process in place to approve school trips
- The board discusses how school trips fit in with the school's/trust's values, ethos and aims.
- Leaders have considered the inclusivity of school trips, including accessibility for all pupils and costs for disadvantaged families

The Local Authority is responsible for the final approval (via 'Exeant') of all visits that are either overseas, residential, take place in a challenging environment (including London) and/or involve an adventurous activity for Local Authority maintained establishments. For establishments outside of Local Authority control, the LA acts in an advisory and consultative role providing guidance for such establishments.

Staff Competence

We recognise that staff competence is the single most important factor in the safe management of visits, and so we support staff in developing their competence in the following ways:

- An apprenticeship system, where staff new to visits assist and work alongside experienced visit leaders before taking on a leadership role.
- Supervision by senior staff on some educational visits.
- Support for staff to attend training courses relevant to their role, where necessary.

In deciding whether a member of staff is competent to be a visit leader, the Head Teacher will take into account the following factors:

- Relevant experience.
- Previous relevant training.
- The prospective leader's ability to make dynamic risk management judgements, and take charge in the event of an emergency.
- Knowledge of the pupils, the venue, and the activities to be undertaken.

Approval

The approval process is as follows for each type of visit:

1. Category 'A' - Local visits which involve transport purely by foot within the locality. They are either entered onto the 'Exeant' system or the establishment follows the 'Regular Visit Consent Form'
2. Category 'B' - Day visits within the UK that do not involve an adventurous activity, are not within London and do not take place in a challenging environment. These are entered onto 'Exeant' for initial approval by the EVC/Head and must then be fully submitted to the EVC for checking at least 7 days in advance, and then forwarded to the Head for approval.
3. Category 'C' - Visits that are overseas, residential, within London, take place in a challenging environment and/or involve an adventurous activity (see LA guidance for definition of 'adventurous' and 'challenging environment') are checked by the EVC, approved by the Head along with automatically being sent through to the LA (by virtue of selecting the adventurous and/or residential checkbox on 'Exeant') for approval or consultative guidance. The Governing body maybe consulted if the school feel this is necessary.

Emergency procedures

A critical incident is any incident where events go beyond the normal coping mechanisms and experience of the visit leadership team.

The school has an emergency plan in place to deal with a critical incident during a visit (see Appendix B). All staff on visits are familiar with this plan and it is tested at least bi-annually and following any major staffing changes.

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 local authority and Multi-Academy Trust.

Educational Visits Checklist

Our Lady of Mount Carmel's Educational Visits Checklist forms part of the risk management process for visits and off-site activities. This has been adapted from the LA's generic checklist. A visit should only go ahead if the answer to all relevant questions is 'YES'.

Parental Consent

The school obtains blanket consent at the start of each year for regular/routine activities that take place wholly within the 'normal' school day. Category A visits are covered by using the 'Regular Visit

consent'(Appendix A) and parents/carers can be informed of visits via electronic means, newsletters or letter. For Category B visits that are less routine, parents/carers must be fully informed of the arrangements and acknowledgement received from parent/carers that they have received the information regarding the visit via a reply slip.

Specific, (ie. one-off), parental consent must be obtained for all visits that take place either partly or wholly outside of 'normal' school hours. For these visits, sufficient information must be made available to parents (letters, meetings, etc), so that consent is given on a 'fully informed' basis.

Inclusion

The School will make every effort to ensure that all pupils are able to take a full and active part in educational visits, irrespective of disability, special educational or medical needs, ethnic origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation etc. This will include making reasonable adjustments to help overcome or minimise difficulties encountered by pupils who suffer from disabilities. The School will only consider preventing a pupil from attending an educational visit as a last resort and will only do so following consultation between the school the pupil and the parent(s). The reasons a School may need to consider preventing a pupil from attending an educational visit might be where it is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim, for example because of an unacceptable risk to the health and safety of the pupil concerned or others on the educational visit or where it is not possible to make reasonable adjustments to enable the pupil to attend. The School will work with parent(s) and pupil(s) in order to agree a way forward in respect of the proposed educational visit and retain a written record of the steps taken and the final decision

Charging / funding for visits

Please see the charging and remissions policy.

Insurance

Our Lady of Mount Carmel has a Risk Protection Arrangement from the DfE. The Link below shared further information.

[*Risk protection arrangement \(RPA\) for academy trusts - membership rules*](#)

Other topics

Swimming Lessons

Children will travel to swimming lessons on a hired coach. A risk assessment will be completed on Exeant. Children will be supervised by two adults when going. The venue will provide the main swimming instructor and a qualified life guard.

Dismissing from Sporting events

Before the visit the leader will find out who will be picking the child up from the sports fixture (via a letter being sent out before the event). After the event has finished the leader will gather the children together and will only release the child if the parent collects them. All contact information will be taken with the visit leader to ensure parents are contactable.

Appendix A – Regular Visit Consent form



City of
Doncaster
Council

RVC: Regular Visit Consent Form
(Version 1.2.2022)



This form is to be completed for annual blanket consent for regular routine activities that take place in the local area.

(To be completed by establishment)

Establishment:	Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic Primary School
Period of Consent:	School admission date, until leaving date, for the young person named below

(To be completed by parent/carer)

Name of young person:	
Pre-existing medical / anxiety related conditions:	

I hereby agree to my young person participating in recognised, routine activities that are organised by the school, taking place off the site, but within the local area during school hours. Such activities would include, but not limited to, environmental/field studies, sports fixtures, joint activities with other schools, visits to the local shop/church/library/museum/theatre etc.

I understand that:

- such activities will not normally extend beyond the school day, however if they are likely to do so, such as in the case of sports fixtures, adequate advance notice and details will be provided by the school so that I can make appropriate arrangements for my young person's safe return home;
- my specific permission will be sought for any out-of-school visits and activities beyond those outlined above, which involve overnight stays, journeys beyond the local area, non-routine visits taking place outside of normal school hours, visits which involve high risk activities/environments etc.;
- there is some level of risk in every activity, but that all reasonable measures will be taken to minimize the risks involved;
- my young person will be under an obligation to follow all directions given by staff and observe all guidelines governing the visit/activity along with following all other policies applied by the school.
- **I will continue to inform the school of any changes to medical or other information which staff should reasonably be aware of**, and which might affect the safety and welfare of my young person or other group members during an offsite visit;

Name of Parent/Carer:

Relationship to Young Person:

Signed: Date:

We use this extended area on a regular basis for a variety of learning activities, and approved staff are allowed to operate in this area without completing the QES visit approval process, provided they follow the below Operating Procedure.

Operating Procedure for Extended Learning Locality

The following are potentially significant issues/hazards within our extended locality:

- Road traffic.
- Other people / members of the public / animals.
- Losing a pupil.
- Uneven surfaces and slips, trips, and falls.
- Weather conditions.
- Activity specific issues when doing environmental fieldwork (nettles, brambles, rubbish, etc).

These are managed by a combination of the following:

- The Head, Deputy or EVC must give verbal approval before a group leaves.
- Only staff judged competent to supervise groups in this environment are approved. A current list of approved staff is maintained by the EVC and office.
- The concept and Operating Procedure of the 'Extended Learning Locality' is explained to all new parents when their child joins the school.
- There will normally be a minimum of two adults.
- Staff are familiar with the area, including any 'no go areas', and have practiced appropriate group management techniques.
- Pupils have been trained and have practiced standard techniques for road crossings in a group.
- Where appropriate, pupils are fully briefed on what to do if they become separated from the group.
- All remotely supervised work in the extended learning locality is done in 'buddy' pairs as a minimum.
- Pupils' clothing and footwear is checked for appropriateness prior to leaving school.
- Staff are aware of any relevant pupil medical information and ensure that any required medication is available.
- Staff will deposit in the office a list of all pupils and staff, a proposed route, and an estimated time of return.
- A school mobile is taken with each group and the office have a note of the number.
- Appropriate personal protective equipment is taken when needed (eg gloves, goggles)

Appendix B – Emergency Procedure

The school's emergency response to an incident is based on the following key factors:

1. There is always a nominated emergency base contact for any visit (during school hours this is the office).
2. This nominated base contact will either be an experienced member of the senior management team, or will be able to contact an experienced senior manager at all times.
3. For activities that take place during normal school hours, the visit leadership team will be aware of any relevant medical information for all participants, including staff.
4. For activities that take place outside normal school hours, the visit leadership team and the emergency contact/s will be aware of and have any relevant medical information and emergency contact information for all participants, including staff.
5. The visit leader/s and the base contact/s know to request support from the local authority in the event that an incident overwhelms the establishment's emergency response capability, involves serious injury or fatality, or where it is likely to attract media attention.
 - a) The visit leader will carry a 'Visit Leader Emergency Action Plan - VLEAP' and 'Phone Crib Card'
6. This Emergency Procedure is tested through both desk top exercises and periodic scenario calls from visit leader.

