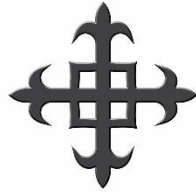


External Visits



ST. OSWALD'S
C of E ACADEMY

Head of School: Mrs C Furniss

Executive Headteacher: Mrs S Patton

Policy Date: February 2024

Our Mission Statement:

We aim to provide a high quality of education for all, recognising everyone's value and worth, helping them to achieve their full potential, and sharing the love of God made known through Jesus Christ.

Context

St Oswald's Church of England 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 St Oswald's* 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, St Oswald's:

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 - Cat. A (separate policy)
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 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 S Patton (Executive Head Teacher) 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. 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 Trust's role is that of a 'critical friend'.

The Trust (DSAT) will ensure that:

- They carry all the responsibilities of an Employer.
- The Establishment for which they are responsible has guidance in place, and ensure that robust systems are put in place to support the implementation of the guidance.
- There is an Establishment Visit Policy, or wider policies in place that cover all aspects of Visits.
- Establishment policy clarifies any Trust involvement in the visit approval process.
- There are training regimes in place to appropriately support the planning and delivery of visits and off-site learning.
- There is a trained EVC in place who meets Employer requirements with sufficient time allowance to fulfil the role.
- There are approval procedures in place at Establishment level and notification procedures in place between the Establishment and the Employer as required by the Employer's guidance.
- The Establishment Visit Policy supports the principles of inclusion.
- There are monitoring procedures in place.

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 (particularly where lead teacher is an ECT).
- 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 Executive Head Teacher/Head of School 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 entered onto the 'Exeant' system.
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 and must then be fully submitted to the Executive Head for checking and approval at least **7 days in advance**.
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. **All Category C visits must have approval by LGB/DSAT.**

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 Diocese.

Educational Visits Checklist

St Oswald'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 and Routine, Local Visits Policy 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

St Oswald's is an inclusive school which focuses on the well-being and progress of every child. We have high expectations of all our children.

To ensure they achieve their potential we engage a range of strategies to issue challenge at an appropriate level, and provide support to overcome barriers to learning. Children with special educational needs are catered for within their own class and, where useful, may be withdrawn for short periods to work with a specialist adult, individually or in a small group.

Similarly, children who are identified as more able, demonstrating a particular aptitude in a curriculum area, will be given opportunities to extend their learning in class, and may work on challenges outside the classroom. All children have equal access to the curriculum both in and out of the classroom.

Visits are planned with a presumption of entitlement for all protected characteristic groups/pupils to participate, ensuring integration through participation with peers wherever possible. Accessibility should be ensured through direct or realistic adaptation or modification as required.

Our Inclusion Leader and SENDCO is Mrs E Hermiston. She leads the inclusion and support of children with additional needs or disabilities as a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

Transport

In order to ensure that the transport used for visits is suitable and conforms with legislative requirements the school will only use hired transport from a reputable and approved company. Seat belts must be provided on all seats and it is school policy that each child will wear a seatbelt whilst travelling on a school visit. Private cars will only be used in exceptional circumstances and seatbelts must be worn and the legal requirements relating to child restraints and booster seats must be complied with. Parents will be notified of these arrangements. Evidence of appropriate insurance cover for staff whilst carrying pupils whilst at work (business cover use on insurance certificate) is required.

Voluntary Help

Whilst we endeavour to ensure that visits are fully supported by staff we are aware that some visits could not go ahead without the goodwill of volunteer helpers. Volunteers will normally be people well known to the school as parents, governors or classroom volunteers/students.

All volunteers are required to follow the instructions of the Group Leader and the visit organiser will define their role and responsibilities in advance of the visit. Where possible volunteers should be DBS cleared.

Use of staff cars to transport pupils – *Trust guidance is that staff vehicles are only used if in an emergency situation, where no other options are available.*

Insurance

St Oswald's currently buys into an annual policy with RPA which provides personal insurance for all educational visits. Residential visits are categorised as "Category C" visits and are only undertaken with the approval advice of the Local Authority and require additional insurance cover prior to approval.

Appendix A - Extended Learning Locality Statement

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 Teacher 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 mobile phone is taken with each group and the office have a note of the number.

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 leaders.

ST OSWALD'S C OF E ACADEMY

EMERGENCY PROCEDURE TO SUPPORT ALL EDUCATIONAL VISIT GROUP LEADERS AND ASSISTANTS

The Group Leader is responsible in the event of an emergency and must ensure that all other staff know what action to take if there is a problem.

If an accident happens the priorities are to:

- Assess the situation
- Safeguard the uninjured members of the group
- Attend to the casualty
- Inform the emergency services
- Inform the Headteacher/school/parents/Zurich
- Record and review details of incident

Assess the situation:

Safeguard the situation

Deal with any immediate or potential danger to self and other group members Account for all members of the group (children & adults)

Arrange first aid:

Airways

Breathing

Circulation (bleeding)

Get help:

Call the emergency services as necessary.

Dial 999 for ambulance, police, fire brigade, mountain rescue, coastguard etc.

Inform school/parents/LA:

School: 01302 770330

Establish a contact point and a member of staff to liaise with the emergency services

Arrange for someone to travel to hospital/medical centre with any casualties

Make arrangements for non casualties to return to school / base

Record details of incident and actions taken.