



St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Banbury Educational Visits Policy

Rationale

St Joseph's School is committed to the provision of a broad and balanced curriculum for all children. Well-planned educational visits and outdoor learning help to provide pupils with valuable experiences to enrich and enhance their learning experiences, deepen knowledge and understanding, and increase skills and confidence. They can help children develop a good sense of communication, teamwork, organisation, independence and leadership, as well as learning and social skills. They also contribute to a child's spiritual and personal development, promoting improved understanding and awareness of the environment, other cultures, real world learning and enjoyment.

Introduction

St Joseph's School has adopted the OEAP National Guidance for the management of visits and Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) activities. In the event of any apparent conflict between the school policy and the OEAP guidance, the school policy must be followed, and advice sought from the EVC or Head Teacher. (National guidance <http://oeapng.info>)

- There must be adequate preparation for and follow up after the visit as part of the learning process.
- All visits should have an identifiable educational benefit, with clear objectives linked to the school's vision for outdoor off-site activities.
- All visits should be led by a competent visit leader and the appropriate number of supporting adults for that age range.
- All those involved in the organisation and running of educational visits will comply with national, local and school guidelines on the health and safety of participants on educational visits.
- The management of all visits will be based on the outcome of suitable and sufficient risk assessments, and group leaders will ensure that such risk assessments are carried out as part of the planning process.
- It is the responsibility of all staff to ensure that the risk to the health and safety of participants is minimised by a process of continuous vigilance and ongoing risk assessment.

Roles and Responsibilities

Academy Committee:

The Academy Committee approves the school's policy for educational visits and considers annually the place and contribution of visits/outdoor learning to the ethos of the school. Visits and outdoor learning are included in meeting agenda and are a standing item on the Head Teacher's report. The Academy Committee is also responsible for ensuring that the school's Emergency Plan relating to off-site visits is appropriate and kept up to date. (See national guidance <https://oeapng.info/governors/> and <https://oeapng.info/employer/>)

Head Teacher:

All off-site outdoor activities and visits comply with national and Oxfordshire guidance and are submitted for formal approval by the Head Teacher or by an EVC delegated by her. The Head teacher ensures that all staff involved are competent to carry out the responsibilities they are allocated. This includes the designation of a suitable member of staff as the EVC (Educational Visits Co-ordinator) who undertakes EVC training as recommended or required. (See national guidance <https://oeapng.info/head-manager/>)

Educational Visits Coordinator:

As well as supporting the Head teacher with the approval and planning of trips, the EVC is required to monitor and support staff with visit planning and ensure that essential information regarding first aid, medical and special needs and emergency contact is obtained. (See national guidance <https://oeapng.info/evc/>).

Visit Leader:

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. The key requirements for Visit Leaders are that they must be accountable, competent and confident to lead the visit/activity, not that they hold a particular post, title or job description. (See national guidance <https://oeapng.info/visit-leader/>)

Procedural Requirements for visits

- Consult EVC/Head with regard to planning and risk assessment of the visit. A visit approval form should be completed and submitted to EVC.
- Check date with EVC so that it can be put into the school diary. Authorisation should usually be received no less than six weeks in advance of the proposed trip. The lead period for more complex activities will be longer.
- Visit Leader or another delegated member of staff obtains quotations for transport, entrance fees and other incidentals.
- A Risk-Benefit Assessment is carried out as part of the planning process for the trip and is passed to the EVC or Head teacher for approval. Visit leaders must make an emergency action plan for each risk-benefit assessment.
- The Visit Leader writes a letter for parents, making sure educational aims of the visit are clearly stated and including the final cost per child. The letter makes clear that the trip will not go ahead if insufficient financial contributions are made.
- The letter is shown to the EVC for approval.

- Once approved, the letter is returned to the Visit Leader for distribution. A copy of the letter is also emailed to web.3825@st-josephs-banbury.oxon.sch.uk so that it can be uploaded to the class page of the school website.
- Payment and parental consent are collected using the school's 'Parent Pay' system.
- **Two weeks** before the date of the trip, a decision is made whether there have been sufficient financial contributions towards the trip. If not then the trip is cancelled and parents informed.
- The school cook must be informed two weeks before the date of a trip if a large group of children will be out of school at lunchtime and there will therefore be a reduced requirement for cooked lunches.
- If the visit will require children to have a late lunch on their return, or packed lunches will be required for children entitled to free school meals, the school cook must be informed five working days in advance of the trip.
- Staff who are required to go on the trip are informed *at least* a week in advance so that they can organise to swap cover for playtime/lunchtime etc.
- The visit leader takes details of the emergency contact details for all participants on the trip, children and adults. This should be requested from the office no less than three days before the visit.
- The visit leader ensures that a clear itinerary is left with the school office, or the Emergency Contact Person. (See Educational Visits Emergency policy statement).

Monitoring of visits

Visits are monitored by the EVC through checking of planning. An evaluation form is completed after the visit and is passed to the EVC so that it can inform future similar visits. Where problems have occurred, correct procedures are followed and steps are taken to ensure that they are not repeated on subsequent visits.

Records of visits are kept for 3 years, or for 7 years where a medical incident or injury has occurred.

Induction and training

The EVC is required to re-validate his or her training every 3 years and all members of staff are offered visit leader training. New staff are supported in planning visits in accordance with school and national procedures and are supported with visit planning by the EVC.

Risk management and risk-benefit assessment

For activities which occur regularly, such as walks in the local area, visits to the church, or short coach rides to the swimming pool, for example, generic risk-benefit forms are already completed and are stored for ease of access in a folder in the staff room. They are also available on the T-drive. Staff should read through them when the visit is planned and append any necessary information pertaining to specific children or variations such as weather conditions etc.

For one-off visits an individual risk-benefit assessment form is completed as part of the planning process in conjunction with the school's visit approval form. All visit leaders should

complete a visit approval form as part of their planning process and submit this to the EVC for approval. The risk-benefit assessment form must be completed at least five working days before the visit, and preferably at the time of the initial planning.

Assessing venues and providers

All venues should be investigated before a visit. Where possible this should include visiting the venue in advance so that risk-benefit assessment is well-informed. Where an advance visit is not possible visit leaders should make every effort to check out the suitability of the venue and planned activities through the company's website and through direct liaison with the venue or activity provider. Whilst it is not necessary for visit leaders to obtain a copy of the venue or activity provider's risk assessment, they should ask for any information that is specifically aimed at helping visit leaders to manage their visit. Visit leaders should also take advantage of national schemes that monitor the suitability of activity providers e.g. LOTC Quality badge, AALA Licence, Adventuremark etc. (See National Guidance <https://oeapng.info/downloads/specialist-activities-and-visits/>)

Volunteers

Volunteers should:

- have an enhanced DBS check if they are to be left in charge of a group;
- be fully briefed in advance of a visit and should be given all necessary information regarding itineraries and risk-benefit assessment;
- be suitably competent and confident to be able to carry out the duties they are assigned;
- be confident in their understanding of the role and responsibilities that they have been assigned and how these integrate with other staff;
- be included in the evaluative aspects of the visit;
- be appropriately briefed, as necessary for their role, on relevant establishment and visit procedures, group characteristics, including age, health, capabilities, special educational needs, behaviour and any other relevant matters in the context of the visit and with an understanding of the need for confidentiality.

Where the Helper is a Parent (or otherwise in a close relationship with a young person taking part in the visit) they should be made aware of the potential for their relationship to compromise group management, particularly if there is a serious incident. This is because, in such a situation, the helper may naturally be distracted by the needs of their own child, rather than looking to the needs of the whole group. The Visit Leader should directly address this issue as part of the risk-benefit assessment and should not usually assign a volunteer to a leadership role which gives them a direct responsibility for their own child, other than where this is a risk-managed part of the Visit plan.

Emergency procedures and incident reporting

The visit leader carries the school mobile phone on the trip. In case of an emergency on a visit the visit leader implements their emergency action plan. This involves securing the immediate safety of staff and children before calling the emergency services, if necessary, and then informing the school of the situation. The school then informs parents and carers

as well as taking over responsibility for managing the situation where possible. The visit leader and staff on the visit do not contact parents directly, and it must be made clear to parent volunteers that they must not contact other parents with regards to any incident.

On visits which occur in part or wholly outside school hours, an emergency contact will have been nominated to provide 24 hour emergency contact. The emergency contact has 24 hour access to all details of the visit, including next-of-kin information regarding staff and young people.

In the case of injury or incident the school's incident reporting procedures are followed. (See National Guidance <https://oeapng.info/downloads/good-practice/>)

Behaviour

Both staff and children are expected to follow the school behaviour policy when on educational visits. Clear guidelines for appropriate behaviour should be given in advance of the visit to ensure the safety of all involved and to reduce the opportunity for misunderstanding of expectations and the sanctions that may be involved where the policy is not followed. Any venue rules (e.g. no mobile phones on residential visits) should be made clear in advance of the visit.

For pupils who have challenging behaviours, a risk assessment will be completed and all possible measures put in place to ensure that the child is included in the trip. In rare circumstances, a pupil may be excluded from an off-site visit. This will be where a pupil's behaviour poses too great a risk to him or herself, or to other pupils or adults. This assessment will be undertaken in consultation with parents/carers.

Staff on overnight or longer residential visits may not consume alcohol and must follow the school policy on the use of mobile phones.

Inclusion

St Joseph's is an inclusive school and we believe in the right of all children to take part in educational visits. We will take all possible steps to ensure that young people are able to participate fully in educational visits, regardless of circumstances that make it difficult for them to do so. Where there are special circumstances visit leaders must be supported by the head, SENCO or EVC, so that requests made of staff are both reasonable and within their competence. Very occasionally it may be necessary to refuse permission for a child to attend a specific visit, particularly an overnight stay, if the Head and EVC consider that the child's attendance may present a danger to other children or adults.

In planning a visit the needs of all the children in the group should be considered. The Risk/Benefit form is completed at the start of the planning process, and if it becomes clear that there is a child/children for whom the trip may pose problems, another venue should be sought, or assistance requested in terms of staffing, for example, so that the trip may go ahead with the whole group involved.

Insurance

All visits are covered through the school's insurance policy.

Finance

St Joseph's School may not charge for education provided during school hours or for transport provided in connection with an educational visit. It is permissible to charge for board and lodging provided as part of a residential visit except for parents who are in receipt of certain benefits (see national guidance <https://oeapng.info/visit-leader/> (Category 3.2c *Charging for School Activities*.)

Restrictions on charging do not, however, prohibit the school from asking for voluntary contributions. Parents are provided with written information explaining the benefits of the visit and the financial cost of the visit per student. No student will be excluded if they are unable to contribute, however it must be made clear to parents in writing that the visit may be cancelled if sufficient contributions are not received.

Headteacher: Clare Smith

Chair of Governors: Angela Briggs

Reviewed: April 2020

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