

Educational trips and visits

Olive AP Academy – Thurrock (OA-Th)

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| Document control table | |
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| <p>This a central template which must be updated to include local information and context.</p> <p>Please return the updated policy to jenny.wingate@oliveacademies.org.uk</p> | |

Key contacts in OA-Th

Educational Visit Coordinator: Chris Reilly and David McCartney

Authoriser for trips: Collette Hunnisett, Executive Headteacher

1. Introduction

Olive Academies (OA) has a strong commitment to the added value of learning beyond the statutory academy day and beyond academy premises.

The OA multi-academy trust (MAT) board has given its approval to the following types of activities being arranged in support of the educational aims of the trust and the specific context of alternative provision:

- educational provision with alternative providers
- out of hours clubs (music, drama, art, science, sport, homework etc.)
- academy sports teams
- regular educational visits (libraries, shops, parks, place of worship)
- day visits for particular groups of pupils
- adventure activities and outdoor pursuits (which might be classed as higher risk)
- charity support visits.

2. Roles and responsibilities

The Board of Trustees have delegated the approval of the policy and procedures for agreeing educational visits to the Director of Academies. Approval of educational visits and other off-site activities has been delegated to the headteacher.

The headteacher must:

- ensure that the management of visits follows the policy and procedures outlined, and review their effectiveness on a regular basis
- ensure that the Director of Academies is kept appropriately informed and accreditation or verification of providers has been checked
- ensure that arrangements are in place for the educational objectives of the visit to be inclusive and that issues identified in exploratory visits have been satisfactorily resolved within the risk assessment

All offsite activities and educational visits will need the approval of the headteacher. Before parents are informed of a visit the headteacher must approve the initial plan. The headteacher will approve the completed plan and sign-off risk assessments via Evolve, OA's online educational visit management system for the visit at a later date.

The educational visits coordinator must:

- be involved in educational visit management in order to ensure OA procedures are followed and to confirm that adequate risk assessments have been carried out
- oversee the trip logging system, Evolve
- be able to confirm that the leadership of the visit is appropriate and to check staff qualifications – to include accompanying staff and volunteers
- provide information on the training of leaders and volunteers, and to provide support to staff and volunteers new to any visit

- ensure DBS clearance is in place for accompanying staff and volunteers as appropriate
- ensure liaison with parents and obtaining consent procedures are in place as needed
- ensure the receiving venue has robust emergency procedures in place and knows how to liaise with the academy should an emergency occur
- ensure that the academy and receiving venue complete reports on incidents and near misses
- ensure suitable record keeping practice for students off-site
- learn from previous experience, recording successful practice and contacts, so that they can be used in the future, in particular where staff personally change
- ensure that any risk assessments prepared for the trip are dated as having been evaluated and/or modified following the visit.
- monitor and review what is going on, establishing a clear picture of current practice. Be able to both report on successes and set targets for improvement. Be ready to intervene where practice is incorrect or unsatisfactory
- ensure any use of pupil information (e.g. photos) complies with data protection and online safety policies

Group leaders

Group leaders should be selected by the headteacher and be given overall responsibility for the preparation, supervision and conduct of the visit. They should be of sufficient seniority to direct other accompanying staff.

The group leader must ensure that:

- the academy policies and guidelines are followed
- ensure details of the trip are logged on Evolve, the academy's trip management system
- all required paperwork is submitted to the headteacher for approval before the visit goes ahead
- all accompanying staff are thoroughly briefed and clear about their specific duties and responsibilities
- they are suitably competent to instruct/supervise students in any planned activity
- they are familiar with the visit location / centre
- they understand child protection and safeguarding issues
- they allow sufficient time to undertake the planning and organisation of the trip
- they undertake and complete a comprehensive risk assessment
- they adequately brief colleagues, parents and students
- they are aware of the requirements of the minibuss policy, should a minibuss be used
- they obtain sufficient information about the students to assess their suitability for the visit and the planned activities
- that they ensure all accompanying staff are briefed on students' medical and special educational needs
- they organise suitable and sufficient supervision proportionate to the numbers, ages and abilities of the group and the planned activities

- they have sufficient competence and confidence to assess risks as they change throughout the visit and to make a decision to stop activities if the risk becomes unacceptable
- they have adequate emergency procedures in place that are known to all relevant parties.

Accompanying staff and volunteers

Accompanying adults, whether staff or volunteers, must:

- follow the instructions of the group leader at all times;
- help to maintain control and discipline amongst the group;
- be prepared to stop any activity if they feel the risk to health and safety unacceptable;
- not be left in sole charge of students except where it has been previously agreed as part of the risk assessment;
- inform the group leader if concerned about the health and safety of students during the visit
- be familiar with the risk assessment prior to departure

3. Outline procedure for planning visits

An exploratory visit must be made to the planned venue. If this is not practicable alternative arrangements will be made to gain as much knowledge of the site as possible by liaising with officials at the site or seeking advice from colleagues who have made previous visits. Site officials will be asked for copies of specific site risk assessments.

Where external contractors are involved in organising all or part of the visit the contract will be made with the academy on behalf of the pupils. All payments for the visit will be made through the academy accounts.

Parents will be asked to sign a general consent form when their child enters the academy. This covers participation in: alternative educational sessions off site; out of hour's clubs; academy teams and nearby visits; residential visits; and adventure activities. If an activity is to be outside the academy day, parents will be told in advance of each activity and given the opportunity to withdraw their child from a particular activity or trip. They will also be given the timetable for the activities that pupils are involved in and will be informed if an activity has to be cancelled.

Parents will be fully informed of the activities and arrangements for each visit and for all residential visits they will be invited to a briefing meeting where they can ask for clarification of any aspect of the itinerary and organisation of the visit.

The academy has separate policies for minibus use, charging and remissions, online safety and data protection and equalities which apply to all educational visits.

Staffing

The academy recognises the key role of accompanying staff in ensuring the highest standards of learning, challenge and safety on an academy visit.

Activity leaders must familiarise themselves with this policy.

Teachers and other staff are encouraged and supported to develop their abilities in organising and managing pupils' learning in a variety of environments through induction and training. The selection of staff for educational visits will be a key factor in the initial approval of any proposed visit.

Where it is appropriate the academy will ensure that DBS screening is available for volunteer adults assisting with educational activities and visits.

The academy does not support additional people accompanying educational visits such as family members if the Senior Leadership Team is not satisfied that there is an educational benefit for the students.

The appointed group 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 other staff, accessing training courses and evaluating the visit or identifying time when the leader might work in partnership to undertake planning and risk assessments. OA uses the Evolve online system for planning educational visits, and all relevant staff are trained in the use of this.

Supervision

Staffing ratios will vary according to the activity, age, group, location and resources. Ratios should not be finalised until the risk assessment is complete. Group leaders will also need to consider the needs of students with SEN and/or physical disabilities. Known behaviours, learning and physical needs should also be taken into account.

Pupil to staff ratios for school trips are not prescribed in law. Those planning trips, on the basis of risk assessment, should decide the ratios, taking into account the activity to be undertaken and the age and maturity of the pupils

Residential visits and adventure activities require higher levels of supervision and all accompanying staff and volunteers must be DBS checked.

At least half of the adults accompanying an educational visit should be staff based at the academy (teachers or other members of staff). Organisers are encouraged to use other adults to meet (or exceed) the minimum staffing requirements.

Any volunteer helpers should be properly briefed on their responsibilities and especially on safety procedures and must be DBS checked if volunteering regularly or on a residential visit.

4. Risk Assessment

Common sense and a proportionate approach should be taken to risk assessment with the focus being on significant risks. Generic assessments can be produced for lower risk, common activities (e.g. visit to a local venue) but the group leader must review and adapt these as necessary before undertaking the planned visit. For higher risk activities a full risk assessment must be undertaken

prior to the visit. OA uses the Evolve online system for planning and risk assessing visits, and staff are trained to use this. The headteacher will approve all documents including the risk assessment via Evolve.

The risk assessment should address the following questions.

- What are the hazards?
- Who might be affected by them?
- What safety measures need to be in place to reduce risks to an acceptable level?
- Can the group leader put the safety measures in place?
- What steps will be taken in an emergency?

Risk assessment forms for use in educational visits are available via the Evolve system. Guidelines for consideration are provided below:

The following are the 10 key points to consider when preparing a risk assessment.

1. What are the main objectives of the visit?
2. What is "Plan B" if the main objectives can't be achieved?
3. What could go wrong? Does the risk assessment cover:
 - The main activity
 - "Plan B"
 - Travel arrangements
 - Emergency procedures
 - Staff numbers, gender and skill mixes
 - Generic and site-specific hazards and risks (including for Plan B)
 - Variable hazards (including environmental and participants' personal abilities and the 'cut off' points).
4. What information will be provided for parents?
5. What consents will be sought?
6. What opportunities will parents have to ask questions (including any arrangements for a parents' meeting)?
7. What assurances are there of the leader(s)' competencies?
8. What are the communication arrangements?
9. What are the arrangements for supervision, both during activities and 'free time' – is there a Code of Conduct?
10. What are the arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the visit?

Risk assessment is not a one-off exercise. The group leader and other supervisors should monitor the risks throughout the visit and take appropriate action as necessary.

All risk assessments must follow the same proforma as specific by the Educational Visits Coordinator to ensure consistency across the academy.

5. Transport

When hiring buses and coaches it is essential that the company is reputable and licensed. The vehicle should be provided with seatbelts on all seats and with all seats forward facing, as the law requires for academy trips.

Staff or parents' cars are not used for transportation of students.

If public transport is used it is advisable to make party bookings in advance and ensure that the risk assessment adequately covers all potential hazards.

First Aid and medical needs

It is compulsory that one member of the accompanying staff is first aid trained and is also able to provide any necessary support for students with medical needs. Procedures outlined in the Medical Needs policy should be followed. The specific guidance about educational trips is repeated below:

'we actively support pupils with medical conditions to participate in trips and visits, or in sporting activities but are mindful of how a child's medical condition will impact on their participation. Arrangements will always be made to ensure pupils with medical needs are included in such activities unless evidence from a clinician such as a GP or consultant states that this is not possible.

A risk assessment will be completed at the planning stage to take account of any steps needed to ensure that pupils with medical conditions are included. This will require consultation with parents and pupils and advice from the school nurse or other healthcare professional that are responsible for ensuring that pupils can participate. A copy of the child's health care plan should be taken with the child on an educational visit.

The class teacher must also ensure that medication such as inhalers and epi-pens are taken on all trips and given to the responsible adult that works alongside the child throughout the day. A first aid kit must be taken on all trips. The trip leader must ensure that all adults have the telephone number of the academy in case of an emergency.

A fully trained first aider should attend all academy trips especially when a pupil with a specific medical need is going. The first aider provisions at the destination of the trip should be included as part of the risk assessment. The party leader must ensure that all necessary medicines are taken on the trip. This will mean checking the medical requirements of the class and ensuring that any pupil with a specific medical condition has access to prescribed medicine whilst on the trip. First Aid trained staff administering medication to children on trips should follow the guidelines above.'

6. Emergency procedures

The academy will appoint a member of the SLT as the emergency contact for each visit. All major incidents should immediately be relayed to the academy office. The office will relay the problem to the headteacher or other member of the SLT, especially if the incident involves injury to a pupil or an incident that might attract media attention.

The group leader will leave full details (in paper form) of all students and accompanying adults on the visit with the emergency contact, including the home contact details of parents/guardians and next-of-kin, as appropriate.

The group leader will take a mobile phone designated for offsite use, which should be used in an emergency – this will have relevant contact details for managers, base location and intended end of journey location.

All incidents and accidents occurring on a visit will be reported back through the academy reporting systems.

The academy will have funding available to support the group leader in an emergency.

Despite good planning and organisation there may be accidents and emergencies that will require on the spot response by the group leaders. Adequate provision for minor first aid must be available when the party is 'in the field' and the leader should ensure that the levels of supervision are sufficient to allow the group to be split where necessary. An academy mobile phone should be available for use in cases of emergencies.

Activity centres should have their own emergency procedures. Details of these must be obtained in advance of the visit and compared with the recommended framework below. If there is any doubt about the safety of the arrangements the trip should not take place

Recommended emergency procedures:

- establish the nature and extent of the emergency;
- make sure all other members of the party are accounted for and safe;
- if there are injuries immediately establish their extent, so far as possible, and administer appropriate first aid;
- establish the names of the injured and call whichever emergency services are required
- advise other party staff of the incident and that the emergency procedures are in operation;
- ensure that an adult from the party accompanies the injured child/children to hospital;
- ensure that the remainder of the party are adequately supervised throughout and arrange for their early return to academy;
- arrange for one adult to remain at the incident site to liaise with emergency services until the incident is over and all students and staff are accounted for;
- control access to phones until contact is made with the headteacher emergency contact point or designated senior member of staff and he or she has had time to contact those directly involved;
- give full details of the incident to the headteacher or designated contact
 - name
 - nature, date and time of incident
 - location of incident
 - details of injuries
 - names and telephone numbers of those involved
 - action taken so far
 - telephone number for further contact details

Serious incidents

For serious incidents where the media may be involved, staff should refer to OA's emergency plan and crisis communications plan, both available in the academy office. It is not for the group leader or other party members to discuss matters with the media, procedures for this are provided within the crisis communications plan. Under no circumstances should the name of any casualty be divulged to the media.

The headteacher or designated senior staff member should alert the Director of Academies at OA central giving details as above. The Trust may identify further actions or help required (which might include financial assistance). Alternative and additional phone lines may need to be identified at an early stage.

The headteacher or designated senior staff member should arrange to contact parents/carers of those involved. For a serious incident the headteacher or designated senior staff member should contact parents of all party members. It is also his/her responsibility to act as a link between the group involved, the chair of the AAB, the trust and parents.

If it is necessary to talk to the media, OA central will do this initially. A member of staff will be designated as the point of contact for the media and all involved should direct questions and requests to this person. This person will liaise with the emergency services, possibly on site.

The group leader should write down, as soon as practicable, all relevant details while they are still fresh in the memory. Other staff members might also be asked to do so. A record should be kept of the names and addresses of any witnesses. Any associated equipment should be kept in its original condition.

Legal liability should not be discussed or admitted.

All accident forms should be completed as soon as possible and insurers, the Health and Safety Executive and the Trust should be informed as appropriate.

7. Monitoring and evaluation of this policy

Headteachers will report to the Director of Academies incidents on educational visits on a regular basis – learning from these will be shared across the Trust. OA central will review this policy by evaluating the effectiveness of arrangements for off-site activities and educational trips and the outcomes for students on an annual basis.