



Ad Gloriam Dei et Servitium Omnium

EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY

The Palmer Catholic Academy

MISSION STATEMENT



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The Academy's Mission promotes the academic and personal development of each member of its community, both students and staff alike.

We serve Christ in each other to the Glory of God and Service of all.



Adoption by Governing Body of The Palmer Catholic Academy:

Date of Implementation: November 2021

Signature of Chair of Governors: *Mrs Leslie-Povoas*

Signature of Headteacher: *Mr Downey*

Review Date: When required

Educational Visits Policy

The academy acknowledges the great value of Educational Visits in broadening and enhancing both the learning and social experience of students.

Under statutory guidance which came into effect on 1st March 2004, all schools are required to have a named Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC), who will ensure that the planning and supervision of all visits and adventurous activities meet the DfE requirements and Local Authority guidelines.

(<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/adventure.aspx>)

The academy's EVC is Mr Rupert Slack, Assistant Headteacher.

ROLE OF THE EVC

The role of the EVC is as follows:

- The EVC will be appointed by, and will act on behalf of the Headteacher.
- The EVC should have practical experience in leading and managing a range of Educational Visits similar to those typically run by the academy.
- The EVC will be the principal contact with the LA over planned visits by the academy.
- The EVC will be involved in the planning and management of Educational Visits including adventure activities run by the academy.
- The EVC should ensure that an appropriate academy policy is in place for Educational Visits and that this is updated as necessary.
- The EVC will be required to attend training and up-date training where appropriate.
- The EVC should ensure that DfE guidance; LA guidance, school policy and/or any other relevant documentation are readily available for access by staff.
- The EVC is required to keep appropriate records of Educational Visits.
- The EVC should seek advice from the LA, or any other personnel, where necessary.

FUNCTIONS OF THE EVC

The EVC will carry out the following functions:

- Liaise with the Local Authority to ensure educational visits meet their requirements including those of risk assessment.
- Support the Headteacher and Governors with approval and other decisions.
- Assign competent people to lead or otherwise supervise a visit.
- Organise the training of leaders and other adults going on a visit.
- Assess the competence of leaders and other adults taking part on a specific visit.
- This will commonly involve training such as first aid, hazard awareness, etc.
- Organise thorough induction of leaders and other adults taking part on a specific visit
- Make sure CRB disclosures are in place as necessary.
- Organise the emergency arrangements and ensure there is an emergency contact for each visit.
- Keep records of individual visits including reports of accidents and 'near accidents'
- Review systems and, on occasion, monitor practice.

APPROVAL FOR VISITS

All matters regarding each visit outside the academy – feasibility, planning, safety, organisation etc. – will require the prior approval of the EVC and final approval from the Headteacher. Approval of

'normal' day visits is at the discretion of the EVC and the Headteacher. However; visits that are overseas, residential or involving an adventurous activity have to be agreed with the Governors.

COMPETENCE TO LEAD

Any member of staff leading a visit will need to have their 'competence to lead' assessed before approval for the visit is given. For the majority of visits this will be assessed by the EVC. In assessing competence to lead, the EVC should therefore consider the following when assessing the competence of a member of staff to lead a visit:

- a) *What are the leader's reasons for undertaking the visit?*
- b) *Is the leader an employee of the academy?*
- c) *Has the leader a real sense of responsibility, extending beyond the teaching of the subject to concern for the students' wellbeing?*
- d) *Does the leader possess the necessary organising ability?*
- e) *Is the leader competent in risk assessment and risk management?*
- f) *What experience has the leader of the students he/she intends to lead?*
- g) *What experience has the leader in leading, or assisting in the leading of similar visits or activities?*
- h) *What experience has the leader of the environment and geographical area chosen?*
- i) *Does the leader possess appropriate qualifications?*
- j) *If appropriate, what is the leader's personal level of skill in the activity, and fitness level?*
- k) *If leading adventurous activities has the leader been 'approved' by the CSA?*
- l) *Is the leader aware of, and able to comply with all relevant guidelines?*

REASONS FOR VISITS

It is essential that all visits have sound and clearly stated educational aims. Visits without a clear educational purpose will not receive approval.

ASSESSMENT OF RISK

'Risk assessment' is a careful examination of what could cause harm to students, staff or others, together with an identification of the control measures necessary in order to reduce risks to a level which, in the professional judgement of the assessor, is deemed to be acceptable (i.e. low).

In considering risk, there are 3 levels of which visit leaders should be mindful:

Generic Risks – normal risks attached to any activity out of school. These will be covered by careful completion of the 'Educational Visits Checklist'.

Event Specific Risk – any significant hazard or risk relating to the specific activity and outside the scope of item 1 above. These should be recorded on the EVENT SPECIFIC NOTES Form.

Ongoing Risk – the monitoring of risks throughout the actual visit as circumstances change.

PLAN B

Despite the most detailed and sedulous pre-visit planning, things can go wrong on the day, e.g. parent/carer helper is unavailable, member of staff is ill, transport fails to arrive, museum have lost booking, etc. To avoid having to make important decisions under pressure, it is important that some advanced thinking is done to cater for any foreseeable eventuality. This takes the form of **Plan B**.

STAFFING RATIOS

A professional judgement must be made by the Visit Leader, EVC and Headteacher as to the appropriate ratio for each visit (a ratio of 1 to 10 is used at TPCA for years 7 to 11 where public transport is involved). This will be determined by:

- type, duration and level of activity
- needs of individuals within the group (SEND)
- experience and competence of staff and accompanying adults
- nature of the venue
- weather conditions at the time of year
- nature of transport involved

SUPERVISION

Students must be supervised throughout all visits. However, there are circumstances when they might be unaccompanied by an adult (remote supervision). The decision to allow remote supervision should be based on risk assessment and must take into account factors such as:

- prior experience of students
- age of students
- responsibility of students
- competence/experience of staff
- environment/venue

ROLE OF SUPERVISING PARENTS/CARERS (NOT CURRENTLY USED AT TPCA)

Supervising parents/carers must be fully briefed on the programme, venue, activities, supervision arrangements and their responsibilities. They must also be given a written list of the students in their immediate care, and be shown the completed EVENT SPECIFIC NOTES Form.

FIRST AID

The level of first aid provision should be based on risk assessment. On all visits there should be a member of staff who has a basic knowledge of first aid. First aid kits are available from the academy office. If the visit involves the party splitting up by any distance, a kit should be taken for each group.

TRANSPORT

Travel arrangements should be included in the risk assessment. If public transport is to be used, all students and supervisors must be fully briefed as to procedures on platforms, at bus stops, on busy streets etc.

If travel is by coach or minibus, all students must wear a seat belt. Staff must ensure that students comply with this rule; students may also be asked to check the seat belt of their neighbour. If a

minibus is being borrowed or hired, the driver must have passed the London Borough of Redbridge mini bus test.

If any students are to travel by car, the driver must complete a **PRIVATE CAR Form (check)**. This is also relevant to sports fixtures, and applies to both staff and parents/carers' cars. A new form must be completed every academic year.

WATER 'MARGIN' ACTIVITIES

Where students might participate in learning activities near or in water, such as a walk along a riverbank or seashore, collecting samples in ponds or streams, or paddling or walking in gentle, shallow water, then the guidance contained in DfE's 'Group Safety at Water Margins' is relevant. All staff, including parents/carers, should be provided with a copy of this guidance prior to the visit. A hard copy of this is available in the academy from the EVC.

SEEKING PARENTAL CONSENT

Parents/carers should be made fully aware of any likely risks of the visit and their management, so they may consent or refuse on a fully informed basis (known as 'Acknowledgement of Risk').

The letter to parents/carers should therefore give full details of the visit, the reason for the visit (educational aims), supervision arrangements and the transport arrangements. Ensure that details of other incidental activities is included, together with Plan B if appropriate. The letter should also state the cost of the visit per child.

The reply slip should read:-

"I give permission for my child _____ to take part in _____

I have read and understand the information about the visit. I have paid my voluntary contribution/deposit via ParentPay."

In the case of sports fixtures, the reply slip should read:-

"My child _____ is able to play in the _____ match (at) on

I have read and understand the information in the letter, and give permission for my child to take part."

FINANCE ARRANGEMENTS

The Visit Leader should ensure that:

- each visit is accurately costed and budgeted for;
- adequate allowances are made for additional unforeseen costs and changes in circumstances;
- financial plans – especially for more complex and committing visits – are checked over and agreed first by the Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher/EVC before financial commitments are made; for visits that involve substantial commitment financially (e.g. overseas expeditions), no firm bookings or financial commitments are made until the visit has been agreed
- the costs of the visit are made clear to all concerned (including parents/carers), including how much will come from academy funds, and how much each parent/carer will be charged or asked to contribute

The Visit Leader must forward ParentPay cost details to the Finance Manager (Mrs Bovington). These should include:

- title of the proposed visit
- brief resume of the proposed visit
- which students the visit is open to (e.g. Year group)
- total cost
- deposit and instalment information (where necessary)

GAINING AUTHORISATION BEFORE THE VISIT

Preliminary Approval

The Visit Leader must fill in the academy's yellow diary additions form at least 6 weeks in advance to gain preliminary approval. This form should be given to the academy EVC.

Final Authorisation

If the visit gains preliminary approval to go ahead, the Visit Leader must complete the Educational Visit form – Blue form (day or part day) – Green form (overnight or abroad). The Visit Leader must:

1. Produce an initial letter to parents/carers
2. The completed finance section (if items of expenditure are involved)
3. The completed Risk Assessment EV5 (ERSA - Event Specific Risk Assessment) (if any risks are not covered by the Educational Visit Checklist)

and

4. Have a copy of the completed, dated and signed Form EV4 (Provider Form) (if an external provider is organising the trip and/or any of the activities).

The academy EVC and Headteacher will then give final approval or request additional details.

Without final authorisation the visit may not take place.

AFTER FINAL AUTHORISATION

Once the visit gains final authorisation, the Visit Leader should:

- Book Visit
- Book Transport
- Send letters home (all EVC letters must be sent to the Headteacher for approval before being sent home)
- Inform relevant teaching staff of participating students in advance of the day of the visit

If the visit is overseas and/or residential and/or adventurous then the EVC must:

- Prepare the EMERGENCY CARD (VISIT LEADER) Form in advance for the Visit Leader
- Prepare the EMERGENCY CARD (HOME CONTACTS) Form in advance for the Academy Contacts (Headteacher, Chair of Governors, EVC, Deputy Headteacher)

The EMERGENCY CARD Forms describe procedures that Visit Leaders and academy contacts should engage in the event of a significant and serious incident that may or may not involve serious injury. The forms describe how to mobilise the Local Authority Emergency Response Team.

ON THE DAY OF THE VISIT

The Visit Leader must:-

- Collect first aid kit(s)
- Ensure students with medical needs have their medication
- Brief supervising staff and/or parents/carers
- Give supervising staff and/or parents/carers their lists of students
- Ensure that a minimum of one mobile phone is working, and that the academy office (or EVC if out-of-hours) has the number(s)
- Count students

During the course of the visit, students should be counted regularly as appropriate, and always when changing locations. Always 'double-count'. The mobile phone(s) should be switched on during the entire journey. The Visit Leader should contact (text) the previously agreed academy contact.

OUT OF HOURS RETURN

Headteacher, EVC, Deputy Headteacher confirm that all students have been dismissed/collected as per parental permissions.

AFTER THE VISIT

It is important that after each visit a proper debrief takes place. This should take place within a week of the visit date and should involve the Visit Leader, accompanying staff and, if appropriate, the supervising parents/carers. The purpose of a debrief is to identify what went well and what could have been done better, in order to inform future planning. The Visit Evaluation Form on EVOLVE should be used for this purpose.

MONITORING

To assure quality of standards on educational visits:

The Headteacher and/or the Deputy Headteacher and/or the EVC, will accompany at least one visit per year to monitor real practice and to assist with the review of policies and procedures.