



Oakgrove School

Trips and Visits policy

OAKGROVE SCHOOL TRIPS AND VISITS POLICY
ADOPTION AND AMENDMENTS TO TRIPS AND VISITS POLICY

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OAKGROVE SCHOOL TRIPS AND VISITS POLICY

INTRODUCTION

Oakgrove School recognises that school trips and visits represent a valuable element in the education of students, whether the trip or visit is during term time or in the school holidays, whether it is during, or outside of school hours. Where a school trip or visit takes place in school time, the benefits have to be weighed against the loss of time spent in lessons by the students involved against, the loss of teaching for groups left in school. A visit or trip should only take place in school time where its clear purpose is to enhance and support the normal school curriculum.

This policy is intended to support, and not constrain, the proper organisation and safe conduct of school trips and visits. Further information and advice should be sought from the EVC or Plumsun (the school's service provider for trips and visits), especially when special or hazardous activities are involved.

1. RATIONALE

It is recognised that a period of well planned, activity based residential (or non-residential) experience can have a major effect on a student's motivation, self-confidence, ability to develop personal skills, self-knowledge and awareness of others within the learning situation. To ensure the effectiveness of this activity, careful planning, preparation and management, and competent staffing are essential.

Any residential or international programme must provide a careful structured course of activities and experiences which provide a proper learning progression through the programme. Oakgrove School aims

To ensure the rationale is adhered to, Oakgrove School has a comprehensive trips and visits proposal and approval procedure in place. This is overseen by the Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) in school and has been produced in line with Plumsun's Service Agreement Policy which incorporates the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and associated acts and regulations as well as the requirements of the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 2004 and AALS (the policy can be found on the Plumsun Portal www.plumsun.com).

2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Every effort should be made to ensure that outdoor learning activities are available and accessible to all students and pupils, irrespective of ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, additional educational or medical needs.

Trips or visits should enable students to:

- Further develop skills in new and different environments;
- Try new roles;
- Experience being away from home;
- Discover new interests and activities;
- Identify skills, attitudes and capabilities that were not previously known to exist;
- Meet new people, new customs and new habits;
- Participate intensively as a group;
- Plan, prepare and organise elements of the programme;
- Experience the problems and highlights of group membership and group leadership;
- Take part in a series of challenging activities (mental, physical and creative);
- Take part in a variety of outdoor pursuits, creative activities, etc. which are designed to help the development of communication and relationship skills as well as activities;
- Have clearer understanding of themselves, their feelings/attitudes towards others and their personal strengths and weaknesses;
- Develop a clearer understanding of different cultures in the worlds around them both at home and abroad.

OAKGROVE SCHOOL TRIPS AND VISITS POLICY

3. RESPONSIBILITIES

- The responsibility for trips and visits does not rest entirely with those participating, but is shared by others as well: The **Leader** of the trip or visit must take all reasonable steps to ensure that it is planned thoroughly, with due attention to safety, and in accordance with the guidance. The Leader should carry out a risk assessment (based upon risk assessments provided by Plumsun) which will include individual risk assessing for students on Health Care Plans at an early stage. The Leader is also responsible for ensuring that the finances of the visit are carefully thought out and that necessary contributions from participants have been paid to the Finance Department.
- The **Headteacher**, whether accompanying the students or not, has a responsibility that there is appropriate and proper planning (approval is confirmed via a signature on the trip risk assessment paperwork).
- The **Educational Visits Co-ordinator** (a senior member of staff) oversees a thorough planning and checking process in accordance to the guidelines in this policy and the Plumsun Service Level Agreement. The procedures cover every aspect of the trip from proposal, to approval, during the trip and for a safe return.
- The **Local Governing Body**, has the responsibility for health and safety, including off-site visits. As such, they must seek to ensure that every trip or visit has:
 - Whole school insurance is covered by RPA (Risk Protection Arrangement for Schools). Any additional policies can be submitted by organising companies or parents/carers;
 - The visit has been organised and planned in accordance with this policy.
 - **Plumsun**, our service provider is available on call to the EVC for advice regarding any planning issue risk assessment and their updates, or in the event of an on-trip issue. All activities with a hazardous element and/or an overnight stay and/or taking place outside the UK, will be checked thoroughly by Plumsun and approved.
 - The **Adult Supervisors** on the trip or visit must follow the instructions of the Leader, and the students must follow the instructions of all the supervisors. All supervising adults on the trip must have a copy of the necessary contact and medical information of students and staff involved, as well as the risk assessment.
 - The **students** on a residential trip or visit are expected to follow all instructions from the supervising adults involved. For certain trips or visits, they will be asked to sign a conduct agreement before departure, counter signed by parents/carers. Any student who misbehaves on a school trip will be dealt with in line with the school's behaviour policy.

4. ORGANISING AND PLANNING

Oakgrove paperwork is used for both the primary and secondary. It draws upon guidance from Plumsun and Employer Guidance documents and the statutory framework for EYFS.

Parent/Carer consent must be obtained for all offsite activities. Letters that are sent home require approval from the Headteacher.

In the Primary and Nursery, the local area is used to deliver lessons. Permission for children to be taken off the Primary and Nursery site to make use of the local area is included as part of the induction pack for all children joining the school. This use of the local area does not constitute a trip or visit in the context of this policy and proposed Trip or Visit forms and governor sign off is not required for teachers to make use of the local area. A risk assessment must be completed by the trip leader and signed off by the Primary EVC in advance of any children leaving the Primary and Nursery premises, this includes local area visits.

OAKGROVE SCHOOL TRIPS AND VISITS POLICY

Duke of Edinburgh (DofE) trips

Oakgrove School is a Directly Licenced Centre (DLC) and qualified to deliver the Duke of Edinburgh Award at Bronze, Silver and Gold. Operational Support will continue to be provided to the DLC from the DofE Central England Regional Office.

The DofE Manager runs the Duke of Edinburgh Award within Oakgrove School. Oakgrove also has trained DofE Verifiers, whose role is to check the eDofE participant's evidence for each Award is correct and signed off by the DofE Manager. It is the Verifier who can then inform the Central England office to award the participant at Bronze, Silver or Gold. The training for these roles is provided, and updated as required, by the DofE Central England regional office.

All DofE expeditions are organised by an outside agency: Chiltern Adventure a nationwide company specialising in DofE expeditions for all Awards. Chiltern Adventure will risk assess, staff and provide equipment for Oakgrove students when on Bronze and Silver expeditions. Adventure Expeditions are used to risk assess, staff and provide equipment for Oakgrove students when on Gold expeditions. Both Chiltern Adventure and Adventure Expeditions hold all the required National Governing Body Awards to be a recognised AAP (Approved Activity Provider), this includes having the correct level of staff approval, qualifications and experience to competently plan and run training, practice or qualifying expeditions at Bronze, Silver and Gold Award level. Liaison between students and Chiltern Adventure/Adventure Expeditions will be part of the DofE Manager's role. All risk assessments for expeditions will be scrutinised by Plumsun and the EVC prior to expeditions.

PE /Sports Events and Clubs

A sporting fixture that takes place off school site is classified as a trip/visit and therefore requires a risk assessment. For after school inter-school and club fixtures the PE Department has developed its own risk assessments for each sporting activity. These risk assessments are referred to and taken to the event by the staff involved. Sporting fixtures or events that take during the school day, use the whole school trip paperwork and risk assessment.

5. STAFFING

Staffing of a trip or visit must be made based on meeting the needs of the students to ensure their safety. Effective supervision is determined by the risk assessment which includes careful consideration of:

- age and gender (including developmental age) of the students to be supervised;
- the ability of the students/pupils, including their behavioural, medical, emotional and educational needs;
- the nature and location of the activity (including the type of activity, duration, skill level involved, as well as the time of year and prevailing environmental conditions);
- Staff competence.

Whilst staffing ratios will vary according to these aspects, this policy recommends the following supervisory ratios:

Nursery

- under 2 years – 1 adult for every 3 children;
- aged 2 years – 1 adult for every 4 children;

Foundation to Year 3

- 1 adult for every 6 children;

Years 4 – 6

- 1 adult for every 10-15 pupils;

OAKGROVE SCHOOL TRIPS AND VISITS POLICY

Years 7-11

- 1 adult for every 10-15 students;

Years 12-13

- 1 adult for every 15-20 students.

For activities taking place out of the UK, the policy recommends:

- 1 adult for every 10 students/pupils for years 4 to 13 only;
- at least one male and female adult teacher or worker is ideal, but not a necessity.
- an appropriate number of group supervisors on night standby duty.

In most cases there must be a minimum number of two accompanying adults.

The use of suitable parents (in the Primary and Nursery only) or other adult helpers may be appropriate provided any necessary checks, e.g. DBS, are in place. Adult helpers will be those individuals who are held on the SCR and are actively involved in the life of the school, e.g. volunteer readers, PTA.

All staff must have a level of competence to supervise students/pupils. This will be determined by the Headteacher/EVC at the approval stage of a proposed visit. For EYFS, staff must have the appropriate qualifications, training, skills and knowledge and have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities.

When authorising ratios, the Headteacher/EVC will ensure the ratios are sufficient to enable effective supervision in accordance with this policy.