

# **CHULMLEIGH ACADEMY TRUST**

## **Educational Visits Policy**

Approved by SLT on 23 January 2024

# **A Policy for the Management of Outdoor Education, Visits and Off-Site Activities**

## **1. Introduction**

This policy covers all off-site visits and activities organised through the Trust and for which the Board of Directors and Executive Headteacher are responsible.

**The Board of Directors endorses the Devon County Council /Torbay Council policy document “Outdoor Education, Visits and Off-Site Activities Health and Safety Policy 2022” (OEVOSA) as the basis for the Trust’s health and safety policy for the management of visits and off-site activities.**

The purpose of this policy is to explain how the overall OEVOSA policy will be applied in practical terms at a local level, and in particular, the specific roles, responsibilities and arrangements that will apply at Chulmleigh Academy Trust.

This policy also complements and should be read in conjunction with the Trust’s Health & Safety and Safeguarding Policies.

The Board of Directors seeks to ensure that every pupil has access to a wide range of educational experiences as an entitlement. As part of this entitlement, the Board of Directors recognises the significant educational value of visits and activities, which take place away from the immediate school environment.

The Board of Directors aims to enable the schools in the Trust to become educational environments in which all members of the school community can thrive, regardless of race, religion, culture, gender or individual need. We intend to apply this aim to the planning and management of all visits and off-site activities.

Visits and off-site activities support, enrich and extend the curriculum in many subject areas, encourage co-operation, teamwork and the application of problem solving skills and develop independence and self-confidence.

Residential opportunities, physical challenge and adventure can have a particular part to play in the development of personal and social qualities for all young people. Outdoor education helps young people to be physically active and to understand how to assess and manage risk.

The management of visits and off-site activities places particular responsibilities for the health, safety and welfare of all participants on the Board of Directors, Executive Headteacher, the party leader, members of staff and volunteers, pupils and parents. The school also has responsibilities to other members of the public and to third parties. This policy on visits and off-site activities therefore complements the wider Trust health and safety policy.

**It is a priority of this school that all visits and off-site activities are safe, well managed and educationally beneficial.**

## **2. Responsibilities of the Executive Headteacher**

The Executive Headteacher will:

- ensure all visits and off-site activities have specific and appropriate educational objectives
- have overall responsibility for the approval of all visits and activities, based on compliance with the OEVOSA document and recognised good practice, even where this task may have been delegated to another named person
- ensure that all off-site visits, and especially residential visits, are carried out with reference to the Safeguarding Policy and Expected Standards for Teaching and Support Staff
- ensure that there is a suitably experienced and competent Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) to oversee adherence to the OEVOSA policy and that the tasks associated with this role are clearly outlined in this policy
- to ensure that approval and endorsement arrangements for all visits are in accordance with OEVOSA requirements
- to ensure that leaders, staff and adult volunteers have any relevant qualifications and are competent to lead and support particular visits and activities as outlined in OEVOSA
- to ensure that appropriate emergency arrangements are in place for visits and off-site activities
- to review accident and incident reports relating to visits and off-site activities to ensure that any lessons are learnt
- to ensure that any third-party provider / contractor / coach has been vetted for competence in accordance with the requirements of OEVOSA
- approve all visits and activities, based on compliance with the council and school health and safety policy, relevant Devon County Council / Torbay Council guidance and recognised good practice
- ensure off-site programmes are led by competent adults who are appropriately experienced to assess the risks, manage the activity and manage the specific group
- check that the adult:pupil ratio is suitable for each visit
- provide relevant induction, training and other Continuous Professional Development opportunities for staff and volunteers involved in the provision of visits and off-site activities
- ensure that for all off-site visits and activities risks have been assessed, the significant findings of these assessments recorded, and any appropriate safety measures implemented accordingly

The Executive Headteacher may delegate any or all the above responsibilities to a competent member of SLT but will retain overall responsibility for the operation of this policy.

### **3. Responsibilities of the Educational Visits Co-ordinator**

In order to carry out the above responsibilities effectively the Executive Headteacher may delegate specified tasks to a suitably experienced and competent Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC). The Executive Headteacher will be considered to be the EVC where tasks are not delegated to a named member of staff. The EVC will be responsible for carrying out agreed tasks and attending relevant training provided by the Local Authority (LA).

The Trust may appoint an EVC for the primary phase and an EVC for the secondary phase, The functions delegated to the EVC (in relation to their specific phase, if applicable) are:

- to be the principal contact with the LA over planned visits
- to establish monitoring systems to ensure that educational visits are undertaken in accordance with OEVOSA and the Trust specific arrangements named in this policy
- to ensure that the management of visits and off-site activities is informed by an appropriate risk assessment

- to draw up the Standard Operating Procedures for 'routine and regular' visits and activities
- to manage and update the Evolve website, including updating staff lists and training records
- to provide staff with support, advice and information that they need to comply with OEVOSA requirements
- to ensure that procedures to inform parents and to obtain their consent where necessary are in place

#### **4. Approval of off-site activities**

The Executive Headteacher will be responsible for approving all off-site activities. This includes approving the party leader for each visit or off-site activity.

An Evolve visit form will be completed for all off-site visits. For the avoidance of doubt, visits by pupils of one of the Trust's schools to another school forming part of Chulmleigh Academy Trust are not 'off-site'.

The Evolve visit form for the following types of visit will be sent, via Evolve, to the Adviser for Outdoor Education for endorsement.

- hazardous outdoor and adventurous activities (Category B activities);
- visits abroad (Category C activities);
- activities where there is significant concern about health, safety and welfare (Category C activities).

The Executive Headteacher will monitor off-site visits and activities and will provide a regular report to the Board of Directors about the off-site activities which have taken place from the Trust.

#### **5. Responsibilities of the visit leader**

The visit leader will:

- have overall responsibility for the supervision and conduct of the visit or activity
- obtain the Executive Headteacher's approval and where appropriate, LA endorsement for the visit in line with OEVOSA and the specific arrangements of this policy before any off-site visit or activity takes place
- carry out specific activities in accordance with the detail of OEVOSA
- assess the risks to staff and volunteers, young people and members of the public presented by the visit or activity in order to identify and implement any safety measures
- use the school planning checklist to ensure all procedures have been followed
- ensure form SOE5 from the policy is completed (or a previously completed form is on Evolve) where commercial, charitable or private providers are being used for adventurous or residential activities in accordance with the requirements of OEVOSA
- inform parents fully about the visit and gain their consent, in accordance with arrangements described in OEVOSA
- brief all supervising staff, volunteers and pupils in roles, responsibilities and expectations
- continually re-assess risks while the visit or activity takes place and make adjustments accordingly
- establish appropriate emergency and contingency arrangements for the planned visit or activity which will include the identification of sufficient First Aid cover

## **6. Responsibilities of additional members of staff taking part in visits and off-site activities**

Members of staff, volunteers and parent helpers should:

- Assist the party leader to ensure the health, safety and welfare of young people on the visit
- Be clear about their roles and responsibilities whilst taking part in a visit or activity
- Familiarise themselves with the any risk assessments pertaining to the visit or activity

## **7. Responsibilities of pupils**

Whilst taking part in off-site activities pupils also have responsibilities about which they should be made aware by the party leader or other members of staff, for their own health and safety and that of the group. Young people should:

- Avoid unnecessary risks
- Follow instructions of the party leader and other members of staff or adult volunteer Behave sensibly, keeping to any agreed code of conduct
- Inform a member of staff or adult volunteer of significant hazards

## **8. Responsibilities of parents**

Parents have an important role in deciding whether any visit or off-site activity is suitable for their child. Subject to their agreement to the activity, parents should:

- support the application of any agreed code of conduct
- inform the party leader about any medical, psychological or physical condition relevant to the visit
- provide an emergency contact number
- Provide consent in accordance with the requirements of OEVOSA

## **9. Risk Assessment**

The Trust is committed to a wide variety of outdoor activities, many of which will be repeated over each academic year where the risks will be very similar or the same. Therefore, when visits are 'routine and regular' in that they occur repeatedly each academic year, the measures taken to control these risks are listed in the school specific Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) documents.

These control measures will apply to all such visits and off-site activities and have been drawn up by the Executive Headteacher and EVC and will be brought to the attention of anyone undertaking the role of Visit Leader.

In assessing the risks presented by a planned visit or activity, the Visit Leader must judge if the SOP are adequate for controlling the risks. For each visit/activity, the SOP document will be generated electronically and the Visit Leader will either confirm these as adequate for the proposed visit/activity or the additional control measures needed will be listed in the enhanced risk assessment column.

Any ad hoc visit, which is not repeated regularly, plus any activities delivered by school staff falling within the definition of Category B, will have a separate stand-alone risk assessment, as will any overseas Category C visit.

This process will be undertaken by the Visit Leader who, whilst being supported by the EVC, will be competent and equipped to complete this task. To meet statutory requirements and to ensure sufficient communication with other staff involved, this risk assessment will be recorded using the risk assessment format on Evolve.

## **10. Approval of Off-site Activities**

The Executive Headteacher will be responsible for approving all off-site activities subject to assurances that arrangements are in line with this policy and risks are adequately controlled. This includes approving the Visit Leader for each visit or off-site activity.

There are 3 categories of visit:

Category A:

Non-adventurous visits i.e. visits to local places of worship, farms, public places etc

Non-adventurous residential visits i.e. cultural visits to towns/cities etc

Category B:

Adventurous visits where activities are delivered by school staff (i.e. Ten Tors, kayaking etc)

Adventurous day visits led by external providers (i.e. visits to climbing centres, a pony trekking centre etc)

Adventurous residential visits to outdoor centres

Category C:

Visits of all types outside the UK

In-line with the requirements of OEVOSA, details of Category B and C visits will be uploaded to the Evolve on-line system to facilitate the approval by the Executive Headteacher ahead of final endorsement by the Local Authority Adviser for Outdoor Education.

The policy of the Trust is that Category A visits will be uploaded to the Evolve system to allow Directors, the Headteacher and the EVC to monitor the management of off-site visits.

## **11. Safeguarding**

The safety and welfare of children is paramount. In the event of a safeguarding issue or concern being identified during the trip or visit, the visit leader should follow the Trust's child protection/safeguarding policy and procedures. All staff and volunteers on the trip should be made aware of these before the trip or activity takes place.

Arrangements should be in place to enable contact with the Trust's Designated Safeguarding Officer outside normal school hours if necessary. Contact details should be communicated to all staff/volunteers on the trip (as well as the visit leader) in case the safeguarding concern is about the visit leader

## **12. The provision of training and information**

A copy of this policy and associated school procedures will be made available to all staff within the Trust who may be responsible for leading off-site visits and activities and to any parent requesting a copy.

The Executive Headteacher will make additional information available to staff to help ensure the safe management of off-site activities, including the Devon /Torbay policy statement

“Outdoor Education, Visits and Off-Site Activities” and access to the Devon LDP website: [www.babcock-education.co.uk/ldp](http://www.babcock-education.co.uk/ldp)

The Executive Headteacher will ensure that staff leading or participating in visits are competent for the activities involved. When required, specific training will be undertaken, and competencies maintained in accordance with the requirements of OEVOSA. This process will be overseen by the EVC and records of qualifications will be uploaded to the Evolve system.

### **13. Action in the case of emergency**

The Executive Headteacher will ensure that emergency arrangements are in place, known to staff and in line with Devon County Council policy, to cover the range of activities undertaken by the Trust and the times at which they take place. This will include a minimum of two emergency contact numbers for designated senior members of staff or the Board of Directors out-of hours. First aid provision and training of staff will be in accordance with good practice.

### **14. Accidents and incidents**

The Executive Headteacher and EVC will ensure that emergency arrangements are in place before approving visits. The Visit Leader will identify these arrangements via a process of risk assessment. Where necessary, this assessment must include the identification of contingency plans.

It will also include the identification of sufficient First Aiders, as well as emergency contact details which must include a school contact for outside normal hours if necessary.

Any accidents and incidents that occur during off-site visits and activities will be reported and recorded in accordance with the school health and safety policy. Accidents and incidents will subsequently be reviewed within the school to identify any learning points.

### **15. Monitoring and review policy and practice**

The Directors will review this policy:

- Every three years
- After any significant changes to the management of outdoor education locally
- After any significant changes to the OEVOSA document
- After an incident