



## School Journey Policy

St Mary Magdalene Academy is a Christian community of learning. We aim to nurture young people to become high achievers and to discover their vocation in the global society.

“Show by a good life that your works are done by gentleness born of wisdom”  
James 3.13

We believe that educational visits enhance education and give children unique opportunities to learn from hands on experience. We will make use of the wealth of opportunities in and around London to supplement and extend the learning of our children.

**Adopted:**

## **School Journey Policy**

### **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 Off-site visits are activities arranged by or on behalf of the Academy, and which take place outside the school grounds. The governors and teaching staff believe that off-site activities can supplement and enrich the curriculum of the Academy by providing experiences which would otherwise be impossible. All off-site activities must serve an educational purpose, enhancing and enriching our children's learning experiences.
- 1.2 In this policy we seek to establish a clear and coherent structure for the planning and evaluation of our off-site visits, and to ensure that any risks are managed and kept to a minimum, for the safety and health of all students at all times. Within these limits we seek to make our visits available to all students, and wherever possible to make them accessible to those with disabilities. The visits usually take place within the school day.

### **2 Aims**

- 2.1 The aims of our off-site visits are to:
- enhance curricular and recreational opportunities for our students;
  - provide a wider range of experiences for our students than could be provided on the school site alone;
  - promote the independence of our students as learners, and enable them to grow and develop in new learning environments.

These visits begin with short excursions into the local area in the Early Years, and progress to a residential experience towards the end of Key Stage 2 and KS 3.

### **3 Curriculum Links**

- 3.1 For each subject in the curriculum there is a corresponding programme of activities (which includes visits to the Academy by specialists). All these activities are in line with guidance published by the LEA:
- English – theatre visits, visits by authors, poets and theatre groups;
  - Science – use of the school grounds, visits to botanical gardens;
  - Mathematics – use of shape and number trails in the local environment;
  - History – castle visits, Hothorpe Hall, study of local housing patterns, local museums;
  - Geography – use of the locality for fieldwork, Sayers Croft Field Center, village trails;

- Art and Design – art gallery visits, use of the locality;
- PE – a range of sporting fixtures, extra-curricular activities, visits by specialist coaches;
- Music – a variety of specialist music teaching, extra-curricular activities, concerts and performances for parents/carers to hear;
- Design and technology – visits to local factories or design centres;
- ICT – its use in local shops/libraries/secondary schools etc; attendance at the Arsenal Study Support Centre;
- RE – visits to local centres of worship, visits by local clergy;
- PSHE and citizenship – visit to the fire station or an old people's residential home, visits by local police officers and health workers.

#### **4 Residential Activities**

- 4.1 Student in Years 5 up will have the opportunity to take part in a residential visit. This activity is in school time and linked to the National Curriculum, so we do not make any charge for the education or cost of travel. We do, however, make a charge for board and lodging, insurance and specialist instruction for certain activities. Parents/carers in receipt of state benefits can see the Principal in order to arrange support with the payment.
- 4.2 The residential visit enables students to take part in outdoor and adventure activities as part of their PE and geography work. We undertake this visit only with the written agreement of the Governing Body of the Academy. We provide qualified instructors for all specialist activities that we undertake.

#### **5 How visits may be authorised**

- 5.1 The Principal will appoint a party leader to be responsible for running the activity. This will normally be a teacher employed at the Academy.
- 5.2 The Academy's educational visits coordinator, who may be the Principal, will be involved in the planning and management of off-site visits.  
S/he will:

- Ensure that risk assessments are completed;
- Support the Principal and Governing Body in their decisions on approval;
- Assign competent staff to lead and help with trips;
- Organise related staff training;
- Verify that all accompanying adults, including private car drivers, have had satisfactory police checks, and that the letter from our coach company (see 6.5) assures us their drivers too have had police checks;
- Make sure that all necessary permissions and medical forms are obtained;
- Keep records of visits, and ensure there are regular generic assessments of the risks (for example road-crossing) where there are frequent visits to local venues (for example a swimming facility).

Staff arranging or otherwise involved in off-site activities must familiarise themselves with the regulations, advice and procedures published by the LA

(and available from the Academy office). All off-site activities must take place in accordance with the LA's guidance.

- 5.3 Where staff is proposing to arrange an off-site activity, they must seek and obtain the approval of the Principal before any commitment is made on behalf of the Academy. A comprehensive visit plan should be provided by the member of staff to allow for an informed decision to be made.
- 5.4 Where the activity involves a period of more than 24 hours, an overnight stay, or a journey by sea or air, the Principal will seek the approval of the Governing Body before permitting the activity to take place.
- 5.5 It is our policy that all students should be able to participate in educational visits. Where a student with a disability is eligible for a trip, we will make every effort to ensure that s/he is included. We may seek guidance from parents/carers to help us adapt our programme, and we will make any reasonable adjustments to our itinerary to include a child with disabilities. Any such adjustments will be included in the risk assessment.

## 6 Risk Assessment

- 6.1 A comprehensive risk assessment is carried out by the group leader before the proposed visit (See attachment 1). It will assess the risks which might be encountered on the visit, and will indicate measures to prevent or reduce them. The risk assessment should be based on the following considerations:
  - What are the hazards?
  - Who might be affected by them?
  - What safety measures are needed 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?
- 6.2 Staff planning an off-site activity should make a preliminary visit to the venue, in order to carry out an on-site risk assessment. It is important to take into account the probable weather conditions at the time of year proposed for the trip, and the party leader should take careful account of the facilities available, with due regard to the proposed size of the group. They should also assess the site's suitability with regard to the age and any particular needs of the students. They will also consider the venue's own approach to security and to health and safety. Venues providing instructor-led activities will have their own risk assessments for particular sessions, and these assessments may be adopted if it is impractical for the group leader to experience the activity beforehand, or if s/he lacks the skills required to make informed judgements about the risks it may involve. The LA will not have given its approval for the visit unless it is satisfied with the venue, its instructors and their risk assessment procedures.

- 6.3 It is important to assess and record any health, safety or security issues that are identified during the preliminary visit. Any such issues will be taken into account when the final decision is taken on whether the visit should proceed, and the Visit Plan must state both the extent of any risks involved, and the measures that will be taken to reduce or eliminate them. The cost of these preliminary visits will be borne by the Academy, and should be built into the overall financial arrangements for the visit itself.
- 6.4 An activity should normally have sufficient adults taking part to provide the following minimum ratios:
- 1 adult to between 10/15 students in Years 4 to 11 based on risk assessments;
  - 1 adult to 6 students in Years 1 to 3;
  - 1 adult to 4 students in Reception.
- 6.5 A risk assessment must also cover transport to and from the venue. The coach company we use on a regular basis has provided us with a letter detailing all the health and safety measures it routinely takes, including:
- The provision and required use of seat belts;
  - Proper vetting of the driver by the police;
  - Proper insurance for the driver;
  - Details of first aid and emergency equipment;
  - Breakdown procedures.
  - See generic risk assessment
- 6.6 The group leader will double-check that all adults helping to supervise the trip have been subject to police checks (see 5.2 above). Only adults who have been police checked will be put in charge of students on school outings.
- 6.7 A copy of the completed risk assessment will be given to the Principal, the Governing Body and all adults supervising the trip.

## **7 Transport**

- 7.1 The costing of off-site activities should include any of the following that apply:
- Transport;
  - Entrance fees;
  - Insurance;
  - Provision of any special resources or equipment;
  - Costs related to adult helpers;
  - Any refreshments the Academy has opted to pay for.
- 7.2 Transport arrangements will allow a seat for each member of the party. It is our policy only to use coaches fitted with seat or lap belts, and to insist that they be worn by all those participating in the visit.

- 7.3 Where private cars are used for transport, the Principal is responsible for checking that the insurance of each driver covers such journeys. At no time will any adult be allowed to be in a car with less than 3 students.
- 7.4 We instruct all students, whether travelling by car, minibus or coach, to attach their seat belts.
- 7.5 All charges cover the expenses of the journey only; we do not make any profit from this.

## **8 Communication with Parents/Carers**

- 8.1 The parents/carers of students taking part in an off-site activity should be provided with all appropriate information about the intended visit. Parents/carers must give their permission in writing before a student can be involved in any off-site activities.
- 8.2 Funding for off-site activities is provided mainly by parental contributions (voluntary except in the case of residential visits), with a limited subsidy from the parent/teacher association. This must be made clear to parents/carers in all correspondence about an educational visit at the planning stage.
- 8.3 No student may be excluded from an activity because of the unwillingness or inability of the parent/carer to make a contribution. Parents/carers will be informed of this principle through the Academy's prospectus and letters sent home about intended visits.
- 8.4 The timetable for the payment of contributions should allow for the Principal to make a decision about the financial viability of the activity in reasonable time.

## **9 Further Health and Safety considerations**

- 9.1 All adults accompanying a party must be made aware, by the party leader, of the emergency procedures which will apply. Each adult should be provided with an emergency telephone number. This will normally be the Academy number, but where an activity extends beyond the normal school day the home telephone number of a designated emergency contact should be provided.
- 9.2 Before a party leaves the Academy, the Academy office should be provided with a list of everyone, students and adults, travelling with the party, together with a programme and timetable for the activity.
- 9.3 The safety of the party, and especially the students, is of paramount importance. During the activity the party leader must take whatever steps are necessary to ensure that safety. This involves taking note of any

information provided by medical questionnaire returns, and ensuring that students are both safe and well looked after at all times.

- 9.4 Prior to an activity, if it is felt that the behaviour of an individual student is likely to compromise the safety of others or the good name of the Academy, the party leader should discuss with the Principal the possibility of excluding that student from the activity.
- 9.5 More detailed guidance on procedures and requirements can be obtained from the Local Education Authority's Health and Safety for Off-Site Activities File held in the Principal's office.

## 10 **Group Leaders' Planning**

- 10.1 Group leaders must read thoroughly the appropriate guidance for off-site activities:

- *Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits: A Good Practice Guide* – (DfES 1998) and its supplements:
  - *A Handbook for Group Leaders* (DCSF 2002)
  - *Health and Safety Powers and Responsibilities and Groups Safety at Water Margins* (DCSF 2002)
  - *Standards for LAs in overseeing Educational Visits*
  - *Standards for Adventure*
  - *(all are available at Teachernet web site [www.teachernet.gov.uk](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk))*

They must consult LA documentation detailing procedures and requirements, including guidance on Emergency Planning and Crisis Line organisation, and must draw up a Visit Plan which records in writing (including standard forms where appropriate) the arrangements that have been made.

## 11 **Visit Plan**

- 11.1 The visit plan for intended educational visits must include the following:

- Risk assessment;
- Report on preliminary visit;
- Applications for approval of visit;
- General information;
- Names, ages, contact details, permission forms, medical records and other relevant details of all those going on the visit;
- Travel schedule;
- Accommodation plan (if applicable);
- Full plan of activities;
- Fire precautions and evacuation procedures;
- Intended arrangements for supervision;
- Insurance arrangements for all members of the group;
- Emergency contacts and procedures;

- General communications information;
- Guidance for party leaders;
- Guidance for the emergency contact and Principal;
- Medical questionnaire returns;
- First-aid boxes.

## 12 **Monitoring and Review**

12.1 This policy is monitored by the Governing Body and will be reviewed every two years or before if necessary.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Principal)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Chair of Governors)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Off Site Visit Guidelines**

### **Preparations**

- Class visits should be booked at the beginning of the school year or term. Early booking will help ensure getting the dates you want;
- Proper risk assessments must be completed;
- Risk assessments must be handed in to the appointed member of staff 2 weeks prior to the school trip or visit;
- Once they have been checked by the appointed member of staff they need to be given to the Vice Principal to be signed off;
- Residential school visits must have risk assessment and proposals handed in to the Principal so permission can be given for the trip by the Governors and by the LA;
- Letters for the class visits must be sent out 2 full weeks in advance of the visit. A reminder should be sent out 2 days in advance;
- Students need to be charged enough to cover any admission cost, travel costs as well as adult travel costs.

### **Travel Preparations**

- Risk assessment for travel must be completed;
- Applications for free London transport travel for students must be submitted a minimum of 2 weeks prior to the trip via [www.tfl.gov.uk/schoolparty](http://www.tfl.gov.uk/schoolparty) .
- Applications for free travel for adults on school visits must be submitted a minimum of 2 weeks prior to the trip. The Academy should not have to pay for adults attending school visits

### **Lunch Preparations**

- The Academy kitchen needs to be given notice of children being absent for lunch 2 weeks prior to the visit.
- Included in visit letters should be a section enquiring about who will need a school packed lunch. This will assist us in reducing the number of wasted lunches and food.

### **Other Adults**

- Additional adults should be selected first from our Academy list of CRB checked volunteers.
- Any other adults attending school visits need to have a list 99 check. This can be done 2 days prior to the visit. These additional adults must be made known to the office 2 days prior to the visit
- Adults who are not CRB checked cannot be left in charge of groups of students. They can supervise in open areas like museums but cannot take students to the toilets and non-public areas
- Other adults need to be well informed of the learning intention of the visit, procedures for the day and what they can and cannot do with the students i.e. taking to the shop, providing additional resources for the students, paying for extra exhibitions, etc.

## **Adult to student ratio by age range**

An activity should normally have sufficient adults taking part to provide the following minimum ratios:

- 1 adult to between 10 students in Years 4 to 6 based on risk assessments;
- 1 adult to 6 students in Years 1 to 3;
- 1 adult to 4 students in Reception.

### **Walking to and from Venues**

- Teachers are to have a register of who is going on the visit and a copy of this must be handed into the Academy office along with a list of student left at the Academy and which class they have been left with;
- Students are to walk in pairs;
- Teachers are to walk at the front of the line with TAs at the rear;
- Other adults are to be dispersed along the line;
- Adults are to walk on the road side with the students away from the road;
- Teachers are to walk at the pace of the students not faster than them in order to keep the line together and not strung out;
- When crossing a 2-lane road the teacher stops the class, goes to the middle of road and calls the class to cross telling them to stop at a given point so the teacher can rejoin the line;
- When the TA, not other adults, gets to the teacher, the teacher goes back to the front of the line. Other adults cannot be given responsibility for managing the crossing of roads;
- When crossing 4-lane roads, both teacher and the TA will take a position in the road and then the above guidance will be followed.

## **Guidance for other adults on educational visits**

### **All adults accompanying classes on educational visit need to...**

- **Be clear about the learning intention of the visit.** *The class teacher will inform you of this.*
- **Know which students they will be supporting or supervising.** *The groups will be set by the class teacher. Only adults who have had a full police check can be allowed to supervise students without a member of staff present. If you have not had a full police check then you will be supporting a group with a member of staff or a parent/carer who has a full police check.*
- **Be clear about what is expected of them.** *You will be asked to assist the students with their learning on the trip. You may be asked to follow a set plan or to look at set exhibits. It is very important that the instructions of the class teacher are followed in order to maximise the learning experience and opportunities for the students. This will normally be done before the class leaves the Academy.*
- **Arrive at the Academy on time ready to leave when the class is ready to leave.**

### **What we ask of other adults on educational visits:**

- Please follow the instructions laid out by the class teacher;
- Unless you have a full police check, you cannot accompany students to the toilets. This has to be done by a member of staff or an adult with a full police check;
- Please do not purchase treats for your group or your own child. Students and parents/carers will be informed prior to the trip if money is required for the shop. In most cases money will not be required.
- Do not provide additional things for the students. Do not pay for rides or exhibits. The class teacher will have planned in detail what will take place on the visit. Providing activities that all students do not receive will cause problems with the remainder of the class and will be seen as unfair by the students.

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- When the TA, not other adults, gets to the teacher, the teacher goes back to the front of the line;
- Other adults cannot be given responsibility for managing the crossing of roads.

- When crossing 4-lane roads, both teacher and the TA will take a position in the road and then the above guidance will be followed.

**Travelling to and from the venue**

- Travel cost for adults assisting on educational visits will be covered by the Academy.