



Ordinary Offsite Activities Policy

Term of policy: Every 4 years

Approved by: Board of Trustees

Date ratified: Autumn 2022

Next Review Date: Summer | 2026

Author: N Christensen

Sources: NGA, The Key

Online location: SharePoint folder: Policies

Consulted with JCC? Yes ☐ No ☒

Introduction

This policy replaces any previous policy and follows the DfE regulations.

As part of our commitment to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations, we have carefully considered the impact of this policy on equality. The School will ensure that this policy is applied fairly to all employees and does not have a negative impact on students or staff with protected characteristics; race, sex, religion and belief, sexual orientation, age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity.

Contents

1. Aims	2
2. Offsite Activity and Training.....	2
3. Running an Ordinary Offsite Activity – Step by Step.....	3
4. PE Department Process for Taking Students Out of School for a PE Event.....	4
5. Level of Risk Assessment	5
6. Student Numbers and Supervision	6
7. Motor vehicle insurance.....	6
8. Emergency Procedures.....	7
9. Charging	7
10. Water	7
11. Legal Note	7

1. Aims

This policy replaces any previous policy and follows the Health and Safety Advice given in the ‘Department for Education Advice on Legal Duties and Powers for Local Authorities, Head Teachers, Staff and Governing Bodies’.

School visits have clear benefits for students and large numbers of successful visits and outdoor learning activities take place every year. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) fully recognises that learning outside the classroom helps to bring the curriculum to life, providing deeper subject learning and increasing self-confidence. It also helps students develop risk awareness and prepares them for their future working lives. This Policy aims to help staff to strike the right balance between protecting students and allowing them to learn from school trips and is intended to help staff focus on how the ‘real risks’ are managed and not on the paperwork.

Striking the right balance means that schools and staff focus on the real risks when planning trips. It means that those running trips understand their roles and are supported and competent to lead or take part in them. The real risks are managed during the trip and the learning opportunities are experienced to the full.

Striking the right balance does not mean that every aspect is set out in copious paperwork that acts as a security blanket for those planning the trip. The detailed risk assessment and recording procedures aimed at higher-risk adventure activities are used when planning lower-risk school trips. It doesn’t mean that mistakes and accidents will not happen and that all risks must be eliminated.

All staff hoping to lead an activity must have received training on Offsite Activities, currently run as needed by the EVC.

Further advice is available from the Department for Education website: <http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/adminandfinance/healthandsafety/f00191759/departamental-health-and-safety-advice-on-legal-duties-and-powers-for-local-authorities-headteachers-staff-and-governing-bodies>

2. Offsite Activity and Training

An Offsite Activity is defined as any educational pursuit that is not on the School premises. Thus, as soon as students are taken out of the School, the regulations and this policy come into force. There are different requirements for any OSA that is Overseas, Residential or Adventurous and these types of activity should be run in accordance with the ORA Policy.

All staff are permitted to run an Off-Site Activity provided they have undertaken the appropriate training given by the EVC (Educational Visits Coordinator) and completed a Staff Code of Conduct form.

3. Running an Ordinary Offsite Activity – Step by Step

To begin the process of running an offsite activity, trip leaders will have to fill out a form which can be found on [SharePoint](#).

Trip leaders must ensure that all questions are completed as lack of information could result in the trip being declined.

Before filling out the form, trip leaders must initially discuss this and gain approval from their Line Manager. They must ensure that their Line Manager is aware of the trip dates, and alternatives are discussed if relevant. Trip leaders should also check the school calendar to ensure that there is nothing already scheduled on the date that they are requesting that would create a clash for students/staff and lead to their trip being declined. The School Calendar can be found in SharePoint.

If the trip is being declined, trip leaders will receive an email advising them the reason of this.

If the trip is approved, the trip leader will receive an automated email including the link to the SharePoint Trip pack. The email will provide key information including the trip number, the date and the deadline for receipt of all payments via Parent Pay if the trip has associated costs. It will also provide with the date by which all paperwork must be completed.

There will be different tabs on the Spreadsheet that will need to be completed by the trip leader.

Trip Leaders will first need to complete the OSA Summary Sheet – where they need to fill out key details of the trip.

If the trip has associated costs, they must complete the Budget Tab. Once the Trip Leader has completed the budget tab, they must contact the Finance Manager who will need to sign this off before the trip planning can continue.

The Trip Leader will need to fill out the Trip Letter tab, which will then generate a letter draft that is sent to the OSA team, who will check and edit this as necessary. The draft will be then shared with the trip leader, who can do a final check. The letter can then either be printed out for students, or it can be sent out to relevant parents via the SIMS app InTouch. Meena Patel is currently in charge of this.

It is very important that trip leaders fill out the OSA Risk Management form. If the Trip Leader needs additional support for example ideas or relevant items to include, they can always talk to the OSA team who will help them.

Trip Leaders will need to paste the final list of students onto the Student List tab, prior the trip taking place. If no costs are associated with the trip, they can include a list of students when they finalize attendees. If there are associated costs payable via Parent Pay, the OSA team will put the final student list into the Student List tab.

Finally, after the trip has finished, trip leaders will need to complete the OSA Evaluation tab, where they can attach and upload pictures also.

The trip pack must be signed by the EVC, Finance Manager (if associated costs) and Headteacher before it can go ahead.

It is the trip leader's responsibility to ensure that they provide with a final and complete list of students taking part in the activity and confirm that a list of students will be published to staff before the activity takes place.

They must obtain reports containing confirmation that a signed consent form has been received by the School, medical information and GP details, details of any special needs, a telephone number for parents and carers, consent for photographs if applicable. Trip leaders must discuss with the Headteacher the arrangements for any students whose behaviour poses a potential risk to the safety of themselves or others. As part of the process of risk analysis, the leader will obtain an event analysis report for the students taking part in the trip to give due consideration to the mix of students, based on their behaviour record in School.

Parents should know where their children are always and be aware of any extra safety measures required. Parents must be told in advance of each activity and must be given the opportunity to withdraw their child from any trip or activity covered by the School's consent form.

If there are any doubt about the procedure, then staff should contact the Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) or the OSA team for further advice. Stored paperwork from previous activities including examples of risk assessments and reviews of activities is available in the EVC's Office.

4. PE Department Process for Taking Students Out of School for a PE Event

PE Process and Rules

The PE Department have different rules regarding Offsite Activities involving PE events. Students taking PE are expected to participate in offsite and championship events and their parents will be aware of this. Parents sign a consent form before their child starts at Rooks Heath allowing their child to be taken offsite for PE fixtures.

Parent/Carer's Being Informed of a PE Event

Out of courtesy and so that parents are made aware of each event, the lead staff member will inform their tutees/students in the team by giving each student a fixtures list for the term to take home for parents/carers. Students will inform the PE department that they are available for an event. However, there is no formal communication between PE staff and parents regarding fixtures unless it is a weekend event. Traditionally the PE department pin a forthcoming event sheet up in the PE hall as a reminder to all students.

Completing Document OSA2PE

The PE department complete the document OSA2PE which previously they had stored on their computer and then send this document to the OSA team for processing. The OSA2PE includes information such as Dates, Times, Venue, Year Groups, Method of Travel, Staff involved etc. is signed by the PE lead staff member. The OSA team then arrange for this document to be signed by the Deputy Head and the Headteacher, then log and process the OSA2PE.

Permission from Deputy Head

Permission for the event to take place is usually only required from the Deputy Head if it is an event that takes place during the school day, effecting cover, as most are twilight events, or it is likely to be at the weekend. In this case permission is required.

Pink Forms

There is no need to complete a separate Pink form for PE fixtures as the information submitted will be lifted from the OSA2PE when the OSA team process the form and the OSA team will enter details into Sims if required.

Participation List

It is the responsibility of the lead PE staff to inform the OSA Team and Reception staff of an updated student participation list. The PE staff should put the names of all students who are with them into the 'Keeping Students In School' excel document, so that Reception staff can field any enquiries from parents/carers.

Processing the OSA2PE Form

the OSA2PE forms are entered onto the EV1 (list of all school trips) alongside all the other OSAs but unnumbered, with just PE as a reference, so we know where and when they are happening. Also, the EV1 can be used for letting us know how many events have taken place each term, both OSAs and PE events.

The OSA staff enter the event onto the school calendar and advise Reception staff that an event will take place, giving them a brief description. Reception staff often get calls asking where their child is and why they might be late home from school that day hence the reason for informing Reception staff.

5. Level of Risk Assessment

Teachers and other staff in schools have a common law duty to act as any prudent parent would when in charge of students. Risk Assessments are carried out to answer the questions: "What could go wrong?" and "What are the staff going to do about it?" A risk assessment must take a common sense and proportionate approach and should follow these guidelines:

1. An on-going risk assessment must be carried out by the Leader as a part of every activity. It is not possible to have this written down in advance to cover every eventuality.
2. A formal written risk assessment is required for any activity where the leader is inexperienced or otherwise at the discretion of the Educational Visits Coordinator. In all other cases a generic Risk Assessment should be adapted (copies available in the EVC's office).
 - a. Any risks specific to the activity must be planned for (e.g. reminding students to stay away from the platform at a train station or of the traffic at a motorway service station).
 - b. Standards of discipline during an offsite activity must be effective, absolute and continuous. Any student who could be said to be 'a danger to themselves or others', may be banned from future OSAs for a set period. Any decision to ban a student can only be made by the Headteacher. In all cases where a student is banned, the curricular aims of the activity must be met in other ways and can only be done on the basis that the student is a danger to themselves or others.

Only in exceptional circumstances should a refund be requested in writing and submitted to the EVC for consideration. Requests should be submitted by the trip leader and should detail reasons for the request. Each request will be considered on an individual basis by the EVC and the Tithe Academy Finance Officer and will consider all circumstances including payments already made by the School, whether places have been filled, and the financial viability of the trip. Only refunds authorised by the EVC in consultation with the Headteacher will be processed by the Finance Department.

6. Student Numbers and Supervision

In cases where there are a limited number of places on an activity, eligible students should have an equal chance of participating and can only be chosen on a random basis e.g. by drawing names from a hat. It will never be on a first come, first served basis.

The level of staffing must be sufficient for there to be always adequate supervision. This will be determined by: (a) the type, level and duration of the activity (b) the nature and requirements of the group (c) the experience and competence of the staff (d) the venue, time of year and prevailing or predicted conditions (e) the likelihood and consequences of any reasonably foreseeable changes. The leader needs to be able to show that the ratio is sufficient to ensure a safe and educational activity.

- Supervision can be 'remote' (i.e. not direct e.g. allowed to explore a museum) when those with parental responsibility have been informed in advance. A leader can authorise students to roam freely, within a location, while they remain at a pre-determined position, but parents/carers must be advised in advance.
- Reasonable adaptations to the activity will be made to enable students with SEN to participate in activities. However, if this means that the activity must be changed considerably, then staff will have no alternative but to omit the student with SEN from the activity.
- Adults who are participating in an offsite activity must have no responsibility for their own children whilst they are responsible for the safety of students as they could be placed in a compromising situation (conflict of interests). This will usually mean that their children do not participate in an activity.
- The School's behaviour policy is in force during an off-site activity.

7. Motor vehicle insurance

Staff must make specific mention on their car insurance if they wish to use a private vehicle for work purposes (such as carrying students during off-site activities). Most staff will not be insured to carry students unless they specify this to their insurance company (it often states something to the effect of "for business use" in the policy if they are covered). The addition of this to an insurance policy is usually free. Approval is also needed, in advance, from the Headteacher and staff are required to complete a form to request permission to use a private car to transport students.

Insurance will usually be cancelled if the car is overloaded or if regulations are not adhered to (for example ensuring the use of seat belts).

On no account will staff give unauthorised lifts to students. A member of staff must **never** place themselves in danger by arranging to take an individual student in their car. When using staff cars there must always be more than one student involved and staff must have the prior approval of the Headteacher.

It is important to note that there are separate rules governing the use of the School minibuses and staff need to consult the Director of Business before using a minibus for transporting students.

Using parental lifts on approved activities are not subject to the same regulations but they should only give lifts when there is more than 1 student.

Off-site activity insurance - there is an automatic insurance scheme for virtually all activities authorised by the schools within the MAT and where the correct procedures, including all forms completed by the deadlines and training have been followed.

A summary of the significant features, benefits, and limitations of the cover by the Tithe Academy's insurance policy is available from the Educational Visits Coordinator.

8. Emergency Procedures

In case of emergency, the critical incident plan will be adhered to. A set of Emergency cards, providing emergency phone numbers, will be carried by leaders when they are on an activity.

Immediately before an activity, and in many cases on the activity, emergency procedures must be clearly explained to the group. Effective procedures for taking a roll call must always be considered and meeting points must be made clear.

When there are circumstances beyond their control, staff are expected to use their prior knowledge, experience, and training to deal with such unexpected events. It is part of the role of the leader of the activity to ensure that all members of the activity know what to do in such an emergency.

9. Charging

Please refer to the Charging Policy. It is important to note that students studying at national curriculum level should not be charged for their education and cannot be asked to cover costs directly. Staff of the Tithe Academy therefore asks for a voluntary contribution. An explanation for this is provided in student Link Books or by letter and it is hoped that most parents will be understanding and cooperative. Any activity that does not receive sufficient contributions will have to be cancelled.

10. Water

Swimming in a public pool in the United Kingdom is not considered to be an adventurous activity.

Water margin activities are those that might take place near water, such as walking along a riverbank or seashore where students will not actually be entering the water. Except for swimming in a public pool, it does not include other water-based activities such as swimming, canoeing etc. or anything that involves entering the water. All staff accompanying this type of activity will take extra care and will be given a copy of 'Group Safety at Water Margins'.

All other forms of water-based activity are regarded as adventurous and are dealt with in the Overseas, Residential and Adventurous Offsite Activities Policy.

11. Legal Note

Sometimes civil proceedings in negligence can be taken against an employer or an individual member of staff. However, legal action for negligence against schools is only likely to be successful if:

- the School has not taken care of a child in a way that a prudent parent would have done
- as a result, the child has been injured
- the injury was a foreseeable consequence.