



Ordinary Offsite Activities Policy

Introduction

This policy replaces any previous policy and follows DfE regulations and guidance. All staff members of the Tithe Multi Academy Trust (MAT) are affected by and are expected to adhere to this policy.

In line with all of our Equal Opportunities and Special Educational Needs policies, we aim to give all students equal opportunities to take part in all aspects of School and College life, as far as is appropriate, practicable and compatible with giving regard to health and safety and the efficient education of other students.

This policy takes account of our aim for children to have the support they need:

- to be healthy
- to stay safe
- to enjoy and achieve
- to make a positive contribution
- to achieve economic well-being

The policy will follow the five principles of the Children's Plan:

- to support parents and families;
- to allow children to reach their full potential
- to enable children to enjoy their childhood whilst preparing for adult life
- to provide services in response to children and family needs
- to use preventative measures to help students to avoid the possibility of failure

This policy is founded in the Trust's commitment to the development and maintenance of good behaviour and a positive and inclusive ethos for all members of the Tithe community. It reflects our commitment to safeguard children, as well to encourage diversity in all aspects of School and College life.

Foreword

The Tithe Multi Academy Trust comprises of Earlsmead Primary school, a mixed 4 to 11 school with a specialist SEN unit and Rooks Heath College which is a mixed 11 to 18 multicultural comprehensive in the London Borough of Harrow. This policy is formulated by the Designated Lead Person for Safeguarding (DSL) and the Chair of Governors group.

This policy is formulated by the Associate Headteacher, who is the Educational Visits Coordinator at Rooks Heath, in consultation with Earlsmead Primary School’s Headteacher and is monitored by other members of the College Journeys Working Group at Rooks Heath, along with the School Journeys Working Group at Earlsmead. The policy is subject to annual review and approval by the Governing Body and Board of Trustees. It is part of the collection of policies for safeguarding.

For any higher risk activities please refer to the Overseas, Residential & Adventurous Offsite Activities Policy. Approval for these activities has to be given by the Chair of the Governing Body and the Chief Executive Officer in addition to the Headteacher, and EVC if different, after checking that all the relevant safety procedures have taken place.

Roles	EPS	RHC
Headteacher	N Marshall	D J Parker
EVC		D J Parker
Admin/Clerical Assistant i/c OSAs	A Jadeja	M Downey
Other staff		C Davis & J Edwards

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/college 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:

- schools and staff focus on the real risks when planning trips;
- those running trips understand their roles, are supported and are competent to lead or take part in them;
- the real risks are managed during the trip; and
- learning opportunities are experienced to the full.

Striking the right balance does not mean:

- every aspect is set out in copious paperwork that acts as a security blanket for those planning the trip;
- detailed risk assessment and recording procedures aimed at higher-risk adventure activities are used when planning lower-risk school trips;
- mistakes and accidents will not happen; and

- 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 Associate Headteacher at Rooks Heath.

Further advice is available from the Department for Education website:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/adminandfinance/healthandsafety/f00191759/departme%20ntal-health-and-safety-advice-on-legal-duties-and-powers-for-local-authorities-headteachers-staff-and-governing-bodies>

An Off Site Activity

Is defined as any educational pursuit that is not on the school/college premises. Thus, as soon as students/pupils are taken out of the school/college, 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.

Training

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.

Running an Ordinary Off Site Activity

Staff **must** follow the procedures outlined in this policy, for every off-site activity. All off-site activity forms are kept in the Associate Headteacher's office at Rooks Heath and with the Admin Assistant, in the main office at Earlsmead.

1. The leader of the activity decides on the educational purpose of the visit. This must be made very clear, as it is not allowed for staff to organise 'holidays'. The educational purpose of the visit must be stated in the first letter to those with parental responsibility. The Educational Visits Coordinator needs to be assured that the activity is being run for the correct educational reasons.
2. The leader will see the Associate Headteacher to outline plans, agree a date and obtain authority to lead the activity. All leaders must be approved by the Educational Visits Coordinator.
Nothing will be done in terms of booking or advertising the visit to students before the appropriate approval has been given and the activity is in the school/college calendar.

For trips involving a cost, or if the Leader needs advice, the Leader will book an appointment with the OSA Clerical Assistant, Mandy Downey or with Earlsmead's Clerical Assistant i/c OSAs, Anita Jadeja. Leaders will need to have full details of what they are proposing so that the relevant paperwork can be completed. At this meeting assistance will be given with completion of the paperwork, production of a letter and transport arrangements.

3. If a cost is involved, then payment procedures must be agreed with the Finance Officer for the Trust via the OSA Clerical Assistant prior to the advertising of the activity to students.
4. After the activity has been agreed, staff can make preliminary bookings.
5. The forms needed for running an off site activity are of legal importance. Staff are only insured if these are in place. The relevant forms will be issued by the OSA Clerical Assistant and are listed in the OSA Handbook. Failure to complete the necessary forms will invalidate insurance cover. To protect staff, the forms are kept by the school/college for the legally recommended retention period of seven years after the students involved have left.
6. With the exception of OSAs eligible to be run at short notice, a letter will be issued to targeted students. (Note that if an activity is oversubscribed places are allocated on a random basis).
7. The Leader will:
 - provide a final and complete list of the students taking part in the activity and confirm that a list of students will be published to staff before the activity takes place.

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- obtain reports containing:
 - confirmation that a signed consent form has been received by the school/college
 - medical information and GP details
 - details of any special needs
 - a telephone number for parents and carers
 - consent for photographs, if this is applicable.
 - discuss with the Associate Headteacher any behaviour issues of students who deemed to be poor behaviour risks.
 - 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/college.
8. A copy of the OSA approval form will be returned to the leader.
 9. Any further correspondence e.g. itineraries, instructions, amendments, must be copied and given to the OSA Clerical Assistant prior to the activity taking place. The OSA Clerical Assistant will receive written confirmation of all bookings.
 10. The school/college reception office will collect any voluntary contributions via ParentPay.
 11. Before departing on an activity all paperwork should be in the possession of the appropriate person(s).
 12. In case of emergency the critical incident plan will be adhered to.
 13. The leader will contact the EVC after the activity to confirm that it has ended successfully. They will also complete an appropriate review of the activity and pass this to the EVC.

If there is any doubt as to procedure, then staff should contact the Educational Visits Coordinator or one of the clerical assistants for further advice. Stored paperwork from previous activities including examples of risk assessments and reviews of activities are available from the OSA Clerical Assistant.

Parental Consent

Parents should know where their children are at all times 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 particular trip or activity covered by the school/college consent form.

Registration

A register will be taken before the OSA departs. The school/college will then be informed of any students who are absent, who will pass it on to relevant staff.

Planning time

Staff planning an OSA need to have agreed the basic details with the Headteacher and met with the OSA Clerical Assistant by the published OSA deadlines. However, local OSAs run in lessons can be run on a much shorter timescale, having had the date agreed by the Headteacher.

Levels 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.

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2. A formal written risk assessment, OSA5, 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 OSA5 should be adapted (copies available in AF16).
 - 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 take into account all circumstances including payments already made by the school/college, 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.

Student Numbers

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.

Supervision

The level of staffing must be sufficient for there to be adequate supervision at all times. 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 has to 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/college’s behaviour policy is in force during an off-site activity.

Motor vehicle insurance - staff have to 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

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this to an insurance policy is usually free. Approval is also needed, in advance, from the Headteacher/Associate Headteacher and staff are required to complete a form to request permission to use 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 College 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.

Emergency Procedures

In case of emergency, the critical incident plan will be adhered to. A set of EV9 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.

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 the majority of parents will be understanding and cooperative. Any activity that does not receive sufficient contributions will have to be cancelled.

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 river bank 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.

A legal note

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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/college 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.

Feedback

A review form, OSAR, will be completed after every activity and staff are encouraged to complete an OSA17 form for publicity.

College Journeys Working Group or School Journeys Working Group

This group is run by the Educational Visits Coordinator at Rooks Heath or Earlsmead Primary School. These groups include a senior member of staff, at least one member of staff who regularly runs ordinary OSAs and/or ORAs, as well as staff involved in the administration of OSAs. The purpose of the CJWG/SJWG is to review recent OSAs using feedback from trip leaders. It also reviews the OSA policies on an annual basis.

If there is any doubt as to procedure, then staff should contact a member of staff in the Associate Headteacher's office for further advice.