

OUTDOOR EDUCATION POLICY

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Review date: March 2019	
Portfolio Group responsible: Premises/C&CD	
Origin: Health & Safety Officer	



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

Aims and Values

We serve and support our community providing a child-centred education that reflects Christian values. Respecting the dignity and potential of each individual person and sensitive to the needs of a diverse society, we strive to enhance and strengthen our values:

- Hope
- Kindness
- Courage
- Integrity
- Trust
- Respect
- Responsibility

These values are central to our school.

1. Introduction

This policy covers all off-site visits and activities organised through The Ilfracombe Academy and for which the Local Governing Body (LGB) and Directors and Head Teacher are responsible.

The Local Governing Body and Directors endorse the Devon County Council /Torbay Council policy document “Outdoor Education, Visits and Off-Site Activities Health and Safety Policy 2016 (OEVOSA)” as the basis for the school’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 The Ilfracombe Academy. This policy also complements and should be read in conjunction with the Academy’s Health & Safety and Safeguarding Policies.

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

The LGB and Directors aim to enable this Academy to become an educational environment in which all members of the Academy community can thrive, regardless of race, religion, culture, gender or individual need. This will apply 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, team work 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 LGB and Directors, Head Teacher, the EVC (Educational Visits Co-ordinator), the party leader, members of staff and volunteers, pupils and parents. The Academy 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 Academy Health and Safety Policy.

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

2. Responsibilities of the Head teacher

The Head Teacher 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 Staff Code of Conduct
- 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
- ensure off-site programmes are led by competent staff who are appropriately experienced to assess the risks, manage the activity and manage the specific group
- provide relevant induction, training and other Continuous Professional Development opportunities for staff 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

3. Responsibilities of the Educational Visits Co-ordinator

Although holding the ultimate responsibility, Head Teacher has delegated specified tasks to a suitably experienced and competent EVC. The EVC is responsible for carrying out the following agreed tasks and attending the relevant training and update training provided by the Local Authority (LA).

The functions delegated to the EVC 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 Academy 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 a Risk Assessment with pre-populated Existing control measures for 'routine and regular' visits and activities
- to manage and update the Evolve website, including updating staff lists and training records
- to ensure that approval and endorsement arrangements for all visits are in accordance with OEVOSA requirements
- to provide staff with support, advice and information that they need to comply with OEVOSA requirements
- to ensure that leaders and staff have any relevant qualifications and are competent to lead and support particular visits and activities as outlined in OEVOSA
- to ensure that procedures to inform parents and to obtain their consent where necessary are in place
- 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.
- It is strongly recommended that the EVC should have practical experience in leading and managing the range of visits typically run by the school.

4. Responsibilities of the Visit Leader

The Visit Leader will:

- have overall responsibility for the supervision and conduct of the visit or activity;
- obtain the Head Teacher's approval before any off-site visit or activity takes place; where appropriate, LA endorsement for the visit in line with OEVOSA and the specific arrangements of this policy prior to undertaking the activity

- obtain and complete costing sheets which are available from the Finance office, the school minibus should be costed at 50p per mile
- all letters to parents/carers to inform them of the visit and gain their consent, will be generated by the Office, but NOT without a completed costing sheet
- completed costing sheets to be passed to the Business Manager
- Read the Guidance for Planning an Off-site Visit September 2016 (Appendix B) that they have received by e-mail from EVC
- assess the risks to staff, young people and members of the public presented by the visit or activity in order to identify and implement any safety measures. This process will be undertaken in line with the arrangements described in section 8 of this policy
- carry out specific activities in accordance with the detail of OEVOSA
- use the school planning checklist provided in Resources /Establishment resources on Evolve to ensure all procedures have been followed
- vet any third party provider / contractor / coach for competence in accordance with the requirements of OEVOSA
- brief all supervising staff, volunteers and pupils in roles, responsibilities and expectations
- inform parents about the visit and gain their consent in accordance with arrangements described in OEVOSA
- establish appropriate emergency and contingency arrangements for the planned visit or activity which will include the identification of sufficient First Aid cover. This can be a First Aider on the trip or using a wider context first aid kit on the form of transport or at the venue
- continually re-assess risks during the activity and make adjustments accordingly
- ensure there is a contingency plan (Plan B) should a significant change to the programme be necessary due to weather etc.
- be responsible for putting all visits onto “Evolve” and submitting them to the EVC.
- collect from the EVC a card that details appropriate phone numbers in case of an emergency or safeguarding incident

5. Responsibilities of additional members of staff taking part in visits and off-site activities

Members of staff, volunteers and parent helpers should:

- Assist the Visit Leader to ensure the health, safety and welfare of others including young people on the visit;
- Take time to understand their roles and responsibilities whilst taking part in a visit or activity.

6. Responsibilities of pupils

Whilst taking part in off-site activities pupils also have responsibilities about which they should be made aware by the Visit 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 Visit Leader and other members of staff;
- Behave sensibly, keeping to any agreed code of conduct;
- Inform a member of staff of safety concerns.

7. 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 and the Ilfracombe Academy

8. Risk Assessment

The Academy 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 Generic Risk Assessment's Existing Control Measures in Appendix A. These are the control measures that will apply to all such visits and off-site activities and have been drawn up by the 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 RA is adequate for controlling the risks. For each visit/activity, the RA document will be generated electronically and the Visit Leader will edit these appropriately, as adequate for the proposed visit/activity or if necessary add Further Control Measures in the appropriate column

Any activities delivered by Academy 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 Generic Risk Assessment format in Appendix A as a starting point.

There are three generic risk assessments to assist staff in completing the paperwork for a visit: (1) Generic RA for local trips; (2) Generic RA for longer trips including residential; (3) Generic RA for those going overseas, exceptions are the skiing trip and all adventurous activities which are stand-alone RAs. All can be found on Evolve

9. Approval of off-site activities

The Head Teacher will initially approve all off-site activities. Then it is the responsibility of the EVC to approve 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 EVC ahead of final endorsement by the Local Authority Adviser for Outdoor Education.

The policy of The Ilfracombe Academy is that Category A visits will be uploaded to the Evolve system to allow the EVC to monitor the management of off-site visits.

10. 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 Academy's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures. All staff and volunteers on the trip should be made aware of these before the trip or activity takes place. Staff are trained annually, and in addition receive at least termly updates. Arrangements are in place to enable contact with the Academy'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.

11. The provision of training and information

A copy of this policy, along with the overall OEVOSA document, and associated school procedures will be made available to all staff within the school who may be responsible for participating in off-site visits and activities and to any parent requesting a copy. Access will also be made available to the overarching OEVOSA policy, and additional guidance information, via the Babcock LDP website: www.babcock-education.co.uk/ldp

The EVC 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.

Appropriate training will be made available to leaders and other adults taking part in off-site activities in order to reflect identified school health and safety priorities and educational priorities.

The Head Teacher (or EVC on his /her behalf) will maintain a record of the qualifications held by staff and volunteers involved in outdoor activities including first aid, life-saving, mini-bus driving and specific hazardous activities.

12. Action in the case of emergency

The 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 as described in section 8 above. Where necessary, this assessment must include the identification of contingency plans. It will also include whenever possible the identification of sufficient First Aiders or first aid equipment, 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. In the case of an emergency, students need to be informed that they should not use their mobile phones until agreed with Visit Leader.

13. Monitoring and review policy and practice

The LGB and Directors will review this policy:

- Every two years
- At such time as there are significant changes to guidance on the management of Outdoor Education, Visits and Off-Site Activities
- Should significant issues be brought to the attention of the Governors through the report of the Head Teacher.

14. Dates and reviews

Policy / Version Date	Summary of change	Contact	Implementation Date	Review Date
November 2011	Policy created	Margaret Holman	November 2011	November 2013
November 2013	Changes to title and throughout policy - Ilfracombe Arts College to The Ilfracombe Academy	Margaret Holman	November 2013	November 2015
January 2014	At Governors' request section on the responsibilities of the Party Leader where to include items on costing sheets	Margaret Holman	January 2014	November 2015
March 2017	Significant rewrite of policy following Babcock's rewrite of policy	Margaret Holman	March 2017	March 2019
February 2018	Additional information added to the Risk Assessment section	Margaret Holman	February 2018	March 2019

This policy has been agreed by the Local Governing Body and Directors on

Date: