

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

Policy Control Page

Responsible Person	Deputy Head School Deputy Head College
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Oct 25	1.0	JF/DK	Policy taken from DCC guidance with additions in green for sections specific to the Academy

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The Deaf Academy

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

Rationale

The Governing Body seeks to ensure that every student has access to a wide range of educational experiences as an entitlement. As part of this entitlement the Governing Body recognises the significant educational value of visits and activities which take place away from the immediate Academy environment.

The Governing Body aims 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. 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, 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 Governing Body, Principal, Assistant Principals - Heads of School, College and Care, the party leader, members of staff and volunteers, students 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 [and the work experience policy](#).

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

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This policy covers all off-site visits and activities organised through the college and for which the Governing Body and Principal are responsible. The Academy endorses the Devon County Council /Torbay Council policy document *“Outdoor Education, Visits and Off-Site Activities Health and Safety Policy 2024”* (OEVOSA) as the basis for the Academy’s policy for the management of visits and off-site activities.
- 1.2 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 Academy.
- 1.3 This policy also complements and should be read in conjunction with the Academy’s Health & Safety and Safeguarding Policies.

2. Responsibilities of the Principal/ Assistant Principals for Education

2.1 The Principal (Sylvan Dewing) and Assistant Principals - Heads for Education (Rachel Stevens – School, Greg Ireland – College) 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 Council and Academy health and safety policy, 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 Policies 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.
- Check that staffing ratio is suitable for each visit.
- 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 (EVC)

3.1 Although holding the ultimate responsibility, the Principal and Assistant Principals have delegated specified tasks to a suitably experienced and competent EVC.

Name of EVC: *Jo Fison (Deputy Head of School) and David Kussel (Deputy Head of College)*

3.2 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).

3.3 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's specific arrangements named in this policy.
- To ensure that the management of visits and off-site activities is informed by an appropriate risk assessment and SOP.
- To work with the Principal, Assistant Principals for Education, Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and other Senior Leaders to establish Standard Operating Procedures to guide the risk assessment process for visits and non-adventurous 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 work with each Visit Leader 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.

4. Responsibilities of the Visit Leader

4.1 The Visit Leader will:

- Have overall responsibility for the supervision and conduct of the visit or activity.
- Obtain Leadership approval and, where appropriate, LA endorsement for the visit in line with OEVOSA and the specific arrangements of this policy prior to undertaking the activity.
- Follow policy and procedures of the Academy.
- Use the Academy planning checklist to ensure all procedures have been followed.
- 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.
- Carry out specific activities in accordance with the detail of OEVOSA.
- Use the school planning checklist provided in OEVOSA to ensure all procedures have been followed.
- Vet any third-party provider / contractor / coach for competence in accordance with the requirements of OEVOSA.
- Ensure form SOE5 from the policy is completed (or a previously completed form is on Evolve) where commercial, charitable or private are being used for adventurous or residential activities.
- Ensure there is a contingency plan (Plan B) should a significant change to the programme be necessary due to weather etc.
- Ensure there are two members of duty staff available throughout **on group activities of more than 2 students or where supervision levels require this.**
- Brief all supervising staff, volunteers and students in roles, responsibilities and expectations.
- Inform parents about the visit and gain their consent in accordance with arrangements described in OEVOSA, **or gain student consent where age appropriate.**
- Establish appropriate emergency and contingency arrangements for the planned visit or activity which will include the identification of sufficient First Aid cover.
- Continually re-assess risks dynamically during the activity and make adjustments accordingly.

5. Responsibilities of Additional Members of Staff

5.1 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.

- Have read all Academy guidance regarding trips and visits.
- Read the Risk Assessments and SOPs thoroughly.
- Ensure they have read and understood student placement plans.
- Take time to understand their roles and responsibilities whilst taking part in a visit or activity.

6. Responsibilities of Students

- 6.1 Whilst taking part in off-site activities students 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 party leader and other members of staff.
 - Behave sensibly, keeping to any agreed code of conduct.
 - Inform a member of staff of safety concerns.
 - Students on work placements will be expected to follow all Health and Safety rules, as required by their workplace, to know evacuation procedures and follow instructions from their employer.

7. Responsibilities of Parents

- 7.1 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 (all conditions should already be noted on Placement Plans which must be read by staff).
 - Provide an emergency contact number.
 - Provide consent in accordance with the requirements of OEVOA.

8. Risk Assessment

- 8.1 The Academy is committed to providing a wide variety of outdoor activities and visits design to challenge and develop young people. These inevitably feature a degree of risk that demands management. Arrangements will be achieved by a risk assessment led by the Visit Leader for each activity/visit or series of visits undertaken. This process is guided by establishment specific Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) documents which have been created to establish minimum standards and expectations for Visit Leaders. There are currently 2 SOP documents for various categories of visit. These are:

[2024 - visits walking SOP.docx](#)

[2024 visits with transport SOP.docx](#)

- 8.2 These are the control measures that will apply to all such visits and off-site activities and have been drawn up by the Principal/Assistant Principals for Education, EVCs and other Senior Leaders and will be brought to the attention of anyone undertaking the role of Visit Leader.
- 8.3 In assessing the risks presented by a planned visit or activity, the Visit Leader must judge if the controls described in the SOP are adequate for controlling the risks. For each

visit/activity, add any additional control measures needed in the enhanced risk assessment column of the SOP document or at the bottom of the SOP.

- 8.4 Any activities delivered by school staff falling within the definition of Category B (adventurous), will have a separate stand-alone risk assessment; Adventurous Activities Led by School Staff Risk Assessment.
- 8.5 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.

9. Approval of Off-site Activities

- 9.1 The Principal/EVC 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.
- 9.2 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
- 9.3 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 Principal/EVC ahead of final endorsement by the Local Authority Adviser for Outdoor Education.
- 9.4 The policy of the Academy is that Category A visits will be uploaded to the Evolve system to allow the EVC and Academy leaders to monitor the management of off-site visits.

10. Safeguarding

- 10.1 The safety and welfare of students 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 policies and procedures. All staff and volunteers on the trip should be made aware of these before the trip or activity takes place.
- 10.2 Arrangements should be in place to enable contact with the Academy's Designated Safeguarding Officer outside normal college 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

- 11.1 A copy of this policy, along with the overall OEVOSA document, will be made available to all staff within the Academy 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 via the Evolve system.
- 11.2 The Principal 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 Principal/ Assistant Principals for Education/EVC and records of qualifications will be uploaded to the Evolve system.

12. Action in the Case of Emergency

- 12.1 The Principal/ Assistant Principals for Education/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.
- 12.2 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.
- 12.3 Any accidents and incidents that occur during off-site visits and activities will be reported and recorded in accordance with the Academy's health and safety policy. Accidents and incidents will subsequently be reviewed within the school to identify any learning points.
- 12.4 [First Aid on trips.docx](#)

13. Monitoring and Review

- 13.1 Academy leaders will monitor the application of this policy in operational practice by conducting checks in accordance with our Quality Assurance Policy
- 13.2 This policy will be reviewed:
 - Every two years.
 - After any significant changes to the management of outdoor education locally.
 - After any significant changes to the OEVOSA document.
 - After an incident.
 - Should significant issues be brought to the attention of the Governors through the report of the Assistant Principals - Heads of School and College.

- 14. **Submission of Visit Form Timescales**
 - 14.1 Visit forms must be submitted by the Visit Leader to the EVC in accordance with the following timescales. Failure to meet these timescales may result in the planned visit being postponed or cancelled.

Category A Day Visits – *4 weeks before the visit*

Category A Residentials – *At least 8 weeks before the residential*

Category B Adventurous Day visits – *At least 5 weeks before the visit*

Category B Adventurous Residential visits – *at least 10 weeks before the residential, bearing in mind the visit form must be submitted to the LA with at least 2 months' notice*

Category C Overseas visits – at least 4 months before the overseas visit, bearing in mind the visit form must be submitted to the LA with at least 3 months’ notice

15. Work Placements and Work Related Visits

Work placements and work related learning are essential to our Deaf students to prepare them for adulthood. A work placement for the purposes of risk and recording, will be treated as any other visit (see above).

15.1 Safety on work placements and work related learning should follow all systems and procedures set out in the “Work Placement Policy”.

15.2 The work placement co-ordinator will check that employers have suitable public liability insurance and personal evacuation procedures.

15.3 The work placement co-ordinator will ensure a SOP for transport, a Pre-visit checklist and, if necessary, a site specific risk assessment is in place for all placements.

15.4 The supporting staff member (Learning Leader, CSW, Job Coach etc) will have read placement plans and will support the student to follow all employer guidance to keep safe.

16. Residential Care Trips and Visits

Residential Care acknowledges that in order for children, young people and adults to thrive and fulfil their potential it is essential to provide a wide range of activities to promote social, emotional and physical wellbeing. Taking risk is an important part of development and it is important that we are not risk adverse whilst ensuring the safety of our residents.

16.1 Within Residential Care we hold key generic risk assessments for regular activities that we provide. Members of the Residential Care team are required to regularly read and update these risk assessments to ensure that they are aware of any potential risks/hazards and control measures making the activity as safe as possible.

16.2 In Residential Care we employ a team of trained and experienced staff who are required to read each relevant plan for the child, young person or adult that they are supporting. This contains detailed individualised risk assessments and together with the generic activity risk assessment allows the member of staff to conduct an activity in a safe way.

16.3 If a member of staff is planning a new activity that is not covered within the generic risk assessments the member of staff will be required to complete a risk assessment for that activity. This risk assessment will follow the template in appendix two and require sign off by senior leadership.

16.4 When completing a risk assessment, the member of staff is required to identify all hazards that may related to the activity. The hazards are then assessed using the risk assessment key by identifying the likelihood and impact and finally level of risk;

Level 1: Little or no risk.

Level 2: Acceptable amount of risk that can be managed with minimal controls.

Level 3: Risk of harm that will require controls.

Level 4: Risk of significant harm that will require high level controls.

Once the level of risk for each hazard has been identified the member of staff must identify control measures to minimise risk. These may include additional staffing, safety equipment, training or

supervision. Once the control measures have been identified the member of staff must reassess the risks using the risk assessment key. Any risk that is still over Level 3 must be reassessed and if sufficient controls cannot be identified then the activity must not take place.

15.5 There may be times when a low to medium risk activity or trip spontaneously arises and it may be inappropriate to prevent the child, young person or adult from participating simply because of a risk assessment not being completed. In these rare moments, the member of staff can dynamically risk assess, taking into account the needs of the individual, the current staffing arrangements as well as the likelihood/impact of risk. These dynamic risk assessments must be signed off by an on-call shift leader or senior member of staff.

.....
Chair of Governors

.....
Date

.....
Principal

.....
Date

Appendices

Appendix 1 Taken from EVOLVE

Staff Drug Use – Medicines

Visit Leaders should ensure that they have relevant information about the medical needs of staff members. These records should be treated confidentially by the Visit Leader.

Staff members should ensure that their medicines are stored safely. It is expected that staff who use medication are aware of any effects on driving etc and restrict their actions accordingly.

Staff Drug Use – Tobacco

Staff must be clear about the times and places they may smoke. The rules followed whilst on school premises will usually be applied.

Staff Drug Use – Alcohol

- No alcohol will be consumed on residential trips by on, or off duty staff

Drinking/Drugs and Driving

Employees driving in connection with Academy business must comply with the Road Traffic Act and supporting regulations. Therefore, the Academy:

- expects that employees whose duties require them to drive will abstain from alcohol consumption and/or the misuse of medicines, controlled drugs or other substances during their normal working hours or at times which may later lead to adverse effects during working hours;
- considers drinking and driving under the influence of prescribed drugs that adversely affect the driver's capability to safely control a vehicle to be a disciplinary offence. (These rules apply to Academy owned vehicles, e.g. pool cars and minibuses, lease cars and employees' own vehicles that are insured for business use, and for which the Academy pays business mileage rates).

Appendix 2

[SOE5 2024 .docx](#)

[Offsite Trip Process.docx](#)

[Parent Letter Template.docx](#)

[Visit Specific Risk Assessment.docx](#)

[Pre-visit form.docx](#)

[Trip Notes and Checklist.docx](#)

[School Guidelines- staff when on a trip.docx](#)