



Outdoor Education and Offsite Activity Policy

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Aims and Objectives

Tor Bridge High wishes to provide a broad range and rich variety of personal development opportunities for all students. Occasions which necessitate students missing timetabled lessons must, however, be very carefully scheduled and planned so as to minimise disruption to teaching and learning programmes. The procedures given below relate to all trips/visits which may, or may not, incur a cost to the student/the student's family. The procedures are split into two sections - general procedures and those relating specifically to the financial aspect. Staff should make themselves familiar with all aspects of these guidelines.

Safeguarding

The safety and welfare of children is paramount. In the event of a safeguarding issue or concern being identified during a trip/visit, the visit leader should follow the school's child protection/safeguarding policy and procedures. All staff and volunteers on the trip should be made aware of these before a trip/visit takes place.

Arrangements should be in place to enable contact with the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead outside normal school hours if necessary. Contact details should be communicated to all staff/volunteers on the trip (as well as the trip/visit leader).

Responsibilities of the Headteacher

The Headteacher will:

- ensure all visits/trips 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 Outdoor Education, Visits and Off-Site Activities Health and Safety Policy (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.

Responsibilities of the Educational Visits Co-ordinator

Although holding the ultimate responsibility, the Headteacher has delegated specified tasks to a suitably experienced and competent EVC. Name of EVC: Pearce Pettitt

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 Headteacher contact with the LA over planned visits
- to establish monitoring systems to ensure that educational visits are undertaken in accordance with OEVOSA and the school 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 work with the Headteacher, 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
- 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.

Responsibilities of the Visit Leader

The Visit Leader will:

- have overall responsibility for the supervision and conduct of the visit or activity
- obtain 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
- 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
- brief all supervising staff, volunteers and students in roles, responsibilities and expectations
- inform parents/carers 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
- continually re-assess risks dynamically during the activity and make adjustments accordingly

Approval of Off-site Activities

The Headteacher/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.

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 Headteacher/EVC ahead of final endorsement by the Local Authority Adviser for Outdoor Education.

The policy of Tor Bridge High is that Category A visits will be uploaded to the Evolve system to allow the EVC and school leaders to monitor the management of off-site visits.

Procedures to be followed:

- Discuss the activity with your Curriculum Leader or member of Senior Leadership Team in order to clarify aims, outcomes and any organisational implications.
- Refer to the School Calendar and discuss the activity with the Headteacher and the Deputy Head responsible for staff cover.
- Obtain the Headteacher's written permission for any off-site activity using the 'Costing Sheet for Activities & Trips' pro forma provided in the 'Trips' folder within the staff SharePoint. This pro forma is also the means by which you need to cost your activity (if applicable) to ensure it is cost effective with a contingency built in. Please ensure you complete this pro forma in full including all costings/budgeting information. **You also need to consider that there will be transactional charges from MCAS which you need to budget for.**
- The 'Costing Sheet for Activities & Trips' pro forma above should be completed as soon as you are aware of the proposed activity to allow as much planning time as possible. When completed, the pro forma should be passed to the Senior Leadership Team for approval (the pro forma is prepopulated with this information).
- When/if confirmation is received back from the Headteacher that the activity can proceed you should complete the online 'Staff Absence Request Form' which you need to forward to your line manager to process.

- Inform the catering manager if meals will not be required by students or packed lunches are required for those students who are in receipt of free school meals.
- Consult Health and Safety regulations and Codes of Practice to ensure every aspect is fully covered, including insurance.
- It is recommended that there is an Assistant Visit Leader, who will be involved with all stages of the planning process. The benefits are two-fold: there will be someone to stand-in in the event of illness/injury/emergency, and colleagues gain experience in leading visits enabling them to lead future visits themselves.

On completion of the Risk Assessment using 'Evolve' this will be approved by the Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) who will store the necessary paperwork, itinerary and list of students involved in a central location. **All activities must be approved by the EVC. Approval must be secured at least one week before departure (Category 'C' activities need to be approved at least 3 weeks before departure). Category 'C' activities include:**

- Activities planned to take place overseas
- Activities inside the UK which involve high risk elements, requiring specialist skills and qualifications for supervisors, e.g. canoeing, sailing, caving, walking in remote or hazardous environments such as moorland or mountains
- Activities where there is a level of uncertainty about the safe conduct of that particular activity.
- There should be a phone number listed on the Evolve form for a member of SLT, in case of emergencies. This person will have all the relevant paperwork to hand in order to provide information to parents, and other appropriate parties.

If staff are in any doubt as to whether an activity is a Category 'C' activity, confirmation should be sought from the EVC before the activity is arranged.

Parental written consent is required for all planned activities or visits which take place either during the school day, after school or residential. The exception to this are those activities which may happen more frequently as part of the normal school day and are in walking distance of the school.

Detailed notes for guidance on all aspects of off-site activities are available from the EVC.

All staff wishing to use a minibus must have undertaken and passed a mini bus test, with the Academy's approved provider, in the relevant category. For information on bookings and for guidance on use of the minibus, please see our Mini Bus Driver/Site team.

Risk Assessment

The school 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 5 SOP documents for various categories of visit. These are:

- SOP - Transport
- SOP - Overseas

- SOP - Walking
- SOP - Residential UK
- SOP - Alternative Provision

These are the control measures that will apply to all such visits and off-site activities and have been drawn up by the Headteacher, EVC and other Senior Leaders 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 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.

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.

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.

The Visit Leader's responsibility is to students' parents, carers, landowners, public agencies, the general public, wildlife and the environment through the Headteacher and Governing Body for the group members. A hazard is anything that has the potential to cause injury or harm. A risk is the likelihood, great or small, of the potential for harm being realised and causing an accident or incident. The extent of the risk takes into account how serious the injuries or outcomes are likely to be.

First Aid requirements

For the majority of school trips or activities, the minimum requirement by the Academy is that one member of staff within the party acts as an 'appointed person' for first aid. This person is responsible for ensuring a first aid kit is available and they will have access to a mobile telephone should the need arise to summons medical assistance. In the case of overseas trips, one of the staff party must hold a minimum of a one day emergency first aid qualification. For activities such as Ten Tors and Duke of Edinburgh activities, one of the party should hold a three day qualification and have appropriate Moorland Walking qualifications where such activities are undertaken.

Any First Aid incidents, or near misses, must be recorded at the time, and included in the post trip evaluation.

Visit Leaders should be aware of the limits of mobile phones in regard to potential emergencies, or delays. Texts can be sent to the emergency service (need to register beforehand). A text may get through, even when there is insufficient signal for a call.

The "What Three Words" app is very useful for helping the emergency services to locate a group in remote settings.

Action in the Case of Emergency

The Headteacher/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.

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.

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.

Planning Checklist (PSOE1 form)

The aim of this Guidance is to help the Headteacher and the Visit Leader to ensure:

- the safety of students and staff
- the maximum educational benefit to students
- effective organisation and administration
- issues relating to access and conservation are addressed
- staff:student ratios are at the discretion of the school, and are dependent on the nature of the visit, and the participating students.

Responsibilities of Students and Parents

Student Conduct and Participation

Participation in educational visits, residentials and extracurricular trips is considered a privilege rather than an entitlement. Students are expected to demonstrate behaviour that reflects the school's values and complies fully with the school's Behaviour Policy both in the lead-up to, and throughout, any educational visit. The school reserves the right to withdraw a student's place on a trip where their behaviour, attendance, punctuality or conduct gives reasonable cause to believe that they may present a risk to their own safety, the safety or enjoyment of others, the reputation of the school, or the successful operation of the visit. This decision will be made at the discretion of the Headteacher and will take into account the individual circumstances, the nature of the incident(s), any reasonable adjustments required, and the school's wider duty of care to all participants.

By providing consent for a student to participate in an educational visit, parents/carers confirm that they have read and accepted the school's expectations regarding conduct and understand the financial implications should their child's behaviour result in withdrawal from, or exclusion from, the visit.

Behaviour incidents occurring in school or whilst representing the school prior to the visit may be considered when determining whether participation remains appropriate.

Decisions will be informed by the school's risk assessment, safeguarding responsibilities and duty of care to all participants.

The Headteacher reserves the right to consider exceptional circumstances on an individual basis.

Serious breaches of the Behaviour Policy during a visit may result in activities being withdrawn, parents/carers being contacted, the student being required to return home early, police involvement where appropriate, and further sanctions on return to school.

Parents/carers may be liable for any additional costs incurred by the school as a direct result of their child's behaviour, including additional staffing, transport, accommodation changes or damage caused, where appropriate.

Parents/carers may be required to reimburse the school or third parties for wilful or negligent damage caused by their child during an educational visit.

Possession or use of alcohol, illegal drugs, vaping devices, weapons or any prohibited item during an educational visit will result in immediate removal from the visit, subject to safeguarding considerations.

Educational visits are an extension of the school day and the school's Behaviour Policy, Code of Conduct, safeguarding procedures and all other relevant policies remain fully in force throughout the duration of the visit. Students represent both themselves and the school at all times and are expected to uphold the highest standards of conduct.

Financial Responsibility

Where a student is withdrawn from, or excluded during, an educational visit as a result of behaviour that does not meet the expectations set out in the school's Behaviour Policy, the school will not ordinarily be liable for any financial losses incurred. Any refunds will be subject to the terms and conditions of the travel provider, venue or third-party organiser and any associated insurance arrangements. Where costs have already been committed, including non-refundable deposits, transport, accommodation or activity fees, parents/carers may remain responsible for these costs. In circumstances where a student must be collected early from a visit or residential due to unacceptable behaviour, parents/carers will be expected to arrange and fund their child's return home unless exceptional circumstances apply and the Headteacher determines otherwise.

Financial procedures

Voluntary contributions may be sought for activities during the school day which entail additional costs, e.g. fieldwork trips, visiting speakers. In these circumstances, no student will be prevented from participating because their parent/carer cannot or will not make a contribution (if insufficient funds are available, it may be necessary to curtail or cancel activities).

Trip Leader to arrange meeting with Finance Department to set the trip up in MCAS to determine cost of trip and payment method. Trip leader should provide the finance team with the following:

- list of suppliers being used for the visit/s
- order forms for resources needed for the visit/s
- student list of those invited. Also, if any are excluded or whether there is a number limit.
- copy of the letter to parents/carers

Criteria for charging

Optional Activities outside of the school day

The Academy reserves the right to request full payment for optional, extra activities provided outside of the school day, for example theatre or sport-based visits. Such activities are not part of the curriculum or religious education nor are they part of an examination syllabus. Where we wish to charge we will tell parents/carers in advance. Where specific funding has been received to support particular activities, we will subsidise the charge to the extent permitted by the funding.

Education Partly During the School Day

If a non-residential activity happens partly inside the school day and partly outside of it, there will be no charge other than the voluntary contribution, if applicable, if most of the time to be spent on the activity falls within the school day. Conversely, if the bigger proportion of time spent falls outside of the normal school day, charges will be made. When such activities are arranged parents/carers will be told how the charges are to be calculated.

Residential Activities

Charges will be made for board and lodging. Other charges will be made to cover costs when the number of school sessions missed by the learner's totals half or more of the number of half-days taken up by the activity. In such cases, parents/carers will be told how the charges were calculated.

Minibus

Travel in the school minibus is free for the Post 16 consortium learners but a discretionary charge may apply to other users. Charges will be made to cover only actual costs incurred, divided by the total number of learners participating. There will be no levy on those who can pay to support those who can't or won't.

General

As explained previously, all trips and activities should be costed as accurately as possible on the trip proposal form, and consider that a 'contingency' should be added to the budget calculations to allow for any unforeseen expenditure.

Inform the Finance department of planned activity to enable collection of money, transport arrangements etc. to be clarified. **COMPLETED ORDER FORMS FOR ANY EXPENDITURE MUST BE SUBMITTED IN ADVANCE. PARENT/CARERS MUST PAY FOR ANY ACTIVITIES USING MCAS. NO CASH OR CHEQUES WILL BE ACCEPTED.**

MCAS (My Child at School)

The process:

When a trip is identified by the Trip Leader, budgeted for and approved the following action should be taken:

1. Trip Leader to draft letter to parents/carers following advice of content regarding payment from Finance Team.

2. Finance Team will then create the trip in MCAS and apply the relevant criteria for payment and student audience depending on content of letter.
3. Deposit dates, instalment dates etc. can all be set up in MCAS.
4. It will be the Trip Leader's responsibility to ask Finance Team for update on payment progress. They will be able to produce excel spreadsheets for trip leaders.
5. Credits against trips can also be applied in MCAS. E.g. If HOY/SLT Link agrees to subsidise the Year 11 Prom for (named student) for £x we can go into MCAS and allocate the subsidy against the student, thus showing a 'modified balance'.

After any activity the finance will run a check to ensure there are no overspends. Likewise, if there is a surplus, parents/carers are entitled to a refund should the cost incurred by them exceed the proportionate cost of the trip or activity. The initial letter which the party leader sends to parents/carers informing them of the activity should include the statement below in all cases where parents/carers have been asked to make a contribution:

*"In the unlikely event that a small surplus is left, once all the costs of this activity have been met, if it is less than £10 per student, we would like to retain it within the School Fund to use for the general well-being of the students. If you have any objection to this, could you please let us know by xx/xx." **It is crucial that sufficient time is allowed for everything to be set up properly to ensure it doesn't all fall apart from the start!***

Tor Bridge High is committed to ensuring the General Data Protection Regulation GDPR is adhered to at all times within the schools. We will ensure that all data we are given is processed in line with our organisations Data Protection Policies and in line with your rights under the Data Protection Act 2018 and the EU General Data Protection Regulations.



Annexe A - Guidance on the use of 'Evolve'

As explained overleaf, staff are required to gain formal approval for activities which take place outside of the normal school day or at the discretion of the Headteacher.

Tor Bridge High uses Evolve to approve activities. All staff have account log in details through which proposed activities can be uploaded. Staff who lead activities will have an active account through which submissions and editing is possible. Other staff will have a read only option and can access forms and guidance.

Early approval is encouraged and providing that the majority of the detail is included to indicate the purpose, financial viability and level of risk attached, a decision to support the venture in principle can be given. This will be done using Evolve's formal note facility which is attached to the record. Taking this approach also enables the EVC to communicate recommendations to the activity leader. Forms, checklists and guidance are available through Evolve for completion electronically or for download and printing.

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 - 2 weeks

Category A Residentials - 2 weeks

Category B Adventurous Day visits - 3 weeks

Category B Adventurous Residential visits - 3 months

Category C Overseas visits - 4 months

Staff who lead Adventure Activities must upload copies of their leadership certificates to their personal area of the site. It is not possible to progress approval for activities of this nature, led by school staff, unless there is evidence of competence on the system. Outside providers will have their own accreditation which is vetted using the LOTC Quality Badge or AALA quality safety schemes.

The school supports self-assessment measures as a part of its commitment to quality assurance. Evolve has sections to identify purpose and objectives and expects to see these features reflected in the activity evaluation which can be uploaded up to 28 days after the activity has taken place.