

The “Outdoor Education Camp Scheme” (OECS) (2023/24)

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Q1 : How can schools apply for participating in the OECS ?

A1 : Invitation for schools to participate in the OECS (2023/24) was sent through the Education Bureau Circular Memorandum “Curriculum Development Institute Application for Participation in Educational Activities and Event” on 2 May 2023. Camp places of the 2023/24 school year (i.e. from 1 September 2023 to 12 July 2024) will be open for telephone booking by schools from 16 May 2023 (Tuesday) at 0900 hours onwards. Schools may firstly reserve camp periods with camp offices over the phone followed by downloading the “OECS (2023/24) Application Form” from the EDB website. The completed application form should be sent to the camp offices within one week after the successful telephone booking.

Procedures	Details
Step 1: At least two months before the commencement of the OE Camp	<p>Schools should directly contact the respective camp offices <u>by telephone to reserve the camp places</u>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A deposit at a rate of \$25 (3-day camp) or \$50 (5-day camp) per head may be collected by the camp offices, except those managed by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD).
Step 2: Within one week after the telephone booking	<p>Schools should <u>return the duly completed “OECS Application Form” to the respective camp offices by fax or email</u>. Schools should clearly indicate if they also wish to apply for the OECS subsidy in the application form.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ For submission of application forms via <u>fax</u>, upon receiving the application forms acknowledged by the camps, the EDB will reply and notify schools of the result of subsidy application via fax; ■ For submission of application forms via <u>email</u>, upon receiving the application forms acknowledged by the camps, the EDB will reply and notify schools the result of subsidy application via the email provided by the schools. ● Camp offices will verify the information on the application form against the telephone booking record, and then forward it to the EDB for follow up action. ● If the school does not receive any notifications within 20 days after the submission of application, the school may contact the PE Section, EDB for enquiry (Tel No.: 2762 2538).
Step 3: At least six weeks before the commencement of the OE Camp	<p>Schools should <u>confirm the number of camp places and programme design with the respective camp offices</u> to facilitate the deployment of manpower and resources.</p>
Step 4: At least four weeks before the commencement of the OE Camp	<p>For any changes of the number of camp places reserved, schools are required <u>to notify the respective camp offices and the EDB in writing</u> at least four weeks before the commencement of the OE Camp. The camp offices will then confirm the updated information and provide the information to the EDB to revise the subsidy accordingly. For</p>

	those schools which have not timely confirmed the changes of the number of camp places with the respective camp offices, the camp offices may refuse other additional campers to the campsites. The camp offices may also charge schools in accordance with the original numbers of campers proposed through Step 3 above. Besides, <u>schools should arrange the payment according to the specified period of time provided by the camps.</u>
Step 5: In the OE Camp	On arrival/Before leaving the camp, the responsible teacher and the camp responsible officer should <u>sign a confirmation of campers counted.</u>
Step 6: Within one week after the completion of the OE Camp	Schools should <u>complete the “Outdoor Education Camp Scheme Evaluation Form” in duplicate</u> and return them to the respective camp offices and the EDB.

Q2 : Is there defined duration required for participating in the OECS (2023/24) ?

A2 : Education camp to be organised from 1 September 2023 to 12 July 2024 in consecutive 3-day (applicable to both primary and secondary schools) or 5-day (applicable to primary schools only) are eligible to apply for participating in the OECS. If the camp periods fall into Sundays and public holidays, schools are required to discuss with the camp offices.

Q3 : Is there any restriction for the use of the OECS subsidy in the camp duration and choice of camp?

A3 : The OECS subsidy applies to education camps organised in the 37 camps approved by the EDB (website: http://www.edb.gov.hk/en/curriculum-development/kla/pe/references_resource/oecamp/index.html). The camps should be 3-day camp (for primary and secondary schools) or 5-day camp (for primary school).

Q4 : What are the subsidy rates of the OECS? Is there any restriction on the time(s) for a school to apply for it?

A4 : Schools can apply for OECS subsidy for many times. The subsidy rates are as follows :

	5-day Camp (applicable to primary schools only)	3-day Camp
Camping Days	Monday to Friday (Or agreed with camp offices)	Monday to Wednesday or Wednesday to Friday (Or agreed with camp offices)
Subsidy Rate per Student	\$ 310	\$ 156
Subsidy to Accompanying teachers	Subsidy to Accompanying Teachers is calculated based on the ratio of 1:25 (i.e. one accompanying teacher will be subsidised full charges for 25 participating students), and at least two teachers ^{Note} will be subsidised in each application. [Note: With reference to the “Guidelines on Outdoor Activities”, at least two teachers are required for each camp period.]	

Q5 : How to apply for the OECS subsidy ?

A5 : Schools intend to apply for the OECS subsidy should mark clearly in the “Outdoor Education Camp Application Form”. Camp offices will verify the information on the application form against the telephone booking record and then forward it to the EDB for follow up action. The EDB will issue notification to respective schools and camp offices by **fax or email** (whether the subsidy applications are successful or not).

Q6 : What is the ratio of teacher to student in leading outdoor education camp ?

A6 : There are two kinds of teacher-student ratio for leading outdoor education camp, one for subsidy approval and the other for safety purpose. For subsidy approval, the ratio of teacher to student is 1:25 (with at least two teachers in one camp period); For safety purpose, the ratio of teacher to student is at least 1:30.

Q7 : How to change of the number of campers after the submission or approval of the OECS subsidy?

A7 : For any changes of the number of camp places reserved, schools should inform the camp offices at their earliest convenience. Schools have to **notify the respective camp offices** by updating the number of participants on the original application form with the signature of teacher-in-charge or the school head at least four weeks before the commencement of the OE Camp by **fax or email** to the camp offices for processing. The camp offices will endorse the updated information and convey it to the EDB for record keeping ND subsidy revision. In case of insufficient notification period, the camp offices may refuse other additional campers to the campsites or charge schools in accordance with the confirmed numbers of campers even if there is less number of campers.

Q8 : Will the change of number of campers affect the OECS subsidy ?

A8 : Schools are required to **fax or email** the updated “Outdoor Education Camp Application Form” to the camp offices as earliest as possible after the telephone agreement with camp offices. The handling procedures are as follows with reference to the form **faxed or emailed** to the camp offices:

	Number of campers increased	Number of campers decreased
Schools fax or email the up-dated form to camp offices 4 weeks or more prior to the camping date	The EDB will pay camp offices according to the number of students and teachers (eligible for OECS subsidy), revise the OECS subsidy approval, fax or email the revised approval letter to schools and camp offices concern.	The same procedures as the number of campers increase as list on the left box.
Schools fax or email the up-dated form to camp offices less than 4 weeks	The EDB may not be able to subsidise schools.	According to the request of camp offices, schools and the EDB may need to pay the amount of camp fees

prior to the camping date		and subsidy respectively according to the number of campers' schools has agreed with camp offices earlier.
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Q9 : How to handle outdoor education camp under special circumstances (e.g. adverse weather and the announcement of class suspension by the EDB) ?

A9 : Handling outdoor education camp under the following special circumstances:

- a) Adverse weather: No outdoor activities should be organised in case of the **tropical cyclone No.1 or above, the Red or Black Rainstorm** etc. warning signals were issued. **When Typhoon Signal No.1 or above is in force, schools should arrange students to leave the camp under a safe circumstance.** Schools should discuss with camp offices to postpone or cancel the camp if they were yet to enter the camp.
- b) Schools should discuss with camp offices to postpone or cancel the camp in case of the announcement of class suspension by the EDB.

Example: The camp period of the school is scheduled for 5 March to 7 March. (On 5 March, the Hong Kong Observatory issued Typhoon Signal No.1 on 7:00am, and then replaced it by Signal No. 3 on 3:00pm. All typhoon signals were lowered at 8:00pm).

The arrangement is suggested as below:

- The camp of 5 March will be cancelled;
- School may consider to resume the camp on 6 March (Either in the morning or the time as discussed with the camp offices) or discuss with the camp offices to postpone.

Q10 : Will the paid fees be refunded for cancellation of outdoor education camp under special circumstances (e.g. adverse weather and the announcement of class suspension by the EDB) ?

A10 : Under the following circumstances, the camp offices accept schools to cancel, postpone, delay or leave earlier. Schools should discuss with the camp offices for the postponement of the camp (must be within the same school year). If the camp needed to be cancelled, the camp office would arrange refund to schools and the EDB:

- The Education Bureau announces suspension of classes;
- The Hong Kong Observatory issues the red or black rainstorm warning signal;
- The Hong Kong Observatory issues Tropical Cyclone Warning Signal No. 3 or above;
- The Air Quality Health Index (AQHI) at the district where the campsite located reaches 10+ (Severe); and
- Serious flooding in the district at which the campsite is located.

The End