

**School Exchange Activity in Okinawa**  
**Guidelines of Application (For Travel Agents in HK)**

The Okinawa Convention and Visitors Bureau (OCVB) would arrange a local host school after receiving an application of an exchange activity during school trips coming to Okinawa. Before applying a school exchange activity in Okinawa, please read the following guidelines carefully. Please note that this is a document for travel agents in Hong Kong. **If you are a school teacher, please refer to the guidelines for school teachers in HK.**

**A. What to do during a school exchange activity**

What participants will do during a school exchange activity depends on your client's (a HK school) requests and on what the host school can offer. These are some of the examples.

- a. Campus tour;
- b. Participation of lessons;
- c. Participation of club activities;
- d. Japanese-style school lunch together with local students;
- e. Cross-cultural activities, such as traditional Okinawan drum dance *Eisa*;
- f. School cleaning with local students (In Japan, it is a part of education for students to clean their own school, in order to nurture their sense of responsibility to the school.);
- g. Sports or music exchange activities.

With the mission of facilitating the inter-cultural exchange, OCVB try their best to arrange a local host school for each application. However, OCVB do not guarantee to find a host school which fulfils all of client's requests. Some local schools might reject arranging school cleaning due to safety reasons, while some find it difficult to arrange all of the requested exchange activities with your client's students due to tight curriculum. For most schools in Okinawa, a campus tour is the easiest to arrange.

You are appreciated to explain to your client that a school exchange activity is mutual-based and so the host schools might also request your client's cooperation, such as asking your client's students to prepare presentations to introduce their own country and school. Your client's students might also be invited to participate as a language partner in the English or Chinese language lessons. Your client's cooperation will be highly appreciated.

**B. Application Procedures**

**As an overseas travel agent, you are encouraged to submit the application to OCVB through a land operator (travel agent) in Okinawa.** A land operator in Okinawa is more familiar with the application procedures as well as the local logistics arrangement. This will contribute to a smoother and efficient process of arranging a host school and will prevent any miscommunication due to language difference.

**Please avoid contacting a local primary or secondary school in Okinawa directly if you do not have any relations with the counterparts.** (For example, sending an

email requesting for a school exchange activity to an email address stated in the website of a school in Okinawa.) For the safety of students, schools in Japan are usually not open to the public and people unknown. Some schools are also confused when they receive these emails of request from schools and travel agents in foreign countries they do not know. This might also lead to warning from the Education Department in Okinawa. Your request might be rejected at a high probability in such case.

### C. What you should submit for application

Please submit the following completed documents in PDF for application.

- (1) Application form (please download at <https://www.okinawapref.com.hk/educationaltour>);
- (2) Proposed name list of participants, stating the age and gender, their positions (students / teachers / parents) and information of food allergy of all participants;
- (3) Proposed trip itinerary with information of the flights and proposed place of accommodation; and
- (4) Letter of application to the host school, stating the proposed date(s), exchange activities and theme of the trip.

If the original copy of (3) to (4) is not in Japanese, **you must provide a copy of Japanese translation.** You might also request the local land operator to do the translation for you.

In your email of application, you should also **provide the English website of the school** or attach an English PDF file which briefly introduces your school, such as mission, number of students, school type (public / private) and etc..

### D. Application Deadline

In order to provide sufficient time for OCVB to find a suitable host school and for the host school to prepare for the exchange activity, you should submit your application with all of the completed documents stated in Part C **at least 3 months before the trip.** If you still want to apply after the deadline of application, please first contact OCVB for advice.

In order to provide you more time to prepare for the submission of application, **please remind your client to start the procedures of selecting the travel agent earlier** and to prepare all the completed documents at the time signing a contract with you.

### E. Fee

OCVB do not request any fee of application for arranging a host school. However, fees might be requested by the host school for lunch or for the tools necessary during the club activities.

F. Dates of exchange activities

Although there are not any restrictions on the dates of school exchange activities, local Okinawan schools are busy and tend to reject school exchange activities in certain periods, such as school opening and closing periods, exam periods and school holidays (please refer to the grey areas in the tables below). Moreover, every school also has a different schedule for hosting a school exchange activity. Although for most of the application in the past, OCVB successfully arranged a host school, in the event of difficulty of arrangement, OCVB will contact the applicant as soon as possible. In such case, your understanding is highly appreciated.

Periods of Difficult Arrangement of a Host School

April			May			June			July			August			September		
B	M	E	B	M	E	B	M	E	B	M	E	B	M	E	B	M	E
School Opening Ceremony & Orientation												Summer Holiday					

  

October			November			December			January			February			March				
B	M	E	B	M	E	B	M	E	B	M	E	B	M	E	B	M	E		
Autumn Holiday (for some schools)									Winter Holiday									Graduation Ceremony & School Closing Ceremony	

- B: Beginning of the month
- M: Middle of the month
- E: End of the month

Notes: Exam periods and some school events such as school picnic are not stated in the tables as they vary from schools.

G. Other important points of notice

**Once you have submitted your application, please avoid any changes or absence** unless there are uncontrollable reasons, such as cancellation of trips due to epidemic or natural disasters. It not only takes OCVB a large effort to seek a host school, but also the host school and their students to prepare for your client’s visit. This might lose the trust from schools in Okinawa and they might reject hosting other schools in the future. Therefore, you and your client should only submit an application only when the trip to Okinawa is confirmed.

## H. Links of Useful Information

### 1. Website of Study Tour Programmes in Okinawa:

<https://www.visitokinawa.jp/edu?lang=zh-hant> (Chinese)

<https://www.visitokinawa.jp/edu> (English)

### 2. Model Itineraries and Documents Related to School Exchange Activities:

<https://www.okinawapref.com.hk/educationtour>

## I. Inquiries

### 1. Okinawa Convention and Visitors Bureau 沖繩觀光會議局

Educational Travel Team

Email Address: [edu\\_okinawa@ocvb.or.jp](mailto:edu_okinawa@ocvb.or.jp)

Languages: Japanese and English

### 2. Okinawa Prefectural Government Hong Kong Representative Office 沖繩縣香港事務所

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