



Community College

OUTDOOR EDUCATION POLICY

Outdoor Education Policy

Introduction

This policy covers all off-site visits and activities organised through the College and for which the Governing Body and Executive Principal are responsible.

The Governing Body endorses guidance and policies issued by Plymouth City Council regarding Outdoor Education, visits and off site activities. Local and national guidance forms the basis for the College's Health and Safety Policy for the management of visits and offsite activities.

The Governing Body seeks to ensure that every student has access to a wide range of educational experiences as an entitlement and that opportunities are planned as a coherent programme that supports the curriculum.

The Governing Body aims to enable the College to become an educational environment in which all members of the community can thrive, regardless of race, religion, culture, gender or individual need. This aim will apply to the planning and management of all visits and offsite activities.

The management of visits and off-site activities places particular responsibilities for the health, safety and welfare of all participants on the Governing Body, Executive Principal, the trip leader, members of staff and volunteers, students and parents. The College also has responsibilities to other members of the public and to third parties. This policy compliments the wider College Health and Safety Policy.

It is a priority of the College that all visits and off-site activities are safe, well-managed and educationally beneficial, forming part of a planned approach to provision.

1. Responsibilities of the Executive Principal

The Executive Principal will:

- Ensure all visits and off-site activities have specific and appropriate educational objectives
- Approve all visits and activities, based on compliance with the Local Authority Outdoor Education Manager (LAOEM) and College Health and Safety Policy, relevant Plymouth City Council, national guidance and recognised best practice

- Ensure off-site programmes are led by competent staff who are appropriately experienced to assess and manage the risks, manage the activity and manage the specific group
- Check that the staffing ratio is suitable for each visit
- Ensure trip leaders have access to a planning checklist, based on the Plymouth City Council Policy, and adapted as necessary to meet the particular needs of the College
- Check that risks have been assessed, significant risks recorded and any appropriate safety measures are in place to manage and minimise risk
- Ensure that all adult volunteers are DBS checked

2. Responsibilities of the Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC)

In order to carry out the above responsibilities effectively the Executive Principal may delegate specified tasks to a suitably experienced and competent Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC). The EVC will be responsible for carrying out agreed tasks and attending relevant training provided by the LAOEM.

The EVC will advise staff and support planning of activities and, on behalf of the Executive Principal, authorise trips when planning and risk management is completed and uploaded onto Evolve.

3. Approval of Off-Site Activities

The Executive Principal (or EVC) will be responsible for approving **all** off-site activities. This includes approving the trip leader for each visit or off-site activity.

All trips must be logged on Evolve, a web-based recording and monitoring system in which the EVC, Head and LAOEM have an oversight of all trips. Trip leaders will be responsible for generating a form for the trip and include vital planning and risk assessment attachments.

Trips will be approved by the EVC based on the quality of these documents and any conversations held with the trip leader, which can also be tracked on the trip form within Evolve.

Trips will be categorised based on their level of risk as outlined by the LAOEM. All category C and C+ activities will receive final approval from LAOEM.

Trips will be categorised as below:

A – Local, non-hazardous activities

B – Out of area, residential activities including trips abroad

C – Out of area visits including regulated activities

C+ - Out of area dangerous or unregulated activities

The Executive Principal will monitor off-site visits and activities and will provide a regular report to the Governing Body about the off-site activities which have taken place from the College. The Executive Principal will ensure that all volunteers attending visits are DBS checked.

4. Responsibilities of the Trip Leader

The trip leader will:

- have overall responsibility for the supervision and conduct of the visit or activity
- obtain the Executive Principal's approval (or the EVC on his /her behalf) before any off-site visit or activity takes place
- follow College Policies, LAOEM and national and local guidance
- ensure good financial planning for activities and trips and costing sheets are completed
- assess the risks involved and amend as appropriate any previously recorded risk assessment for the same visit or activity
- use documents provided by the EVC in the Staff Shared Area including planning checklist 'Trips Off Site' to ensure all procedures have been followed
- inform parents/carers fully about the visit and gain their consent, where appropriate
- reassess risks while the visit or activity takes place
- ensure there is a contingency plan (Plan B) should a significant change to the programme be necessary due to weather etc
- ensure all staff are aware of risk management responsibilities and relevant National Governing Bodies and DCSF advice

- engage students in risk management and planning where appropriate

5. Responsibilities of Additional Members of Staff Taking Part in Visits and Off-Site Activities

Members of staff, volunteers and parent/carer helpers should:

- assist the trip leader to ensure the health, safety and welfare of young people on the visit;
- be clear about their roles and responsibilities whilst taking part in a visit or activity
- if a parent/carer of an attending student, be aware of the trip leader's responsibility of the group and acting in loco parentis

6. Responsibilities of Students

Whilst taking part in off-site activities students also have responsibilities for their own health and safety and that of the group, about which they should be made aware by the trip leader or other members of staff in attendance. Trip leaders are encouraged to involve students in the planning process where possible to promote active engagement, highlight the importance of their involvement and relieve the strain on trip leaders to ensure all organisational points are clear. Students 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 significant hazards
- represent the College in the expected manner, upholding the principles of the Stoke Damerel 6

7. Responsibilities of Parents/Carers

Parents/carers 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/carers should:

- support the application of any agreed code of conduct
- inform the trip leader about any medical, psychological or physical condition relevant to the visit
- provide an emergency contact number
- sign the consent form at the point of giving permission for their child to join the trip or activity
- take advantage of all opportunities to understand how the activity or trip is being organised, by attending parents' information sessions and reinforcing all information given by trip leaders

8. The Provision of Training and Information

A copy of this policy and associated College procedures will be made available to all staff within the college who may be responsible for leading off-site visits and activities and to any parent requesting a copy via the College website.

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

The Executive Principal (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, minibuss driving and specific hazardous activities.

Access to local and National guidance will be made available to staff.

9. Action in the Case of an Emergency

The Executive Principal will ensure that emergency arrangements are in place, known to staff and in line with Plymouth City Council policies, to cover the range of activities undertaken from the College and the times at which they take place. This will include a minimum of two emergency contact numbers for designated senior members of staff or the governing body out-of hours. First aid provision and training of staff will be in accordance with best practice.

10. Accidents and Incidents

Any accidents and incidents that occur during off-site visits and activities will be reported and recorded in accordance with the College Health and Safety policy. Plymouth City Council will be informed of notifiable accidents and incidents and will subsequently be reviewed within the College to identify any learning points and inform future practice.

11. Monitoring and Review of Policy and Practices

The Governors 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 Executive Principal.

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