

## **Management of Outdoor Education, Visits and Off-Site Activities**

### **1. Principles**

Kingsbridge Community College recognises that trips, 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 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 trips, visits and off-site activities places particular responsibilities for the health, safety and welfare of all participants on the Governing Body, Principal, the party 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 covers all off-site visits and activities organised through the College and for which the Governing Body and Principal are responsible.

The Governing Body endorses the Devon County Council policy document "Outdoor Education, Visits and Off-Site Activities" as the basis for the College's health and safety policy for the management of visits and off-site activities.

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

### **2 Responsibilities**

#### **2.1 *Through delegation to the Assistant Principal (Matthew Lennon) the Principal:***

- ensures all visits and off-site activities have specific and appropriate educational objectives;
- approves all visits and activities, based on compliance with the council and College health and safety policy, relevant Devon County Council guidance and recognised good practice;
- ensures off-site programmes are led by competent staff who are appropriately experienced to assess the risks, manage the activity and manage the specific group;
- checks that the staffing ratio is suitable for each visit;
- ensures party leaders have access to a planning checklist, based on the Devon policy, and adapted as necessary to meet the particular needs of the College;
- checks that risks have been assessed, significant risks recorded and any appropriate safety measures are in place.
- Ensures a consent letter is sent out and signed at the beginning of each year to allow consent for all category A activities.

The Assistant Principal attends relevant training provided by the Council and others.

#### **Category A Activities**

- These include day visits which do not involve adventurous activities, journeys, sporting and physical education activities and environmental studies for which the element of risk is similar to that encountered in daily life.

A summary of the programme for the following categories of visits, together with a risk assessment, is sent via the Evolve website to the Adviser for Outdoor Education, Devon Education Services, for endorsement:

### **Category B activities**

- hazardous outdoor and adventurous activities.

### **Category C activities**

- visits abroad
- activities where there is significant concern about health, safety and welfare.

## 2.2 *The party leader:*

- has overall responsibility for the supervision and conduct of the visit or activity;
- obtains approval before any off-site visit or activity is advertised to students and takes place;
- follows policy and procedures of the Council and the College;
- assesses the risks involved and amends as appropriate any previously recorded risk assessment;
- uses the College planning checklist to ensure all procedures have been followed;
- informs students and parents about 'Code of Conduct' in place including notifying them that all behaviour will be within guidelines laid down by the College Behaviour Management Policy;
- ensures form SOE5 from the policy is completed where commercial, charitable or private facilities are being used for adventurous or residential activities;
- informs parents fully about the visit and gains their consent, where appropriate;
- reassesses risks while the visit or activity takes place;
- ensures there is a contingency plan should a significant change to the programme be necessary due to weather etc.

## 2.3 *Responsibilities of additional members of staff, volunteers and parent helpers taking part in visits and off-site activities*

- Assist the party leader to ensure the health, safety and welfare of young people on the visit;
- Are clear about their roles and responsibilities whilst taking part in a visit or activity.
- Are CRB (Criminal Records Bureau) checked where necessary and have completed the College online safeguarding and child protection course. It is not
- necessary to CRB check people who only have contact with students on an ad hoc or irregular basis for short periods of time, e.g. volunteers or parents who only accompany staff and students on one-off outings or trips that do not involve overnight stays, or who only help at specific events.

## 2.4 *Responsibilities of Students*

Whilst taking part in off-site activities students also have responsibilities about which they should be made aware by the party leader or other members of staff, for their own health and safety and that of the group. Students should:

- avoid unnecessary risks;
- follow instructions of the party leader and other members of staff;
- behave sensibly, in accordance with the College Behaviour Management Policy;
- inform a member of staff of significant hazards;
- **must** attend meetings arranged by trip organisers. Failure to do so may disqualify them from being eligible for the trip.

## 2.5 *Responsibilities of parents*

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 and the College Behaviour Management Policy;
- inform the party leader about any medical, psychological or physical condition relevant to the visit;
- provide an emergency telephone number where they can be contacted;
- sign the consent form at the beginning of each year;
- attend or send representative to briefing meeting arranged by trip organiser. The trip organiser retains the right to disqualify students from the trip if Parents/representatives do not attend.

## 3. **The provision of training and information**

A copy of this policy and associated school procedures are 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.

The Assistant Principal makes additional information available to staff to help ensure the safe management of off-site activities, including the Devon policy booklet “Outdoor Education, Visits and Off-Site Activities” and access to the DES website: [www.deseducation.org/outdooreducation](http://www.deseducation.org/outdooreducation)

Appropriate training is made available to leaders and other adults taking part in off-site activities in order to reflect identified school health and safety priorities and educational priorities.

The Assistant Principal and Business Manager maintain a record of the qualifications held by staff and volunteers involved in outdoor activities including first aid, life-saving, mini-bus driving and specific hazardous activities.

## 4. **Action in the case of emergency**

The Principal and Assistant Principal ensure that emergency arrangements are in place, known to staff and in line with Council policy for category B and C activities, to cover the range of activities undertaken from the College and the times at which they take place. This includes 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 is in accordance with good practice.

## 5. **Accidents and incidents**

Any accidents and incidents that occur during off-site visits and activities are reported and recorded in accordance with the College health and safety policy. Devon County Council is informed of notifiable accidents and incidents. Accidents and incidents are subsequently reviewed within the school to identify any learning points.

## 6. **Monitoring and review policy and practice**

The Learning & Community Committee of the Governing Body 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 Principal.

## **7. Voluntary contributions**

Voluntary contributions may be sought for activities during the College day which entail additional costs (eg field trips). A student is not prevented from participating because parents cannot or will not make a contribution. If insufficient funds are available the activity may be curtailed or cancelled.

### *7.1 Optional activities outside of the College day*

We may charge for optional, extra activities provided outside of the College day, eg football club, theatre visits.

### *7.2 Education partly during the College day*

If a non-residential activity happens partly inside the College day and partly outside of it, there is a voluntary charge if most of the time to be spent on the activity falls within the College day. Conversely, if the bigger proportion of time spent falls outside of the normal College day, charges may be made.

### *7.3 Residentials*

Charges are made for board and lodging.

### *7.4 Minibus*

Under the Department of Transport Minibus Permit held by the College, only students of the College, College staff or parents may be charged for travel in the minibus. Charges are intended to cover only actual costs incurred, including depreciation. Other organisations using the bus must have their own Permit.

### *7.5 Calculating charges*

When charges are made for any activity, whether during or outside of the College day, they are based on the actual costs incurred, divided by the total number of students participating.

### *7.6 Financial Assistance*

Students whose parents are in receipt of eligible benefits may apply for financial relief from the Grant Aid Fund administered by the Assistant Principal (Community):

- Income Support;
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance;
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999; or
- Child Tax Credit (Child Tax Credit (providing that they do not also receive Working Tax Credit and have an annual income that does not exceed the free school meal threshold as set by the Inland Revenue)

## **8. Monitoring and review policy and practice**

This policy is reviewed every two years by the Learning & Community Committee of the Governing Body or at such time as there are significant changes to guidance on the management of Outdoor Education, Visits and Off-Site Activities.

**Ratified by the Learning & Community Committee  
31<sup>st</sup> January 2012**

**Guidance on Dealing with Incidents****1. Background**

Major incidents on trips are thankfully rare. Minor incidents of behaviour or minor accidents are dealt with on the trip. It is advisable that staff who are leading a residential agree in advance to a set of suitable sanctions based on the College Behaviour Management Policy e.g. withdrawal from the next day's activity, accompanying staff for the day, sitting with staff on the coach etc. It is important that these possible sanctions are communicated to parents and students at meetings before the trip departs. If any significant misdemeanours or accidents do occur parents must be informed.

Although circumstances will vary, in the case of a major incident involving behaviour or injury, the trip leader has regard to the following:

**2. Guidance for Trip Leaders**

- 2.1. Make contact with the senior member of staff at the College in order to discuss next steps.
- 2.2. Contact with parents is time-consuming but of paramount importance: a failure to do this can cause unnecessary distress and on-going problems when the trip returns to College. The amount of contact will depend upon the severity of the incident: do not assume that parents and children will make direct mobile contact – you must take this responsibility yourself. It is always best for staff to contact the parents first rather than the student. In the case of an injury or a major incident, it is useful to let the student speak first to the parent saying “Hi Mum, there's been a bit of trouble, but I'm OK. I'm going to hand you over to Mrs (x) who is going to talk to you about it”. You will always need to make at least one follow-up phone call or provide parents with a mobile telephone number on which the leader can be contacted in case the parent needs reassurance, particularly in the case of foreign trips. Remember that parents are worried but at a distance need regular updates.

When the trip returns to College tell the student that you want to talk with the parent when he/she meets the coach. The onus is on you to seek out the parents: do not rely on them to do this.

- 2.3. It is consuming of time and energy to deal with a major incident. Assign roles carefully to staff restoring normalcy as quickly as possible for the rest of the group.
- 2.4. Keep written notes of the incident including significant actions taken by you/other agencies, dates, times, brief content of all relevant communications. Do not in any circumstances give any comment to reporters.

**3. Guidance for Senior Members of Staff**

- 3.1. Do not underestimate the difficulty of understanding the situation on a trip, particularly if abroad: frequent contact is necessary before making decisions.  
Any of the following actions may be necessary:
- 3.2. Telephone contact with parents is necessary but time-consuming. Convene a team of staff to help ring parents all with a script.
- 3.3. Inform Governors through the Clerk's e-mail address book.
- 3.4. Inform Devon County Council Outdoor Education Advisor.
- 3.5. Keep all College staff informed. During Challenge Week information will be picked up by students who are on other trips through mobile contact. Include staff on those trips in briefings.
- 3.6. Give careful consideration to whether the trip needs to be curtailed or individuals on the trip need to return home.

- 3.7. Consideration needs to be given to the amount of stress and pressure put on the trip staff by continuing.
- 3.8. Consideration should be given to supporting the trip with extra staff.

**4. On return from the trip:**

- 4.1. Any disciplinary issues with students need careful handling: a lot of work may need to be done with parents in order that they fully understand the pertaining circumstances. At a minimum, meet or have a telephone discussion with parents before taking a decision on any further disciplinary sanctions.
- 4.2. In the event of an incident, ensure that offers of support and counselling are made to staff and students.

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **TRIPS & VISITS – Trip Leader: Online Application**

Kingsbridge Community College SVI - Initial Application Form

Budget and Payment Collection form

Risk Assessment

SOE5 – Provider standards for Category B + C activities

Kingsbridge Community College Outdoor Education Information