



POLICY: Rangitikei College Board

# Education outside the classroom policy

## Rationale

The links that students are able to make between the classroom and real-world experiences can be critical to their long-term learning. Also, positive education outside the classroom (EOTC) experiences can also counter educational disadvantage. Accordingly, Rangitikei College policies and practices should enable students to participate in well-designed, curriculum-based experiences outside the classroom.

Learning and safety are paramount in EOTC. While EOTC provides opportunities for positive learning outcomes in a student's education, alongside these gains is the potential for mishap if programmes are not effectively managed. Schools have legal responsibilities to keep learning environments safe for students and staff (NAG 5, Health and Safety at Work Act 2015). This policy and associated procedures clarify the school's responsibilities with regard to EOTC.

## Definition:

'EOTC' is a generic term used to describe curriculum-based learning and teaching that extends the four walls of the classroom. EOTC can range from a museum or marae visit to a sports trip, an outdoor education camp, a field trip to the rocky shore, or a visit to practise another language. EOTC can take place in the school grounds, in the local community, or in regions further afield, including overseas.

## Guidelines

1. EOTC will be a fundamental part of the Rangitikei College curriculum, and relevant and appropriate opportunities to participate in EOTC will be encouraged.
2. The Board, which includes the Principal, is responsible for the safety of all students and others involved in EOTC programmes.
3. The Board and Principal will ensure that EOTC experiences in the school will:
  - a. Comply with relevant legislation including the Education and Training Act 2020, the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 and the Vulnerable Children's Act 2014, and associated regulations.
  - b. Follow the Ministry of Education *EOTC Guidelines: Bringing the Curriculum Alive* (2016).
  - c. Ensure that:
    - i. Risks are managed to prevent serious harm during EOTC events.
    - ii. Equipment is safe to use during the event.
    - iii. Students are supervised by competent staff.

- iv. Emergency procedures are planned and followed.
  - v. The standard of care required during an EOTC activity is the standard that could be reasonably expected of a competent person in the activity, for example, a coach, a teacher, or an outdoor leader.
- 4. EOTC programmes and experiences must be appropriate to the curriculum and/or related needs of students, and be based on sound teaching and learning practices. This means that EOTC activities will have appropriate resourcing to support students and enable them to learn.
  - 5. Where EOTC is a *required* part of a course, students must not be charged for the activity. Where the EOTC is *optional*, students opting not to participate must not have their learning, or ability to complete the course, disadvantaged.

Where EOTC is *co-curricular* in nature (eg. an Outward Bound or Spirit of Adventure activity), the school will encourage participation.

For curricular or co-curricular activities, the Principal will seek to reduce barriers (including financial) to involvement.

- 6. EOTC experiences must be organised in such a way that EOTC goals are attainable without major disruption to other courses or significant school activities, as determined by the Principal.
- 7. The Principal will be responsible for appointing a designated EOTC Coordinator. When there is no designated EOTC Coordinator, this role will be undertaken by the Principal.
- 8. Responsibilities of the Board, Principal, EOTC Coordinator, person in charge of the EOTC activity, and other involved in EOTC will be clearly stipulated in formal procedures.

Presiding Member:



Date: 28/6/23

Next review date: July 2026

#### **ASSOCIATED PROCEDURES:**

- 1. EOTC list of responsibilities
- 2.

*(NB: Procedures are developed as part of school management. The Board of Trustees will be informed of the development or revision of procedures derived from Board policies by the Principal. For some especially significant procedures, these will be presented to the Board in full)*



Relating to EDUCATION OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM POLICY

## Procedure 1: EOTC list of responsibilities

The following list of responsibilities is derived from the Ministry of Education *EOTC Guidelines: Bringing the Curriculum Alive* (2016), Appendix 5. These are subject to change by the senior leadership team in conjunction with the EOTC Coordinator.

### Responsibilities of the Board and the Principal

The Board, through the Principal must ensure policies and procedures are in place in three major areas: staff competence and best practice, health and safety, and equipment and resources.

#### 1. Staff competence and best practice

The Board and the Principal must ensure that:

- an activity leader's competence is assessed against accepted best practice
- only competent activity leaders are approved to lead EOTC activities
- assistants have the appropriate skills, knowledge, and/or experience for their assigned role
- contractors, parents and volunteers have been screened for their suitability to work with students and where the Vulnerable Children Act 2014 applies, children's worker safety checked
- all staff, contractors, volunteers, and students are involved in safety management planning and have been instructed in the health and safety procedures to be used during EOTC events
- ensure that roles and responsibilities of all outside providers involved are clarified, understood and accepted.
- all staff, volunteers, and students consider utilising sustainable practices in the planning and implementation of EOTC
- staff have professional learning opportunities to develop the competence required to run the activities they are responsible for.

#### 2. Health and safety

The Board and the Principal must:

- understand and comply with their legal responsibilities
- ensure that the school has a health and safety policy and procedures and that these are in place and implemented effectively
- ensure that valid informed consent from parents and caregivers is obtained

- ensure that all risks to health and safety are identified and to eliminate these risks so far as reasonably practicable through the application of appropriate safety management procedures;
- ensure that responsibility for co-ordinating EOTC in the school has been assigned to competent staff and adequately resourced
- act appropriately to address any risks reported to the Board in writing
- ensure plans to respond to emergencies or traumatic incidents are in place, including a clear process for dealing with media, and that all staff are familiar with them;
- regularly review the school's safety management systems
- review incidents to determine any lessons learned and implement any recommendations made
- ensure that all outside providers used for EOTC meet accepted best practice criteria and where outside provision of an adventure activity occurs, a registered adventure activity provider is used.

### **3. Equipment and resources**

The Board and the Principal must ensure that:

- all circumstances and activities where safety equipment and/or clothing is necessary are identified
- safety equipment and/or clothing is provided to safeguard all staff, volunteers, and students from any danger to their health and safety
- safety equipment and clothing are stored securely and their use is controlled, their distribution is supervised,
- all people use safety equipment and/or clothing when required
- all safety equipment and clothing complies with any relevant New Zealand standards or codes of practice, is fit for the purpose, and is adequately maintained
- communication devices are available and a communications plan is in place for EOTC activities.

### **Responsibilities of EOTC Coordinator**

The EOTC coordinator is the person with full overview of EOTC in the school. It is the responsibility of this person to ensure that planning, process, and procedures are in place across all EOTC activities and that these are appropriately delegated and implemented.

Ideally, the EOTC co-ordinator will have experience relevant to the school's EOTC programme and a strong belief in using EOTC as an effective part of pedagogy to support teaching and learning.

If there is not a formally appointed EOTC Coordinator, the Principal will assume responsibility for this role.

As with the Board and the Principal, the EOTC coordinator's responsibilities cover three major areas of staff competence and best practice, health and safety, and equipment and resources.

#### **1. Staff competence and best practice**

The EOTC Coordinator, either directly or through delegation to the person in charge, ensures that:

- they are familiar with the EOTC guidelines,
- only a competent person is approved as the person in charge or as an activity leader and that an activity leader's competence is assessed against accepted best practice
- roles and responsibilities have been clarified, documented, and agreed to by anyone who is placed in a role in which they interact with students, for example, the person in charge (who may be from another PCBU involved), or the activity leader, or an assistant
- activity leaders are assured of the safety of their EOTC activity, and venue before the activity commences
- assistants who support EOTC activities are informed, trained, and supervised appropriately
- outside providers meet accepted best practice criteria. Where outside provision of an adventure activity occurs, a registered adventure activity provider is used.
- each student participating in an EOTC activity has access to a currently qualified first-aider.

## **2. Health and safety**

The EOTC Coordinator, either directly or through delegation to the person in charge, ensures that:

- the school has a policy in place on health and safety in EOTC (usually incorporated in the EOTC policy and/or the health and safety policy)
- procedures are in place to support that policy
- reasonably practicable steps have been taken to ensure the physical, emotional, and cultural safety of students and staff involved in EOTC
- risks relevant to any planned EOTC event are identified and reasonably practicable steps are taken to eliminate or minimise these risks through the application of appropriate safety management procedures;
- risks that are relevant to the EOTC event and that cannot be easily eliminated, or minimised, have been reported in writing to the Board for them to act upon appropriately
- all incidents are recorded in the school's incident register, reflected on, and appropriately responded to
- the safety and emergency procedures for each EOTC activity are identified and communicated to all activity leaders, assistants, and students
- safety procedures are outlined in the EOTC management system
- where there is a deviation from the policy, there is clear documentation of the reasons for it and how it is being managed and reported to the Board
- an emergency information sheet listing all health information and emergency contact details is compiled for staff responsible for students on an EOTC activity.

## **3. Equipment and resources**

The EOTC Coordinator, either directly or through delegation to the person in charge, must ensure that:

- safety equipment for EOTC is specified and used
- first aid kits are accessible and available during all EOTC events;
- hazardous substances are correctly stored, labelled, and transported.

- equipment is appropriately stored and repaired as required, equipment logs are kept, and when equipment has reached the accepted use-by date, it is retired and replaced
- a communications plan is detailed in the school's Traumatic Incident Response Plan (TIRP) and used to facilitate actions during an emergency
- procedures are in place for access to food, disposal of waste, and the protection of water, flora, and fauna during an EOTC event.

## **Responsibilities of Person in charge**

The Person in Charge (PIC) is the person who is overall in charge of a particular EOTC activity or event on behalf of the school. This person is responsible for managing a team of activity leaders and assistants during an event or is the sole activity leader. The PIC could be a registered teacher, could be a qualified instructor or sports coach.

There may be multiple Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking (PCBUs) involved in EOTC. The respective PICs must clarify with each other where and when their respective responsibilities apply and execute these according to best practice.

The PIC's responsibilities cover the following major areas the competence and best practice, health and safety procedures, and equipment and resources.

### **1. Competence and best practice**

People in Charge must:

- be familiar with the EOTC guidelines and procedures that relate to the activity
- ensure that educational goals that meet the students' needs are established for the EOTC activity at the outset of planning
- assess their own competence against accepted best practice standards before planning begins, and have their decision reviewed by a suitably competent expert
- ensure that parents are given sufficient information about an EOTC event in writing. This is to ensure that they have enough information to give informed consent for their children to attend
- make arrangement for parents whose first language is not English, to allow them to be well informed and able to make a decision
- brief parents and other volunteers, students, contractors, and staff about the EOTC event's objectives, the specific roles and responsibilities of all parties, the code of conduct, the school's safety management procedures (including contingency plans), and any relevant school policies
- ensure that activities are sequenced to facilitate a progressive acquisition of skills and/or knowledge that will result in quality educational outcomes and safe participation for all
- ensure there are readily accessible lists of all the participating students, activity leaders, and assistants. The lists should include emergency contact details, medical profiles, and any other pertinent information.

### **2. Health and safety**

People in Charge should:

- clarify and agree to specific roles and responsibilities with other PCBU's involved
- provide cultural safety for students by being sensitive to, and respectful of, different cultural practices, and by planning for them
- ensure that students are involved in safety management planning where relevant
- obtain informed parental consent for student involvement in EOTC activities as per the school's policy
- ensure that all significant hazards relevant to any planned EOTC event are identified and reasonably practicable steps are taken to eliminate or minimise risks through the application of appropriate safety management procedures;
- cancel the EOTC activity if an identified hazard cannot be adequately controlled, or the planned situation significantly changes
- ensure reporting of all incidents to the Principal
- ensure that appropriate contingency plans are in place
- ensure that students' needs and any hazards associated with these (educational, cultural, health, medical, nutritional, and behavioural) are identified and managed.

### **3. Equipment and resources**

People in Charge must ensure that:

- all staff and students know the location of the event
- first aid kits, emergency equipment, and a means of communication that will work in the location are taken to the event and where practicable, all staff and students know the location of the event
- weatherproof copies of emergency procedures and contact details are provided to activity leaders to take into the field
- all equipment is returned to storage cleaned and in good repair and that usage and repair logs are completed.

### **Responsibilities of activity leaders**

Activity leaders work under the leadership of a PIC and can be teachers, coaches, other staff, contracted providers (for example, instructors), adult volunteers, senior school students, or tertiary students. This group must have the appropriate competence for the activities and groups they are responsible for.

Through the use of activity leaders, EOTC activities involving large groups can be more effectively managed. In this way, safety can be maximised and students can more easily achieve the intended learning outcomes.

Activity leaders also have responsibilities in three main areas: competence and best practice, health and safety procedures, and equipment and resources.

#### **1. Competence and best practice**

Activity leaders must:

- assess their own competence against accepted best practice standards before planning begins and have their decision peer- or expert- reviewed. Saying “no” to leading an activity is an accepted and respected response.
- instruct students in appropriate safety procedures and have practised them for themselves
- ensure that students experience “challenge by choice”\* (that is, they are encouraged, not forced or pressured, to participate in activities in a supportive group environment)
- be familiar with the school’s EOTC guidelines
- brief assistants on their specific role and responsibilities, the activity outcomes, their allocated students and the relevant school or contractor safety management procedures and/or policies that apply
- assess the needs and capabilities of the students against the demands of the activity and make any necessary adjustments to the programme
- ensure that there is minimal impact on the environment and that sustainable practices are used in all aspects of the EOTC activity
- make every effort to deliver the activity so that educational goals and students needs are met.

## **2. Health and safety**

Activity leaders must:

- take reasonably practicable steps to ensure their own safety and the safety of other staff, contractors, volunteers, and students during EOTC activities and ensure that no action or inaction on their part causes harm to any other person
- comply (so far as they are reasonably able) with any reasonable instruction that is given by PCBU to allow the PCBU to ensure health and safety
- co-operate with any reasonable policy or procedure of the PCBU relating to health and safety that has been notified to them
- ensure that activities are sequenced to facilitate a progressive acquisition of skills and/or knowledge that will result in quality educational outcomes and safe participation for all
- provide cultural safety for students by being sensitive to, and respectful of, different cultural practices and by planning for them
- inform assistants of any cultural practices relevant to the group and emphasise the need to respect them
- understand and follow the safety requirements of all the activities they are responsible for and determine any special care that should be taken by themselves, the assistants and the students. This includes ensuring they take medical and other relevant information for their group into the field
- identify all hazards and risks
- ensure that hazards, such as unsafe equipment and practices, are reported in writing to the EOTC co-ordinator and/or the person in charge
- cancel an EOTC activity if an identified hazard or risk cannot be adequately controlled
- report all incidents in the school’s incident register
- understand and know how to implement any applicable contingency plans



- ensure that students' needs and any hazards associated with these (educational, cultural, health, medical, nutritional, and behavioural) are identified and managed.

### **3. Equipment and resources**

Activity leaders must ensure that:

- appropriate safety equipment and/or clothing are used when required;
- safety procedures for specific activities and use of equipment are known;
- equipment logs are referred to before any equipment is used;
- first aid kits, emergency equipment, and a means of communication that will work in their location are taken
- weatherproof copies of emergency procedures and contact details are provided to activity leaders to take into the field
- all equipment is returned to storage cleaned and in good repair and that usage and repair logs are completed
- food and drink are taken regularly by participants, during an EOTC event, to maintain energy levels.

### **Responsibilities of the Assistants**

Assistants can be teachers, support staff, adult volunteers, and tertiary or senior students. They differ from an activity leader in that they do not necessarily have the required competence for that role. Such people should be assigned to an activity leader as an assistant. They should be given the students' medical details and other relevant information on their group and the activity, and they should be briefed on the risk management and emergency procedures. The level for supervision of an assistant should be in proportion to the level of risk in the activity. Supervision of an assistant may, therefore, be direct or indirect.

**School staff** acting as assistants on EOTC experiences continue to act as employees of the school whether the excursion takes place within normal school hours or outside those hours. Staff must do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group and act as any reasonable adult would do in the same circumstances. They should:

- follow the instructions of the activity leader or person in charge and help with control and discipline
- consider stopping the excursion or the activity and notifying the activity leader if they think the risk to the health or safety of the participants in their charge is unacceptable.

**Adult volunteers** (including parents and tertiary students) and senior students acting as assistants on the EOTC experience should be clear about their roles and responsibilities during the activity. They should:

- do their best to support the activity leader and ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group
- not allow themselves to be left in sole charge of participants, except where it has been previously agreed as part of the risk assessment

- only accept the responsibility of being a supervisor if they are comfortable with the role and the skills they have
- follow the instructions of the activity leader and the person in charge and help with control and discipline
- speak to the person in charge or the activity leader if they are concerned about their own health or safety or that of participants at any time during the EOTC experience.

### **Responsibilities of students**

Students involved in EOTC activities have some basic responsibilities for their own safety and the safety of others. If special rules apply to a particular activity, they should be explained at the start of that activity.

Students should be briefed and accept the following requirements and expectations:

- follow the instructions of the activity leader
- touch potentially hazardous substances or equipment only if and when told to do so
- avoid behaviour that could lead to incidents
- wear appropriate clothing at all times and confine long hair and loose clothing during activities where they are a hazard
- know what to do, and co-operate fully, during an emergency situation
- eat and drink regularly to maintain energy levels
- use equipment appropriately and take care to minimise damage or loss
- report any faulty or ill-fitting equipment to the person in charge
- report any incident to the person in charge immediately
- carry out responsibilities to the best of their ability – look after one another
- if lost – stop, stabilise, advertise. Stop (stay together and stay put; move only if exposed to the weather), stabilise (provide warmth, shelter, food, and drink), and advertise (draw attention by use of a whistle or by visible signs)
- challenge themselves within personal limits (both physical and psychological). Support others to do the same but refrain from pressuring them
- tell their activity leader if they feel unsafe or see any unsafe practices in an EOTC activity that they are involved in
- look out for anything that might hurt or threaten them or anyone in the group and inform the activity leader about it
- always participate in EOTC activities responsibly and under supervision.
- use sustainable practices and follow Department of Conservation guidelines
- if overseas, be sensitive to local customs
- treat the environment as taonga (a treasure).

### **Responsibilities of parents/caregivers' of students who participate in EOTC events**

Parents'/caregivers' responsibilities in supporting their child's learning in EOTC are important particularly in providing information to help meet their child's needs and keep them safe.

#### **Parents'/caregivers' responsibilities**

- provide informed consent for their child to participate in EOTC experiences that extend out of school hours or involve more than a minimal level of risk based on the information you have been provided with.
- provide updates on your emergency contact numbers whenever they change
- provide any information about their child's emotional, psychological, and physical health that might be relevant to the EOTC event
- help prepare their child for the EOTC experience, for example, by reinforcing the students' EOTC behaviour expectations and by helping them to obtain everything required on the gear list.
- support the school on matters such as an "early return agreement" for unacceptable behaviour.