



Off-site community visits and risk assessment policy and procedures

This policy refers to 'the organisation' throughout and in doing so is referring to Phoenix Autism Trust.

Written January 2021 – Review January 2022

Phoenix Autism Trust (PAT) - A Pathway Towards Independence and Employment
Registered Company no. 09615159 Registered Charity No. 1172227
Registered Office: 49 Bow Road, London, E3 2AD

Scope of the Policy

This policy makes clear the organisation's commitment to ensure, as far as reasonably practicable, opportunities for safe access to the community for all its staff, volunteers and students

Other policies to be referred to:

- First Aid and Health Care Policy
- Medicines and medication Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Lockdown Policy

The Acts and Regulations that legally bind us are:

- The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013
- The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Regulatory Reform (Fire Health and safety) Order 2005.

Policy Review

The Off-Site Visits and Risk Assessment Policy and Procedures will be reviewed annually, or more regularly in the light of any change in legislation or significant change in our working practices. The next anticipated review date would be January 2022.

Planning community visits

The Trust's purpose is to enable those who are its service users and students to live ordinary lives and be active in their home communities, enjoying community living as independent as possible, accessing community services and employment or meaningful activity and enjoying friends and relationships. Community visits therefore form an integral part of the curriculum at Phoenix College.

All offsite visits will be planned following guidance contained in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets Children Schools and families Outdoor Education Policy. Stuart.mcgregor@towerhamlets.gov.uk is your contact for any Outdoor Education Visits concerns, and all matters relating to the Evolve system.

The LA's Offsite Visits Advisor must be notified of trips which include self-led adventurous activities, fieldwork trips to open or "wild" country, and all trips overseas and residential trips. This will be done via the use of Evolve, the online notification and approvals system.

The member of staff planning the trip will submit all relevant paperwork and risk assessments relating to the trip to the school's Educational Visits Co-ordinator Kate Marrs-Gant, who will check the documentation and planning of the trip and if acceptable initially approve the visit before referring to the Principal

All trips and visits must include:

- **A Risk Assessment signed and approved**
- **A register of those in attendance staff and students**
- **Next of Kin and contact details**
- **A contact phone number so the trip organiser can be contactable**
- **If vehicles are used, the relevant permissions for driving and which students and staff are in which vehicles**

Risk assessments for community visits

Risk assessments must be carried out prior to any community visit and shared with class teams or individual staff where students are involved in 1:1 programmes

Risk assessments should be completed by the person organising the visit or activity who must have sufficient knowledge understanding, training and experience to do this. This will normally be the class/subject teacher.

When organising a visit consideration should also be given to individual student risk assessments. These can be accessed through DatabridgeMIS in the student's file.

Any additional/relevant information relating to an individual student must be included on the risk assessment e.g. if a student has previously run away

If a student is given 1:1 support, then the member of staff must be named on the risk assessment and if the staff member is absent on the day this **MUST** be changed on the risk assessment.

An ongoing activity only needs one risk assessment. However, such risk assessments should be reviewed regularly or re written when circumstances change e.g. student behaviour, alterations to method of travel, changes to procedures at a site visited.

New risk assessments should be written at the start of each academic year.

All risk assessments must be followed without any allowances for changes unless these have been discussed and changed on the filed risk assessment

Risk assessments must be signed by the Principal or Senior Manager before any visit takes place.

Where off-site learning opportunities are provided by other agencies e.g. local gyms, adventurous activity centres, work experience placements, the class/subject tutor should liaise with providers to ensure adequate risk assessments have been made by the provider, which clearly identify responsibilities, are in place and shared with staff working with students. Details of provisions relating to Health and Safety, will be included in contracts with these providers

Guidelines for completing a risk assessment:

Guidelines on carrying out risk assessments will be included in staff induction procedures and annual updates provided to all staff but specifically for teachers and group leaders.

Risk assessments focus on significant risks which could cause major injury or an injury that could result in being absent from College for over three days, as opposed to trivial risks.

The following guidance relates to the Phoenix College risk assessment form. A blank risk assessment form can be found in appendix 1

- **Hazards and outcomes**

A hazard is something that can cause harm such as crossing a busy road. An outcome is the effect of a hazard.

e.g. Boiling water spilling from saucepan (hazard) causing scalding (outcome)

Road traffic accident crossing busy road (hazard) causing injury/death (outcome)

- **Who is at risk?**

This should include everybody involved in an activity.

e.g. Students, Phoenix College staff, visitors, general public, staff at public facility.

- **Hazard severity:**

It is important that everybody involved in making risk assessments understands the agreed school system for interpreting risk.

At Phoenix College hazards are graded A, B or C depending on the severity.

- A Death, major injury, severe damage to property
- B Over 3-day injury, moderate damage to property,
- C Minor injury, minimal damage to property

When making decisions on hazard severity you should consider what would be a predictable and realistic outcome with the measures to reduce risk in place. This decision should also be based on your normal experience and not the worst case scenario. It is not necessary to get it 100% right every time, but if there is an accident the risk assessment should be reviewed.

- **Risk factors –**

These are the conditions or things that make a hazard more or less likely to occur.

e.g. Students behaviours, staff numbers, volume of traffic.

These need to be discussed or observed and will help you to make an overall assessment.

- **Measures taken to reduce risk**

These are the things that are in place to make an activity safer and reduce risks. These need to be considered and discussed in order to decide the likelihood of an accident happening.

e.g. Use of social stories prior to visit, take motivators for individual students

- **Likelihood of harm**

Based on the risk factors and taken to reduce risk the likelihood of harm should be assessed as follows:

1. Extremely likely to occur
2. Likely to occur
3. Slight chance of occurring

- **Priority**

This is made by putting together the severity and likelihood scores and will give an overall assessment of risk, which will help you to decide whether further controls need to be considered. It will also alert you to the more hazardous aspects of an activity.

For example:

A1 – This risk is unacceptable and further controls need to be in place before that activity takes place. It may be that the activity is considered unsuitable.

A3 – This is a low rating, but staff should be aware of the possible severity of outcomes.

B2 – This means that an accident causing a 3-day injury is likely and is unacceptable before that activity takes place.

- **Further controls to be taken**

No activity should take place or area be used where the likelihood of an accident occurring is 1 or 2. If this is the case further controls should be identified eg increase student staff ratio, use different method of transport which will bring the likelihood of an accident occurring to 3.

This section only needs to be completed when the likelihood of an accident occurring was identified as 1 or 2

- **Final risk assessment**

This is made by putting together the severity and the likelihood score after further controls have been put in place. It will give a final overall assessment of risk. Once again the likelihood of accident should be graded at 3 for the activity to take place or area to be used.

- **Medical issues**

This should identify students where there are medical issues and say what measures are in place along with the procedure in the event of an emergency.

- **Behaviour issues**

This should identify those students who have individual risk assessments and behaviour support plans or who have specific behaviours that could be challenging when out.

- **Signing and storage of forms**

Once completed the risk assessment should be signed by the Principal or in her absence a Senior Manager, the day before an activity takes place and handed to the office. It will be filed in the office. A copy of the signed risk assessment will be handed back to the person completing the risk assessment. Without the signed copy the trip cannot go ahead.

- An offsite register should be completed immediately before going out and handed to the office, attached to a copy of the risk assessment.

Risk assessments must be written and stored on DatabridgeMIS on the College Server

- **Before leaving College**

1. It is essential that the risk assessment is valid and it has been shared with **all** staff accompanying the group.
2. Staff have a mobile phone with them and the number is on the off-site register
3. All staff know the behaviour risks of all of the students in their care

4. All students are easily identifiable
 5. All staff know the procedures if a student is to go missing while out on a trip
- **Procedures to follow if a student is to go missing when out of school**
 1. Check the immediate area
 2. Check the wider area
 3. Within 3 minutes contact the College and the police
 4. The Principal or Senior Manager will coordinate according to the procedures in College
 5. During the incident staff must ensure that students are safe at all times.

Written: January 2021

Date of next review: January 2022

Review group: Trustees

Appendix 1

Phoenix College Risk Assessment Template

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