

1. Education outside the classroom (EOTC) provides opportunities for a vast array of positive outcomes in a student's education. Alongside these gains is the potential for loss if programmes are not effectively managed. The degree of risk inherent in many EOTC activities makes effective safety precautions necessary.

2. The safety of our children, teachers and volunteers during EOTC is paramount. This guide clarifies schools' responsibilities regarding EOTC safety, provides ideas and examples of how requirements can be met, and safety improved.

3. This guide replaces *Education Outside the Classroom – Guidelines for Good Practice*, Ministry of Education, 1995; and Department of Education circulars 1985/1 and 1988/28. It supplements the *Health and Safety Code of Practice for State Primary, Composite, and Secondary Schools*, Ministry of Education, 1998; and *Worksafe at School*, Ministry of Education, 2002 for matters relating to EOTC.

4. The guide is designed to assist boards of trustees, principals, and teachers to enhance safety in EOTC programmes and meet their obligations under relevant statutory and best practice requirements. It is for the use of state and state-integrated primary, composite, and secondary schools. Independent schools may also wish to adopt this guide. It should be used to review a school's EOTC policies and update them where necessary.

5. This guide is available on Te Kete Ipurangi (tki), the Ministry of Education's online learning centre www.tki.org.nz/e/community/eotc/ where it will be updated as required. This website contains links to related sites and resources.

6. EOTC is a generic term to describe curriculum-based learning that extends beyond the four walls of the classroom. This can range from a museum or marae visit to a sports trip, outdoor education camp, or a rocky shore field trip.

7. EOTC crosses all essential learning areas in the *New Zealand Curriculum Framework*: language and languages; mathematics; science; technology; social sciences; the arts; health and physical well-being. Curriculum guidelines for EOTC are in *Anywhere, Everywhere – EOTC Curriculum Guidelines for Primary Schools*,

Secondary Schools and Early Childhood Centres, Ministry of Education, 1992. This is available on www.tki.org.nz/e/community/eotc/resources

8. While EOTC strengthens *all* curriculum areas, it has strong links to the statement *Health and Physical Education in the New Zealand Curriculum* (Ministry of Education, 1999) and *Guidelines for Environmental Education in New Zealand Schools* (Ministry of Education, 1999). For example, outdoor education¹ is a key area of learning in the health and physical education curriculum.

▶ EOTC goals²

9. EOTC aims to:

- provide students with opportunities to learn outside the classroom, in all curriculum areas;
- promote appreciation of our heritages – local, national and global;
- increase students' awareness and understanding of the traditions and values of their own, the tangata whenua and other cultural groups;
- increase students' understanding of different perspectives on land, natural resources and the environment, and of the need for conservation management;
- provide students with opportunities for enjoyment, adventure and challenge, both close to home and far away;
- provide students with opportunities to enhance spiritual, physical and mental well-being through uplifting experiences in a natural environment;
- develop students' skills so they can move with confidence and safety in urban, rural, and wilderness settings;

¹ See Appendix II, EOTC - related terminology.

² EOTC goals and outcomes are adapted from: *Anywhere, Everywhere – EOTC. Curriculum Guidelines for Primary Schools, Secondary Schools, and Early Childhood Centres*, (1992). Wellington: Ministry of Education. Available on: www.tki.org.nz/e/community/eotc/resources

- help students develop respect for themselves and others, by providing them with opportunities for personal and social development;
- enable students to take increased responsibility for their own development and to regard learning as enjoyable, continuous, and lifelong; and
- provide students with opportunities to develop in many diverse ways.

EOTC outcomes

10. In the course of their EOTC experiences, students will gain new knowledge and understandings, skills and abilities, and attitudes, as well as building on those they already have.

Knowledge and understandings

11. These include:

- knowledge of the world;
- knowledge of culture and traditions;
- aesthetic awareness;
- awareness and understanding of issues for tangata whenua and other cultural groups;
- awareness of environmental issues;
- knowledge of how outdoor activities can benefit personal fitness, health and spiritual well-being;
- knowledge and understanding of safe practices in the outdoors;
- awareness of recreational opportunities;
- awareness that all aspects of learning are interrelated; and
- specific new knowledge, for example, knowing the names of some animals after a zoo visit, or how to respond after being welcomed onto a marae.

Skills and abilities

12. These include the skills and abilities that enable students to:

- make decisions;
- solve problems;

- take responsibility for self and others;
- evaluate their own learning;
- apply learning to new situations;
- develop independence and interdependence;
- work as team members; and
- maintain good relationships with family, peers and others, as well as many more specific skills related to their particular EOTC experiences.

Attitudes

13. These include:

- enjoying the challenge and excitement of new experiences;
- having self-esteem and the confidence that goes with it;
- having the motivation to learn;
- being sensitive to, and positive about, issues for tangata whenua and other cultural groups;
- being sensitive to, and positive about, environmental issues;
- sensitivity to, and respect for, the strengths and weaknesses of self and others; and
- readiness for major steps – starting school, moving to a new school, starting tertiary education and starting work.

Rationale for EOTC activities and safe practice

14. It is recognised that safe and quality learning experiences are intrinsic to the teaching and learning process. Lessons and programmes should be based on the educational needs of students and the community, in conjunction with curriculum statements. All EOTC activities should, therefore, be appropriate to these needs and based on sound teaching and learning practices.

15. Key pedagogical functions for a teacher are to:

- know their class's individual and group needs;
- establish learning objectives and make decisions about the desired kind of learning;

- carefully select an appropriate environment;
- plan for sequential learning experiences that scaffold learning;
- manage, facilitate and evaluate the learning process; and
- safeguard the safety and welfare of the students.

16. A balance must therefore be made between the learning needs of the students and appropriate challenges in the environment. This process should lead to the fundamental questions:

- What is the educational purpose of this activity?
- Is the activity appropriate for the developmental needs of the students?

Observation of this process establishes a foundation for safe practice.

Legal framework

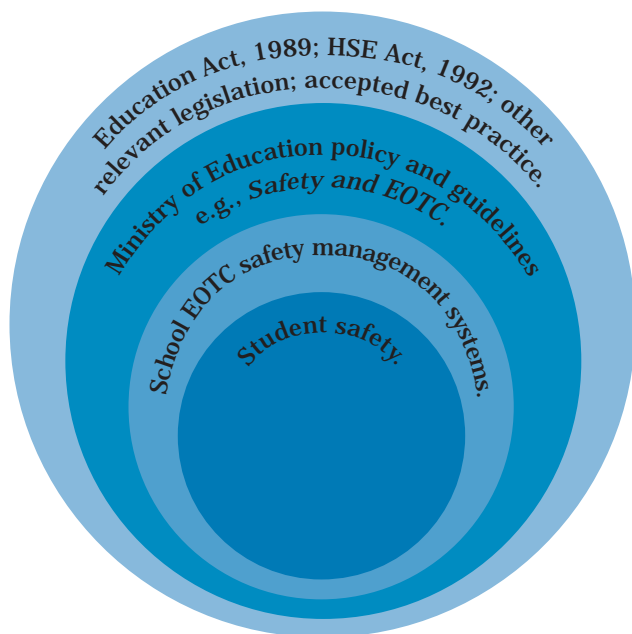


Figure 1.1 The legal and policy environment for safe student learning.

17. Schools operate in an environment of statutory requirements and Ministry of Education policies. This is illustrated in Figure 1.1. The outer layer shows the statutory requirements schools need to meet. Some of the most important statutory obligations faced by schools in the provision of EOTC programmes are those under the Education Act (1989) and the Health and Safety in Employment Act (1992). These and other requirements are detailed in Section 6 – Legal requirements and Section 7 – Codes of practice and accepted best practice.

18. The second layer of policies schools need to follow are Ministry of Education policies and guidelines for EOTC, which are outlined in this guide. These are consistent with statutory requirements and accepted best practice.

19. The third layer is the safety management policies and systems developed by New Zealand schools themselves that ensure safe student learning. Statutory requirements and Ministry of Education policies and guidelines must underpin these.

20. Central to the entire framework is safe student learning.

21. Boards must ensure a high level of student safety during EOTC events in order to meet their obligations under the (Education Act, 1989) National Administration Guideline 5 to:

- (1) *provide a safe physical and emotional environment for students; and*
- (2) *comply in full with any legislation currently in force or that may be developed to ensure the safety of students and employees.*

22. Boards of trustees will go a long way towards meeting these obligations and provide good guidance to staff, by ensuring schools put the following in place:

- appointing an EOTC co-ordinator or committee;
- establishing a safety committee (see Section 7, accident/incident review procedure, paragraph 140);
- providing a place where all EOTC policies and procedures are together and accessible to management and staff (see Appendix VI);
- compiling an inventory of all known EOTC activities to be run over the year, that also identifies the skills and experience required to run each activity safely (see Section 5, paragraphs 94 and 95);

- completing a stock-take of relevant skills and experience of all staff delivering planned EOTC activities (see Section 5, paragraph 96);
- matching planned activities with appropriately trained and experienced staff according to points one and two. Ensure this meets accepted best practice³. Identify any gaps in requirements (see Section 5, paragraphs 97-99);
- considering these gaps when making staff appointments (contract or permanent) and planning staff professional development (see Section 5, paragraphs 81-83);
- compiling an inventory of all EOTC sites and resources used by the school. Assess these for risk as part of safety management procedures (see Appendix V, forms 12 and 13); and
- ensuring students learn about and are involved in, safety procedures.

▶ Review

23. Schools should review their policies and procedures regularly.

- Each EOTC event should be reviewed to identify what went well and what could be improved.
- It can be useful to invite peer review from a school with a similar EOTC programme. This could be done on a reciprocal basis.
- Outdoor professional bodies can assist schools in reviewing programmes or activities (see

Appendix VI, Resources and contacts for details of professional bodies and national organisations).

- The Education Review Office (ERO) considers school safety management systems as part of its review. ERO would be looking for evidence that a school has ensured its systems are rigorous.

▶ School policies and procedures

24. Boards of trustees should have a policy that sets out the health and safety requirements for students and staff involved in any EOTC activities. This could be part of the board's overarching health and safety policy. Alternatively, if the board has a series of policies on health and safety they should be cross-referenced, in a footnote, with the EOTC policy.

- Boards are required to ensure staff are competent, have appropriate safety training, and that adequate facilities and resources are available to meet the stated procedures.
- Staff must comply with policies set by the board. The clearest way to do this is for the board to approve procedures that comply with the policy.
- It is important that staff are aware of and understand the policies and adhere to the procedures.
- If a teacher deviates from school policy or procedures, they could be held responsible should anything go wrong.



³ See Appendix 1, Glossary for definition and Section 7 for explanation.