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Safe Islander Orkney 2018

Practice Exemplar 30/04/2021

Introduction

The Safe Highlanders and Islanders initiative began in 1996 and is a Community Safety scheme aimed at Primary 7 or first year Secondary school children. The scheme enables children to experience and participate in a range of simulated practical situations which in real life, would be potentially threatening.



The initiative is based on the view that:

1. Children learn by doing
2. Crime Prevention/Community Safety Education can be both challenging and exciting
3. The most effective way of tackling these issues is a partnership approach

Situation

The suggestion that Orkney could host a Safe Islander event was first mooted at a Community Safety Partnership meeting in 2006. The aims and objectives of the scheme were presented in a paper to obtain funding and inspire partners to get on board to deliver the projects. The aims of the scheme are to teach children, in an enjoyable way, to:

- Become more aware of personal safety
- Make a contribution to Crime Prevention/ Community Safety
- Avoid becoming victims of crime
- Learn how to react to dangerous situations
- Know the role the emergency services play
- Foster good citizenship

The scheme continues to delivery activities and impact for children living in the Highlands and Islands.

Action



The tenth Safe Islander event in Orkney took place at Kirkwall Grammar School on Thursday, 20th September 2018.

Safe Islander is an educational programme where participants learn life skills that may keep themselves and others safe in the

future. Small groups of pupils rotate around a number of workshops where safety messages and advice are given by facilitators and pupils are encouraged to get involved and be “hands on”.

Approximately 245 S1 pupils from Kirkwall Grammar School and Stromness Academy attended Safe Islander. Orkney Ferries had adjusted their timetable to enable Sanday /Eday pupils to arrive on time for the start of their session. Unfortunately, weather conditions meant that Sanday/Eday and Westray pupils were unable to travel and attend the event as planned.

Three of the workshops delivered include the below examples.

Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

A teenage bedroom was set up and the pupils had to identify potential fire hazards. A smoke alarm went off and, as they tried to exit through a door, they were faced with a wall of fire. A discussion took place on how best to deal with this type of situation. They learned the importance of having working smoke alarms and that they must be tested once a week.

Scottish Agricultural College

A quad bike was brought into the school and regulations regarding quad bikes were discussed. A pupil from each group was invited to sit on the bike and discussions took place on the design of the bike from a safety perspective. The pupils had to match warning signs to their meanings and consider what type of clothing is appropriate to wear while on a quad bike. There was a selection of suitable/unsuitable helmets to handle and try on. Real-life accidents and potential dangers were also discussed.

Casey Construction

A small-scale building site was set up in an indoor space. Safety signage was discussed, and pupils learned that building sites are not playgrounds and can be very dangerous places, especially for young people. They were advised not to enter a site without permission. All pupils were given the opportunity to try on protective clothing that they would be required to wear should they ever be invited on to a construction site.

Outcome

Following the workshops, pupils took part in an evaluation exercise by completing pre-event and post-event questionnaires. The results demonstrated that overall, safety lessons had been learned or reinforced. Children were to asked answer questions such as:

What depth of fast flowing water can knock a person off their feet?

a) 15cm	b) 30cm
c) 50cm	d) 1 metre

What details should you give about yourself when chatting on-line to someone you don't know?

a) Your name and age	b) The school and/or clubs you attend
c) Don't give out any personal details	d) Where and when your parents are at work

What should you do if your Frisbee is thrown into an electricity sub-station?

a) Call the electricity company	b) Call 999
c) Climb in and get it out	d) Send a friend in to get it back

Reflection

When moving from Primary to Secondary school, children find themselves becoming more independent and responsible for themselves. They may be faced with dangers and difficult situations that they haven't had to deal with before. Safe Islander is an interactive event where certain scenarios are demonstrated and pupils are shown the most appropriate ways of responding to the challenges they present. Although the messages are serious, the scenarios are delivered in a fun way. Over the years, schools and pupils have embraced this event.

Since the first Safe Islander in Orkney in 2009, several local agencies and businesses have made contributions to this event. It is an excellent example of partnership working and it is heartening to see so many local businesses and organisations working together to teach our children valuable lessons in how to look after their personal safety. Without the support of partners this worthwhile initiative couldn't take place.

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