

Update from the Council for Learning Outside the Classroom

Dr John Stevenson, Chairman of the interim Board of the Council For Learning Outside the Classroom, outlines the newly established Council's objectives and ambitions for the next few months.

The main aim of the Council for Learning Outside the Classroom is to promote and champion learning outside the classroom, in order to enable all young people to benefit from increased opportunities for high-quality and varied educational experiences. The Council will become a leading voice for Learning Outside the Classroom, influencing and challenging policy and practice. By continuing to raise the profile of learning outside the classroom, the Council will promote its benefits and strive to increase the number of quality learning experiences outside the classroom.

The Council is now established as a charity and a company limited by guarantee and at the beginning of January 2009, Beth Gardner started work as chief executive of the Council. Beth Gardner joins the Council from the Carers Federation and brings with her a wealth of management and organisational development expertise. Beth believes that learning outside the classroom can play a vital role in ensuring the welfare and education of young people.

Over the coming months the interim Board of the Council will work to finalise its strategic plan. The Board will also continue to build its operational team, while working closely with the DCSF to ensure the smooth handover of operations to the Council at the end of March 2009.

It is important that organisations and individuals who believe in the importance of learning outside the classroom 'join up' by becoming members of the Council. Membership processes will be agreed shortly and shared with the wider Manifesto partnership within the next few months. Members will be supporting learning outside the classroom by creating a powerful single voice that is based on strength in numbers; raising its profile within the wider education community; and providing an opportunity to network with like-minded individuals and organisations with an interest in learning outside the classroom.