

**34 Highfield Crescent
Hebdon
Tyne and Wear
NE33 7NC**

Enquiries
National Business Unit
Ofsted
5th, 6th and 7th Floors
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

Dear Sir/Madam

Complaint re: Grainger College, Tyne and Wear

My daughter, Melissa Burns, attends Grainger College, Hebdon, Tyne and Wear and is studying Business. Melissa recently took part in a residential weekend at an Activity Centre in the Lake District with her class who were accompanied by their lecturer, Karen Mortimer. I think it is important to point out that Melissa is only 17 years old.

During the time at the activity centre the students were sent off into the woods to draw a map. The students were not accompanied by any adults and were just left to their own devices. During this time Melissa got lost and could not find any of her classmates which caused her distress. I am sure you will agree that sending any young people off into unknown environments is extremely foolish, I feel that they should have been accompanied by an adult.

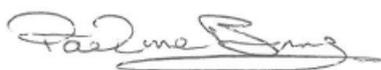
However my complaint is that Melissa particularly should not have been put in this situation as she suffers panic attacks when she is put into new situations which may cause concern. At a recent parent evening I spoke to her group tutor about these panic attacks and stressed that should there be any concerns then I was to be informed. I was quite happy about Melissa going along to the activity centre but I would have liked an opportunity to have spoken with Karen Mortimer prior to their departure. Unfortunately every time I tried to ring I was told that she was either teaching or in some meeting and she did not return any of my calls. I thought that because her group tutor was aware of the panic attacks this would be taken into account during the weekend and Melissa would not be put into any danger. Clearly this was not the case.

I was not told about the incident at the activity centre by anyone from the college and it was only when I heard Melissa and her friends discussing the weekend that I found out. Melissa is also very distressed because her classmates now know that she suffers panic attacks and I had not told her that I had spoken to her course tutor about this.

I have already complained to the Principal of the college and I received a letter from her stating that she would carry out an investigation but was surprised that my concerns were not outlined on the Parental Consent Form which I had signed. I would like to stress that I did not sign any Parental Consent Form for this trip. I have spoken to Melissa who has admitted that she forgot to give the form to me and signed it herself to make sure the college got it in time. I would have thought that surely her lecturer would have realised that the form was completed and signed by Melissa and this is another cause for concern.

I would appreciate this matter being investigated by your Office.

Yours faithfully



Pauline Burns