

# Excursions Policy

## Rationale:

- Excursions are seen as an integral part of the school curriculum as they enable students to explore, extend and enrich their learning and their social skills development, in a non-school setting. Excursions complement, and are an important aspect of the educational programs offered at the college. An excursion is defined as any activity beyond the school grounds.

## Aims:

- To reinforce, complement and extend the learning opportunities beyond the classroom.
- To develop an understanding that learning is not limited to school, and that valuable and powerful learning takes place in the real world.
- To provide a safe, secure learning experience for students in a venue external to the school.
- To further develop social skills such as cooperation, tolerance, communication, individual and group interaction.
- To further develop problem solving and life survival skills.
- To extend understanding of their physical and cultural environment.

## Implementation:

- Day excursions are defined for the purpose of this policy as any organised and supervised school activities that require children to venture beyond the school boundary.
- The principal is responsible for the approval of all non-adventure single-day excursions other than those that must be approved by the School Council.
- A designated 'Teacher in Charge' will coordinate each day excursion and must complete an excursion proposal form on SIMS and lodge it at least three weeks before the excursion date. The Campus Principal will on occasion allow late proposals but no later than 2 weeks before the excursion date. Where an excursion proposal has not been submitted, that excursion will not run, unless special circumstances are pending. This decision will be made by the Campus Principal or Sub School Leader. They will consider the educational outcome of the excursion as well as the impact on the school for the proposed date.
- Prior to the commencement of any detailed planning relating to a proposed day excursion, the Teacher in Charge must meet formally with the principal, to present the principal with a planning summary, to discuss the proposed activity, and to seek 'in principle' support for the event. The principal will complete the Principal Checklist to ensure all information and planning is in order.
- If the principal's approval is granted, detailed planning should commence using the planning questions proforma as a guide. This must include a site visit and risk assessment.
- When presenting information to the Principal, the Teacher in Charge must be aware that the Principal will consider the following:-
  - What is the purpose of the excursion and its connection to student learning?
  - Do staff members attending have the competence to provide the necessary supervision of students throughout the excursion?
  - Is an appropriately trained member of staff able to provide first aid ?

- Have supervisory adults who are not registered teachers completed a Working with Children Check?
- Is the location of staff and students throughout the excursion including during travel known?
- Is a record of telephone contacts for supervising excursion staff available?
- Is a record of the names and family contacts for all students and staff available?
- Are copies of the parental consent and confidential medical advice forms for those students on the excursion completed?
- The Principal is responsible for the approval of all single-day excursions other than those that must be approved by School Council as mentioned above.
- If day excursions include adventure activities organising staff should consult the adventure activities website, or seek advice from peak bodies or skilled and experienced staff with recent experience instructing the activity to satisfy the principal's requirements.
- If approved, the online Notification of School Activity form then be submitted three weeks prior to the activity if required. (required if country schools travelling beyond the local town/city, rural schools travelling beyond the local area, metropolitan schools travelling beyond the greater metropolitan area).
- School Council prefers that students only travel on buses fitted with seatbelts if available.
- The principal requires that a report from the Teacher in Charge occur after each day excursion if any mishaps or concerns have arisen.
- All families will be given sufficient time to make payments for excursions. Children whose parents have not paid deposits by the due date, who do not make full payment by the due date, or who have not made alternative arrangements with the Principal will not be eligible to attend.
- Office staff will be responsible for managing and monitoring the payments made by parents and will provide classroom teachers with detailed records on a regular basis.
- Information will be provided to all parents of non-English speaking families in a manner that allows them to provide an informed consent to their children attending excursions.
- Classroom teachers will be given the first option to attend excursions.
- The school will continue to provide the opportunity for teachers to update their first aid skills.
- The school will provide a mobile phone and a first-aid kit for all day excursions.
- Copies of completed Permission forms, and signed Confidential Medical Information forms must be carried by excursion staff at all times, and copies remain at school.
- A senior staff member will be in attendance at school whilst the children are returning from any out-of-school-hours excursion. The Teacher in Charge will communicate with this person with regards the anticipated return time.
- While school excursions are a team activity requiring the cooperation and common-sense of all participants, it is the Teacher in Charge who oversees the operations of the excursion, takes charge of events, makes key decisions and accepts ultimate responsibility for the excursion.

### **Expectations:**

- The Department's requirements and guidelines relating to preparation and safety will be observed in the conduct of all excursions.
- The principal or their nominee will ensure that full records are maintained regarding the camp/excursion.
- The principal or their nominee will ensure that adequate pre-excursion planning and preparation, including the preparation of students, takes place.

- Satisfactory arrangements will be made to provide continuous instruction for the students remaining at the school during the absence of staff accompanying an excursion.
- The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) will not be involved in any expense associated with the conduct of excursions. The school may choose to subsidise some excursions or some student's expenses.
- Prior to conducting a camp or excursion, the approval of the School Council or the principal will be obtained. Council must approve overnight or adventure activities. The Principal must approve these and other activities.
- Only children who have displayed sensible, reliable behaviour at school will be invited to participate in camps or excursions. Students and their parents/carers need to be made aware that acceptable standards of behaviour will be expected during a camp or an excursion.
- The emergency management process of the school will extend to and incorporate all camps and excursions.
- All DEECD requirements and guidelines that apply to the conduct of excursions are also applicable to all overseas and interstate (domestic) camps/excursions.

### **Program:**

- Prior to conducting a camp or excursion, the Department's requirements and guidelines relating to camps or excursions, will be rigorously observed.
- Consideration in planning may include:
  - [\*Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors\*](#) website
  - [\*Risk management\*](#) website
  - [\*Emergency management\*](#) website
  - [\*Student preparation\*](#) website
  - [\*Student medical information\*](#) website
  - [\*Bushfire\*](#) website
- Prior to conducting any camp or excursion, the formal approval of the School Council and/or principal will be obtained. In approving a camp or excursion, consideration will include:
  - the contribution of the activity to the school curriculum
  - the adequacy of the planning, preparation and organisation in relation to the school policy and the guidelines and advice provided by DEECD
  - information provided by community groups and organisations that specialise in the activity proposed
  - appropriateness of the venue
  - the provisions made for the safety and welfare of students and staff
  - the experience and competence of staff relevant to the activities being undertaken
  - the adequacy of the student supervision
  - the high risk nature of some activities
  - emergency procedures and safety measures
  - staff-student ratios
  - student experience
- Prior to the camp or excursion parent/carers are to be made aware that DEECD does not provide student accident cover and that they need to make their own arrangements for cover.

### **Arrangements for payments**

- All efforts will be made not to exclude students simply for financial reasons. Parents experiencing financial difficulty, who wish for their children to attend an excursion, are

invited to discuss alternative arrangements with the Business Manager. Decisions relating to alternative payment arrangements will be made by the Business Manager in consultation with the appropriate staff, on an individual basis.

- All families will be given sufficient time to make payments for excursions. Parents will be provided with permission forms and excursion information clearly stating payment finalization dates. Children whose payment have not been finalized at least 7 days prior to the departure date will not be allowed to attend unless alternative payment arrangements have been organized with the Business Manager.
- Teachers organising the excursion will be responsible for managing and monitoring the payments made by parents. Office staff will provide organizing teachers with detailed CASES21 Charge by Charge Type reports on request.

### **Teacher Responsibilities:**

- A designated “Teacher in Charge” will coordinate each excursion.
- The Teacher in Charge must provide the Office with a final student list.
- In the case where an excursion involves a particular class or year level group, the organizing teacher will ensure that there is an alternative program available for those students not attending the excursion.
- All students must have returned a signed permission note and payment to be able to attend the excursion. Copies of completed permission notes and medical information must be carried by excursion staff at all times.
- The school will provide a mobile phone and first aid kit for each excursion. The teacher in charge is responsible for collecting these prior to leaving.
- The teacher in charge will communicate the anticipated return time with the office in the case where excursions are returning out of school hours. Parents will be informed prior to students leaving for the excursion, that they can phone the office to receive an updated anticipated return time.
- Only students that have displayed sensible, reliable behaviour at school will be permitted to participate in school excursions. Parents will be notified if their child is in danger of losing the privilege to participate in an excursion due to poor behaviour at school. The decision to exclude a student will be made by the Campus Principal or Sub School Leader in consultation with the organizing teacher. Both the parent and the student will be informed of this decision prior to the excursion.
- Disciplinary measures apply to students on camps and excursions consistent with the School’s Student Engagement policy and Code of Conduct. In extreme cases the camp or excursion staff, following consultation with, and the approval of, the Campus principal or their nominee, may determine that a student should return home during a camp or excursion. In such circumstances, the parent/carer will be advised:
  - of the circumstance associated with the decision to send the student home
  - of the time when the parents/carers may collect their child from the camp or excursion
  - of the anticipated time that the student will arrive home
  - of any costs associated with the student’s return which will be the responsibility of the parents/carers
- The school’s emergency procedures do include the effects of an emergency on student supervision in the event of excursion staff being required to assist injured students or to go for help.
- All excursion staff and, where appropriate, the students will be familiar with the specific procedures for dealing with emergencies on each excursion.
- On days of extreme fire danger or total fire ban, the principal or their nominee may need to cancel an excursion at short notice. Where an excursion is not cancelled, special fire safety precautions will be implemented.

- The primary references that must be consulted when considering all excursions is the School Policy and Advisory Guide website:  
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/excursions.aspx>
- The college will adhere to DEECD policy and guidelines in relation to camps and excursions.

**Evaluation:**

- This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three year review cycle.

School Council last ratified this policy in March 2014	Review: March 2017	Policy No: 9	Date Produced: March 2014
--	--------------------	--------------	---------------------------