

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.

An excursion is defined an activity during which students leave the school grounds to engage in educational activities (including camps and sport). Adventure activities are included in this definition (regardless of whether they occur outside the school grounds or not).

The Excursion policy will:

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

1. Guidelines

- 1.1 All excursions must be approved by the Principal or their nominee(s)
- 1.2 Staff wishing to organise an excursion will ensure all excursions are maintained at an affordable cost and comply with Department of Education and Training (DET) policy and requirements. Staff must complete an excursion proposal form and lodge this for approval
- 1.3 The Principal or their nominee(s) will consider the educational outcome of the excursion as well as the impact on the school for the proposed date
- 1.4 The Principal or their nominee(s) will ensure that all excursions, transport arrangements, emergency procedures and staffing will comply with DET guidelines
- 1.5 Risk Assessment documentation must be completed prior to approval of an excursion
- 1.6 Once the excursion has been approved all relevant documentation must be completed
- 1.7 All approved excursions must be recorded on the online notification of school activity form prior to the activity taking place
- 1.8 School Council is responsible for the approval of:
 - a) Overnight excursions
 - b) Camps
 - c) Interstate and international visits
 - d) Excursion requiring sea or air travel
 - e) Excursions involving weekends or vacations
 - f) Adventure activities
- 1.9 All excursions requiring School Council approval must meet the requirements of the Safety Guidelines of Education Outdoors

- 1.10 For excursions requiring School Council approval, an excursion risk assessment plan must be provided
- 1.11 The Principal or their nominee is responsible for the approval of all single day excursions other than those that must be approved by the School Council
- 1.12 The Regional Director should be informed if an excursion leaves a school unoccupied
- 1.13 Interstate and overseas excursions must meet Department policies and requirements
- 1.14 **The approval process will take into account the following considerations:**
- The educational purpose of the excursion and its contribution to the curriculum
 - Maintenance of full records, including documentation of the planning process
 - Venue selection, including the suitability of the environment and/or venue for the excursion
 - Safety, emergency and risk management
 - Procedures in the event of an emergency
 - Arrangements if the excursion needs to be cancelled or recalled (e.g. severe weather)
 - Completion of an online notification of school activity form three weeks prior to the activity
 - First Aid requirements
 - Any other measures necessary for student and staff safety and welfare
 - Staffing and supervision (sufficient staff/experience/qualifications/appropriate level of Supervision)
 - Informed consent from parents/carers
 - Adequate student and staff medical information
 - Student preparation and behaviour
 - Requirements for any adventure activities
 - Transport requirements
 - Communication requirements
 - That staff and students have appropriate clothing and personal equipment
 - That group or technical equipment is in good condition and suitable for the activities undertaken
 - That continuous instruction is provided for students remaining at the school during the absence of staff accompanying the excursion
 - Requirements for interstate or overseas excursions
 - That the excursion meets the requirements of any school-level policy or procedures

2. Implementation

2.1 Safety

- 2.1.1 The Department's requirements and guidelines relating preparation and safety will be observed in the conduct of all excursions
- 2.1.2 The emergency management process of the school will extend to and incorporate all excursions
- 2.1.3 School Council approved excursions must have an emergency response plan
- 2.1.4 Risk assessments will be undertaken for bushfire in the activity location
- 2.1.5 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
- 2.1.6 When required, schools must follow the Department's emergency management (bushfires) procedures for off-site activities for all excursions
- 2.1.7 All excursion staff and where appropriate, the students, will be familiar with the specific procedures for dealing with emergencies on each excursion

- 2.1.8 Teachers leaving the school on an excursion must carry a mobile phone, first aid kit, asthma plans other relevant medication, emergency anaphylactic kits and management plans where applicable
- 2.1.9 Students on the Program for Students with Disabilities will need to be accompanied by an ESO Staff Member where necessary
- 2.1.10 Prior to the excursion parents/carers will be made aware that DET does not provide student accident cover and that they need to make their own arrangements
- 2.1.11 Seat belted buses are required for all excursions
- 2.1.12 In the event of an emergency, accident or injury staff will:
 - Take emergency action
- 2.2 Immediately notify the school Principal who will then notify the Department's Security Services Unit
- 2.3 **Organisation**
 - 2.3.1 A designated 'Teacher in Charge' will coordinate each excursion and is responsible for ensuring the excursion, transport arrangements and excursion activities comply with the DET guidelines
 - 2.3.2 The Teacher in charge will provide the Main Office with a final student list
 - 2.3.3 All students must have returned a signed permission note and payment to be able to attend the excursion. In exceptional circumstances verbal permission may be given to the Principal or their nominee
 - 2.3.4 Consent forms will remain at the school with the designated school contact person and copies of each form will be taken on the excursion by the teacher in charge. These forms will be archived following the excursion in accordance with DET guidelines
 - 2.3.5 Parents/guardians will be notified at least two weeks prior to any activity
 - 2.3.6 The Teacher in Charge will communicate the anticipated return time with the General Office in the case where excursions are returning out of school hours
 - 2.3.7 Students not attending an excursion will be placed in another class and have an appropriate learning program provided by the class teacher
 - 2.3.8 To participate in the excursion all students will be expected to travel by the same mode of transport to and from the designated venue unless otherwise approved by the Principal
 - 2.3.9 An additional trained adult may accompany students on an excursion if required
 - 2.3.10 Occasions may arise where staff may need to transport students in their own cars. In such instances the Department policy and requirements for Private Car Use will need to be followed
 - 2.3.11 Parents/carers may be invited to assist with excursions. When deciding on which parent will attend, the teacher in charge will take into account:-
 - Any valuable skills the parents have to offer e.g. first aid etc.
 - The need to include both female and male parents.
 - The special needs of particular students.
 - The currency of Working With Children Check
- 2.4 **Behavioural Issues**
 - 2.4.1 Only students who have displayed sensible, reliable behaviour at school will be invited to participate in school excursions. Parents will be notified if a student is in danger of losing their invitation to participate in an excursion due to poor behaviour at school. The decision to exclude a student will be made by the Principal, in consultation with the classroom teacher and teacher in charge. Students and their parents/carers need to be made aware that acceptable standards of behaviour will be expected during an excursion
 - 2.4.2 Disciplinary measures apply to students on excursions consistent with the school's **Wellbeing and Behaviour Management policies**. In extreme cases

the excursion staff, following consultation with the Principal or their nominee, may determine that a student should return home during an excursion. In such circumstances the parent/carer will be advised of the circumstances, the time to collect their child or the anticipated time that the student will arrive back at school. Any costs associated with the student's return will be the responsibility of the parents/carers

2.5 Arrangements for Payments

- 2.5.1 All families will be given sufficient time to make payments for excursions. Parents will be provided with permission forms and excursion details as well as information clearly stating payment finalisation dates
- 2.5.2 Full payment is required prior to any student attending any excursion
- 2.5.3 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, will be required to discuss their individual situation with the Principal. Alternative payment arrangements may be made to enable all students to attend excursions
- 2.5.4 Students whose payment has not been finalised prior to the excursion will not be able to attend unless alternative payment arrangements have been organised with the Principal
- 2.5.5 Class teachers will be responsible for keeping permission forms as they are returned to the school and the monitoring of payment. Money will be sent to the office for processing.

3. Resources

- 3.1 This Policy is underpinned by the:
 - a) Behaviour Management Policy
 - b) Bullying, Cyber-bullying and Harassment Policy
 - c) Child Safe Policy
 - d) Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy
 - e) Student Welfare Policy

4. Evaluation

- 4.1 The Education Sub Committee and Weeden Heights PS staff will review the effectiveness of the school's Excursion Policy on a cyclical basis in accordance with DET guidelines and priorities.