

## EXCURSIONS – Policy and Guidelines

Well planned excursions are a means of complementing and enriching the learning that takes place in the classroom.

Excursions may be day or overnight activities and include:

- Whole class activities
- Individual or small group activities
- Adventure activities
- Sporting activities
- Interstate and overseas tours

It is vital that due care is taken to safeguard the welfare of students before, during and after an excursion, and that detailed records are kept.

Principals, teachers, school councillors and others involved in school excursions, including camps and adventure activities, must anticipate the possibility of litigation following an incident or injury. They must be prepared for a detailed examination of all their actions, their planning and the curriculum role of the particular activity.

The Principal has responsibility for ensuring students receive adequate care when on excursions or camps.

The Assistant Principal – Operations oversees this area of school activities.

Teachers organising excursions must follow the college guidelines and procedures.

### 1. General guidelines

- Because of potential time lags it is essential that all planning be completed well in advance of the proposed activity.
- Adequate pre-excursion planning and preparation, including emergency planning and the preparation of students must take place.
- Parental consent is required for all excursions outside the school grounds. When preparing Parent Excursion Notification forms teachers must provide all relevant information that may influence a parent/guardian's decision to grant permission for their son/daughter to take part in the excursion.
- All excursions will be entered on the Events section of Compass. A staff instruction document is provided to all staff.
- Parents & guardians are encouraged to grant consent and make any associated payments online via Compass
- Detailed records must be kept by the college for each excursion.
- If accidents or injuries occur, comprehensive reports must be completed and filed promptly. Accident report sheet is available from General Office.
- Where approved by the Assistant Principal – Operations students may travel independently to and from the excursion venue.
- Adventure activities and overnight camps require College Council approval and detailed documentation. A staff checklist is available.
- Any money to be collected must be organised through the General Office. Staff should not collect money.
- All staff and students must wear appropriate and suitable clothing and protective apparel.
- Equipment must be in good condition and be suitable for each activity undertaken.
- Parental consent is required for the school to seek emergency treatment for student.
- Parental consent is required for a student to be sent home in the advent of serious misbehaviour.
- Medical alerts are highlighted in the excursion handbook that the supervising teacher takes on each excursion. Parents are consistently reminded to update their son or daughters medical history.

- Independent students are able to sign their own excursion form.
- All appropriate forms are to be taken on the excursion/camp and copies must be given to the General Office.
- Satisfactory arrangements must be made to provide continuous instruction for the students remaining at the school during the absence of staff accompanying an excursion.
- Organising teacher should consult with Assistant Principal - Operations if he/she needs to clarify any aspect of the process.

## **2.0 Supervision of Excursions**

### **2.1 Level of supervision**

The degree of supervision to be exercised will vary according to the nature of the activity, the age and maturity of the students, the size of the group and the degree of risk involved in the environment in which the activity will take place.

For single day excursions not involving adventure activities the level of supervision required is one teacher for every 20 students attending. For senior secondary students this ratio may be extended if student safety is not an issue. The Assistant Principal – Operations must approve any variation to the required ratio.

### **2.2 Supervised excursions**

All excursions involving groups of students must be supervised according to Department requirements (refer to 2.1 above). A Notification of Excursion Form must be completed for each student.

### **2.3 Unsupervised excursions**

In some circumstances an individual student or **small** groups of students may be required, as part of their VCE coursework, to undertake research outside the school during school hours, without teacher supervision.

The organising teacher should prepare the documentation that clearly indicates that the students will be unsupervised.

Unless approved by the Assistant Principal – Operations Year 5 to 10 students should not be permitted to undertake unsupervised excursions.

### **2.4 Travel – Unsupervised & Supervised**

It is assumed that travel to and from an excursion will be supervised.

The following should be noted in relation to supervised and unsupervised travel –

- Unless approved by the Assistant Principal – Operations unsupervised travel is not permitted for year 5 to 9 classes.
- The organising teacher should prepare the documentation that clearly indicates that the students will travel independently.
- Where the excursion is for the **whole** day students will be permitted to travel to and from the venue unsupervised provided that parents have consented to this arrangement. This generally means that students will not attend school on the day but leave for the excursion from home and return home after the excursion;
- Where a parent/guardian requests in writing that their child be dismissed from the excursion venue at the end of the day the student will travel home unsupervised.
- Where it is deemed to be more efficient, students may travel unsupervised directly to the excursion. This would generally only occur where the excursion commences at the start of the day.
- In circumstances where students are to travel unsupervised it is important to attach all relevant information to the parent excursion notification. This can include public transport timetables and maps indicating the exact meeting point.

### **3.0 Use of private vehicles for excursions**

If a member of staff intends to transport students by private car, then the following guidelines apply:

- The parent/guardian of each student should be advised of the name of the driver(s) and requested to sign consent for their child to travel in that vehicle.
- Accurate records should be kept of the names of the students travelling in each vehicle.
- Staff must have a comprehensive insurance policy.
- Students are not permitted to drive other students.

#### 4.0 Approvals for excursions

The Assistant Principal – Operations will consider all applications to conduct an excursion. The Daily Organiser will provide advice and consideration will be given to:

- Staffing;
- the impact on other school programs;
- the impact on students remaining at school during the absence of staff accompanying an excursion.

Final approval for all excursions is required from the Assistant Principal Operations - AT LEAST **TWO WEEKS** in advance. Excursions that are not notified two weeks in advance or do not meet other requirements may NOT be authorised.

Adventure activities must be approved by Council AT LEAST **FOUR WEEKS** before the excursion (*refer 4.1 School Council approval*).

In approving the excursion the Assistant Principal - Operations and in some cases College Council, will consider:

- the contribution of the activity to the school curriculum;
- the adequacy of the planning, preparation and organisation;
- 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 cost.

#### 4.1 School Council approval

The school council is responsible for the approval of:

- Overnight excursions
- Camps
- Interstate and overseas visits
- Excursions requiring sea or air travel
- Excursions involving weekends or vacations
- Adventure activities.

#### 5.0 Department Notification of Council approved activity

Relevant details about school council approved excursions should be entered online to the Office of Emergency Management on the Notification of School Activity form at **least three weeks** prior to the activity.

In the event of an emergency, to ensure information is provided to emergency services, schools must notify the Department of any approved school camp or excursion at least three weeks beforehand using the [Student Activity Locator online form](#). A user guide has been developed to help schools complete the online form, see: [Student Activity Locator User Guide](#)

The information will be used by the emergency services in the event of an emergency. Where additional information is required during an emergency, schools will be expected to provide it from the documentation prepared for the activity.

#### 6.0 Overseas Travel

Any overseas travel must be approved in strict accordance with Department guidelines and with reference to the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (see their website at <http://www.dfat.gov.au>).

## **7. Excursion documentation**

It is the responsibility of the Assistant Principal - Operations to ensure that excursion records are maintained.

Relevant details to do with individual excursions should be readily available during both school hours and outside school hours.

These details should include:

- the exact location of the excursion participants at all times, including during travel.
- The relevant telephone number(s) through which excursion staff may be contacted in an emergency.
- The names and family contacts for all students and staff.
- Copies of the parental approval and medical details.

The organising teacher should file these in the General Office prior to the excursion commencing.

## **8.0 STUDENT DRIVER POLICY GUIDELINES**

**8.1** What are the Department of Education and Training's requirements?

**8.2** The Victorian Government Schools Reference Guide contains two sections relevant to students driving to school – sections 4.4.2.10 and 4.10.6.3. The two sections basically contain the same requirement, that is:

*Students are not permitted under any circumstances to transport other students in private cars in connection with any school program or function whether held during normal school hours or at other times.*

## **9.0 Private Car Use**

In relation to the use of private vehicles that the College will

1. not direct staff members to transport other staff, students, or equipment
2. ensure private vehicles used meet requirements for insurance and registration
3. avoid use of private vehicles (including volunteer workers, parents etc) whenever possible
4. ensure the DEECD requirements as established in the web site attached apply when use of private vehicles is unavoidable.

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/privatecar.aspx>

**Policy approved: May, 2014**

**Signed: Gina D'Ettorre (Council President)**