

EXCURSIONS POLICY

Excursions Policy

Rationale:

The school's excursion program enables students to further their learning and social skills development in a non-school setting. Excursions complement, and are an important aspect of the educational programs offered at our school.

Aims:

- To reinforce, complement and extend 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.

Implementation:

- An excursion is defined as any activity beyond the school grounds.
- All excursions must be approved by School Council. In doing so, School Council will determine a schedule of excursions for the school year, will ensure that all excursions are maintained at a reasonable and affordable cost, and comply with all DET requirements.
- The scheduling of excursions will be printed in an edition of the school newsletter, and will be updated on a needs basis.
- Students will not be excluded from excursions 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. Decisions relating to alternative payment arrangements will be made by the Principal on a case-by-case basis.
- All families will be given sufficient time to make payments for excursions. Parents will be sent notices before the excursion date reminding them of the closing date for payment.
- Each excursion will be coordinated by a designated 'Teacher in Charge'.
- Prior to any child attending an excursion, parents/guardians must have provided to the school a signed permission form, a signed "Confidential Medical Information for School Council Approved Excursions" form, and must have paid the costs involved.
- When obtaining parental consent, the permission slip will have sufficient information to allow parents to make an informed decision about whether to permit their child to participate in the activity. The consent form should include information about the nature of the proposed activity, degree of supervision and the risks involved.
- The designated Teacher in Charge of each excursion will ensure that all excursions, transport arrangements and excursion activities comply with Department of Employment, Education and Training guidelines. The "Notification of School Activity" form will be completed and line to the Department three weeks prior to the excursion departure date.
- www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/forms/school/sal/enteractivity.asp
- Classroom teachers will be given the first option to attend excursions.
- The school will provide a mobile phone and a first-aid kit for all excursions.

- Copies of completed Permission forms, and signed “Confidential Medical Information for School Council Approved Excursions” forms must be carried by excursion staff at all times.
- 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.
- Parents of children involved in excursions may be invited to assist in the delivery of excursions. When deciding on which parents will attend, the Teacher in Charge will take into account –
 - Any valuable skills the parents have to offer. E.g. bus license, first aid etc.
 - The need to include both male and female parents.
 - The special needs of particular students.
- Parents selected to assist with an excursion may be required to pay costs associated with the excursion.
- Only children who have displayed sensible, reliable behaviour at school will be invited to participate in school excursions. Parents will be notified if a child 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 the Teacher in Charge.
- All excursions require School Council approval. This approval is sought at a scheduled meeting at least three weeks prior to the departure date. Information presented to the School Council will include: -
 1. The educational aims and objectives of the camp.
 2. The names of all adults attending and their expertise and experience.
 3. Travel arrangements and costs.
 4. Venue details and an itinerary of events.
 5. Procedures followed to ensure the safety of the children.
- The above information will be provided to the Principal at least a week before the School Council meeting date.

Bushfires and Control Procedures on Excursions

- Pre-activity planning will include consideration of the possible fire risk and potential for bushfire in the relevant location when attending excursion. The excursion will be cancelled in the event of a bush fire. Alternatives will be planned to allow for last-minute change in the event of severe fire danger.
- Fires and open fire places will be used in accordance with the requirements of the fire and/or land management authorities.
- Students will be briefed on the safe site and use of fuel stoves and alerted to the risks associated with open flames in a bush setting.
- The communication strategy will include mechanisms to ensure that the group is alerted to a potential Total Fire Ban or other communications from fire authorities.
- In addition, staff will consider prevailing local conditions and adjust the excursion accordingly. Adjustments could include further consultation with the school and/or land management authorities to determine course of action, evacuation, changing location or cancellation of the activity.

Monitoring and review

Yarra Me School will:

- Review the Excursions Policy every four years

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| This policy was ratified by school council on | 17 th September, 2018 | |
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*References: S132-2014 –Legal Division - Focus on Legal
Vic Gov't School Policy & Advisory Guide – Planning & Approvals for excursions*

Important Information to be considered when planning camps:

When undertaking excursion planning, 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 their planning, actions and the curriculum role of any activity.

The excursion planning and approval process should 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:**
 - the suitability of the environment and/or venue for the excursion
- **Safety, emergency and risk management:**
 - assessment of excursion risks
 - procedures in the event of an emergency
 - arrangements if the excursion needs to be cancelled or recalled (for example, due to forecast severe weather conditions)
 - 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:**
 - there are sufficient staff to provide appropriate and effective supervision
 - the experience, qualifications and skills of each staff member (including volunteers, instructors, etc) will allow them to provide effective supervision in general and for planned activities (as applicable)
 - there are appropriate levels of supervision in view of the activities undertaken and students involved.
- informed consent from parents or carers
- adequate student and staff medical information
- student preparation and behaviour
- requirements for any adventure activities
- transportation requirements, noting that:
 - public transport should be used if practicable, where transport authorities should be consulted as to appropriate travel times and at least a fortnight's notice of travel provided
 - excursions that run late, failing to meet times agreed to with private bus operators, are likely to incur significant costs
 - information on student concession cards is available at: Public Transport Victoria
- 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
- any information which has been provided by specialists in the activities proposed
- requirements for interstate or overseas excursions
- that the excursion meets the requirements of any school-level policy or procedures

Who approves the excursion

This table explains the approval required before the excursion occurs.

| Excursion type | Then it must be approved by |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Overnight excursions Camps Interstate and international visits Excursions requiring sea or air travel Excursions involving weekends or vacations Adventure activities. | The school council, or Both school councils when it is a joint activity involving another school and The Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors must be followed. |
| Day excursions (other than those referred to above that must be approved by the school council). | the principal, or both principals when it is a joint activity involving another school |

Joint-school activities

The nominated coordinating principal or teacher ensures:

- Planning and approval requirements are met
- Parents or carers are informed that their children may be supervised by teachers and other approved adults from the other school.

Note: All schools involved in a joint excursion must complete an online notification of school activity form.