



St Patrick's Parish Primary School

Camps & Excursions (Offsite Activities) Policy

Rationale

St Patrick's 'Camping and Excursion Program' should enable students to further their learning and social skills development in a non-school setting. Camps and Excursions should complement, and be an important aspect of the educational programs offered at our school. They may have a cultural, environmental or outdoor emphasis.

Definitions

An offsite activity includes any excursion, camp (including study camps), interstate or overseas tour or off-campus activity such as attendance at a sporting fixture.

A **camp** is defined as any activity involving at least one night's accommodation.

A local **excursion** is defined as any activity beyond the school grounds and within a 30km radius of the school.

A **major excursion** is defined as any activity travelling outside of a 30 km radius.

Offsite activity staff are teachers, Learning Support Officers, volunteers (who have been approved as a school volunteer), campsite staff and specialist instructors who will supervise the students.

Policy Statement

As an important aspect of the holistic education of each student offered at St Patrick's School, a program of school excursions and camps will be put into practice by the school community.

Principles

The Camping and Excursion program at St Patrick's will:

- Be developed in the context of the school's Child Safety Policy
- Provide all students with the opportunity to participate in a sequential camping and excursion program
- Provide shared class experiences and a sense of group cohesiveness
- Reinforce and extend classroom learnings
- Provide a program that promotes self-worth, resourcefulness, respect, independence, leadership, cooperation, and tolerance within students
- Reinforce, complement and extend learning opportunities for students beyond the classroom
- Develop an understanding for students that learning opportunities are not limited to school and that valuable and powerful learning takes place in the real world.

Guidelines

The conduct of any excursion or activity needs to ensure the following considerations are taken into account:

- Educational purpose of the excursion and its contribution to the curriculum
- School approval requirements for excursions and staff travel
- Maintenance of full records, including documentation of the planning process
- Suitability of the environment and/or venue for the excursion
- Informed consent from parents or carers
- Adequate student and staff medical information
- Student preparation and behaviour
- Requirements for any adventure activities (these involve greater than normal risk - there are

additional considerations associated with these activities

Guideline Indicators

- The camps and excursion program will be developed sequentially throughout the school.
- All camps/excursions require approval from the Principal.
- The Principal, Staff and School Advisory Council will ensure that all school camps/excursions are maintained at a reasonable and affordable cost.
- All camps/excursions will be budgeted for at the beginning of the school year with detailed and accurate costing presented to the Principal. Parents/Guardians will be notified of the exact cost and other relevant details as soon as practicable. These costs will be detailed in school fee statements. The cost of replacing teachers (if required) will be budgeted for by the school. Minor excursions will be funded from within class budgets.
- Students will not be excluded from camps/excursions simply for financial reasons. Parents/Guardians experiencing financial difficulty will need 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 individual camps/excursions.
- The Excursion and Camp Checklist (Appendix 1), Offsite Activity Planning checklist (Appendix 2), Student Activity Locator (on CEVN) and a Risk Assessment (Appendix 3) need to be completed at least three weeks prior to the camp/excursion.
- The designated “Teacher in Charge” of each camp/excursion will ensure that all venues, accommodation, bus arrangements and camp/excursion activities comply with Catholic Education Office Ballarat, Catholic Education Commission of Victoria and the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development guidelines.
- The school will ensure that a staff member with Level 2 First Aid qualifications will attend each camp/excursion.
- The school will ensure that communication between those on camps/excursions and the school is maintained on a regular basis.
- The school will ensure that appropriate staff-student ratios are adhered to (Appendix 4)
- Parents/Guardians who assist on camps/excursions must have a current Working with Children Check.
- Parents will be notified if a child is in danger of losing their invitation to participate in an experience due to poor behaviour at school. If the unsatisfactory behaviour continues, the child will then be excluded from camp/excursion. The decision to exclude a student will be made by the Principal, in consultation with the classroom teacher.
- Parents will be requested to collect their child from camp if their child exhibits behaviour that is considered unacceptable. The Teacher in Charge, in consultation with the Principal, will make this decision. Costs incurred will be the responsibility of the parent.

Emergency and Risk Management

The conduct of any excursion or activity needs to ensure the following considerations have been undertaken:

- Assessment of excursion risks
- Procedures in the event of an emergency
- Arrangements if the excursion needs to be cancelled, recalled, or altered (for example: severe weather conditions, changes to DFAT travel advice, or students returning early due to illness/serious misbehaviour)
- First aid requirements

Reflective Materials

St Patrick’s Vision and Mission Statements

St Patrick’s Pastoral Care Policy

Resources

[Catholic Schools Operational Guide](#)

[Victorian Government Schools Reference Guide](#) (sections 4.4.2.6 – 4.4.4.7 inclusive)

[Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors](#)

[Guidelines to Schools for Interstate and Overseas Tours](#)

Appendix 1: [Excursion and Camp checklist](#)

Appendix 2: [Offsite Activity Planning Checklist](#)

Appendix 3: [Risk Assessment Template](#)

Appendix 4: [CECV Summary table of Staff-Student Ratio for Camps, Excursions and Outdoor Activities](#)

Camps and Major Excursion options

Year Level	Time	Option	Duration
F - 2	Any term	Day excursion	Day - may be slightly longer than school day
Yr 3/4	Term 3/4	Odd Year - Sovereign Hill or similar	1 night
		Even Year - Local camp at school or Southcombe Park	1 night
Yr 5/6	End of first term	Odd Year - Camp Cooriemungle or similar (Kangarooobie/Halls Gap)	2 nights
		Even Year - Melbourne	2 nights
Yr 5/6 (Optional)	Every 2 Years	Trip to Japan	2 weeks (approx)

Reviewed: September 2018

Ratification: November 2018

Next review: 2022