
CAMP AND EXCURSION POLICY

Rationale:

The Church speaks of Catholic schools as aiming to foster the integration of faith and life, and the integration of culture and faith. These aims underpin every activity of the Catholic school's life and curriculum. (*Mandate Letter, 11-17*) School camps and excursions are conducted as either an integral or an incidental part of the educational program of the school. "*School camps and excursions*" are defined as activities generally conducted away from the school campus for educational and/or religious purposes. In special circumstances, a camp or excursion could take place at a school campus. "*Camps*" would normally involve an overnight stay whereas "*excursions*" would normally involve single-day trips. "*Educational program*" shall be as defined by the School Education Act (1999) Clause 4 Definitions, '*educational program*' "*Integral*" to the educational program shall mean a component that is compulsory for all students (eg a class/year level Retreat). '*Incidental*' to the educational program shall mean a component that is optional for students (A voluntary overseas excursion).

1. School camps and excursions are part of the educational program offered at St Maria Goretti's.
2. The Principal shall ensure that maximum emphasis is placed on the safety and well being of all the participants. Child Protection procedures shall be known to all staff. Students will be advised of developmentally appropriate, personal safety strategies.
3. School camps and excursions are to be regarded as an extension of the school. The same code of conduct expected during school hours is expected of all students, staff and supervisors for the duration of the camp or excursion. Pastoral care systems shall be in place to support the needs of all students.
4. A duty of care exists at all times, as a teacher/student relationship exists throughout the camp or excursion.
5. The Principal, in planning school camps and excursions, shall consider the needs of students and their families.
6. Behaviour Management, Bullying and Harassment, Child Protection and other school policies and processes shall continue to be applicable. Appropriate modifications shall be made to the consequences for unacceptable behaviour and staff, students and families shall be advised of these prior to the camp or excursion.
7. The Principal shall consider the financial burden on families of sending students to camps or excursions. Provision shall be made by the school so that no student is prevented from attending camps or excursions that are an integral part of the educational program, on financial grounds.
8. Staff shall ensure that appropriate prayer/liturgical experiences form an integral part of the camp or excursion program.
9. On interstate or overseas excursions, staff shall be apprised of and shall follow any local mandatory reporting requirements in relation to Child Protection.

Background:

Recent recommendations suggest the following should be considered in developing a camp or excursion plan:

- Age of students
- Special Needs – e.g. behaviour patterns known to teachers and staff need to be provided for when planning activities – ensure that centre staff are also aware of difficult children and that they are easily recognisable so that if they are in the wrong place they can be picked up quickly by centre staff or noted quickly by the supervisor.
- Supervisor role for children in water activities or other dangerous activity was considered adequate at 1:5.
- Rules need to be constantly reinforced and checked with children.
- Supervisors should be known to children and get a chance to acquaint themselves with their charges and visa versa – the relationship is important.
- Always check student ability to undertake activity – greater supervision required if incompetent.
- Always do a reconnaissance trip of the venue to assess potential hazards.

Incidentals from this case

- Medication provided to student by responsible adult (forms completed) is acceptable.

Principles:

1. All camps and excursions offered by the school shall be:
 - a. Designed to:
 - i. Further the school's vision statement.
 - ii. Enhance the child's educational opportunities.
 - b. Derived from or supportive of the teaching programs of the class.
2. The Principal shall ensure that maximum emphasis in planning and implementing the camp or excursion is placed on the safety and well being of all the participants.
3. The Principal, in planning school camps and excursions, shall consider the needs of both students and their families particularly the needs of individuals:
 - a. With particular medical needs.
 - b. Supervisory needs.
 - c. From varying cultural backgrounds.
 - d. Finances which may prevent a child from attending a camp or excursion.
4. Camps and excursions are to be regarded as an extension of the school. The same code of conduct expected during school hours is expected of all students, staff and supervisors for the duration of the camp or excursion. **(See the St Maria Goretti's Managing Student Behaviour Policy.)**
5. A duty of care exists at all times, as a teacher/student relationship exists throughout the camp or excursion.
6. Staff shall ensure that appropriate prayer/liturgical experiences form an integral part of the camp or excursion (where appropriate) program.

Procedures

1. The St Maria Goretti's Catholic School Camps and Excursion Policy should be read in conjunction with:
 - a. The School Camps and Excursions - Guidelines for Catholic Schools (file).
 - b. The Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia: Policy Statement "*School Camps and Excursions*".
2. While on camp or an excursion, duties of care responsibilities exist at all times. Therefore, staff and supervisors shall not be permitted to use intoxicating substances at any time during the camp or excursion.
3. St Maria Goretti's Catholic School is a Smoke and Allergen Free Zone which extends to camps and excursions of the school.
4. Planning
 - a. Approval
 - i. Each camp and excursion shall be discussed with and approved by the Principal prior to discussion with the children, parents or other staff.
 - ii. At the initial meeting, the teacher will be prepared to discuss with the Principal:
 1. The purpose of the excursion in relation to their teaching program.
 2. A tentative timetable.
 3. Costing.
 4. The student to adult ratio for camps and excursions in consideration of the following factors:
 - a. The types of activities.
 - b. The location of the school camp or excursion.
 - c. The age of the student.
 - d. The camp or excursion facilities.
 - e. Gender balance for the supervision of male and female students.
 - f. Dormitory arrangements in a co-education setting

As a norm, school staff will supervise school camps and only a parent of a child with significant medical need or issue will be asked to attend. The parent of the same gender as the child will be required to attend to provide supervision of the child's medical need or issue only and will not have a role on the camp beyond that.

5. The Emergency Plans.
6. Medical Requirements:
 - a. Special requirements for students.
 - b. Impact on the selection of the venue.
- b. The organising teacher will:
 - i. Coordinate publications with the Administrative Officer.
 - ii. Book a bus.
 - iii. Book the venue.
 - iv. Establish the timetable for the day.
 - v. Complete the School Excursion form and submit it to the Principal for approval and include:-
 1. Indicate the name of the excursion.
 2. The venue
 3. The date
 4. A timetable for the excursion
 - vi. Maintain class list to ensure all parents are provided with an equal opportunity to attend excursions throughout the year as primary educators of their child.
 - vii. Determine Emergency Plans in accordance with the *"School Camps and Excursions - Guidelines for Catholic Schools"* (File).
 - viii. Determine factors influencing Medical Requirements (5b) including:
 1. Allergies that may make the venue inappropriate
- c. The Principal shall
 - i. Make provision so no student is prevented from attending camps or excursions on financial grounds.
 - ii. Ensure that adequate insurance cover is in place to protect all the participants on the school camp or excursion. The School Board has arranged for 24-hour insurance for each child therefore no additional insurance is necessary for excursions, although the need for additional insurance for camps is to be established with Catholic Church Insurance.
- d. Parental Notification
 - i. Parents will be notified of all excursions through the School Newsletter, although in special circumstances the Principal may authorise a parent letter.
 - ii. Notification period:
 1. At least three weeks prior to the excursion.
 2. At least six weeks prior to camps.
 - iii. Students shall not be allowed to attend a school camp or excursion unless written permission is granted by the parent.

- e. The Permission Note shall:
 - i. Contain details such as:
 - 1. The date of the camp or excursion.
 - 2. The departure and return times.
 - 3. The method of transport.
 - 4. The rationale for the camp or excursion.
 - 5. The activities to be undertaken on the camp or excursion.
 - ii. Contain a section for the parent to complete that gives:
 - 1. The school permission to take the child on the camp or excursion detailed in 4di (above).
 - 2. An opportunity for the parent to indicate special requirements or needs for the child.
 - iii. Be returned to the Class Teacher no later than:
 - 1. Three weeks prior to a camp.
 - 2. Two days prior to an excursion.
- 5. School camps and excursions form part of a school's curriculum program and students are required to attend. Where a parent has an issue regarding the attendance of their child on a school camp or excursion these issues should be discussed with the Principal.
 - a. Care shall be taken to protect the right of parents to decide whether to send their children to school camps.
 - b. Where a student does not attend a school camp or excursion the school shall provide an alternative educational program.
- 6. Implementation.
 - a. Permission Note Record.
 - i. The Class Teacher shall maintain a written record (Class Checklist) to ensure all Permission Notes are returned within the timeline specified in 4diii.
 - ii. Where a permission note is not received:
 - 1. A letter will be sent to the parent on the due by date (e.g. two days prior to the excursion) for return the next morning.
 - 2. Where this letter is not returned, the Principal will send a letter to the parent with a copy of this policy informing the parent that the child will:
 - a. Not be attending the camp or excursion.
 - b. Be provided with an alternate educational program and appropriate supervision.

b. Medical Requirements

i. Consideration shall be given to medical requirements of students participating on camps and excursions. Consideration shall be given:

1. Of the individual Medical Action Plan relating to each child
2. Where a child has a significant medical condition that the Principal believes necessitates a parent of the same gender attending the camp or excursion to ensure adequate care this may become a condition of attendance.
3. Prior to a camp (or strenuous excursion), the camp (or excursion) organiser is to determine the medical needs of the students who are to attend the camp or excursion and shall conduct a detailed survey of the medical needs of students
 - a. This shall include information such as:
 - i. Any known medical conditions e.g. Asthma.
 - ii. Any medication, which is required.
 - iii. Any allergies.
 - iv. Any medical condition, which may prevent a student from participating in a particular activity.
 - v. Dietary needs.
 - b. Specific written instructions shall be obtained from parents for the administration of medication.
 - i. A medical kit (First Aid), appropriate to the activities and/or location of the camp or excursion, shall be kept within close proximity at all times. Appendix E
 - ii. At least one adult attending the camp shall have a recognised and current First Aid qualification. Where an excursion is likely to be strenuous or where participation could affect the medical condition of students, at least one adult attending the excursion shall have a recognised and current First Aid qualification

7. Transport:

- a. Students shall be transported to and from camps, and on excursions in a safe and proper manner, whatever the mode of transport. All vehicles used shall be in a roadworthy condition.
- b. If a bus is required for a camp or excursion:
 - i. A Bus Booking Form (Appendix F) should be emailed to the School Administrative Officer as soon as the excursion is approved.
 - ii. The School Administrative Officer will book a bus and notify the organising teacher of the confirmed booking and cost via email.
- c. The driver for the excursion must:
 - i. Hold a current, appropriate licence.
 - ii. Be approved by the Principal prior to the event to drive for the school or be provided by a bus company.
 - iii. Be responsible for any infringement notices received whilst driving the school bus.

- iv. The Principal shall ensure that drivers of any vehicles used for the transportation of children or staff of St Maria Goretti's Catholic School are persons who act responsibly and give due regard to the safety and well-being of the students and staff.
8. Camp or Excursion Report
- a. At the conclusion of the camp, a detailed report shall be submitted by the camp supervisor/s to the Principal and the report shall cover:
 - i. The adequacy of the campsite.
 - ii. Recommendations for the future use of the campsite.
 - iii. The overall management of the camp including:
 - iv. Behavioural Incidents.
 - v. The budget and relevant financial statements.
 - vi. Any injuries that occurred.
 - vii. The achievement or otherwise of the objectives of the camp.
 - viii. Other information relating to specific incidents on the camp.
 - ix. Any other information, which may assist in the planning of future camps.
 - b. Where an excursion was strenuous or when during the course of an excursion a student suffered:
 - i. An injury or experienced ill health
 - ii. Where a significant unplanned incident occurred

The teacher in charge of the excursion shall submit a detailed report to the Principal.