



Our Lady of the Way Catholic Primary School **Excursion & Camp Policy**

When undertaking excursion planning, principals, teachers, 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
 - ensure that the school policies and procedures for off-site supervision of students align with the DET Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors, especially with regard to management of safety issues relating to student swimming and water-based sporting activities.
 - 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 for off site activities
 - 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 teacher-student ratio will be a minimum of 1:10 for overnight activities and 1:20 for excursions.

- 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. Where there may be deemed a greater concern to risk management based on the activity or location, then additional staff may be required based on the activity assessment.
- 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 only 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
- 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.

Venue selection and assessment

Excursion venues must be assessed and selected on the basis of their safety and suitability for the activities proposed.

It is recommended that venues are selected based on the recent and first-hand knowledge (for example, through an inspection of the site) of at least one member of the planning and supervising staff.

Criteria for assessing venues such as campsites or overnight accommodation venues should include:

- health and hygiene
- buildings and facilities
- activity equipment and the conduct of activities
- certification and qualifications of venue staff
- participant supervision provided
- risks posed by other users of the site
- emergency and risk management plans of venues
- fire precautions
- first aid facilities
- quality assurance and consumer protection
- relevant accreditations
- references from other schools.

Residential campsites

Schools using residential campsites for overnight camping must use accredited campsites, to ensure these venues meet minimum criteria regarding safety and suitability.

Definition: Residential campsites are campsites which usually have permanent facilities (such as cooking and eating facilities, beds and an amenities block) and adventure recreation options. This definition does not include caravan parks, hotels/motels, ski lodges or Victorian government residential schools.

There are three accreditation providers:

- Australian Camps Association's Campsite and Outdoor Activity Provider program
see: ACA Accredited Camps
- Australian Tourism Accreditation Program (ATAP) see: ATAP Accredited Businesses (select Accredited Camp and Adventure Activity Provider)
- National Accommodation, Recreation and Tourism Accreditation (NARTA) program
see: NARTA Accredited Camps

Other venues

Other venues may include:

- overnight campsites and venues that only provide accommodation such as caravan parks, hotels/motels or ski lodges
- Victorian government residential schools (for example: Rubicon Outdoor Centre or Bogong Outdoor Education Centre)

- interstate camps or excursions
- overseas venues.

ACA or NARTA programs' accreditation criteria may be used to assess the suitability and safety of these venues. However this criteria *should* be used when assessing overseas venues.

Inspection on arrival

The teacher-in-charge must check the excursion venue on arrival to assess apparent dangers and hazards and prepare contingency plans if required.