

EXCURSIONS AND CAMPS POLICY

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The Excursions and Camps policy aims to maximise the benefits of and minimise and manage the risks posed by undertaking off-campus excursions and camps.

1. Rationale

Experiential learning is embodied in the curriculum of Mumbulla School. Excursions and camps provide opportunities for experiential learning.

Excursions and camps are often tied in with Main Lesson work and may be the culmination of children's work over many weeks. The provision of opportunities for children to participate in experiences outside the school is a means of reinforcing and supplementing teaching and learning. Children's growth and social development can be enhanced in new ways in a different environment. For many children excursions and camps are the highlight of the school year.

Excursions and camps aim to challenge children. The challenges may be different for each child, and it is important that all students participate. For some children such experiences are the most significant opportunities they have for integrated learning of living skills.

Children with additional needs are encouraged to participate in excursions and camps. Strategies to support children to participate will be developed by the teacher in consultation with the child and parents/carers. Strategies may include:

- Partial participation in or modification of certain activities;
- Parent or carer accompanying their child on an excursion or camp to provide support and comfort;
- Provision of funding for inclusion needs on camps or excursions.

A management plan for children with additional needs will be developed with individual families well in advance to provide appropriate support in order to make the camp or excursion a positive experience for everyone involved. It is important for parents to share with their class teacher any concerns about the child's ability to participate in an excursion or camp.

2. Definition

Within the context of this policy an educational excursion is defined as:

a learning experience external to the school site, initiated, organised and supervised by the school and approved by the class teacher and College of Teachers.

3. College Responsibilities

- 3.1 To ensure that the activities of the camp are safe but challenging, reflecting curriculum-based child learning outcomes;
- 3.2 To ensure that the camp or excursion is based on inclusive practices and geared to the abilities and needs of all participants and that any inclusion costs are reasonable for the school;
- 3.3 To ensure that a suitable 2IC is nominated for identified excursions and camps and is well-briefed for their role;

4. College Exec Responsibilities

- 4.1 To ensure that the teacher has met with a teacher/mentor experienced in this particular camp or excursion and has discussed issues specific to the camp, including identifying Risk Management strategies;
- 4.2 To ensure that the teacher in charge, other attending adults and children are well equipped for all reasonably predictable conditions;
- 4.3 To ensure that participants understand the nature and purpose of the activity and have developed the pre-requisite knowledge, understanding and skill;
- 4.4 To ensure that the teacher in charge, 2IC and attending adults are fully briefed and trained for their roles and responsibilities.
- 4.5 To ensure that an Emergency Response plan is in place prior to the camp or excursion, outlining who is in charge if the teacher becomes unable to carry out the duty of care responsibilities for any reason. *(See Attachment C: Emergency Response Plan)*;
- 4.6 To nominate a staff member to be the designated school contact in case of an emergency.

5. Teacher Responsibilities

- 5.1 To accept the responsibility for students under their care for the duration of the excursion or camp;
- 5.2 To ensure that a detailed itinerary of extended camps is sighted by College Exec at least two weeks prior to the excursion or camp;
- 5.3 To understand the Emergency Response Plan and ensure that the 2IC fully understands it as well;

- 5.4 To bring any issues needing College discussion or decision to a College meeting at least 2 weeks prior to the excursion or camp. These include the need for employment of a 2nd in charge teacher, inclusion issues plus their costs, pedagogical issues as well as other issues raised by the Risk Management Plan;
- 5.5 To hold a briefing meeting for all attending adults before the excursion or camp and to supervise adults for the duration of the excursion or camp. (See *Attachment D: Pre-camp Briefing Meeting for Attending Adults*);
- 5.6 To ensure that if parents do not permit the participation of a student in an educational excursion alternative arrangements are made for the duration of the excursion or camp;
- 5.7 To ensure that all duties as set out in the *Teacher's Checklist for Excursions and Camps* are carried out prior to the excursion or camp commencing. (See *Attachment A: Teacher's Checklist for Excursions and Camps*);
- 5.8 To ensure that the office and/or designated staff contact for the camp or excursion is immediately informed of any change of arrangements during the excursion or camp, including a late return to school.
- 5.9 To ensure that any cheques required for payment of such things as admission fees and meals, are requested from the Finance Clerk at least 1 week before the excursion or camp;
- 5.10 It is the teacher's prerogative to choose adults attending camp.

6. Risk Assessment and Management

- 6.1 A Risk Assessment will be carried out one month prior to the camp or excursion by the Educational Administrator.
- 6.2 The teacher in charge, in conjunction with a teacher experienced in this particular camp or camps in general, will create a Risk Management Plan from the Risk Assessment.
- 6.3 Any issues identified from the Risk Management Plan needing College approval will be brought to the next College meeting for discussion and decision.
- 6.4 The Risk Assessment will include any identified risks to the Teacher in Charge.
- 6.5 The Teacher in Charge, in conjunction with College Exec, will adjust the Emergency Response Plan for the particular excursion or camp. (See *Attachment C: Emergency Response Plan*)

7. Permission Notes

- 7.1 Signed permission notes must always be obtained from the parent or guardian before a student can participate in an educational excursion or camp.
- 7.2 Provision must be made for the following to be included on information and/or consent forms where swimming or water activities are planned:
 - 7.2.1 Details about any swimming or water activities planned, including information about the facilities to be used;
 - 7.2.2 Details about adult supervision and qualifications;
 - 7.2.3 Provision for the parents to indicate whether:
 - their child has permission to participate in the water activities.
 - their child is a strong, average, poor or non-swimmer.
 - special requirements are necessary for their child to participate in swimming or water activities ie. need to use flotation devices.
 - flotation devices will be provided by them.

8. Transport

- 8.1 In some circumstances travel may be by private motor vehicles. Where **private motor vehicles** are to be used the following guidelines must be observed:
 - 8.1.1 The driver must hold a current driver's license.
 - 8.1.2 The car must be registered. If there is any doubt around this, a registration check can be done at rms.nsw.gov.au.
 - 8.1.3 Approved seat belts must be available for, and used by, each person travelling in the car. Class 1 and 2 in particular should take note of the child restraint rules for children under 8 years old. (See *Attachment E: Child Restraint Rules (from the RTA website)*)
- 8.2 Travel for excursions and camps may include a **self-drive mini bus**. Where a self-drive mini bus is to be used, the following must be ensured by the supervising teacher:
 - 8.2.1 The driver must hold a current driver's license, appropriate to the type of vehicle being driven;
 - 8.2.2 The mini bus must comply with safety regulations;

- 8.2.3 Wherever possible, the school will endeavour to hire a mini-bus from a reputable company fitted with approved seat belts which must be worn by each person travelling in the bus;
- 8.2.4 The driver will be on the school's Approved Driver list (see section 2.4 "Bus Drivers" in the *Bus and Bus Drivers policy*)

8.3 Travel may also be by hired **driver-driven coach**. Where a coach is to be used the following must be ensured by the supervising teacher:

- 8.3.1 The coach is hired from a reputable firm with appropriate safety checks in place for the coach.
- 8.3.2 Wherever possible, the school will endeavour to hire a coach fitted with approved seat belts which must be worn by each person travelling in the coach.

9. Additional Activities

Additional or alternative activities which were not originally scheduled in the program and for which parental approval has not been gained, are not permitted, eg. horse riding, water activities.

10. Protective Equipment

Where a particular excursion activity requires special equipment or apparel (eg. hard hats), this must be used. Under no circumstances may safety requirements be compromised.

11. Local Area Excursions

In addition to formal educational excursions and camps and visits as detailed above, occasions for leaving the school grounds for brief, local, spontaneous educational activities will arise from time to time. Permission will be sought annually from parents and guardians for children to participate in Local Area Excursions via the *General Consent Form – Local Area Excursions*. This form will give examples of the type of activity which might occur. Such activities will involve walking within the Bega township only.

Notice will be given, where possible, in the weekly Bulletin informing parents of these excursions.

12. Information for Parents

The information given to parents prior to the excursion will include:

- A brief statement of the educational purpose(s) of the excursion;
- The date(s) of the excursion;
- The venue/s including contact details;
- Point and times of departure and return;
- Mobile phone contact numbers;
- Method of travel;
- Personnel involved (volunteer adults as well as a Second in Charge teacher);
- Any additional costs to parents;
- Clothing and equipment required;
- Spending money limits if necessary;
- Items not permitted (if relevant);
- A copy of the itinerary and sample menu on overnight and longer excursions.

| Date of review | Reviewed by: | Actions taken | Next review date |
|--------------------------------|--------------|---|------------------|
| March-July 2013 | College Exec | All sections updated. Taken to Board in August 2013 | |
| 5 th September 2013 | Board | Ratified | 5/9/2015 |

ATTACHMENT A
TEACHERS CHECKLIST FOR EXCURSIONS AND CAMPS

Have you:

- notified the Educational Administrator of the upcoming camp or excursion?
- completed a Permission note and Info for Parents and sent out?
- received all permission notes back?
- sighted the Risk Assessment (RA) (from the Educational Administrator)
- made time to discuss the camp with a teacher experienced in this particular camp, including looking through the RA and making a Risk Management Plan (RMP)?
- identified the issues from the RMP to be taken to College
- scheduled time for discussion of your camp at the next College meeting
 - camp notification,
 - issues from RMP,
 - necessity for a Second Teacher in Charge (2IC),
 - inclusion issues + costs
 - extra planning if needed?
- nominated a second in charge and clarified what their role and status is, eg. paid/volunteer? Assistant/full teacher/casual? Have you let the Educational Administrator know?
- scheduled in planning meetings with your 2IC?
- scheduled a meeting to brief attending adults (*follow Pre-Camp Briefing meeting info*).
Date & Time: _____
- given non-attending parents info re camp communication & supervision?
- given attending adults the *Values and Beliefs -info for Parents* form?
- received completed Agreement forms from all attending adults?
- obtained dietary and medical info from attending adults?
- nominated 2 First Aid officers if necessary and ensured that they are familiar with the kits?

- identified parents with other relevant qualifications eg. Bronze Medallion and made them known to all attending adults?
- informed attending adults of any additional needs that children may have?
- informed parents of location of Excursion Roll, First Aid kit and emergency phones. Is this necessary or is it enough that teacher & 2IC know?
- updated your Equipment list for the camp and given a copy to your 2IC?
- purchased or borrowed all necessary equipment?
- ensured that the First Aid kits include medication for asthma and an epipen if necessary?
- accessed and packed all necessary safety gear (if necessary)? Like what?
- packed a mobile phone (that you know how to use) or the school's Satellite phone?
- ensured that you and your 2IC know how to use the satellite phone (if using)?
- prepared a Camp Folder - one for front office, one to take on camp and one to give to designated staff contact. Camp Folder must include:
 - an Excursion Roll - if not enough room on Excursion Roll to include all details, add into the Camp Folder
 - the emergency contact person and phone number for each child (take a current Parent Contact Book and store in the First Aid Kit)
 - contact details of local helplines, including local police and RFS, etc.
 - medical information which might affect children or adults during the excursion eg. travel sickness, disabilities, etc.
 - dietary requirements (children and adults).
 - additional needs (children and adults)
 - location and number of Satellite phone
 - First Aid officers
 - attending adults with other qualifications eg Bronze Medallion, ambo, nurse
 - Emergency response plan
- checked that private cars have 3rd party insurance and all drivers are suitably licensed (eg. bus licensing requirements) - P platers? (*Give parent bus drivers info from Bus & Bus Drivers policy*)
- confirmed all bookings?
- confirmed with NPWS, DEC, RFS or other forecasters to check on hazards (eg. hazard reduction burns) and long range weather forecasts for the areas travelling to?
- organised any cheques needed with Melinda at least one week before the camp?

ATTACHMENT B Children and Road Safety

Information for parents, carers and other adults attending excursions and camps.

As soon as children can move, they are on the go, exploring. This can lead them into danger. Adults need to make sure that whenever cars could be around, they:

- Watch and keep children out of danger.
- Talk with children about road safety in ways they understand.
- Expect the unexpected...even at home, because you never know when a child will do something new.

Why are young children at risk?

These are only some of the reasons why young children depend on adults to keep them safe.

Children:

- are curious. This can lead to danger if left alone in the car.
- are dependant. They need an adult.
- are unable to determine which direction sounds are coming from.
- may be restless. They may not want to sit still in a car, but don't realise their behaviour can distract the driver.
- are wanting to be independent. They don't always want to hold an adult's hand when near traffic.
- are small. They can be hard to see in traffic.
- are fragile. Injuries are likely to be more severe because of their small size.
- may be easily distracted. They need help to understand what to watch out and listen for.
- are fast and unpredictable. They can move out of safety and into danger in an instant.

As adults, we need to:

- Protect and supervise children in all traffic situations.
- Use our knowledge and experience to predict when a situation might become dangerous.
- Ensure children hold an adult's hand, wear a seatbelt, or wear their bike helmet, even though they may resist.
- Help children learn about road safety.
- Use the road safety information and activities on this website and ask other adults to do the same.
- Take every opportunity to talk together about what you are doing.

Above all, we must not be complacent!

- Children are most likely to be injured close to home, often in their own street or their own driveway.
- Children can often talk about keeping safe long before they can behave safely.
- Accidents can occur anytime, anywhere and to anyone.

As adults, we are responsible for young children's safety around traffic whether they are pedestrians, passengers, or playing.

As a school, we have a duty of care to our students to keep them safe while on excursion or camp if there are vehicles in the area.

ATTACHMENT C EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN

The Emergency Response Plan (ERP) will be implemented when an emergency occurs during an excursion or camp. An emergency in this case may include:

- Teacher in Charge is injured or incapacitated and can no longer be responsible for those in his or her care;
- Environmental emergency, eg flood or bushfire
- Damage to vehicles, roads, access, etc.

In the event of an emergency, the following steps must be taken:

1. If the Teacher in Charge is no longer able to carry out their duties, the 2IC must take control of the situation;
2. the Teacher in Charge or the 2IC will report directly to the relevant emergency service(s) (ie. Fire, Police, Ambulance or State Emergency Service). The Teacher in Charge makes that judgement.
3. The Teacher in Charge or the 2IC will make immediate contact with the school. The contact person will be the designated staff contact (name and contact details to be held in the Camp Folder). Information will include the nature, location and time of the emergency

Once these initial contacts have been made, the next steps undertaken will be dependent on the type of emergency:

- If it is an environmental emergency, the Teacher in Charge should follow the directions of the attending Emergency Service;
- In the case of other emergencies, the safety of participants is paramount. It may be necessary to end the excursion early and head back to school

Following the contact and notification of the emergency:

4. The designated staff contact will inform the College Exec group
5. College Executive will then follow the Critical Incident Plan

*If necessary, College Exec will nominate a staff member to attend the scene of the emergency to assist at the scene and to liaise with the school;

*College Exec or a nominated staff member will provide details of the event to the Board followed by a briefing in writing. The briefing should state:

- a) extent of injury or damage;
- b) likely effects on school routine;
- c) possible or alleged cause of the injury or damage;
- d) emergency service(s) which attended; and
- e) extent of media involvement at that point.

**ATTACHMENT D
PRE-CAMP BRIEFING FOR ATTENDING ADULTS**

To be added after the College Camp Training day on Wednesday 14th August.

ATTACHMENT E CHILD RESTRAINT RULES

Taken from the RTA website 2013

- Children 4 to 7 years old must be restrained in an approved forward-facing restraint or booster seat.
- Booster seats are used with an adult lap-sash seatbelt and feature high backs and sides which provide protection for children in side impact crashes as well as providing support when a child is sleeping.
- Children should travel in a booster seat that is secured by an adult lap-sash seatbelt, never in a lap-only belt.
- A booster seat should be used until your child's shoulders no longer comfortably fit within the booster seat or when their eye-level is higher than the back of the booster seat. This means that all Class 1 children must be in booster seats until they turn 8.

For further information on Child Restraint Rules, see:

- RTA website
- PDF version of the RTA's "Child Restraint" brochure kept on the school computer
- Hard cover copy of the RTA's "Child Restraint" brochure kept in the Policy folder in the top office.