



Camps & Excursions Policy

General Requirements

- (1) An excursion is a learning experience external to the school site initiated, organised and supervised by a school and approved by the Principal
- (2) An excursion is an integral part of the school's curriculum and specifically of the students' learning program and must be justified on this basis
- (3) An excursion can range from a brief visit of less than one hour to a local point of interest, to an extended journey occupying a number of days and requiring overnight accommodation
- (4) Usually an excursion will take place wholly within the official school week or term
- (5) Since excursions offer enrichment to the planned curriculum, all students within the specific learning group should be given the opportunity to participate unless exceptional circumstances exist
- (6) The same standards of conduct and the obligation to report suspected child abuse, improper conduct of a sexual nature and misconduct apply throughout all stages of an excursion as they do in schools

Specific Requirements

- (1) While recognising the potential benefits of excursions, Waikerie Lutheran Primary School recognises that such activities may interrupt normal learning routines of students. Accordingly, the educational value of a proposed excursion must be considered in relation to the total needs and resources of the school and in relation to the students' needs and total learning program.
- (2) All excursions must have the approval of the Principal.
- (3) All teachers participating in an excursion must accept responsibility for students in their care for the duration of the excursion.
- (4) Prior to any excursion taking place there must be consultation between the Principal and staff concerned with its organisation. Parents (which include guardians) should be informed of the full details of any planned excursion in writing, including details of all planned activities for the excursion. Signed consent forms granting permission for students to participate in an excursion must be obtained from the parents.
- (5) If it is not possible to obtain a signed consent form from parents, oral approval can be sought. The Principal must keep a record of any oral approvals given by parents.
- (6) When it is inappropriate to obtain parental consent because of the age or living circumstances of the student, the consent can be sought from any other person considered appropriate by the Principal.
- (7) If parents do not permit participation of a student in an excursion, the school will make available a sound alternative educational experience.

Conduct of Excursions

(1) Transport

Public transport (bus, rail and ferry services, or private bus and ferry services) should be used for school excursions wherever possible.

In exceptional circumstances (e.g. for small groups), consideration may be given to the use of private motor vehicles.



(2) Supervision

Before the planned excursion is undertaken the Principal needs to ensure that precautions are taken in relation to the safety of the participants and that supervision will be adequate in relation to the number of students, their maturity, anticipated behaviour and the activities planned.

Staff planning overnight or extended excursions should recognise their special duty of care for student safety and welfare in these circumstances. They should take all necessary steps to provide sufficient numbers of appropriate, responsible adults to ensure adequate supervision, especially with co-educational groups. Staff should be aware that they retain the ultimate responsibility for supervision while on excursions and cannot transfer that responsibility to parents, other volunteers or employees of external organizations, such as hotel staff.

Principals should assure themselves of the bona fides of adults who are accompanying such excursions to assist with supervision. Depending on the circumstances, the Principal should:

- consult referees;
- sight evidence of a satisfactory criminal record check by Police;
- require the person to sign a declaration that they have no convictions that would preclude their working with children.

On overnight and extended excursions, supervisory and accommodation arrangements are to be such that no staff member is placed in a position where there is a potential for allegations of improper conduct to be made. In particular, sleeping arrangements should not place any adults in a situation where the propriety of their behaviour could be questioned. Likewise, sleeping and supervisory arrangements are to ensure that no student is placed in a situation where there is the likelihood of sexual contact between students.

The Principal is to ensure that any excursion involving swimming or water activities and/or overnight stays are accompanied by a member of staff who possesses current training in cardio-pulmonary resuscitation and emergency care.

All other excursions must be accompanied by a member of staff who has undertaken emergency care training.

Where it is considered necessary, the site of the proposed excursion should be assessed beforehand to identify potential problems or dangers and to determine the level of supervision necessary to avoid the risk of injury.

(3) Parental Involvement

Parents will frequently volunteer to assist in excursions. The number of parents who might be of assistance will vary according to circumstances.

(4) Unscheduled Activities

Students participating in an excursion must not be permitted to engage in additional or alternative activities which were not originally scheduled in the program and for which parental approval would normally have been necessary (e.g. horse riding, water activities).

(5) **Special Requirements**

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

Where any excursion involves swimming or water activities, the Principal may encourage but not insist that parents provide any floatation devices considered necessary for students. Parents must be asked to indicate the swimming ability of their children when giving consent for students to participate in excursions.

If parents indicate students are poor or non-swimmers and no floatation devices are available for use by the students, the Principal will need to assess whether such students should participate in the swimming or water activities of the excursion. This assessment must take place irrespective of parental permission for the students to participate in the swimming or water activities.

(6) **Film Screenings and Live Performances**

Students are not to be shown or attend any film that is rated "R", "MA" or "M". "G" films may be shown. "PG" films may be shown only after parental permission has been received through a permission note being sent home.

(7) **Short visits outside the school grounds**

In addition to excursions and other visits, occasions for leaving the school grounds for brief, local, spontaneous educational activities will arise from time to time. Limited parental permission for short excursions within walking distance of the school is granted and recorded in the yearly 'Family Database Check'. This still requires teachers to provide advance notice to parents/guardians through the school newsletter, class note or personal phone call before the excursion takes place.

The value of such visits is recognised and on many occasions it is not possible to obtain the permission of parents prior to the visit. Such visits may only take place at the discretion of the Principal, who must ensure as far as possible the safety and welfare of students and be satisfied as to the value of the visit as an integral part of the school curriculum.

This document is to be used in conjunction with the "Guidelines for the Safe Conduct of Sport and Physical Activity in Schools" policy.

At all activities at least one staff member must have current Emergency Care training.

Definition of Volunteer Entrusted Persons

Background

Education and care settings are unique in the degree to which they encourage and accommodate parental participation. Positive partnerships with parents are seen to play a significant role in the overall effectiveness of the education and care process. With regard to criminal history checking, it is important and necessary to distinguish between when a parent is involving themselves primarily in their own child's learning or care and when they are volunteering as an entrusted person.

The following distinctions apply with regard to screening.

Entrusted Person Volunteers (screening, including criminal history checks, is required)

Parents and non parents shall be viewed as entrusted person volunteers and be required to undergo screening including a criminal history check when they are engaged in the following

- any overnight camps/school sleep-overs/billeting
- working one to one with other people's children, e.g. LAP, music, drama, coordination skills etc
- acting as a coach or manager of teams or groups of children and young people.
- working in resource centres, offices, managing canteens etc.
- accepting a position on governing/school councils, boards or committees. (This is to protect against people adversely influencing the protective climate of an education/care environment through the decisions of committees or boards. The organisation shall determine which committees this will apply to).

Please Note:

Criminal history checks are **not** required for one-off guest presentations such as guest speakers, concert performers or attendance at one-off events such as sports days, working bees and whole school/centre events.

Parent participation (no criminal history check required)*

Parents shall not be required to undertake a criminal history check, if each of the following three conditions is met.

- Teacher/staff supervision is provided at all times
- Their own child is involved in the activity and is the main focus of the parent's participation. (This includes one off - events where their child may not be directly involved in the activity such as sports days, concerts, working bees and other whole school/centre events).
- The site's relevant authority confirms their status as the parent or primary carer. (The enrolling parent/guardian and the school must approve extended family members, de facto partners and step-parents).

Examples of parent participation are:

- Hearing reading in the child's class
- Assistance with excursions (e.g. to the zoo) or special events (e.g. religious celebrations) that involve the child's class or child care service
- Attending as a guest for a one off event, working bees, sports days and other whole of school/centre events
- Canteen assistance (under the supervision of a canteen "manager" who has undergone full screening)
- Assisting with transport where their own child is present in the vehicle and *informed* parental consent is obtained (that is, name of transporting parent is provided).
- ☆ *Site leaders have the right to require a parent to undergo screening, at their discretion. This may be appropriate if a parent's initial level of participation alters over time or if a staff member expresses concerns about the parent's relationships with children or young people.*

Additional risk management of volunteers

Sites follow established selection, mandatory notification training, supervision, monitoring and record keeping protocols for volunteers. Volunteers are made familiar with the expectations contained in the *Protective Practices for Staff in their Interactions with Students Guidelines*.

Site leaders retain the right to

- Discontinue a volunteer at any time if concerns exist about their suitability to be working with children
- Bar a person (parent or otherwise) from the school grounds through the Control of Trespass & Misbehaviour on School Premises Education Regulations 1997 (government sector only) if their behaviour threatens the wellbeing of staff, parents or children.