

Purpose

Excursions are seen as an integral part of the school curriculum as they enable students to explore, extend and enrich their learning and their social skills development, in a non-school setting. Excursions complement, and are an important aspect of the educational programs offered at the school. An excursion is defined as any activity beyond the school grounds.

Aims

- To reinforce, complement and extend the learning opportunities beyond the classroom.
- To develop an understanding that learning is not limited to school, and that valuable and powerful learning takes place in the real world.
- To provide a safe, secure learning experience for students in a venue external to the school.
- To further develop social skills such as cooperation, tolerance, communication, individual and group interaction.
- To further develop problem solving and life survival skills.
- To extend understanding of their physical and cultural environment.

Implementation

- All excursions must be approved by the Principal or their nominee.
- Staff wishing to organize an excursion must complete an excursion proposal form and lodge this for approval. All excursions must be approved prior to running. Where an excursion proposal has not been submitted, that excursion will not run, unless special circumstances are pending. This decision will be made by the Principal or their nominee. The Principal or their nominee will consider the educational outcome of the excursion as well as the impact on the school for the proposed date.
- The Principal or their nominee will ensure that all excursions, transport arrangements, emergency procedures and staffing comply with DET guidelines. Refer to: [DET Excursion Policy](#)
- Once the excursion has been approved all relevant documentation must be completed. The *Teacher In Charge* of the excursion, will complete the 'Notification of School Activity' at : www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/forms/school/sal/enteractivity.asp three weeks prior to the excursion departure date, and ensure relevant details are entered on the staff calendar and Sharepoint.
- School Council is responsible for the approval of:
 - Overnight excursions
 - Camps
 - Interstate visits
 - International visits
 - Excursions requiring sea or air travel, weekends or vacations
 - Adventure activities
- The Principal or their nominee is responsible for the approval of all single-day excursions other than those that must be approved by School Council as mentioned above.

Implementation (continued)

EXPECTATIONS

- The Department's requirements and guidelines relating to preparation and safety will be observed in the conduct of all excursions.
- The Principal or their nominee will ensure that full records are maintained regarding the camp/excursion.
- The Principal or their nominee will ensure that adequate pre-excursion planning and preparation, including the preparation of students, takes place.
- Satisfactory arrangements will be made to provide continuous instruction for the students remaining at the school during the absence of staff accompanying an excursion.
- The Department of Education and Training (DET) will not be involved in any expense associated with the conduct of excursions. The school may choose to subsidise some excursions or some student's expenses.
- Prior to conducting a camp or excursion, the approval of the School Council or the Principal will be obtained. Council must approve overnight or adventure activities. The Principal must approve these and other activities.
- Only children who have displayed sensible, reliable behaviour at school will be invited to participate in camps or excursions. Students and their parents/carers need to be made aware that acceptable standards of behaviour will be expected during a camp or an excursion.
- The emergency management process of the school will extend to and incorporate all camps and excursions.

PROGRAM

- Prior to conducting a camp or excursion, the Department's requirements and guidelines relating to camps or excursions, will be rigorously observed.

Consideration in planning should include:

[Safety, Emergency & Risk Management](#) , including Bushfires
[Student Preparation](#)
[Student Medical Information](#)
[Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors](#)

- The Principal or their nominee will ensure that full records are submitted to School Council regarding the camp/excursion well in advance of the starting date of the event and that no camp/excursion occurs unless all the formal record keeping has been completed and approved.

- Prior to conducting any camp, the formal approval of the School Council and principal will be obtained. In approving a camp or excursion, consideration will include:
 - the contribution of the activity to the school curriculum
 - the adequacy of the planning, preparation and organisation in relation to the school policy and the guidelines and advice provided by DET
 - information provided by community groups and organisations that specialise in the activity proposed
 - appropriateness of the venue
 - the provisions made for the safety and welfare of students and staff
 - the experience and competence of staff relevant to the activities being undertaken
 - the adequacy of the student supervision
 - the high risk nature of some activities
 - emergency procedures and safety measures
 - staff-student ratios
 - student experience
- Students not attending a camp or excursion will be placed in another class and have an appropriate learning program provided by the class teacher.
- Prior to the camp or excursion parent/carers are to be made aware that DET does not provide student accident cover and that they need to make their own arrangements for cover.

ARRANGEMENTS FOR PAYMENTS

- All efforts will be made not to exclude students simply for financial reasons. Parents/carers experiencing financial difficulty, who wish for their child to attend an excursion, are invited to discuss alternative arrangements with a member of the Principal Class team or classroom teacher. Decisions relating to alternative payment arrangements will be communicated to the Business Manager in consultation with the appropriate staff, on an individual basis.
- All families will be given sufficient time to make payments for excursions. Parents will be provided with permission forms and excursion information clearly stating payment finalisation dates. Children whose payment has not been finalised at least 24 hours prior to the departure date will not be allowed to attend unless alternative payment arrangements have been approved and organised with the Business Manager.
- Classroom teachers will be responsible for monitoring payments made by parents. Office staff will provide organising teachers with detailed records and information regarding payments made by parents.
- All notices, permission to attend and payments relating to an excursion, will be made available via Compass.
- Only students that have displayed sensible, reliable behaviour at school will be permitted to participate in school excursions. Parents will be notified if their child is in danger of losing the privilege to participate in an excursion due to poor behaviour at school. The decision to exclude a student will be made by the Principal, in consultation with the organising teacher. Both the parent and the student will be informed of this decision prior to the excursion.

- Disciplinary measures apply to students on camps and excursions consistent with the school's *Student Engagement and Inclusion Policy*. In extreme cases the camp or excursion staff, following consultation with, and the approval of, the Principal or their nominee, may determine that a student should return home during a camp or excursion.

In such circumstances, the parent/carer will be advised:

- of the circumstance associated with the decision to send the student home
 - of the time when the parents/carers may collect their child from the camp or excursion
- On days of extreme fire danger or total fire ban, the Principal or their nominee may need to cancel an excursion at short notice. Where an excursion is not cancelled, special fire safety precautions will be implemented. **In any event Risk Assessment documentation must be completed prior to approval.** See *Appendices B&C*.
 - Excursion groups will be equipped with mobile telephones and first aid kits to be used in emergency situations.

TEACHER RESPONSIBILITIES

- A designated "Teacher in Charge" will coordinate each excursion.
- An attendance list for each excursion can be generated from Compass by office staff. This should be made available to all staff via Sharepoint.
- In the case where an excursion involves a particular class or year level group, the organizing teacher will ensure that there is an alternative program available for those students not attending the excursion.
- All students attending an excursion must do so with parental consent and associated payment. This is to be completed online via Compass.
- Copies of the event handbook (as available from Compass) must be printed and carried by excursion staff at all times. This information is confidential and is not to be accessed or viewed by volunteers assisting with the event.
- The school will provide a first aid kit for each excursion. The teacher in charge is responsible for collecting these prior to leaving.
- The teacher in charge must ensure all students requiring medication have their needs met and the relevant medicine/s and medical permission form (Green Form) accompanies the student. Refer to *WNPS Administration of Medication Policy, Anaphylaxis Policy* and).
- The teacher in charge will communicate the anticipated return time with the general office in the case where excursions are returning out of school hours.
- Parents may be invited to assist in the delivery of excursions. Staff must ensure that all volunteers hold a valid Working With Children Check (please check register available at the office).

Further Information and Resources

- [DET Excursion Policy](#)
- WNPS Student Engagement & Inclusion Policy
- WNPS Emergency Management Plan
- WNPS Volunteers Policy
- WNPS Administration of Medication Policy
- WNPS Anaphylaxis Policy
- WNPS Asthma Policy

Appendices which support with this policy are:

- Appendix A: Pupil/Teacher Ratios
- Appendix B: Excursions Approval Pro-forma
- Appendix C: Environment and General Risk Assessment

Evaluation and Review

Evaluation of the *Excursion Policy* will occur as stipulated in the *Watsonia North PS Policy Review Cycle* document or more often if necessary due to changes in regulations or circumstances.

This policy was updated in September 2018 and is scheduled for review in 2022.

APPENDIX A: Pupil/Teacher Ratios


NOTE: Day excursions

Ratio for day excursions is 1 teacher per 20 students as per DET guidelines. If over 20 students, a parent helper, ES staff or student teacher is required (this includes bus transportation). In addition, if going on a local walk, classes are required to take a support person in case the teacher in charge becomes incapacitated. When going on an excursion, teachers are required to self-manage yard duty obligations in their absence and publish alternative arrangement made on SharePoint. If the day excursion involved any of the activities listed below ratios **MUST BE MET** as stipulated below.

| | |
|---|--|
| Abseiling and Rock Climbing 1:1 Rock Face 1:10 Others 2 Experienced Staff | Ropes Course 1:12 3 students to any one element, 1 participating, 2 spotting NOTE: No student on any element unless supervised |
| Bass Camping 1:10 Residential; canvas 1:15 Study: residential | Scuba Diving 1:8 Pool training 1:4 Diving, 2 buddy systems NOTE: 2 qualified staff |
| Board Sailing 1:3 Beginners 1:5 Novice; intermediate; advanced 2 Experienced sailors | Shooting 1:1 New or inexperienced 1:5 On the track or mound 1:15 Observers or waiting |
| Boats, Small Sailing - (Dinghies, Catamarans) 1:8 Enclosed Waters 1:6 Open Waters 1:4 Open Waters, Adverse | Snorkelling 1:8 Closed water: pool 1:4 Open water NOTE: 2 qualified staff |
| Bushwalking 1:5 Overnight 1:10 Day | Snow Activities 1:8 Alpine, Nordic – overnight 1:10 Alpine, Nordic – day 1:10 Non-skiing |
| Canoeing 1:6 2 Staff members | Surf Activities 1:10 Beach 1:8 Surf NOTE: 1 teacher/instructor in water and NOTE 1 teacher/instructor on beach |
| Cycling 1:10 | Swimming 1:20 Enclosed pools 1:10 Open water |
| Horse Riding 1:1 Basics 1:5 Beginners 1:8 Semi-experienced Riding School: 1 Experienced teacher with instructor 2 Experienced teachers if no instructor or group exceeds 10 | Water Skiing 1:20 Shore 1 Student on two at any one time; if highly experienced two may be taken together 2 People in boat – driver and observer; one must be staff member |
| Orienteering 1:10 Bush | |

APPENDIX B: EXCURSION APPROVAL APPLICATION

To be submitted to the Principal or School Council for approval as required by DET.

| | | | | | |
|---|--|---------------------------------|--|--------------------|-------------------------------|
|  | | EXCURSION PLANNER | | | |
| LOCATION: _____ | | GRADES: _____ | | DATE: _____ | |
| | | TEACHER IN CHARGE: _____ | | | |
| NB: ATTACH RISK ASSESSMENT | | | | | |
| VENUE AND TIME | School Location: | Start: | Conclude: | | |
| COST | Admission: | Sundries: | Total Cost: | Per Child: | |
| | Staff Attending | | Parents Attending (Please note WWC Status) | | |
| STAFF | 1. | 5. | 1. | 5. | |
| | 2. | 6. | 2. | 6. | |
| | 3. | 7. | 3. | 7. | |
| | 4. | 8. | 4. | 8. | |
| NUMBERS | Students: | Teachers: | Parents: | Aides: | Students with Specific Needs: |
| CURRICULUM LINK | | | | | |
| CHECKLIST | O: Check Final Numbers O: Cheques For Payment O: Check for Student Payment via CASES Prior to Excursion O: Permission notes collected O: Canteen Notified O: Instrumental Teachers notified | | Complete "Notification of School Activity Form" (Only necessary if DEECD approval is required – see below) Camps/Excursions which require DEECD Approval: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overnight, weekend, interstate and overseas • Adventure Activities • Non-adventure activities which, by their nature, location or timing, may be hazardous. NB: School Council approval is required for all activities listed above. | | |
| | SIGNATURES | Organiser: | | | |

APPENDIX C: Excursion Risk Management Assessment Form

Venue Assessed _____ for month of _____

Section 1 – Environment Emergency Management Assessment

Assess each of the following hazards and any others you think relevant and complete charts below:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bushfires • Severe storms and flooding • Earthquake • School Bus Accident/Vehicle Incident | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Missing Student • Medical Emergencies • Incidents • Aggressive student behaviour | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intruders • Internal fires and smoke • Snakes and other wildlife • Other relevant to camp area |
|---|---|---|

| | | | | | |
|-------------------|------------------|------------|-----------------|-------------|------------------|
| Likelihood | Very High | | | | |
| | High | | | | |
| | Moderate | | | | |
| | Low | | | | |
| | | Low | Moderate | High | Very High |
| Impact | | | | | |

| Environmental Emergency | Event | Risk Management Strategies |
|--|-------|----------------------------|
| Very high or high likelihood / very high or high impact | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| Very high, High and moderate likelihood / Very high, high or moderate impact | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| Very high, High, Moderate or Low likelihood / High and Very High Impact | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

Section 2 General Excursion Risk Assessment

This form is to be completed as part of the planning process for all excursions.

| | | |
|--------------|-------|----------------------|
| Class Group: | Date: | Supervising Teacher: |
|--------------|-------|----------------------|

| | Dangers Factors which could lead to each inherent risk eventuating | Risk Management Strategies Strategies to reduce risks |
|---|--|---|
| People Attributes people bring to an activity e.g. skills, physical fitness, health, age, fears, number | | |
| Equipment Resources that impact on the activity e.g. clothing, footwear, teaching equipment | | |
| Environment Factors that impact on the activity e.g. Weather, terrain, water | | |

Critical incident management (emergency procedures) – contact the school for assistance.

If a student is lost – ensure all other students and staff are safe. Follow School Plan *What to do if a student is lost on an Excursion or Camp*. Every teacher should have a copy of this in the excursion DISPlan.

If someone is injured – ensure all other students and staff are safe. Administer first aid or call for an ambulance if more assistance is needed. Contact the school. Complete forms upon return to school.