



Kalinda Primary School No. 5121

Excursions Policy

Rationale:

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.

An excursion is defined as an activity during which students leave the school grounds to engage in educational activities (including camps and sport). Adventure activities are included in this definition (regardless of whether they occur outside the school grounds or not).

Purpose:

- To reinforce, complement and extend the learning opportunities beyond the classroom.
- To develop and 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 the physical and cultural environment.

Guidelines:

- All excursions must be approved by the Principal or their nominee(s).
- Staff wishing to organise an excursion will ensure all excursions are maintained at an affordable cost and comply with Department of Education and Training (DET) policy and requirements. Staff must complete an excursion proposal form and lodge this for approval.
- The Principal or their nominee (s) 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 (s) will ensure that all excursions, transport arrangements, emergency procedures and staffing will comply with DET guidelines.
- Risk Assessment documentation must be completed prior to approval of an excursion.
- Once the excursion has been approved all relevant documentation must be completed.
- All approved excursions must be recorded on the online notification of school activity form prior to the activity taking place.
- School Council is responsible for the approval of:
 - Overnight excursions
 - Camps
 - Interstate and international visits
 - Excursion requiring sea or air travel
 - Excursions involving weekends or vacations
 - Adventure activities
- All excursions requiring School Council approval must meet the requirements of the Safety Guidelines of Education Outdoors.
- For excursions requiring School Council approval, an excursion risk assessment plan must be provided.

- The Principal or their nominee is responsible for the approval of all single day excursions other than those that must be approved by the School Council.
- The Regional Director should be informed if an excursion leaves a school unoccupied.
- Interstate and overseas excursions must meet Department policies and requirements

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
- 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
- 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 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.
- 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 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.

All adventure activities: (See School Camp Policy)

- Are to be treated as excursions regardless of whether they occur on school grounds or
- Require the approval of school council and the planning and guidelines relevant to school excursions apply see: Excursions: Planning and Approval
- Must also be conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors, which includes a planning and risk management process as well as specific activity guidelines.

Implementation:

Planning and Approvals: -

Principals must ensure that:

- Excursions are appropriately planned and approved in accordance with Departmental policy and requirements
- All excursions requiring school council approval meet the requirements of the Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors.

Important: When undertaking excursion planning, principals, teachers, school councillors 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.

Risk management:

An assessment of excursion risks must be undertaken.

For **excursions requiring school council approval**, an excursion risk assessment plan must be provided which includes consideration of risks across the entire excursion (including transportation, activities undertaken and excursion venues). Venue managers and activity providers should be consulted in the preparation of the school's risk management plan and where appropriate, the risk management plans of venues or activity providers should be used to inform the school risk assessment process.

Emergency Planning:

The emergency management planning in schools extends to and incorporates school excursions.

- All excursion staff and where appropriate, students, must be familiar with emergency procedures for each excursion.
- Planning must cover arrangements if the excursion needs to be cancelled or recalled (for example, due to forecast severe weather conditions).
- School council approved excursions must have an emergency response plan.
- The Department's requirements and guidelines relating preparation and safety will be observed in the conduct of all excursions.
- The emergency management process of the school will extend to and incorporate all excursions.
- Teachers leaving the school on an excursion must carry a mobile phone, first aid kit, asthma plans other relevant medication, emergency anaphylactic kits and management plans where applicable.
- Prior to the excursion parents/carers will be made aware that DET does not provide student accident cover and that they need to make their own arrangements.
- Seat belted buses are required for all excursions.

Note: The regional director should be informed if an excursion leaves a school unattended.

Organisation:

- A designated "Teacher in Charge" will coordinate each excursion and is responsible for ensuring the excursion transport arrangements and excursion activities comply with the DET guidelines.
- The Teacher in charge will provide the General Office with a final student list.
- All students must have returned a signed permission note and payment to be able to attend the excursion. In exceptional circumstances, verbal permission may be given to the Principal or their nominee.
- Consent forms will remain at the school with the designated school contact person and copies of each form will be taken on the excursion by the teacher in charge. These forms will be archived following the excursion in accordance with DET guidelines.
- Parents/guardians will be notified at least two weeks prior to any activity.
- 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.
- Students not attending an excursion will be placed in another class and have an appropriate learning program provided by the class teacher.
- To participate in the excursion all children will be expected to travel by the same mode of transport to and from the designated venue unless otherwise approved by the Principal.

- An additional trained adult may accompany students on an excursion if required.
- Occasions may arise where staff may need to transport students in their own cars. In such instances staff must obtain specific permission from the Principal as well as permission from parent/carers. The Department of Education and Training (DET) policy and requirements for Private Car Use will also need to be followed.
- Parents/carers may be invited to assist with excursions. When deciding on which parent will attend, the teacher in charge will take into account:
 - Any valuable skills the parents have to offer e.g. first aid etc.
 - The need to include both female and male parents.
 - The special needs of particular students.
 - The currency of Working With Children Check

Joint School Activities:

The nominated co-ordinating Principal or teacher ensures:

- Planning and approval requirements are met
- Parents or carers are informed that their children may be supervised by teachers and other approved adults from the other school.

NOTE: All schools involved in a joint excursion must complete an online notification of school activity form

Emergencies:

In the event of an emergency, accident or injury - staff on the excursion should:

- Take emergency action
Immediately notify the school principal.
- The principal should make arrangements for the Department's Security Services Unit to be telephoned on 9589 6266

Fire danger or ban:

- Risk assessments will be undertaken for bushfire in the activity location.
- Principals may need to review planned excursions ahead of forecast days of significant fire risk or total fire ban days and liaise with the region about whether the excursion should be cancelled.
- If an excursion is not cancelled, special fire safety precautions may be required, depending on the location.
- When required, schools must follow their Emergency Management Plan and the Department's emergency management (bushfires) procedures for off-site activities for all excursions.
- On days determined Code Red by the Emergency Management Commissioner, all camps in the CFA fire district determined Code Red must be cancelled.

The school will ensure that:

- Students are adequately prepared for excursions
- The disciplinary measures for students on excursions are appropriate and consistent with the school's Student Engagement Policy and Behaviour Management Policy.

Student Preparation:

In preparation for excursions the school should advise students of:

- the organisational arrangements
- the relevant safety arrangements or emergency procedures
- behavioural expectations

Parents/carers will be advised of:

- the expected standards of behaviour
- that in extreme cases students may be sent home from an excursion at the cost of their parents

Behaviour:

Only children who have displayed sensible, reliable behaviour at school will be invited to participate in school excursions.

- Parents will be notified if a child is in danger of losing their invitation 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 classroom teacher and teacher in charge.

- Students and their parents/carers need to be made aware that acceptable standards of behaviour will be expected during an excursion.
- Disciplinary measures apply to students on excursions consistent with the school's Engagement Policy and Behaviour Management policy.

Returning a student home:

In extreme cases the excursion staff, following consultation with and the approval of the school Principal, may decide to return a student to their home from an excursion.

Excursion staff should advise the student's parent/carer of:

- The circumstance associated with the decision to send the student home
- The time when the parent/carer may collect their child from the excursion or the anticipated time the student will arrive home
- That any costs associated with the student's return will be the responsibility of the parents/carers

Staff will consider the age and maturity of the student when making travel arrangements.

Communications - Parents or carers should be advised of:

- The telephone numbers (both during and outside school hours) for the designated school contact person in the event of an emergency.
- During the excursion, if parents have reason to believe an emergency may have occurred (such as a media report) they should in the first instance call the contact person and not personnel on the excursion as this will keep the telephone lines free at the excursion site.
- Arrangements for communicating with parents in the event of an emergency, cancellation or recall of the excursion must be made.

Consent forms must remain at the school with the designated school contact person and copies of each form must be taken on the excursion by the teacher in charge.

Supervision and staffing:

- Department of Education and Training (DET) guidelines provide minimum requirements for staff-student ratios. The school may need to enhance these measures to ensure student safety.
- In determining appropriate and effective levels of supervision, excursion planning should take into account:
 - the experience, qualifications and skills of staff (including volunteers and instructors etc.)
 - the age, maturity, physical characteristics and gender of students
 - the ability and experience of the students
 - the size of the group
 - the nature and location of the excursion
 - the activities to be undertaken
 - requirements outlined in the Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors, for specific adventure activities
 - any other relevant factors
- Emergency procedures should include the effects of an emergency on student supervision in the event of excursion staff being required to assist injured students or to go for help.
- Students who may have difficulty communicating in an emergency because of age or disability should wear identity tags on excursions.
- Children on the Program for Students with Disabilities will need to be accompanied by an ES staff member where necessary.

Most excursions must:

- Be under the direct control of a teacher employed by the Department or the school council with at least one other excursion staff member present
- Have enough teachers employed by the Department or school council to maintain appropriate control of the excursion and of each activity
- Have teachers comprising at least half of the excursion staff

Overnight stays for mixed gender groups must:

- Include excursion staff of at least one person of each sex

NOTE: In primary schools this requirement may be waived, where staff of each sex are not available.

Other excursion staff must:

Be approved by the Principal or school council and may include:

- teachers employed by the Department or school council
- other adults on a volunteer or paid basis
- have agreed to and are compliant with the **Child Safety Code of Conduct**.

Excursion staff – who will provide supervision of students and who are not registered teachers:

- must have a **Working with Children Check**
- must have agreed to and are compliant with the Child Safety Code of Conduct

The names of volunteer workers must be recorded for the purposes of volunteer workers' insurance.

Where approved excursion staff who are not teachers employed by the Department or school council are in attendance they can be included in the staff-student ratio:

- For the duration of a specific activity for which they have a designated supervisory responsibility or,
- For the overall staff-student ratio for the program, where they are on duty and available on the same basis as other staff (usually 24 hours).

Important:

The specific roles and responsibilities of each staff member (teachers, instructors, campsite staff, volunteers etc.) must be clarified and understood by all staff and students prior to the commencement of an excursion.

Specialist staff – schools must ensure that where specialist instructors are employed they:

- Have the necessary skills or qualifications for the activity
- Have appropriate experience for the age and skill level of the students
- Hold appropriate public liability insurance

Note:

Whilst specialist instructors/external providers may be engaged to deliver specific activities or programs for students, or provide other services, the school retains responsibility for its students, as the duty of care of the school staff to students cannot be delegated to a third party. Therefore, even where the teachers do not directly provide the actual instruction they are still responsible for the safety and welfare of students.

First aid:

- At least one staff member responsible for each group of students must have first aid qualifications.
- Staff must also have a portable first aid kit (including kits for asthma, and anaphylaxis when there is a student who may have an anaphylactic reaction) appropriate to the excursion location and activities undertaken. Portable first aid kits.
- Other relevant individual medication must also be carried when appropriate.

Additional excursion equipment - School councils and principals:

- Must supply smoke detectors if indoor accommodation facilities do not have them
- Should consider providing communication equipment to be used in emergencies.

Arrangements for Payments:

- All families will be given sufficient time to make payments for excursions. Parents will be provided with permission forms and excursion details as well as information clearly stating payment finalization dates.
- Full payment is required prior to any student attending any excursion.
- All efforts will be made not to exclude students simply for financial reasons. Parents experiencing financial difficulty, who wish for their children to attend an excursion, will be required to discuss their individual situation with the Principal. Alternative payment arrangements may be made to enable all students to attend excursions.
- Children whose payment has not been finalized at least 2 days prior to the excursion will not be able to attend unless alternative payment arrangements have been organised with the Principal.
- Class teachers will be responsible for keeping permission forms as they are returned to the school and the monitoring of payment. Money will be sent to the office for processing.

This Policy is underpinned by the:

- Anaphylaxis Management Policy
- Asthma Management Policy
- Behaviour Management Policy
- Bullying, Cyber-bullying and Harassment Policy
- Child Safe Policy
- Duty of Care Policy
- Excursion Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Health Care Needs Policy
- Mandatory Reporting Policy
- Medication Management Policy
- On-Site Supervision of Students Policy
- Parent Concern and Complaints Policy
- Safety and Welfare of Students with External Providers
- School Camps Policy
- School Attendance Policy
- Student Engagement Policy
- Student Welfare Policy

Date Ratified by School Council: 09/05/2017

Date of Review 09.05.2020