



EXCURSION, CAMP & SWIMMING POLICY

RATIONALE

At St. Mary's Catholic school we believe that to develop caring and confident students a wide range of authentic learning experiences should be part of the learning and teaching program. Our excursions and camps are planned around this premise. Outdoor education at St. Mary's focuses on personal development through interaction with others and the natural environment in a sustainable way. It involves the acquisition of knowledge, values and skills that enhance safe access, understanding and aesthetic appreciation of the outdoors through adventure activities.

AIMS

- To provide authentic opportunities for social interaction
- To provide opportunities for appreciation of the local environment
- To provide safe adventure activities that enhance traditional classroom teaching, and offer different ways of learning to suit a range of individual needs

STAFFING

Programs involving outdoor activities are to be conducted by trained staff in keeping with best practices outlined in *Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors*. Service providers engaged by the school are to hold relevant and appropriate qualifications in the activity that is being undertaken. Supervision of students will be the direct responsibility of the staff conducting the activity. Supervision ratios will be based on the recommendations of *Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors including swimming*, and whenever possible these will be exceeded to ensure more than adequate supervision and reasonable workloads for all staff. In computing staff: student ratios, parent helpers are included as staff.

All off site activities will meet the Guidelines as defined by CEM Offsite Check list and approved by the Principal.

Being an area of high risk of Bushfires all Outdoor/Offsite activities will be implemented in accordance with CEM Emergency Management Procedures and the School EMP (Emergency Management Plan)

Risk assessments will be completed for Swimming also in line with Systemic guidelines.

Parents and or volunteers are expected to have a valid Working with Children's Check and have completed a volunteer pack which is available from the school office. If attending a school camp parents and volunteers will be required to have completed a valid police check

IMPLEMENTATION

All camps and excursions require thorough preparation to ensure issues of safety, site awareness, educational needs and risk management have been addressed. Prior to each program a risk assessment will be conducted to identify potential problems. If these risks cannot be reduced to an acceptable level then the activity will not take place. The risk assessment will be undertaken with the service provider and the principal or their delegate.

- Parents will be given sufficient notice prior to any camp or excursion occurring
- If parent helpers are needed, a clear and just selection process must be used to select those who will attend. Completion of the volunteer pack and a current Working with Children Check is required before a parent can be included as a helper. At times, selection criteria may be necessary in deciding which parent helpers can be included. For example, catering for the special needs of students, male / female numbers, valuable skills, etc.
- Camps and excursions are part of the yearly curriculum and as such should be considered a compulsory school activity. However, parents have the right to refuse permission for their



child to attend. It would be preferred if teachers and parents could reach some common understanding on this matter in an amicable process of mutual support.

- Costing for camps and excursions are based on the expectation that all students will be participating. Parents are expected to alert the school in a timely manner if their child is not participating to ensure that unnecessary costs are not incurred. Refunds may be possible if failure to attend is due to unforeseen circumstances such as illness, but cannot be guaranteed.
- Standards of behaviour apply in all camp and excursion situations. Any child who is not behaving appropriately may be sent home. Parents will be contacted and expected to collect their child as quickly as possible, or arrange for someone else to do so. No refund would be available should this occur.
- Medical, consent and other forms, such as Asthma plans and Anaphylaxis plans must be completed and taken on the camp / excursion by the teacher in charge. Failure to return forms by the date requested may result in a child being excluded from the activity.
- First Aid kits and mobile phones will be taken to all camps and excursions, and at least some members of staff will hold current First Aid training qualifications, and one member of staff will be nominated as the First Aid Officer.
- Identification of the school, Principal and teacher in charge contact numbers along with the student's name maybe worn by children when appropriate on camps and excursions. Only a child's first name will be used.
- Children whose behaviour at school has been unsatisfactory may be asked not to attend a camp or excursion. This would only occur if, in the opinion of the teachers and principal, the child's behaviour would place staff and students in danger or would place undue hardship on those attending. The decision to exclude a child would be made by the Principal, and parents will be notified as soon as practicable.

This policy was reviewed and amended in May 2018 by Karen Power, Acting Principal