

ORBOST SECONDARY COLLEGE EXCURSION & CAMPING POLICY

Rationale:

Well-planned excursions are a means of complementing and enriching the learning that takes place in the classroom.

Excursions provide access to resources and experiences that are not available in the classroom and provide the opportunity for the development of social skills.

Aims:

- To reinforce, complement and extend 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 reinforce and extend classroom learnings.
- To provide a program that delivers skills and knowledge that may lead to a lifelong involvement in worthwhile leisure pursuits.
- To provide a program that promotes self-esteem, resourcefulness, independence, leadership, judgement, co-operation and tolerance.

Approval for Excursions

1. Discuss with the Assistant Principal ascertain the likelihood of approval and claim the date. Camps/excursions need to be confirmed by the end of week one of each term to allow for approval, planning and publication on the school calendar.

There are certain times in the year when excursions should not be planned, these include:

- the last two weeks of Semester 1 and correction/report writing days
- the last two weeks before the VCE Unit 2 exams
- Term 4 for any Unit 4 subjects
- school photographs day.

2. Submit completed forms to the Assistant Principal for approval. This form covers proposed dates, purpose of excursion, itinerary, transport costs, students involved, accommodation (place, cost and type), the total cost of the excursion per student and the number of extras created.

Attached to this excursion form should be a list of students, a letter to parents and detailed itinerary.

3. Initial approval from the Assistant Principal is required. In approving the excursion, the following points will be considered:

- timing of the excursion
- the relevance of the activity to the school curriculum
- allocation of staffing
- the provision made for the safety and welfare of the students and staff
- the experience and competence of the staff and students
- the age and sex of the students
- the adequacy of the student supervision
- the cost; in general it is assumed that all excursions will be based on a 'user pays' system, i.e. students will bear the cost of all excursion-related expenses.

The Principal is responsible for the approval of all non-adventure single-day excursions

4. School Council approval is required for all adventure or overnight excursions. The College Council usually meets on the third Monday of each month. It is responsible for the approval of:

- overnight excursions/camps
- interstate visits
- excursions requiring sea or air travel
- excursions involving weekend or vacations
- adventure activities.

School Council approval is required four weeks before an activity. After the Council has approved the activity, the College is required to notify the Office of Emergency Management with details of the excursion /camp preparation and safety procedures. Notification must be completed at least three weeks prior to the activity.

5. Post-Approval Planning

- A letter to parents containing full details of the excursion is required. The AP/Principal should view and co-sign a copy of the letter to parents before it is issued.
- There must be adequate pre-excursion planning and preparation of the students involved. Teachers need to check an outdoor venue, e.g. a bushwalk route or a section of a river which is to be canoed, before they take a group of students to the area.
 - The school will be closed on a Code Red day; therefore any camps planned for a Code Red fire rating day will be postponed or cancelled. If the camp is already in progress when a Code Red day at the camp location is declared, the students will be returned to school the night before, or at the discretion of the Principal/Camp Coordinator and Camp Site Manager. The camp site emergency management plan/risk assessment will provide a guide for decision making.

- Check eligibility of students to attend. For overnight camps, students are required to bring their signed consent forms and their money to the General Office a week before the excursion/camp. For day excursions, the signed consent form and money payable is to be given to the General Office by 1pm the day before the activity. Failure to submit forms on time may lead to the cancellation of the excursion or, individuals may not be eligible to participate in the excursion/activity.
- All staff and students must wear appropriate and suitable clothing (see Sun Smart Policy). Equipment taken on an excursion must be in good condition and suitable for the activity to be undertaken.
- Teachers must leave suitable and sufficient work for classes they leave, along with class lists and any special instructions – seating plans, equipment requirements etc. (see Extras Policy).
- Consent forms are required for all excursions and must be taken on all excursions except on a local excursion (see section on local excursions). Copies of the consent forms must be left at the General Office.
- Organiser is to leave a list of students involved and departure/arrival details on in the staffroom and in the General Office.
- A mobile phone and first aid kit should be taken on all excursions.
- If an accident or injury occurs, the Principal/AP must be notified immediately and kept fully informed. A comprehensive report must be completed and filed promptly on return. Teachers must anticipate the possibility of litigation if an accident or injury occurs on an excursion. They must be prepared for a detailed examination of their planning and actions on the activity.
- No student may transport another student in a car on any excursion.
- Students and parents are to be informed in writing whether school uniform is to be worn

Behaviour Expectations

Normal school rules relating to behaviour and language apply during all excursions/camps and activities.

No alcohol or smoking is permitted on any school excursion or activity. Parents and students need to be informed of this policy before departure and warned that any student who fails to observe this policy will be disciplined and, where appropriate, immediately returned to school or home.

Mobile phone use is at the discretion of the excursion organiser

While school camps are a team activity requiring the co-operation and common sense of all participants, it is the Teacher In Charge who oversees the operations of the camp, takes charge of events, makes key decisions and accepts ultimate responsibility for the camp.

Parents will be notified if a child is in danger of losing their invitation to participate in a camping experience due to poor behaviour at school. If the unsatisfactory behaviour continues, the child may then be excluded from camp. The decision to exclude a student will be made by the Principal, in consultation with the Teacher In Charge.

Parents may be requested to collect their child from camp if their child exhibits behaviour that is considered unacceptable or they become unwell. The decision as to who collects the child will be made by the Principal in consultation with the Teacher In Charge and the parents. Costs incurred will be the responsibility of the parent.

Volunteer Workers

Excursion staff may include other adults on a volunteer or paid-worker basis, their status must be clarified prior to booking and forms signed prior to the excursion. The AP is to ensure that the names of volunteer workers are recorded for the purposes of worker's insurance. School students cannot be used as excursion staff. Volunteer workers assisting on overnight excursions are required to have a satisfactory Working with Children Police Check before they can accompany the excursion.

Volunteers who are driving vehicles transporting students must have the appropriate driving licence and provide a copy of that licence to the school before leaving on the excursion. Anyone using their own vehicle to transport students on any activity must have a comprehensive insurance policy covering the vehicle being used and provide evidence of this policy to the school before using the vehicle.

Local Excursions

Local excursions cover the Orbost township area and generally take only one or two sessions and occur in normal timetabled classes. School Council approval and consent forms are not required. For local excursions, the staff/student ratio is one staff member per twenty students. Depending on the activity, year level and the type of students involved, another staff member may be required.

Leaving the School During Class Time

Students may be permitted to leave the College for school-related projects – research, collecting data, interviewing, buying materials on an unsupervised basis - provided the students are signed out by office staff and sign in on return. The classroom teacher should have informed parents in writing before students participate in these activities and receive an acknowledgement from the parent/s indicating they have received the notice.

This activity should occur during the relevant subject time or lunchtime and not during other class time. A list of students and staff names must be left at the office prior to leaving the College.

Guidelines for Staff/Student Ratios

At least two excursion staff must be present if the school bus is used, except for local excursions.

Where excursions involve overnight stays for mixed groups, excursion staff must include at least one person of each sex.

Day Excursion (not involving adventure activities)

Day excursions cover areas such as Marlo, Cape Conran, Corringale, Lakes Entrance, Bairnsdale or Cann River and are of a half or a full day in length. Consent forms are required. For day excursions the staff/student ratio is one staff member per 20 students. Depending on the activity, year level and the type of students involved, more staff members may be required.

Overnight Excursion (not involving adventure activities)

A minimum of two excursion staff are required. At least one staff member should have prior experience in managing students in a camping environment. Staff/student ratios are as follows:

- base camps in residential premises or under canvas - 1:10 students
- study camps (Year 12) in residential premises - 1:15 students
- tours, including interstate - 1:15 students
- overseas tours - 1:10 students.

Adventure Activities

A minimum of two excursion staff are required. DEECD guidelines for minimum staff/student ratios required for adventure activities are available from the Assistant Principal who is to be consulted when planning adventure activities.

References

The primary references that must be consulted when considering all camping activities (including adventure activities) is the Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoor website:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/safety/pages/outdoor.aspx>
and the Victorian Government 'School Policy and Advisory Guide'

Evaluation:

- This Policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three year review cycle.

School Council President

Principal

This Policy was last ratified by School Council in.... July, 2017