



Policy Name	Excursion, Incursion & Camp Policy
Related Policies and Legislation	Duty of Care Policy Child Protection Policy & Procedure AISWA Excursion, Incursion & Camp Guidelines
Policy Category	Student Wellbeing & Safety
Relevant Audience	All Treetops Community
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Person/s Responsible for Review	Treetops Administration

Excursion, Incursion & Camp Policy

Purpose

School excursions (including camps) and incursions are structured learning experiences provided by, or under the auspices of, the school. When there is a change in learning environment or changes to an existing school environment, additional risks may be apparent requiring management.

Objectives

- Determining the educational value of an excursion must take account of the needs and resources of the school, the needs of the students and the total learning program.
- Excursions are inclusive, and all students within the specific learning group are to be given the opportunity to participate.
- A duty of care is owed to students in the school environment and while on excursions.
- The School's duty of care is owed to students for the duration of an excursion cannot be delegated from the school to parents, caregivers, volunteers or employees of external organisations.
- The obligation to report suspected risk of harm to children and young people applies throughout all stages of an excursion, as it does in schools.
- A risk assessment is to be conducted and a risk management plan developed before seeking approval for any excursion.
- Signed consent forms granting permission for students to participate in excursions and a medical information form are to be obtained from parents or caregivers.
- Safe transport or a safe walking route is to be organised for excursions.
- Students must behave appropriately at all times while on excursions.

Context

Treetops is committed to providing a safe, secure, disciplined and quality learning environment in which students can develop their individual talents, interests and abilities through a curriculum that fosters the intellectual, physical, social and moral development of the student. Excursions and incursions are part of quality teaching and learning programs.

Excursions and incursions are a valuable teaching and learning vehicle, often integral to quality curriculum delivery in that they provide access to teaching content and learning experiences not available at the school. All students are expected to participate in excursions and incursions, accommodations are made to facilitate inclusivity.

School excursions vary in terms of the curriculum focus, the students involved, the duration of the excursion and the excursion venue(s). The student group participating in the excursion may be a class or classes or students drawn from a number of classes. They may be, for example, a team, a performance group or an audience for a performance. 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 or weeks requiring overnight or long term accommodation.

Some excursions involve overseas travel. Particular additional mandatory procedures relate to such excursions.

Responsibilities and delegations

A school excursion is initiated, organised and supervised by a teaching staff and approved by the principal.

The school's duty of care is owed to students for the duration of an excursion cannot be delegated from the school to parents, caregivers, volunteers or employees of external organisations.

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/dutyofcare.aspx>

Duty of Care

The term 'duty of care' is a legal concept that defines the duty a person has to use reasonable care towards others in order to protect them from known or reasonably foreseeable risk of harm and/or injury. The notion of duty of care is one that is contained in most school policies and procedures.

The school has a duty to take reasonable care to ensure that it employs competent teachers and provides safe premises. The school will be vicariously liable for the actions of the teachers while they are acting within the course and scope of their duties as an employee of the school.

A teacher owes a duty to students to take reasonable care to protect them, from a known or a reasonably foreseeable risk of harm and/or injury. Discharge of this duty requires a teacher to take such proactive measures as are reasonable to prevent harm and/or injury to a student.

The notion that a school teacher is *in loco parentis* does not fully state the legal responsibility of a school, which in many respects goes beyond that of a parent. A school should not be equated with a home. Often hazards exist in a home which it would be unreasonable to allow in a school.

If a student is injured because this duty of care is breached, the parent may bring a negligence action against the school. In some circumstances, especially deliberate negligence, the teacher alone may be liable.

The engagement of an external provider, no matter what her or his level of expertise, does not release the school from its obligation to ensure the safety of its pupils who participate in the excursion. The school still has duty of care.

Excursion Procedure (including camps)

- A.** Teachers arranging excursions must take into consideration the following when choosing venue and activities:
- The age and ability of the students.
 - The degree of supervision required to ensure our Duty of Care can be met.
 - All legal requirements that may need to be met. For example, special requirements for water based activities. (See AISWA, Royal Lifesaving Society Guidelines).
 - Any disclaimers or indemnity clauses binding on the school from external providers.

At Treetops the guide for ratio of supervision for general activities is as follows:

For children 3-8 years	one adult per six children.
For children 8 – 11 years	one adult per ten children.
For children 11 – 15 years	one adult per twelve children.
For “special activities” please see individual policies.	

B. Once arrangements for the excursion have been made teachers must:

- Ensure that the Principal has been informed of all activities to be undertaken.
- Ensure that the Principal has seen all paperwork and given consent for the material to be sent out to parents.
- Obtain written consent from parents for their child/children to attend. Only students with a signed consent form will be allowed to attend the excursion. Before parents can give permission, they must be made aware of all details of the excursion, including:
 - a) An outline of the activities, particularly any hazardous activity or those requiring specialist instruction.
 - b) The identity and number of supervisors and whether any of them will be volunteers/parents (e.g. This may be an issue if the parents are separated and one of the parents has restricted access to the child and is going on the excursion as a volunteer).
 - c) The itinerary and transport arrangements.
 - d) Full details of time and location.
- Fully familiarise themselves with student’s health forms.
- Ensure that there are gender appropriate supervisors for the activity.

C. Teachers must prepare volunteers in the following way:

- Ensure volunteers have signed a confidential declaration.
- Ensure volunteers are clearly briefed on:
 - a) Duty of Care
 - b) Expected behaviours
 - c) Behaviour management.
- Ensure volunteers understand the chain of command.
- Ensure volunteers have any specialised training or qualification they may require.

D. Whilst on excursion:

- Teachers and volunteers are responsible for the welfare and safety of all students. Please note even when working with specialists provided by the excursion venue the teacher has the ultimate responsibility.
- Teachers should roster volunteers to ensure that the supervision ratio and appropriate gender requirements are always met.

Disruptive Behaviour – all disruptive behaviour should be treated as per the Appropriate Behaviour Policy.

Medical Emergency and Illness – the teacher should take all practical steps to deal with the situation immediately then phone the parents to arrange the next steps in the care of the student. Phone the school or Principal / Deputy, if after-hours, to inform them of the situation.

Emergency Plan – Teachers should make themselves aware of the Emergency/Evacuation plan of the excursion site and be prepared to implement this, should it be required.