

Excursions Policy

Rationale:

Neerim District Secondary College's excursion program enables students to further their learning and social skills development in a non-school setting. Day excursions complement, and are an important aspect of the educational programs offered at our school.

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.

Implementation:

- Day excursions are defined for the purpose of this policy as any organised and supervised school activities that require children to venture beyond the school boundary.
- The Principal or nominee is responsible for the approval of all non-adventure single-day excursions other than those that must be approved by the School Council.
- School Council is responsible for approval of all overnight excursions; camps; interstate and overseas visits; excursions requiring sea or air travel; excursions involving weekends or vacations; and adventure activities. Council approved excursions are detailed in the '*Outdoor Education*' policy.
- A designated 'Teacher in Charge' will coordinate each day excursion.
- Prior to the commencement of any detailed planning relating to a proposed day excursion, the Teacher in Charge must meet formally with the Principal or nominee, to present the Principal or nominee with a [planning summary](#), to discuss the proposed activity, and to seek 'in principle' support for the event. The Principal or nominee will complete the [Principal Checklist](#) to ensure all information and planning is in order.
- If the Principal's or nominee's approval is granted, detailed planning should commence using the [planning questions](#) proforma as a guide. This must include a site visit and [risk assessment](#).
- When presenting information to the Principal or nominee, the Teacher in Charge must be aware that the Principal or nominee will consider the following:-
 - What is the purpose of the excursion and its connection to student learning?
 - Do staff members attending have the competence to provide the necessary supervision of students throughout the excursion?
 - Is an appropriately trained member of staff able to provide [first aid](#) ?
 - Have supervisory adults who are not registered teachers completed a Working with Children Check?

- Is the location of staff and students throughout the excursion including during travel known?
- Is a record of telephone contacts for supervising excursion staff available?
- Is a record of the names and family contacts for all students and staff available?
- Are copies of the [parental consent](#) and [confidential medical advice](#) forms for those students on the excursion completed?
- If day excursions include adventure activities organising staff should consult the [adventure activities](#) website, or seek advice from peak bodies or skilled and experienced staff with recent experience instructing the activity to satisfy the Principal's or nominee's requirements.
- If approved, the online [Notification of School Activity](#) form will then be submitted three weeks prior to the activity if required. (required if country schools travelling beyond the local town/city, rural schools travelling beyond the local area, metropolitan schools travelling beyond the greater metropolitan area).
- School Council prefers that students only travel on buses fitted with seatbelts if available.
- The Principal or nominee requires that a report from the Teacher in Charge occur after each day excursion if any mishaps or concerns have arisen.
- School Council will determine an 'Excursions Levy' each year. Parents can bulk pay for the year's excursions or pay for individual excursions as they occur. To assist in this matter, parents have an opportunity to sign over their "EMA" cheque if applicable.
- All endeavours will be made not to exclude students simply for financial reasons. Parents experiencing financial difficulty, who wish for their children to attend a day excursion, will be required to discuss their individual situation with the Principal or nominee. Decisions relating to alternative payment arrangements will be made by the Principal or nominee on a case-by-case basis.
- All families will be given sufficient time to make payments for excursions. Children whose parents have not paid deposits by the due date, who do not make full payment by the due date, or who have not made alternative arrangements with the Principal or nominee will not be eligible to attend.
- Office staff will be responsible for managing and monitoring the payments made by parents and will provide classroom teachers with detailed records on a regular basis.
- Information will be provided to all parents of non-English speaking families in a manner that allows them to provide an informed consent to their children attending excursions.
- Classroom teachers will be given the first option to attend excursions.
- The school will continue to provide the opportunity for teachers to update their first aid skills.
- The school will provide a mobile phone and a first-aid kit for all day excursions.
- Copies of completed Permission forms, and signed Confidential Medical Information forms must be carried by excursion staff at all times, and copies remain at school.
- A senior staff member will be in attendance at school whilst the children are returning from any out-of-school-hours excursion. The Teacher in Charge will communicate with this person with regards the anticipated return time.
- While school excursions are a team activity requiring the cooperation and common-sense of all participants, it is the Teacher in Charge who oversees the operations of the excursion, takes charge of events, makes key decisions and accepts ultimate responsibility for the excursion.
- Parents may be invited to participate in excursions. When deciding on which parents will attend, the Teacher in Charge will take into account –

1. Any valuable skills the parents have to offer. eg. bus licence, first aid etc
 2. The preference to include both male and female parents.
 3. The special needs of particular students.
- Parents selected to assist with day excursions may be required to pay their excursion costs.
 - Only children who have displayed sensible, reliable behaviour at school will be invited to participate in school day 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 or nominee, in consultation with the Teacher in Charge.
 - The primary references that must be consulted when considering all excursions is the School Policy and Advisory Guide website:
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/excursions.aspx>

Evaluation:

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle, or after any unexpected or adverse incident origination from an excursion.

This policy was last ratified by School Council May 2017 and will be reviewed May 2017