



# Serpell Primary School

## School Camp, Excursion and Incursion Policy



### **Purpose**

To enable the students, through guided direct experiences within the school and away from the school environment, to engage in educational activities that will contribute to developing understandings about themselves, others and the environment.

### **Scope**

Students will broaden their understandings of the world through planned directed experiences. Students will develop their understandings of the curriculum content through direct 'hands on' experiences. Students will develop their physical, personal and social skills through a planned sequence of school camp experiences.

### **Policy**

Year level Leaders will plan an excursion or incursion each term that will contribute to the learning of their students in relation to the curriculum focus.

Approval for school camps, overnight excursions, interstate and international visits, excursions requiring sea and air travel, excursions involving weekends or vacations and adventure activities must be obtained from the School Council and the Principal. Approval for an excursion/incursion must be obtained from the Principal (or the Assistant Principal on their behalf).

Parents/guardians must provide written approval for their child to take part in an excursion and in any particular adventure activities that will be undertaken during the excursion or camp. Up to date medical information regarding the students must be provided by the parent/guardian before participation on school camps. The confidential medical information form provided by the Department of Education will be used. Refer to: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/medicalinfo.aspx>. A copy of student medical information forms will be taken on the excursion/camp by the teacher-in-charge and be accessible by other excursion staff in emergency situations. The original of the forms will be retained at the school. Consent forms will remain at the school and a copy will be taken on the excursion/camp by the teacher in charge. Two bus lists must be completed for an excursion/camp. One to be retained at the school office, the other to be taken on the bus with student consent forms and medical information for camps.

### *Planning Requirements*

While the degree of planning involved will depend on the risks involved, the conduct of any excursion or activity should take into account the following:

- Educational purpose of the excursion and its contribution to the curriculum.
- Department approval requirements for excursions and staff travel.
- Maintenance of full records, including documentation of the planning process.
- Suitability of the environment and/or venue for the excursion.
- Informed consent from parents or carers.
- Adequate student and staff medical information.
- Student preparation and behaviour.
- Requirements for any adventure activities (these involve greater than normal risk - there are additional considerations associated with these activities).

### *Emergency and risk management*

Planning Requirements for emergency and risk management include:

- Assessment of excursion risks.
- Procedures in the event of an emergency. In the event of an emergency, an accident or an injury to a participant, staff on the excursion should, in addition to undertaking appropriate emergency action, immediately notify the school Principal. The Principal should make arrangements with the Department's Emergency and Security Management Branch to be telephoned on 9589 6266. This is a 24 hour service.

- Arrangements are in place if the excursion needs to be cancelled, recalled, or altered (for example: severe weather conditions, changes to DFAT travel advice, or students returning early due to illness/serious misbehaviour).
- Completion of an online notification of school activity form three weeks prior to the activity using the Student Activity Locator. An online notification of school activity form is completed at least three weeks prior to the activity using the Student Activity Locator: <https://partner.eduweb.vic.gov.au/sites/sal/>
- First aid requirements. Teachers and other staff on camps and excursions are required to have a current level of first aid training appropriate to the event and location. Teachers and other staff who are responsible for the care of students at risk of anaphylaxis will be trained in how to recognise and respond to an anaphylactic reaction, including administering an EpiPen.
- Students will wear identity tags on excursions and on the bus to and from camps and excursions.
- For excursions/camps held outside school hours, parents/guardians will be advised of the telephone numbers (both during and outside of school hours) of the designated school contact person.
- A car must be available at school camps for emergencies. The owner and/or driver of the car must hold a valid driver's license and the car must be registered and have comprehensive insurance.
- 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, excursion venues and staff or student illness) and any significant financial risks to the school and/or parents (for example if an excursion needs to be cancelled).
- 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.
- The emergency management planning in the school 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, recalled or altered (for example, due to forecast severe weather conditions, changes to DFAT travel advice or an emergency). This should include arrangements for communicating with parents.
- School council approved excursions must have an emergency response plan.
- When staying at a residential campsite, emergency procedures should be explained as soon as practicable after arrival and a trial evacuation exercise should be carried out immediately to ensure that procedures are appropriate and staff and students are familiar with them.

#### *Cancellations or alterations*

Planning Requirements for cancellations or alterations include:

- The Principal should inform parents that any costs associated with the student returning from an excursion early due to illness or serious misbehaviour are the responsibility of the parent.
- Parents should be advised of possible cancellations or alterations, and any cancellation fees imposed on the parents by third parties.
- With respect to arrangements between the school and third parties, the Principal should:
  - Carefully negotiate terms and conditions with third parties (e.g. travel agents, travel insurance companies, camp providers, specialist instructors, expedition providers) prior to accepting arrangements.
  - Ensure the terms of any travel insurance offered to the school by the third party are satisfactory.

#### *Staffing and supervision*

Planning Requirements for staffing and supervision include:

- There must be sufficient staff to provide appropriate and effective supervision, the experience, qualifications and skills of each staff member (including volunteers, instructors, etc.) to allow them to provide effective supervision in general and for planned activities (as applicable).
- There must be appropriate levels of supervision in view of the activities undertaken and students involved.
- Staff- student ratios in this policy provide the minimum requirements for school excursions and camps as directed by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. Day excursions (not involving

adventure activities) one staff member per twenty students. Overnight excursions (camps) one staff member to ten students.

### *Communication requirements*

Planning Requirements for communication include:

- Staff and students must have appropriate clothing and personal equipment.
- Group or technical equipment must be in good condition and suitable for the activities undertaken.
- Continuous instruction will be 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 must be communicated.
- Where external providers have been engaged to deliver specific activities or programs for students, or provide other services, the school retains responsibility for its students. The duty of care of the school staff to students cannot be delegated to a third party.
- The excursion meets the requirements of any school-level policy or procedures.

### *Fire danger or ban*

The Principal 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, the school 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.

### **Overseas Travel Requirements**

The Smartraveller website is the Australian Government, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), travel advisory and consular assistance service. This site also provides useful travel information and tips see: [Smartraveller](#)

Schools planning and conducting overseas excursions must ensure that they:

- comply with any DFAT travel advice current for the proposed location;
- subscribe to receive automatic travel advice updates from the Smartraveller website both prior to the excursion and when overseas;
- review their risk assessment if there are any changes to the DFAT travel advice. This will require the Principal to consider whether there is a need to cancel, recall or alter excursion arrangements.

This table describes the four levels of DFAT travel advice with the required actions and considerations.

<b>Level</b>	<b>Required Actions and Considerations</b>
<b>1</b>	Exercise normal safety precautions.
<b>2</b>	'Exercise a high degree of caution' - requires additional attention to planning and assessment of risk.
<b>3</b>	'Reconsider your need to travel' – would generally mean excursions should be postponed or cancelled as the educational goals are unlikely to justify the risks. Any decision to continue would require a detailed risk assessment and treatment plan together with detailed contingency planning.
<b>4</b>	'Do not travel' – The Principal must cancel or postpone the excursion.

Note: Before travelling overseas, the school will check the Smartraveller website itself to ensure that they have the most up-to-date travel advice for the proposed countries and locations to be visited.

### **Related policies**

- [Adventure Activities](#)
- [Approvals](#)
- [Student Preparation and Behaviour](#)
- [Emergency and Risk Management](#)
- [Venue Selection](#)
- [Parent or Carer Consent](#)
- [Staffing and Supervision](#)
- [Student Medical Information](#)

**Evaluation:**

This will be reviewed on a 2 year basis or following updates of procedures from the Department of Education.

**Review Cycle:**

This policy was last updated on the 16<sup>th</sup> of May 2018 and is scheduled for review in May 2020.