



Excursion Policy

Rationale:

The school's excursion program enables students to further their learning and social skills development in a non-school setting. Excursions complement, and are an important aspect of the educational programs offered at Montrose Primary School. They reinforce, complement and extend student-learning opportunities beyond the classroom. Students develop an understanding that learning is not limited to school, and that valuable and powerful learning takes place in the real world.

Definition: An excursion is an activity organised by a school (not including work experience) during which students leave the school grounds to engage in educational activities (including camps and sport). Adventure activities are included in this definition (regardless of whether they occur outside the school grounds or not).

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/pages/excursions.aspx>

Implementation:

The 'Checklist For Excursions' needs to be completed when planning an excursion.

Excursion considerations

Principals are responsible for the conduct of all excursions and must ensure:

- an online notification of school activity form is completed prior to the activity
- a planning and approvals process is undertaken, in accordance with Departmental policy and requirements, which takes into account the following considerations:
 - ◆ venue selection
 - ◆ safety, emergency and risk management
 - ◆ informed consent from parents
 - ◆ medical information
 - ◆ appropriate staffing and supervision
 - ◆ student preparation and behaviour
 - ◆ requirements for any adventure activities.

Note: The regional director should be informed if an excursion leaves a school unoccupied.

All parents are welcome to contact the office if they need to raise any issues, make general inquiries about charges or make a complaint.

Safety, Emergency and Risk Management

Principals must ensure that appropriate emergency and risk management planning is undertaken for excursions.

The emergency management planning in schools 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 or recalled (for example, due to forecast severe weather conditions).

Teachers must ensure students must wear name badges whenever they leave the school grounds.

Emergency notifications

In the event of an emergency, to ensure information is provided to emergency services, schools must notify the:

- Department of any approved school camp or excursion at least three weeks beforehand using the [Student Activity Locator online form](#).

Fire danger or ban

Principals may need to cancel excursions at short notice on days of extreme fire danger or total fire ban. On such days, the Security Services Unit liaises with fire authorities to obtain up to date information for communication to schools that may be affected by wildfire, including schools who may have students attending camps or other venues in areas affected by wildfire. If an excursion is not cancelled, special fire safety precautions will be required.

When required, schools must follow the Department's emergency management (bushfires) procedures for off-site activities for all excursions.

Note: Risk management plans must include fire danger element.

Permission Forms

Student permission forms:

- must be completed by parents or carers before each approved excursion
- the form provides parents or carers with the opportunity to vary any information previously given to the school
- permission forms are to include:
 - ◆ excursion information including venue, date / time, travel arrangements, expenses, permission form return date and any other necessary information
 - ◆ reply slip including child's name, parent name and contact phone numbers, student medical information, anaphylaxis statement, signature and medical treatment consent, payment details including credit card details with CVV
 - ◆ Medical Treatment Consent Statement: *I authorise the teacher in charge of the excursion to consent, where it is impracticable to communicate with me; to the child receiving such medical or surgical treatment as may be deemed necessary*

Permission Form Return & Payment

Payment and permission forms need to be received by the school **no later than 10am the day before the excursion** or at a time stipulated on the permission form.

- No payment will be accepted after this time due to the processing requirements for the following day
- **Failure to make payment by 10am the previous day will result in students not being taken on the excursion**, unless prior arrangements have been made
- **Money will not be accepted on the morning of the excursion**
- **Students without signed permission forms will not be taken on the excursion**

Parents are welcome to contact the office regarding payment requests for optional activities. Alternative payment options are generally available. Refer to the 'Parent Payment Policy' for detailed information on payment of optional activities.

Excerpt from the Parent Payment Policy: Payment arrangements and non-payment

- *Unpaid optional extras payments may compromise a student's ability to be involved in the optional activity in question. Payment plans may be organised with the Principal to permit the child to participate. Regular payments must be adhered to. Failure to show commitment to the payment plan will result in exclusion from other optional extras until payment is made in full*
- *Parents and guardians are provided with an alternative option for their children if they choose not to participate in an excursion or camp*

Student Medical Information

Schools must:

- ensure that the teacher responsible for each group of students takes the permission forms with medical consent/ information on the excursion
- ensure these forms are available to other excursion staff in emergency situations
- keep copies of the forms at the school.

Note: Students should not be denied attendance at any excursion because a parent/guardian refuses permission for a blood transfusion.

First aid

Staff must also have a first aid kit appropriate to the excursion location, activities undertaken and students with individual medical needs (diabetes, anaphylaxis, asthma etc).

Venue selection and assessment

Excursion venues must be assessed and selected on the basis of their safety and suitability for the activities proposed.

Supervision

The minimum staff-student ratios for excursions are:

Day excursions: One excursion staff member per twenty students

Adventure activities: Specific guidelines for activities. See: Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors within [Department resources](#)

Further supervision requirements

This table outlines further supervision requirements

For most excursions	The excursion must <ul style="list-style-type: none">• be under the direct control of a teacher employed by the Department or the school council with at least one other excursion staff member present• have enough teachers employed by the Department or school council to maintain appropriate control of the excursion and of each activity• have teachers comprising at least half of the excursion staff.
small group excursions in the local area	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• with the approval of the principal, be supervised by one or more excursion staff employed by the Department or school council (for example, education support class officers such as integration aides and teacher assistants).

Travel

All buses that schools hire, use or own must have seat belts for all passengers. New laws about where children can sit in vehicles require that if a car or bus has two or more rows of seats, its driver must ensure that children aged 4 to 7 years must not sit in the front seat unless all the rear seats are occupied by children under 7.

Excursion staff

Excursion staff must be approved by the principal or school council (as outlined in [Excursions – Planning and Approvals](#)) and may include:

- teachers employed by the Department or school council
- other adults on a volunteer or paid basis such as: parents or carers, education support class officers, community members, trainee teachers, campsite staff, specialist instructors for excursion activities. **Important:** school students cannot be used as excursion staff.

Excursion staff who will provide supervision of students and who are not registered teachers must have a Working with Children check.

The names of volunteer workers must be recorded for the purposes of volunteer workers insurance. Names of volunteers must be given to the Business Manager to be ratified at School Council prior to the excursion. Only those volunteers approved at School Council may be part of the excursion program. In line with safety regulations and our Duty of Care policy, other adults and children cannot join the excursion group of their own free will.

Important: the specific roles and responsibilities of each staff member (teachers, instructors, campsite staff, volunteers, etc) must be clarified and understood by all staff and students prior to the commencement of the excursion.

Responsibility: Principal, Vice Principal, Curriculum Leaders, Teaching Staff

Ratified at School Council: 18th October 2016

Due for Review: May 2017