



PATTERSON LAKES PRIMARY SCHOOL

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EXCURSIONS, INCURSIONS AND ACTIVITIES POLICY

RATIONALE

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

- excursions are planned, approved and conducted in accordance with Department policy and requirements.
- an online notification of school activity form is completed at least three weeks prior to the activity using the Student Activity Locator.
- compliance with the Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors, which are mandatory for excursions requiring school council approval.

Important: Principals, teachers, school councillors and others involved in school excursions, must anticipate the possibility of litigation following an incident or injury. They must be prepared for a detailed examination of their planning, actions and the curriculum role of any activity.

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).

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

AIMS

- To explain to our school community the processes and procedures Patterson Lakes Primary School will use when planning and conducting excursions, incursions and activities for students.
- To complement the Department's policy and guidelines on excursions, camps and adventure activities which all Victorian government schools are required to follow. Patterson Lakes Primary School will follow both this policy, as well as the Department's policy and guidelines when planning for and conducting camps, excursions and incursions.

IMPLEMENTATION

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 considerations:

- the 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
- location and venue selection:
 - the suitability of the environment and/or venue for the excursion
- emergency and risk management:
 - assessment of excursion risks
 - procedures in the event of an emergency

- arrangements are in place if the excursion needs to be cancelled, recalled, or altered (for example, due to forecast 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 - see Department resources below
- first aid requirements
- minimising disruptions or costs to parents in the event of cancellations or alterations:
 - principals 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:
 - ensure parents are advised of the possibility of cancellations or alterations and of any cancellation fees imposed on the parents by third parties
 - with respect to arrangements between the school and third parties, principals 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:
 - there are sufficient staff to provide appropriate and effective supervision
 - the experience, qualifications and skills of each staff member (including volunteers, instructors, etc.) will allow them to provide effective supervision in general and for planned activities (as applicable)
 - there are appropriate levels of supervision in view of the activities undertaken and students involved
- 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)
- transportation requirements, noting that:
 - public transport should be used if practicable, where transport authorities should be consulted as to appropriate travel times and at least a fortnight's notice of travel provided
 - excursions that run late, failing to meet times agreed to with private bus operators, are likely to incur significant costs
- communication requirement
- that staff and students have appropriate clothing and personal equipment
- that group or technical equipment is in good condition and suitable for the activities undertaken
- that continuous instruction is provided for students remaining at the school during the absence of staff accompanying the excursion
- that the regional director has been informed if an excursion leaves the school unoccupied
- any information which has been provided by specialists in the activities proposed
- requirements for interstate or overseas excursions
- 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, as the duty of care of the school staff to students cannot be delegated to a third party
- that the excursion meets the requirements of any school-level policy or procedures

For detailed information on the requirements above see Related policies.

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](#)
- [Swimming Instruction and Water Safety](#)
- To use the Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors, go to [Excursions and Outdoor Education](#)

For completion of the online notification for school activity form (Student Activity Locator) see the link for government schools below. [Government \(and non-government\) schools](#)

Patterson Lakes Primary School (PLPS) follows the guidelines of all Department Policies. In addition to the Department's Excursion, Incursion and Activities Policy PLPS includes the following:

- The schedule of excursions, including costs in the form of an Annual Excursion Levy, will be distributed to parents 6 weeks prior to the end of the previous year.
- School councils are responsible for developing and approving school-level parent payment charges and can request payments from parents under three categories only Essential Student Learning Items, Optional Items and Voluntary Financial Contributions.

Essential Student Learning Items are those items, activities or services that are essential to support student learning of the standard curriculum. These are items that the school considers essential for all students.

Optional Items are those items, activities or services that are offered in addition to or support instruction in the standard curriculum program. These are provided on a user-pays basis so that if parents choose to access them for students, they are required to pay for them.

Voluntary Financial Contributions Parents can be invited to make a donation to the school for a general or specific purpose, e.g. school grounds projects, library fund or for new equipment.

- All endeavours will be made not to exclude students simply for financial reasons. Parents experiencing financial difficulty, who wish for their children to attend an excursion, will be required to discuss their individual situation with the Principal. Decisions relating to alternative payment arrangements will be made by the Principal on a case-by-case basis.
- All families will be given sufficient time to make payments for excursions.
- 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.
- A designated 'Teacher in Charge' will coordinate each excursion/incursion.
- Prior to any child attending an excursion, parents/guardians must have returned to the school a signed permission form and any additional required forms. E.g. medical forms.
- Classroom teachers will inform parents of non-English speaking families in a manner that allows them to provide an informed consent to their children attending excursions.
- The designated Teacher in Charge will adhere to the DET Staffing and Supervision Policy in relation to appropriate student-teacher ratios.
- If an incursion/excursion includes any swimming, water safety or water associated activities, please refer to the DET Swimming and Water Safety policy guidelines.
- A mobile phone and a first-aid kit will be taken for all excursions.
- Copies of completed permission and medical forms will be carried by excursion staff at all times.
- Parents of children involved in excursions may be invited to assist in the delivery of 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. E.g. bus licence, first aid etc.
 2. The need to include both male and female parents.
 3. The special needs of particular students.
- Parents selected to assist with an incursion/excursion may be required to pay costs associated with the excursion.

- All parents attending an incursion/excursion will be expected to provide evidence of an up to date "Working with Children's Check". Such documentation will be photocopied and filed at the Administration Office.
- Only children who have followed the School Code of Conduct, will be invited to participate in school excursions. Parents will be notified if a child is in danger of losing their invitation to participate in an incursion/excursion due to poor behaviour at school. The decision to exclude a student will be made by the Principal, in consultation with the classroom teacher and the Teacher in Charge.

EVALUATION

Guidelines are updated every 3 - 4 years as per DET recommendations.

CERTIFICATION

This policy was ratified at the School Council meeting held at Patterson Lakes Primary School, May 22nd 2019.

Signed.....

School Council President

Signed.....

Principal