



Willow Grove Primary School

EXCURSION POLICY

PURPOSE:

Excursions provide students with social and educational opportunities beyond what would be available within the regular classroom. An excursion is an activity organised by the school during which students leave the school grounds to engage in educational activities, including camps and sports.

GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTATION:

1. 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 (where applicable) 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

2. 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

- 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.

3. Excursions will be approved according to the following table and where necessary excursions will be recorded in school council minutes, including the endorsement of parent helpers:

Excursion type	Then it must be approved by
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • overnight excursions • camps • interstate and international visits • excursions requiring sea or air travel and • excursions involving weekends or vacations • adventure activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the school council, or • both school councils when it is a joint activity involving another school
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • day excursions (other than those referred to above that must be approved by the school council). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors must be followed. • the principal, or • both principals when it is a joint activity involving another school.

Note: the principal approves cancellations or alterations to excursion arrangements.

Joint school excursions: The nominated co-ordinating principal or teacher ensures:

- planning and approval requirements are met
- parents or carers are informed that their children may be supervised by teachers and other approved adults from the other school.

Note: All schools involved in a joint excursion must complete an online notification of school activity form.

4. The following table describes the minimum staff-student ratios for excursions:

Type of excursions	One excursion staff member per
Day excursions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • twenty students. <p>(Principals may extend this ratio for senior secondary students only, if student safety will not be compromised.)</p>
Adventure activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • specific guidelines for the activity. <p>See: Safety Guidelines for Education</p>

Type of excursions

One excursion staff member per
Outdoors within [Department resources](#)

Overnight excursions:

Base camps in residential premises or under canvas

- ten students.

Study camps in residential premises

- fifteen students.

Example: Year 12 camp.

Local and interstate tours

- fifteen students.

Overseas tours

- ten students.

This table outlines further supervision requirements

For	The excursion must
most excursions	<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.
overnight stays for mixed gender groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• include excursion staff of at least one person of each sex. <p>Note: In primary schools this requirement may be waived, where staff of each sex are not available.</p>
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).
unsupervised excursions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• be approved by the principal only:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- in a small number of instances- for secondary-aged students

For

The excursion must

- for activities involving small groups of individual students
 - and the teacher responsible for the activity must maintain a formal record of:
 - a description of the activity, including locations
 - the names and ages of students involved
 - the time of leaving and returning to school.
 - In addition, principals should ensure:
 - a risk assessment of the activity is completed
 - their decision and the reasons for allowing the activity to proceed is documented.
5. Excursion staff must be approved by the Principal or school council (as outline above) 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.

Where approved excursion staff who are not teachers employed by the Department or school council are in attendance they can be included in the staff-student ratio:

- for the duration of a specific activity for which they have a designated supervisory responsibility; or
- for the overall staff-student for the program, where they are on duty and available on the same basis as other staff (usually a 24 hour basis).

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.

6. In addition to the above DET guidelines, Willow Grove Primary School has the following guideline that all parent / guardian helpers on an excursion must comply with:

Parent helpers must comply with the following policies:

- Working with Children Check policy
- Volunteers and Privacy in the School Community Policy
- Parent Participation Policy

Parent helpers must also comply with the following guidelines:

- Be able to attend the excursion without preschool children
- Follow teacher direction and assist the teacher-in charge at all times
- It is important to emphasise that parent helpers are not on an excursion to give their child preferential treatment. The school requests that all parents who attend excursions comply with the excursion guidelines and treat all children including their own equally and without favouritism.

7. Where possible, teachers will share the opportunity to participate in excursions amongst interested families.
8. Most costs will be borne by the parents of the children involved and the organiser must try to keep any costs to a minimum.
9. Submissions can be made to Parent Association for funding subsidies. A submission must be lodged prior to the PA monthly meeting outlining the excursion purpose, grades involved and the costs associated with the excursion.
10. Most Excursions will be included in the term or yearly planner and payment details and invoice included for parents.
11. Where possible the event will involve all classes in the unit team.
12. Unscheduled local excursions or activities. In addition to planned excursions, occasions for leaving the school ground for brief, local, spontaneous educational activities will arise from time to time. (e.g ANZAC / Remembrance Day ceremonies, Kinder visits, activities at the Hill End Recreation Reserve or Blue Rock Lake walking track) This is not an exhaustive list. The value of such visits is recognised and permission for these local excursions is obtained when an enrolment form is completed upon starting at Willow Grove Primary School.

IMPLEMENTATION:

All members of the school community will be made aware of the Excursions policy. It is the responsibility of all excursion staff to ensure that they read and understand the Excursion policy. It is the responsibility of parents to complete relevant permission forms and update personal and emergency phone contact and medical information.

RESOURCES:

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

EVALUATION AND REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's policy review cycle.

Ratified at school council meeting held