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Excursions and Camps

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DEFINITIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS

MSSA: Milkwood Steiner School Association

Excursion: A planned learning experience for students, facilitated by a teacher, off campus.

Camp: A planned learning experience for students, facilitated by a teacher, off campus which extends beyond school hours, including overnight. For the purpose of this Policy, a Camp is an Excursion.

Accompanying adults includes teachers, parents, school council employees or any other adult individual who will be participating in the excursion and providing supervision.

Consent means the parent/carer agrees to their child participating in an activity after they have been made aware of the details, risks and associated costs involved.

Ochre Card is photo identification proof that an individual has received a Working with Children¹ clearance. In the NT, it is a legal requirement for all persons over 15 years of age undertaking paid or voluntary child-related work to hold a current Ochre Card. The Education Act and Regulations uphold this requirement. Parents may be exempt from holding an Ochre Card if they:

- are engaged only as a voluntary worker;
- are a parent of at least one of the children with who they have contact with while in this role;
- do not participate in any overnight stays;
- are at all times under the direct supervision of someone who holds a current Ochre Card; and
- are not required by the principal to hold a current Ochre Card.

Recurring excursion / regular outing means a walk, drive or trip to and from a destination that the student cohort visits regularly as part of its educational program, where the circumstances relevant to the risk assessment are the same on each outing e.g. swimming lessons or visiting a local playground. The application process, including the risk assessment and parent consent, are only required to be undertaken once every 12 months for regular outings.

Teacher in charge means the teacher nominated by the principal to organise the excursion and to have ultimate responsibility and authority while the activity is in progress. In some circumstances a principal may nominate a trainer to be the teacher in charge of category A or B excursions. For department-coordinated programs the teacher in charge may be a departmental employee who is not a teacher.

PURPOSE

The Outdoor Classroom is a unique part MSSA which acknowledges a need for children to situate themselves in nature and the outdoors. The opportunity to work with the Steiner curriculum in the outdoor classroom is valued for learning and wellbeing, and this Policy exists to support excursions and camps at MSSA. Other excursions are equally embraced for the learning and experiences they afford.

¹ <https://nt.gov.au/emergency/community-safety/apply-for-a-working-with-children-clearance>

This policy seeks to clarify the obligations and procedural requirements for school staff when working with excursions and camps.

POLICY STATEMENT

Excursions have clear educational and wellbeing outcomes that take into account the learning programs and individual needs of students, as well as the educational programs and resources of the school.

Activities are inclusive, with all students appropriately supported to participate.

Teachers organise excursions and camps for their classes, with approval from the Principal.

School fees incorporate allowances for camps and excursions. The planning of camps and excursions functions within the parameters of the budget, determined at the beginning of each year. Families should not be charged additional fees for camps and excursions. In exceptional circumstances, a request may be made to the Principal to approve additional costs to families for camps and excursions.

The teacher in charge is responsible for:

- following the Excursion guidelines and procedures to prepare all required documentation for the relevant excursion category
- submitting all documents to the principal for approval within the required timelines
- in the case where an excursion involves a particular class or year level group, the organising teacher will ensure that there is an alternative program available for those students not attending the excursion
- working with the Principal to ensure that reasonable adjustments are made to assist students with additional needs to participate in the excursion activities and overall program
- ensuring that all relevant information about respective responsibilities and obligations is clearly communicated to all accompanying adults
- ensuring that all excursion staff and, where appropriate, the students will be familiar with the specific procedures for dealing with emergencies on each excursion
- exercising proper care and supervision throughout the duration of the excursion, administering First Aid as required and reporting any incidents according to school procedures.
- notifying relevant staff of planned student absences, including music tutors, specialist teachers/release teachers, After School Care and the College of Teachers.
- ensuring any duties impacted by the teacher's absence from campus, including yard duties, bus duties, assembly rosters are filled by other appropriate staff

The Principal is responsible for:

- ensuring that excursions outings are planned and conducted in accordance with this policy and the Excursion guidelines and that reasonable care is taken to ensure the safety of students and staff
- ensuring that all teaching staff, trainers and volunteers adhere to the requirements of this policy and the Excursion guidelines

The Enrolment and Administration Officer is responsible for:

- disseminating, collecting and filing consent forms
- providing on-campus administrative support on the day of excursions

GUIDELINES

Consent

Written parental consent is required for all excursions. Consent forms need to provide enough information about specific activities to allow parents to make informed decisions about their child's participation. Parents must be given the opportunity to provide relevant information about the child's care needs, as well as advising the school if they do not give permission for their child to participate in some or all of the activities listed. Consent given by parents for children to attend excursions does not indemnify the school nor relieve supervisors of their duty of care responsibilities. The excursion consent form template is attached to this document, and is completed by the teacher for approval by the Principal and distribution by the Enrolment and Administration Officer.

Copies of consent forms must be taken on excursions as it contains information that may be needed in the event of an accident or illness.

Duty of care

Teachers have a responsibility to exercise proper care and supervision throughout the duration of the excursion. The duty of care requires taking reasonable steps to protect the student against risks of injury or harm that are reasonably foreseeable.

A teacher cannot delegate their duty of care responsibilities to anyone. If a professional organisation is involved in a school excursion, the teacher should make general enquiries as to the safety of the activity and equipment and the expertise of the staff running the activity.

Where a trainer has been nominated by a principal, the trainer cannot delegate their duty of care and has the responsibility to exercise proper care and supervision throughout the duration of the excursion.

A first aid kit must be taken on all excursions and it is strongly recommended that at least one of the accompanying members of staff holds a current First Aid Certificate.

Records

All excursion documentation must be retained by the school for 45 years after the excursion has been completed. This includes, but is not limited to itineraries, student details, completed consent forms, risk management plans, travel arrangements, movement requisition forms, incident records, and student health and medical information.

Records pertaining to serious incidents, such as a serious injury or death, must be kept as a permanent record.

Supervision - teacher/student ratios

Decisions regarding supervision requirements and teacher/student ratios should take into account factors such as the age of the students, their maturity, location of the excursion, specific needs of students, anticipated behaviour and the nature of the activities to be undertaken. Principals may implement enhanced measures to cater for the safety of students.

A minimum of two staff members are required on class excursions. Subject to risk assessment and Principal approval some excursions may be possible with one staff member.

School staff, parents and volunteers may be used to meet the ratio balance requirements.

Use of private vehicles – school staff/parent

Where private vehicles are used, the teacher in charge of the excursion must ensure that the vehicle is roadworthy, currently registered, has fully comprehensive insurance, the driver has an appropriate and valid NT driver's licence, and that the number of passengers does not exceed the seat belt carrying capacity of the vehicle.

Parental consent must be obtained, in advance, where it is necessary for students to travel in private cars driven by teachers, parents or other approved persons.

Swimming

Excursions involving swimming or water activities require supervision by an adult who possesses current training in cardio-pulmonary resuscitation, and appropriate swimming qualifications.

Forms and Attachments

Excursion - Consent Form Template

Excursion - Risk Assessment

Excursion – checklist