Our Lady Help of Christians Primary School

Offsite Activities Policy

Rationale:
At Our Lady Help Of Christians, we consider Offsite activities to include:

- excursions
- camps (includes study camps and any activity involving overnight stays)
- tours
- off-campus activities such as attendance at sporting fixtures E.g. M.C.G

Implementation:
Offsite activities must be prepared well in advance so that adequate time is given to the thorough planning of all aspects of the activity. Teachers planning such an activity must fill in an “Approval Form for Excursions” available in the staff handbook well in advance of the excursion.

The duty of care of a teacher to protect students in his or her charge from risks of injury that the teacher should reasonably have foreseen applies during offsite activities. There are numerous examples of teachers and schools being held negligent, e.g. for students being injured when unloading equipment from a trailer; for students being injured on bush walks; and for students being burned by a campfire.

During any offsite activity the teacher has responsibility for the safety of the students from the moment of departure to the moment of dismissal from the activity, which usually occurs when the students are returned to their parents/guardians/school.

The necessity to provide a duty of care should be a guiding factor in the planning of all offsite activities.

Procedures

- A tour leader and deputy tour leader who are teachers on staff have been appointed to manage the offsite activity
- Supervisors’ duties and responsibilities to have been documented on Approval for Excursion form
- Appropriate and minimum staff/student ratios have been established (1:10 or less), including for adventure activities, taking into account extra staff that may be required for foreseeable emergencies.
- A list of participating students and accompanying supervisors has been compiled and left at the office
- Details of home contact names and emergency phone numbers for students and supervisors have been compiled and these are taken by the teacher to the offsite activity. A copy of this is left at the office.

This shows that the activity has been sufficiently planned and prepared for and is in accordance with relevant guidelines.

During the planning phase, consideration should be given to the following main elements:

- teaching and learning
- risk management
- emergency management
- human resources
- physical resources (i.e. equipment).
Teaching and learning includes:
- establishing the purpose of the activity
- determining the educational program.

Risk management includes:
- identifying and assessing risks and hazards associated with the activity and designing appropriate management strategies
- being well prepared (e.g., taking student medication, First Aid kit)
- reducing the likelihood of accidents/incidents
- responding to circumstances
- recovering from accidents/incidents.

Emergency management includes:
- establishing contingency plans that document the arrangements to cancel, relocate, recall or otherwise change the offsite activity in the event of extreme weather (including bushfires)
- entering details of the offsite activity into the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development’s Student Activity Locator database. Principal does this upon receipt of the Approval for Excursion form.

Human resources includes:
- ensuring that at all times there is a teacher in charge and there are sufficient numbers of adult supervisors present
- ensuring that all volunteers have undergone a Working with Children Check and, if necessary, a National Criminal History Record Check
- ensuring that the ratio of adults to students reflects the nature of the risks involved
- endeavouring to ensure that staff or volunteers of both sexes are present if students of both sexes are participating in the offsite activity
- making satisfactory arrangements for those students not attending the activity, including sufficient work and adequate supervision by a teacher.

Physical resources includes:
- preparing an equipment inventory e.g., Sporting equipment

A condition that must be observed during the planning phase is that the school authority or teachers should not be required to meet any of the costs associated with offsite activities.

**Evaluation:**

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