



## **Offsite Activities Policy**

### **Background:**

An Offsite activity (excursion) is an integral part of the school's program and must be justified on the basis of its contribution to the growth in understanding, knowledge and experience of the participating students. An excursion can range from a brief visit of less than one hour to a local point of interest, to an extended journey occupying a number of days requiring accommodation. Since excursions offer enrichment to the school program, all students within the specific learning group should be given the opportunity to participate unless exceptional circumstances exist. The same standards of conduct and the obligation to report suspected child abuse, improper conduct of a sexual nature and misconduct apply throughout all stages of an excursion as they do in schools.

**It is the policy of the school not to take school excursions to areas of Bushfire Risk during Bushfire Season and to cancel excursions at the Principal's discretion on high fire alert days.**

Parents at Daylesford Dharma School give generic permission at the commencement of the school year, for excursions that take place during school hours and attract no costs. Such excursions may only take place at the discretion of the Principal, who must ensure as far as possible the safety and welfare of students and be satisfied as to the value of the visit as an integral part of the school program and that these activities are run by registered teachers.

### **Aims:**

- To ensure excursions are appropriately staffed.
- To describe how to assess requirements for off-site activities.
- To effectively manage bush fire risk.
- To engage with the EMP procedures when managing emergency situations that occur off site.

### **Roles and Responsibilities:**

- The Principal must assess and approve all excursions, taking into consideration the educational value of a proposed excursion in relation to the total needs and resources of the school and in relation to the students' needs and total learning program.
- The Principal will be responsible for ensuring appropriate and effective levels of supervision. The Principal will ensure parents and carers are informed of the full details of any planned excursion outside school hours in writing.
- The Principal shall ensure excursion planning takes into account:
  - the experience, qualifications and skills of staff (including volunteers, instructors, etc)
  - the age, maturity, physical characteristics and gender of students
  - the ability and experience of the students
  - the size of the group
  - the nature and location of the excursion

- the activities to be undertaken
  - safety requirements of the activity to be undertaken
  - risks such as bush fire and any other environmental factor that increase the need for planning
  - provision of scenario planning adapted from the EMP 2022 prior to the excursion
- The Principal will ensure that if parents do not permit participation of a student in an excursion a sound alternative educational experience will be provided.
  - All teachers participating in an excursion must accept responsibility for students in their care for the duration of the excursion.

The Principal will approve excursion staff, this may include:

- teachers employed by the school
- other adults on a volunteer or paid basis such as:
  - parents or carers
  - community members
  - trainee teachers
  - campsite staff
  - specialist instructors for excursion activities.

Excursion staff who will provide supervision of students and who are not registered teachers must have a Working with Children check and be included on the school register.

The Principal will ensure that before the planned excursion is undertaken precautions are taken in relation to the safety of the participants.

The Principal will ensure that supervision will be adequate in relation to the number of students, their maturity, anticipated behaviour and the activities planned as set out in attached chart.

Staff planning overnight or extended excursions should recognise their special duty of care for student safety and welfare in these circumstances.

Staff should be aware that they retain the ultimate responsibility for supervision while on excursions and cannot transfer that responsibility to parents, other volunteers or employees of external organizations.

The Principal will ensure that the specific roles and responsibilities of each staff member (teachers, instructors, campsite staff, volunteers, etc.) are clarified and understood by all staff and students prior to the commencement of the excursion.

The Supervising Teacher will ensure that there are appropriate First Aid supplies, and where there is a student or students who are identified as being at risk of anaphylaxis or asthma, the appropriate medical equipment and a copy of the student's Asthma Management Plan or the Anaphylaxis Management plan are available in the First Aid backpack kit.

### **Swimming**

All teaching staff to have current CPR training that is renewed annually. Swimming instructors to be qualified AUSTSWIM Instructors.

### **Camps**

In the event of an emergency, Staff will follow the procedures as set out in the Emergency Management Plan (EMP 2022) or documented in the scenario planning preparation for the excursion.

This table describes the minimum staff-student ratios for excursions:

| Type of excursions                                 | One excursion registered Teacher per  |
|--|---|
| Day excursions                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>fifteen students.</li> </ul>   |
| Adventure activities                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>specific guidelines for the activity as recommended by the activity organisers and as directed by the Principal based on the activity and students.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Overnight excursions:</b>                       |   |
| Base camps in residential premises or under canvas | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ten students.</li> </ul>   |
| Residential camps                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>fifteen students.</li> </ul>   |

#### Further supervision requirements

| For                                      | The excursion must  |
|--|---|
| Most excursions                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>be under the direct control of a VIT registered teacher employed by the school</li> <li>have enough staff employed by the school to maintain appropriate control of the excursion and of each activity and to supervise the safety of students</li> <li>have VIT registered teachers comprising at least half of the excursion staff.</li> </ul> |
| Small group excursions in the local area | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>be supervised by one VIT registered teacher and staff employed by the school (for example, School Chaplain or Learning assistant).</li> </ul>  |

#### Linked Policies:

Bush Fire Policy

Emergency Management Plan

Child Safety & Wellbeing Policy

#### Review Date:

January 2023

**Basis of Discretion:**

Not applicable.