

# Flemington Primary School

## Excursions and Camps

### Policy



#### 1. PURPOSE AND RATIONALE:

Excursions, including in-school activities and camps, at Flemington Primary School are viewed as an integral part of the School's curriculum and provide access to alternative learning experiences within and beyond the classroom and school grounds.

Excursions are intended to enable students to explore, extend and enrich their learning and their social skills development.

#### 2. POLICY STATEMENT:

The purpose of excursions, including in-school activities and camps, are to:

- Reinforce, complement, and extend the learning opportunities beyond the classroom and provide local and global perspectives.
- Develop an understanding that learning is not limited to school and teachers, and that valuable and powerful learning is often achieved with people and experiences beyond the school.
- Further develop social skills such as cooperation, tolerance, communication, individual and group interaction.
- Further develop problem solving and life survival skills and extend understanding of students' physical and cultural environment.

#### 3. DEFINITIONS:

- **Excursion** - is an activity organised by the school during which students leave the school grounds to engage in educational activities (including camps and sport). Adventure activities, either inside or outside school grounds, are included in this definition. Excursions do not include non-school activities or clubs (e.g. Chess Club) at the school or elsewhere where students may represent the school (e.g. Inter-school Chess). An excursion typically involves a physical mode of transport (e.g. tram, bus)
- **Local excursion** – is an activity within the immediate vicinity of the school that is usually accessible by walking (e.g. within a travel time of 5 to 10 mins)
- **In-school activities** - are learning experiences involving visitors to the school who provide a performance, service, or activity. From a funding perspective they are considered the same as an excursion, but instead follow regular School based operational activities.

## 4. ACTION GUIDELINES:

### 4.1 Process and Planning

Prior to conducting an excursion, the Department of Education and Training (DET) requirements and guidelines, and school policies relevant to excursions will be rigorously observed. Consideration in planning may include refer to the **Related Policies and Documents**, and **References** sections of this document.

Staff or Specialist Teachers wishing to organise an excursion must complete and lodge the excursion form and the proposed permission note with the School Principal or Assistant Principal, and then the School Business Manager a minimum of 4 weeks prior to the planned date

The organiser is to also ensure that the Department and Collaborative Team Leader(s) have been consulted and have approved the event.

In situations where pre-approval is required for a booking process to begin, organisers may seek pre-approval from the Principal. However, the official approval process as documented in the above point will still need to be followed.

Where an excursion proposal has not been submitted, the event will not run, unless special circumstances. The Principal will make decisions regarding any exceptions, considering the educational outcomes of the excursion as well as any impacts on the School regarding scheduling.

At the beginning of each term all excursions should be included in the student's curriculum newsletters. Wherever possible, School excursions should be scheduled to avoid conflicts with other student related activities such as the State School Spectacular and its rehearsals, interschool sports and music theory exams.

The Principal or Assistant Principal is responsible for the approval of all single-day excursions. In addition to the approval by the Principal, School Council is responsible for the approval of:

- Camps and overnight excursions,
- Interstate and international visits, and
- Excursions requiring sea or air travel, weekends, or vacation periods.

### 4.2 Local Excursions

Parent/Carers are expected to have signed the Local Excursions permission form at the start of each year. To organise a local excursion, a teacher will:

- Check that all Parent/Carers have signed the local excursion permission form. If a Parent/Carer hasn't signed the Local Excursion permission form, then they need to have a signed permission form submitted for each Local Excursion.
- Inform DET, the Assistant Principal and the School's Executive Leadership Team of local excursion events a minimum of 3 weeks prior to the event.
- Provide the Executive Leadership Team with a Local Excursion details form for their approval before informing Parent/Carers and confirming any bookings.

- Once approved, inform Parent/Carers of the Local Excursion a minimum of 2 weeks prior to the event. Information for the Parent/Carers will include the following details on a printed note sent home with students:
  - Purpose of local excursion, means of transport, and what will be happening,
  - Address of local excursion,
  - Time students will be leaving and returning, and
  - Include the following statement:  
 ‘Please note that parents have signed the local excursion permission form that was included with the enrolment form. As such, a signed permission notice is not required for this local excursion. However, if you have any concerns or questions about the local excursion and your child attending the event please contact your child’s classroom teacher.’

### 4.3 Parent/Carer Permission and Payments Requirements

Parent/Carers have two options for permissions and payment of excursions, firstly via a once off Excursions Levy payment at the beginning of the school year, or secondly Pay-As-You-Go (PAYG) where payment and permission is required for each excursion. The total costs for either method are the same. A comparison of the two methods is summarised in Table 1.

**The School Council recommends that Parent/Carers provide permission and pay using the once-off Excursions Levy option.**

	Payments	Optionality	Total Cost	Refunds	Local excursion permissions	General Permissions	Other Activities (camps, athletics)
<b>Excursions Levy</b>	Once upfront	All or none	Same	None	Signed once upfront	Per excursion	Paid per activity
<b>Excursions PAYG</b>	For each excursion	For each excursion			For each excursion		

Table 1 – Excursions Levy and Excursions PAYG comparison

Parent/Carer permission notes are required for all excursions regardless of whether payment is required. Permission notes are to be completed and returned prior to the event.

The Interschool sport permission forms are distributed to selected students as each event arises.

A student will not be able to attend unless the school has been provided with written permission. Signed paper or emailed permission forms are acceptable. In exceptional circumstances, the Principal or a member of the School Leadership Team, will accept consent via the telephone; the details of the consent, including the date/time of the call and the name of the Parent/Carer, will be noted in Compass for recording keeping purposes.

## 4.4 Financial Management

The Excursions Levy (if applicable and may vary from year to year) is paid by Parent/Carers for each student at the beginning of the School year and covers the cost of all excursions and in-school activities for the year.

Camps, swimming and inter school sporting events are paid in addition to the School Excursions Levy.

All endeavours will be made to ensure students are not excluded from excursions for financial reasons. Parent/Carers experiencing financial difficulty, who wish for their child/children to attend an excursion can discuss their individual situation with the Principal. Decisions relating to alternative payment arrangements will be made by the Principal and Business Manager on a case-by case basis.

Parent/Carers will be provided with permission forms and excursion information clearly stating payment finalisation dates and whether there are additional costs such as public transport costs or money for lunch. Students whose payments have not been finalised the working day prior to the event will not be allowed to attend unless alternative payment arrangements have been organised with the Principal and School Business Manager. Once that arrangement has been made, the School will be responsible for recuperating any costs.

Office staff will be responsible for managing and monitoring the payments made by Parent/Carers and will provide the Teacher in Charge and class teachers with detailed records on a regular basis leading up to the event.

Class teachers are responsible for providing sufficient reminders to students who have not paid or submitted a permission form prior to the event.

Payment and/or permission notes will not be accepted on the day of the event (unless in exceptional circumstances as deemed appropriate by the Principal).

On the day of the excursion, the classroom teacher is to provide the School office with a class list of students attending the event.

The cost of an excursion must consider transport, entrance to the venue/event and associated impacts (e.g. replacement teachers). The calculated cost per Student will be equally apportioned amongst all students.

Financial management of an excursion should result in a balanced expenditure (expenses and monies received should be balanced). If there is a loss, the School is responsible for covering the shortfall. The school is required to spend all monies collected via the Excursions Levy within the same year.

## 4.5 Expectations of Students

If students have not displayed appropriate behaviour at school, they may not be invited to participate in school excursions. Parent/Carers will be notified if a student is at risk of not being invited to participate in an excursion due to inappropriate behaviour at school. The Principal, Assistant Principal or Team Leader will decide whether to withdraw a student's invitation to attend an excursion.

The **FPS Student Engagement and Inclusion Policy** applies to students on excursions. In extreme cases, the excursion staff, following consultation with, and the approval of, the Principal or their nominee, may determine that a student should return home during an excursion.

In such circumstances, the Parent/Carers will be advised of:

- The circumstance associated with the decision to send the student home,
- The time when the Parent/Carers may collect their child from the excursion or the anticipated time that the student will arrive home, and
- Any costs associated with the student's return which will be the responsibility of the Parent/Carers.

School excursions will have a scheduled departure time. Students who miss the excursion departure time won't be able to attend the excursion.

Refunds will not be given if students do not attend an excursion. Many excursions are paid in advance and costs worked out based on the number of students attending.

Students are not permitted to bring Personal Devices on excursions; this includes mobile phones, smartphones, smart-watches, electronic tablets, and portable game devices. If a Personal Device is brought on an excursion, they are will be left with a teacher for the duration of the excursion. See the **FPS Personal Devices Policy** for more information.

#### 4.6 Staff Responsibilities

A designated Teacher in Charge will coordinate each excursion.

All excursions will be attended by teaching staff who will be responsible for the supervision of students at all times. Excursion staff can include teaching staff and other adults approved by the Principal or School Council. DET guidelines for teacher staff-student ratios will be adhered to (see **Appendix 1**).

The Teacher in Charge is responsible for ensuring that class lists are provided to the School Office indicating:

- Students who are attending the event,
- Students who are absent on the day of the event, and
- The names and the location of students not attending the event.

In the case where an excursion involves a particular class or year level group, the Teacher in Charge will ensure that there is an alternative program available for those students not attending the event.

Copies of completed permission notes and medical information must be carried by excursion staff at all times. Classroom teachers are responsible for collecting individual student medication that is required to be taken on the excursion from the first aid room. This medication must be returned to the first aid room immediately after the excursion. This medication is to be signed out upon collection and signed in upon return.

The Teacher in Charge will communicate the anticipated return time with the School Office in the case where excursions are returning outside of school hours. All permission notes are to be forwarded to the office for archiving at the completion of the excursion.

When taking Education Support staff to support students they are not counted in the adult ratio; they will stay with their Student and a teacher at all times.

## 4.7 Duty of Care

Excursions require staff to fully comply with all DET guidelines and bring an increased duty of care. It is a teacher's responsibility to be aware of these guidelines and remain the person designated with the duty of care.

Excursion, including in-school activities and camp activities, require the teacher to ensure that the external venues or location within the school are appropriate and safe for conduct of the event.

All excursion staff and, where appropriate the students, will be familiar with the specific procedures for dealing with emergencies on each excursion.

During an excursion where staff are required to assist or accompany an injured student, the school's emergency procedures will be followed and implemented (see the **FPS Emergency Management Policy**).

On days of extreme fire danger, total fire ban, or extreme weather, the Principal or their nominee may need to cancel an excursion at short notice. Where an excursion is not cancelled on extreme fire danger or total fire ban days, special fire safety precautions will be implemented.

Excursion groups will be equipped with mobile telephones.

The school will provide a first aid kit for each excursion and Teacher in Charge is responsible for its collection prior to departure. In the event of an accident or emergency, the Teacher in Charge will be responsible for the organisation of first aid and will organise contact with Parent/Carers as appropriate. If Parent/Carers cannot be contacted, the Teacher in Charge will follow school first aid and emergency procedures.

The Teacher in Charge must provide the Principal or Assistant Principal with a report of any emergencies, incidents, mishaps or concerns that may have arisen during the excursion.

Teaching staff have the overall duty of care for all students that includes those with Education Support staff support.

## 4.8 Parent/Carer Involvement

Parent/Carers may be invited to assist in the delivery of excursions. Participating Parent/Carers must possess a current Working with Children's Check which has been lodged with the School Office prior to attendance (see the **FPS Working With Children Check Policy**). The School Business Manager is to be provided with a list of Parent/Carers attending the event.

## 5. MONITORING, REPORTING AND REVIEW:

School Council will maintain an interest in the quality and management of excursions, especially camps.

The Principal shall keep appropriate records of any excursion related incidents or mishaps.

The School Business Manager will keep records of Parent/Carers permission forms and payments.

## 6. RELATED POLICIES AND DOCUMENTS:

- Administration of Medication Policy
- Anaphylaxis Policy
- Emergency Management Policy
- Personal Devices Policy
- Student Engagement and Inclusion Policy
- Student Transport Policy
- Working With Children Check Policy
- Student Management: Staged Response Procedures
- Classroom Helpers and Volunteers Handbook

## 7. REFERENCES:

- DET Excursion Planning and Approval  
<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/studentmanagement/excursions/Pages/outdoorplan.aspx>
- DET Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors  
<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/studentmanagement/excursions/Pages/outdoorguidelines.aspx>
- DET Staffing and Supervision – Supervision Ratios  
<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/staffing.aspx>
- DET Emergency and Risk Management  
<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/excursionsafety.aspx>
- DET Student Medical Information  
<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/medicalinfo.aspx>
- DET Excursion Emergency Management including bushfire  
<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/studentmanagement/excursions/Pages/outdoorreemergency.aspx>

## 8. REVISION HISTORY:

This policy was ratified by School Council in on August 27<sup>th</sup>, 2018.

It will be reviewed as determined by School Council or every 3 years.

## APPENDIX 1: DET STAFF TO STUDENT RATIOS

Description	Staff to Student Ratio
<p><b>General</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Day excursions (not involving adventure activities) 1:20</li> <li>• Overnight excursions (not involving adventure activities) 1:10</li> <li>• Base camps in residential premises or under canvas 1:15</li> <li>• Study camps in residential premises 1:15</li> <li>• Tours, including interstate tours 1:15</li> <li>• Overseas tours 1:10</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Adventure Activities</b> - Note that for adventure activities a minimum of two staff members must be present for each activity, one with responsibility for activity instruction and the other able to assist the instructor or leader.</p>	
<p><b>Boating Activities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Canoeing 1:6</li> <li>• Rafting 1:9</li> <li>• Rowing 1:3</li> <li>• Sailboarding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ beginners 1:5</li> <li>▪ semi-experienced 1:1</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<p><b>Swimming – based Activities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recreational Swimming 1:6</li> <li>• Swimming pools and confined, shallow natural water 1:10</li> <li>• Open deep water 1:10</li> <li>• Surf beaches 1:5</li> <li>• Surfing 1:8</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Bushwalking</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Day walks 1:10</li> <li>• Overnight 1:5</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Cycling</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bikepaths, Road or Mountain Biking 1:10</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Orienteering</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City or town parklands with defined boundaries 1:20</li> <li>• Streets and small area of bushland with well-defined boundaries 1:15</li> <li>• Larger and more remote areas of bushland 1:10</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Rock Climbing and Abseiling</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beginners 1:1</li> <li>• Semi experienced 1:3</li> <li>• Non-active climbers 1:10</li> </ul>	

This list is not comprehensive. For further ratios see the **DET Staffing and Supervision – Supervision Ratios** in the **References** section above.