



Oakleigh Grammar

Policy Document Name	Camps, Excursions, Offsite Activities and Tours
Date Ratified by Board of Management	May 2022
Date for Review	March 2025

1. Preamble

Oakleigh Grammar offers a wide range of activities, camps, excursions and tours for students as an integral part of their learning experience.

The Camps, Excursions, Offsite Activities and Tours Policy sets out the principles and framework governing the school's approach to these activities. The policy, together with the policy implementation documents listed in section 4 should be read and understood by all those planning, leading and participating in such activities.

2. Principles

Activities, camps, excursions and tours arranged by the school have an educational purpose. The school believes that these experiences supplement, enrich and extend students' learning. The activities, camps, excursions and tours offered and arranged by the school are fully integrated within the curriculum.

The school is committed to ensuring the activities, camps, excursions and tours are inclusive; the school ensures such experiences will increase a sense of belonging for all students, including those with physical disabilities and from differing economic, cultural, religious and linguistic backgrounds.

The school endeavours to maintain a reasonable balance in the activities, camps and excursions it offers to students, bearing in mind the potential impact of such experiences on the taught curriculum, on parents' financial outlay and on the additional contributions made by staff.

All activities, camps, excursions and tours will be age-appropriate.

The welfare and best interest of the students are paramount. Oakleigh Grammar has a responsibility therefore to exercise reasonable supervision of students when they are in the care of the school. This includes the supervision of students undertaking school on-site activities, school off-site activities and activities provided by an external provider.

3. Purpose and Scope

This policy aims to establish the requirements for the safety, care and protection of Oakleigh Grammar students while attending school camps, off-site activities, excursions and tours.

This policy applies to the supervision of students at Oakleigh Grammar when they are in the care of the school. This includes times when students are undertaking on-site and off-site activities, activities provided by an external provider and in and out of school hours school activities including overnight, weekend and holiday trips including overseas tours. The policy applies to staff and others placed in a position of responsibility, or who have responsibility for the supervision of students.

4. Related Policies

- Illness or Injury at School Policy
- Emergency Management Plan and Emergency Procedures Manual
- Staff Code of Conduct and Professional Boundaries Policy
- Student Welfare and Behaviour Management Policy
- Critical Incidence Response Policy
- Child Safe Policy
- ICT Acceptable Use, including Social Media, Policy

5. Review

Nothing in this policy shall prevent the Principal from constructing further guidelines, in accordance with this policy, which will help in protecting the safety and welfare of the students or others of the school.

This policy will be reviewed as part of Oakleigh Grammar's cycle of review for all policies.

6. Planning Procedures and Protocols

- 6.1 Schools have a **duty of care** to ensure the safety and wellbeing of students. In discharging this duty, the Principal, teachers and other school staff are held to a high standard of care regarding our students. The duty requires the Principal and all teachers to take all reasonable steps to reduce the risk of harm to students wherever and whenever the student is in the care of the school.

It is reasonable to assert that the duty of care expected of teachers on trips and excursions exceeds that of the comparatively safe, predictable and familiar school environment.

The duty is non-delegable, meaning that it cannot be assigned to another party.

- 6.2 **The legal and regulatory requirements** underpinning the Child Safe Standards must continue to be met in full throughout all such activities:

- The school's duty of care, including the school's duty to meet the Child Safe Standards as set out in Ministerial Order 870, cannot be delegated
- Parent volunteer helpers, involved in child-related work as defined under the Working with Children Act 2005, must hold a current Working with Children Check

- For activities involving host families, host family adults must hold current Working with Children Checks. In the case of overseas families, an equivalent check must be sought. Where that is not available, the school will require a written recommendation from the Principal of the host school stating that the host family is known to the school and is in good standing.

6.3 **The safety of students** is of the highest possible priority, noting that Oakleigh Grammar should prepare for the possibility of litigation in the event of an injury or incident. All activities, camps and excursions therefore require the completion of a detailed School's risk assessment, including contingency planning for emergencies.

It is important that, as part of the risk assessment, any excursion or camp site is well researched in advance. Copies of the external provider's

- risk assessment
- COVID safe requirements and
- Certificate of Currency

must be provided as part of the planning process.

In addition, the teacher-in-charge of the excursion must check the bushfire risk in the activity location and obtain copies of the Emergency Management Plan for bushfire preparedness.

6.4 All activities, camps and excursions require **detailed and timely planning**. In order to make the planning process efficient and consistent, organisers must adhere to thoroughly completing all necessary checklists (see appendix).

6.5 **Approval for different types of activities** undertaken by the school include:

- High risk activities and overseas tours require the approval of the Executive or Board
- Other trips and excursions involving overnight stays require the approval of the Deputy Principal – Operations (as the Principal's delegate) and relevant Head of School
- The Deputy Principal – Operations, is responsible for overseeing and approving the annual calendar so that the school's overall camps, excursions and incursions program is balanced and that the impact on the curriculum, teaching and learning is not excessive.

All necessary paperwork must be completed and submitted in a timely manner before the activity, camp or tour is approved.

6.6 The school is committed to ensuring that its activities, camps and excursions are **inclusive**. To that end, the school will plan activities that are within the financial reach of most families and will seek to ensure that the total financial burden over the lifetime of a student in the school is not excessive.

It is unlawful for a school to discriminate against a student on the grounds of disability by denying the student access, or by limiting the student's access to a school activity, camp or excursion. The school has a responsibility to make reasonable adjustments where necessary in order to ensure that all students are able to participate fully in all school programs.

- 6.7 In planning activities, camps, excursions and tours, the school will clearly nominate
- i. **The teacher-in-charge.** Although it will often be the case that a team of adults is involved in the preparation and supervision of the activity, it is essential that one teacher be named as the teacher-in-charge with direct responsibility for all aspects of the event, including the safety of students. During an overnight or extended activity and when the teacher-in-charge is rostered off duty, the role of teacher-in-charge may be delegated to another named teacher. The teacher-in-charge should carry a school mobile phone and charger at all times.
 - ii. **The school contact person.** The named school contact person located back at the school is on call for the duration of the activity or event, except as specifically delegated when the contact person is rostered off-duty. Arrangements must be made so that the teacher-in-charge is able to communicate with the school contact person, or as delegated, at all times during the event
- 6.8 The plans for activities, camps and excursions should state clearly the way in which **parent communication** will take place, both before and during the activity:
- Parent communication relating to the activity or excursion should be channelled through the teacher-in-charge so that parents have a single point of contact
 - The school will ensure parents have clear information as to the itinerary for the event and the range of activities being proposed. The plans should also include contingency arrangements
 - For longer trips and excursions, arrangements should be made for real-time communication about the expected return to school so that parents are able to make plans for meeting and picking up their children.
- 6.9 **High-risk activities** will only be approved where there is a clear educational benefit for students. High-risk activities should always be voluntary. The nature of such activities requires even greater attention to be paid to the school's duty of care, the risk assessment, supervision and staff training.
- 6.10 The school must obtain the written informed **consent of parents** in advance of any activity, camp, excursion or trip. The procedures will ensure that parental permission is obtained from the person or persons empowered to provide consent, specifically in cases where the custody and/or care of the student is shared between one or more parent and/or guardians.

The school's procedures should state clearly what will happen if written consent is not received. In the case of overnight trips, the student should not be permitted to take part unless written consent has been received.

The signed consent form is a legal document. It must be accompanied by sufficient information to indicate that the parent is aware of the nature of the activity and that he or she gives informed consent for the student to participate. Parents will be provided with information including, but not limited to:

- the educational purpose of the activity or trip, its link to the curriculum and the ways in which it enhances student learning
- the location(s), activities, itinerary being planned, including 'free time' arrangements (if any), contingency plans (when applicable)
- transport details
- sleeping arrangements (where applicable)
- safety information, the management of risks and information relating to any high-risk activities

- the names of the teacher-in-charge and the school contact person, the number of adults and the supervision arrangements
- behavioural expectations
- clothing requirements, dress code, the wearing of school uniform
- any part of the trip involving indirect or delegated supervision, or any activities in which students will be self-reliant
- the expected total cost for the trip [and the details of any financial assistance available]
- arrangements being made in response to emergencies, including medical care
- recommendations and requirements regarding insurance, visas, passports, vaccinations (as applicable)
- the program of preparation for students
- arrangements and programs planned for those students unable to attend.

If a student fails to return a consent note for an excursion, the teacher should refuse to allow the student to take part in the activity. However, attempts should be made to contact parents/caregivers and obtain written permission, e.g. email, text message or complete the permission form in person, prior to commencement of the activity. The use of text messaging will only be accepted if the identified phone number matches the SAS information of the parent or legal guardian of the student. Verbal permission over the phone is not sufficient.

6.11 The teacher-in-charge must have access to up-to-date **student medical information** and an individual health care plan, where appropriate, for each student. In giving consent to participate in the activity, camp or excursion, parents should be required to confirm that:

- i. the medical information held by the school is up-to-date
- ii. medications and instructions for use are provided
- iii. dietary requirements (medical rather than food preferences) are specified
- iv. permission is given for the teacher-in-charge to act in a medical emergency. The information for parents must set out the range of actions and decisions available to the teacher-in-charge and how the cost of those will be met.

All staff attending the camp are responsible for ensuring they understand each student's medical or behavioural needs.

At least one Oakleigh Grammar staff member attending the excursion of camp must be first aid trained and hold current certification.

6.12 Planning for the activity, camp or excursion must include details of all **travel arrangements**. Contingency travel arrangements should be made for extreme weather and emergencies. Information for parents should set out clearly:

- The circumstances under which it may be necessary for a student to return early due to illness or poor behaviour, and information as to who will cover this additional cost
- The school's insurance position and the extent to which students need to be covered by their own or their parents' insurance
- The circumstances under which the use of private vehicles with staff or parent driving will be permitted
- How and when DFAT guidance will be sought with respect to safety and more general travel advice

- Whether or not student participants will be subsidising staff travel costs and to what extent.

The Principal must ensure that when students are being transported in private vehicles the following safeguards are implemented:

- Obtain the written consent of the parent/caregiver for their child to travel in a privately-owned vehicle;
- Obtain details of insurance, registration and roadworthy condition of the vehicle to be used by the parent/caregiver agreeing to transport students in privately owned vehicles.

- 6.13 Students and their parents must be fully briefed as to behavioural expectations whilst travelling, as well as during the activity, camp, excursion or tour. Where appropriate, students should be required to sign a code of conduct (or equivalent) as a pre-condition for participating in the activity, camp, excursion or tour.

The procedures for dealing with incidents of serious misbehaviour, for example arrangements for the student to be excluded from the activity, will be included in the information given to parents during the consent-seeking process.

- 6.14 The school will create and retain **records and documentation** that support the activity, camp or excursion. Written records and documents should include:
- the planning processes
 - the risk assessment
 - a written record of the approval
 - an account of the preparation of students for the activity
 - the training provided for members of staff
 - process for ensuring staff are aware of all student medical and behavioural needs
- 6.15 There should be at least one staff member with a vehicle at camp to allow for any emergency requirements e.g. transporting a student for medical assistance

7. Staffing Responsibilities

All staff shall ensure the safety of the students even when they are not specifically scheduled for supervisory duty. Under their duty of care, teachers bear greater responsibility for the supervision of students than do support staff members, parents or other volunteers.

The school's duty of care requires it to ensure that students are appropriately supervised during the activity, camp, excursions or tours.

Before they attend a camp, excursion or tour, all staff must:

- Be aware of the medical and behavioural needs of the students participating
- Understand their obligations as employees of Oakleigh Grammar in regards to the duty of care of students, including when they are not specifically scheduled for supervisory duty
- Understand the risk management plans for the camp, excursion or tour
- Informed of the program and expectations

It is expected that prior to any camp or tour, that a briefing is held where the teacher in charge has the opportunity to outline any specific medical or behavioural needs and the overall risk

assessments. The teacher-in-charge must complete Part F of the camps and tours application form [Pre-Camps and Tours Accountability Checklist] prior to the commencement of the camp.

For any off-site/activities conducted by an external provider, camp or tour, the accompanying staff members must carry a record of students' significant medical conditions. Where the activity extends over night, full information regarding any illness, allergies, etc. suffered by a student must be supplied by the parent/caregiver.

7.1 **Supervision guidelines** include:

- Supervision ratios – to consider the age and maturity of the students, the nature of the activity (e.g. overseas, overnight trips, high risk activities, etc.), location, other qualified staff (e.g. camp staff) and the size of the group
- To specify the circumstances under which it is acceptable (if ever) for the activity, camp or excursion to be supervised by:
 - one teacher only
 - adults other than teachers, with no teachers present.
- An appropriate gender balance of supervising staff should be maintained in broad proportion to the gender balance of the students participating in the activity
- Planning which type of supervision is required for the specific activity:
 - direct supervision
 - general supervision
 - indirect supervision
 - activities in which students are self-reliant.

7.2 **Supervisor training**

The school has a duty of care to ensure that members of staff involved in the activity, camp or excursion have the appropriate level of training. Training needs should be identified in the planning for the activity and in the risk assessment. Particular attention must be paid to:

- first aid training, including training in the management of anaphylaxis
- training for high risk activities
- training for the use of safety equipment.

Documentary evidence of such training is recommended.

7.3 **Record Keeping**

During the excursion, camp or tour, the teacher-in-charge is responsible for creating and retaining records, including:

- records of communication with parents, including a record of any telephone calls
- staff and/or student illness, accident and/or injury
- records of all first aid interventions
- student misbehaviour

7.4 **Overnight Supervision**

During overnight excursions, camps or tours, staff shall:

- When checking of sleeping arrangements, or changing/showering, where possible, do so with another staff member present and always in a manner that respects student privacy and personal space
- Always knock and advise of presence prior to entering a bedroom or dormitory
- Ensure that while in a bedroom or dormitory a strict staff/student relationship is upheld and that inappropriate behaviour, such as sitting on a student's bed, is not undertaken
- If a student needs comforting or assisted in some way, move the student to a public space and where possible have another member of staff to assist as well

There must (when possible) be an appropriate gender balance for mixed gender overnight excursions and tours.

Staff or assisting adults should not sleep in the same room, dormitory or tent as a student.

7.5 Assisting Adults

Any non-staff member, parent or volunteer who assists in the supervision of students must have undergone a Working with Children Check. A copy of these will be provided before the camp or tour. The original must also be sighted.

In line with all adults working in schools, all assisting adults must be triple vaccinated against COVID19 or hold a medical exemption.

The role of an assisting adult is to assist with supervision. They should not be given responsibility beyond their capacity nor for the sole supervision of students, except in an emergency.

The role and duties of assisting adults must be clearly defined and agreed to before the commencement of their duties.

7.6 Consumption of Alcohol

The consumption of alcohol by staff or assisting adults during camps and excursions is forbidden. as members of staff during camps and excursions have a 24-hour responsibility for the care and safety of students.–This is relevant if the staff member is on duty or not.

The school will make and communicate explicit decisions regarding the consumption of alcohol by staff when on overseas trips.

7.7 Use of Social Media

Employees must not post images that include Oakleigh Grammar staff or students on personal social media channels unless authorised by the School, and not without prior consent of the individual(s) involved.

When groups travel on extended school tours, it may be permitted, with the Head of School's approval, for the use of, for example, WhatsApp or WeChat, when they are being used in case of emergency or a welfare need. In these situations, connections should cease when the tour concludes.

8. Approval Process

Prior to the excursion or camp, the approval from the Deputy Principal - Operations must be obtained. In approving the excursion or camp, consideration will be given to:

- Contribution of the activity to the school curriculum
- Adequacy of the planning, preparation and organisation in relation to:
 - School Policy
 - Guidelines and advice provided by the DEECD and
- Information provided by community groups, external providers and organisations that specialise in the activity proposed
- Appropriateness of the venue
- Consideration of seasonal and locality factors that might increase risk (i.e. bushfire season)

- Provisions made for the safety and welfare of students and staff
- Experience and competence of staff relevant to the activities being undertaken
- Adequacy of student supervision
- Risk assessment and management
- Staff and school implications

For any extended tours, including for overseas travel, approval must be obtained from the Principal and Executive Team.

9. Evaluation

At the conclusion of any camp or tour, an evaluation form, is to be completed by the teacher-in-charge and signed by the Head of School and Deputy Principal – Operations.

10. Off-site Activities, Camps and Tours Emergency Management

An emergency contingency plan should be included in the risk assessment before embarking on an off-site activity conducted by an external provider. Suitable arrangements should be made to ensure that contact can be made expeditiously with the planned venue, parents, medical authorities or other personnel.

For any off-site/activities conducted by an external provider, camp or tour, the accompanying staff members must ensure that a First Aid Kit and mobile phone are taken;

All excursion and camp staff and, where appropriate, students, need to be familiar with the procedures for dealing with emergencies on each excursion or camp. Emergency procedures pertaining to campsites should be explained as soon as practicable after arrival and a trial evacuation exercise should be carried out immediately to familiarise staff and students with emergency evacuation protocols and ensure the procedures are appropriate.

On days of extreme fire danger, the Principal may need to cancel excursions at short notice. When excursions are not cancelled, special fire safety precautions will be required.

In the event of a critical incident on a camp, excursion or tour, the Oakleigh Grammar Critical Incident Protocols and Procedures will be implemented. The teacher-in-charge must inform the Principal immediately.

11. Bushfire Preparedness

11.1 Bushfire Facts

Conditions when bushfires are likely to 'blow up' after being triggered by a source include:

- air temperature 26 degrees or more
- wind speed 30kmh to 70kph in gusts
- wind direction west-north/west
- previous dry spell or drought lasting some 6 weeks
- humidity low, less than 15% - 20%
- Other factors include the vegetation type, dryness and denseness, the angle of slope and topography
- the speed of the fire approaching may be in excess of 100kph
- the front may typically extend 3-5 km or more
- spot fires from air borne embers may be ignited up to 30km away from the fire front
- fire burns much more quickly uphill than downhill or on the flat. Never try to outrun a fire uphill

NB. Fire fighting crews may establish fire breaks in advance of a fire, so don't get caught between the two (communication with PARKS/CFA/000 is the key to avoiding this).

11.2 Preparation

- Prior to undertaking an off-site activity in a bushfire risk area or season, organising and supervising staff must ensure that there is adequate pre-excursion planning and emergency preparation, including preparing students in anticipation of bushfire risk.
- Preparation should include regular checks of CFA websites for alerts; having a school based person monitor any developments and be in regular contact with those off-site in the event of a developing situation; seeking advice from external activity organisers and checking their own bushfire emergency preparedness; giving consideration to alternative sites/activities to reduce bushfire risk/hazard.
- Complete lists of all students, staff and others participating in an out of school activity and their times and location(s) must be provided to designated contact persons on the school site.

11.3 Bushfire Protocols in the Event of a Fire with a Potential to Impact on an Off-site Activity

Once you have established that there is a fire in the vicinity, try to confirm whether it poses a threat to the group and ensure that you have everyone in the group together.

- If communication is possible, consider ringing Parks Vic and/or CFA hotline to ascertain the location and severity of the fire. Make them aware of both the fire and your current location and planned travel route/times. Consider completing an INCIDENT COMMUNICATIONS FORM before calling them;
- If you think that the fire does pose a potential threat look at your options for complete evacuation or for moving to a much safer location. Look for open spaces free of forest fuels and vegetation, such as a beach or cleared area. If these are unavailable look for shelter amongst rocks, behind huge logs or in very wet gullies/creeks or on rocky outcrops, pre-burnt areas. Remember it is generally the 'radiation of heat that potentially kills';
- If necessary, gather all students and staff into canoes and rafts on the water. Depending on your location and the conditions, paddle to a safer landing. If this is not available, paddle to a safe distance (considering radiant heat and wind direction) and raft up while the fire passes;
- Have group dress in woollens preferably and in long sleeved shirts and pants, gloves, beanies, sunglasses as well as to breathe through a damp cloth held over their mouth/nose;
- If time, alert SCHOOL as per EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS PROTOCOL sheet;
- DO NOT RUN unless there is a clearly indicated way of escape. Do not try to outrun fire uphill;
- If caught, CLEAR any leaves or vegetation near you; STAY in your chosen shelter until the fire has passed; COVER any exposed skin with clothing, soft earth, etc., KEEP LOW and breathe air close to the ground;
- Only as a LAST RESORT, run though the flames to burnt ground. Wait for a lull and choose smallest flames and area behind that will have little burning material on the ground. Don't attempt flames higher than you!
- If possible keep PARKS or EMERGENCY SERVICES informed of your situation and inform them, as well as the school, once the fire has passed;

- If Emergency Management Team is called in, manage remaining students until they arrive to take responsibility;
- Staff to liaise with emergency crews to organise the remaining students return to base with non-physically injured students to be looked after and reassured by a nominated staff person;
- As soon as practical the Principal, Deputy Principal – Operations are to be informed of events;
- Contact should then be made with PARKS VIC and/or CFA bushfire hotline or CFA website to ascertain the severity of the situation. Depending on the seriousness of the situation the decision will then be made to contact the DoE 24 hour Emergency Communication Centre and to activate the Counter Disaster Committee.

12. Supporting Documentation

The following documentation should be read in conjunction with this Policy

- Excursion and Camps Application Form or Tours Application Form
- Risk Management Form
- Evaluation Form
- Checklist For Completion to Any Camp or Tour
- Incident Communication Form