

# *Excursions and Camps Policy, Protocols and Procedures*



ST ANDREWS  
CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

INSPIRED BY  
FAITH

DISTINGUISHED BY  
CHARACTER

LEADERS BY  
INFLUENCE



# *Excursions and Camps Policy, Protocols and Procedures*

## PREAMBLE

All policy, protocols and procedures flow from the St Andrews Christian College Mission Statement:

*"To educate our students so that they are well skilled, understand life on the basis of biblical truth, and are motivated to walk with God and serve Him in their lives, so that they will be a positive Christian influence in the world."*

## POLICY DOCUMENT INFORMATION

<b>TITLE:</b>	Excursions and Camps Policy, Protocols and Procedures
<b>AUTHORS:</b>	C. Wansbrough; S. Leslie
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:</b>	Department of Education & Training (VIC)
<b>PURPOSE:</b>	To provide policy and direction for all the College Community.
<b>RELATED DOCUMENTS:</b>	Student Safety Staff Code of Conduct Victorian Teaching Profession Code of Conduct Working with Children Check Policy Extreme Weather Policy and Procedure Emergency Response Action Plan

## KEY DATES

<b>ISSUE DATE:</b>	June 2025
<b>REVIEW DATE:</b>	June 2027



## 1. RATIONALE

This policy sets out requirements for the College to plan for and safely undertake excursions, camps and other off-campus activities.

The College's excursion program enables students to further their learning and social skills development in a non-school setting. Day excursions complement, and are an important aspect of, the educational programs offered at the College. Excursions and camps, mostly occurring outdoors, can provide important social, emotional and spiritual opportunities for students not usually possible in the classroom. They enable students to connect with the environment, develop confidence and skills that promote independence and create situations where trust, teamwork and interdependence can grow and be appreciated.

Camps and other outdoor adventure activities add a further dimension to the curriculum, enabling the College to meet a number of the **Cross-curriculum Priorities** of the Australian Curriculum (e.g. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures; Sustainability); and **the Social and Personal Capabilities**, which, in a Christian Education context, complement the specific development of Christian character, ethics and awareness.

## 2. AIMS

- To reinforce, complement and extend educational learning opportunities beyond the classroom;
- To develop an understanding that learning is not limited to school, and that valuable and powerful learning takes place beyond the classroom;
- To provide rich, hands-on learning experiences that cater for a range of learning styles and the development of specific skills that enable a young person to manage independently and confidently;
- To develop a range of social-emotional skills and capabilities, including dealing with risk and challenge, problem-solving, connecting with nature, creative and imaginative play or self-expression and the building of coordination and strength;
- To encourage shared group or class experiences that develop a sense of group cohesiveness;
- To provide opportunities that promote self-esteem, resourcefulness, independence, leadership, judgement, cooperation, tolerance and spiritual growth;
- To provide activities that deliver skills and knowledge that may lead to a lifelong learning and involvement in worthwhile pursuits;
- To take students 'out of the comfort zone into the challenge zone – but not into the danger zone;
- To allow students to experience the wonder of creation more directly, and to reflect on the nature of God and His creativity and sustaining power;
- To develop and enhance interpersonal relationships with peers, staff, other adults and God.



### 3. POLICY SUMMARY

- 3.1 All Excursions and Camps must be planned in accordance with the requirements outlined in this document. All Excursions and Camps must be approved, after the appropriate application is made that includes all the required data and Risk Assessment/Management plans.
- 3.2 Running activities and programs outside the classroom or beyond the College campus will involve a different set of risks to those managed within the classroom. Good planning and a careful assessment of the nature and severity of the risks is essential to keeping students safe. Risk management can see risks diminished or removed so that children are not put into danger. The process of Risk Assessment and Management will be overseen and monitored by senior leaders. Poor or absent planning will mean that a camp or excursion will not be approved.
- 3.3 The staffing of excursions and camps is critical to the success of the event. The ratios of adult to student outlined below will be adhered to.
- 3.4 The **preparation of students** for the activities and conditions likely to be encountered is vital to making the excursion or camp safe, enjoyable and inclusive experience for all students, including students with disabilities and additional needs.
- 3.5 Clear behavioural expectations will be outlined for students and staff, prior to the event. The Student Safety Staff Code of Conduct applies to all adults involved with a College-approved excursion or camp and for every College-approved activity, whether on or off campus. It also applies to any interactions where there is a student-teacher relationship.<sup>1</sup>

### 4. DEFINITIONS

#### 4.1 *Excursions:*

Excursions are one day activities organised by the College where the students:

- are taken out of the College grounds (e.g. a day excursion or a sporting event);
- undertake adventures activities, regardless of whether or not they occur outside the College grounds;

Local excursions are those that involve leaving the College grounds to locations within walking distance. This includes sports training and events where students walk to local facilities.

#### 4.2 *Camps:*

Camps are excursions involving at least one (1) night's accommodation (including sleepovers on campus).

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<sup>1</sup> For example, a teacher who agrees to meet students at a football game, that is not a College activity and which does not seek written permission, is still bound by the duty-of-care responsibilities that apply on campus, because of the established relationship.



## 5. IMPLEMENTATION

### 5.1 *Day Excursions*

Day excursions are defined for the purpose of these protocols as any organised and supervised college activities that require children to venture beyond the College boundary.

- **The Deputy Principal - Operations** is responsible for the final approval of all excursions, after being given approval by the Section Head;
- A designated '**Teacher-in-Charge**' will coordinate each day excursion. This person is responsible for following all procedures correctly, including completing Risk Analysis and Mitigation Matrices;
- A report from the teacher-in-charge is required after each day excursion or camp if any mishaps or concerns have arisen;
- Copies of completed permission slips, and confidential medical information must be carried by excursion staff at all times. These details are available on Operoo and accessible in electronic format by staff on the excursion or camp;
- The teacher-in-charge will communicate with Reception or Deputy Principal – Operations with regards to the scheduled return time. Any delays will be communicated to parents / guardians;
- While excursions are a team activity requiring the cooperation and common-sense of all participants, **it is the teacher-in-charge who oversees the operations of the excursion, takes charge of events, makes key decisions and accepts ultimate responsibility for the excursion;**
- Parents may be invited to participate in excursions. When deciding on which parents will attend, the 'teacher-in-charge' will take into account:
  - Any valuable skills the parents have to offer. e.g. first aid;
  - The preference to include both male and female parents;
  - The special needs of particular students.
- Parents selected to assist with day excursions must have a current Working with Children Check. Refer to the *WWCC Policy* for more specific requirements.

### 5.2 *Camps and Trips*

The term 'Camps and trips' denotes all events where students are accommodated overnight and mostly off campus. The location and type of camp should conform to an overall plan that takes into consideration age, independence, previous experiences and educational and social/spiritual aims as well as practical skills development.

- **The Deputy Principal – Operations** is responsible for the final approval of all camps, after being given approval by the Section Head;
- The designated **teacher-in-charge** will coordinate each camp. This person is responsible for following all procedures correctly, including completing Risk Analysis and Mitigation Matrices;
- **The timing of camps** is critical, in terms of safety and enjoyment of the experience. Times of the year when extreme weather is likely should be avoided;



- Each camp should have a **Camp Booklet** that includes all the key information for students as well as staff. Procedures for responding to emergencies, dispensing medications, and protocols around meals, sleeping arrangements, health, hygiene and safety should be covered. The Booklet can also contain learning materials and projects that will form part of assessment after the event;
- The selection of teachers and other adults to supervise camps should follow the criteria in 3.3 above.

## 6. PROCEDURES

### 6.1 Dates

Excursions and camps must be pre-planned on the calendar. If an event needs to be at a different time, the College calendar must be consulted with respect to the availability of the dates proposed for the excursion or camp.

### 6.2 Excursion or Camp Application Form

Either an *Excursion Application Form* or a *Camp Application Form* providing all necessary information is to be fully completed. This form needs the Section Head's signature of approval, before being submitted to the Deputy Principal. All sections on the application are to be completed before it will be considered. If the list of students is not yet definite, a final revised list must be substituted the day before the excursion.

### 6.3 Submission deadlines

- 6.3.1 *Excursion Application Forms* are to be submitted to Section Head **no less than five school weeks** before a proposed excursion. When an excursion is proposed for the first half of a term, planning and submission of the *Excursion Application Form* will need to happen during the previous term, or year in the case of Term One.
- 6.3.2 All camps are to be submitted to the DP, Operations prior to the commencement of the new school year with calendar scheduling.

### 6.4 Risk Assessment

A Risk Assessment Form is to be completed and must accompany the *Excursion or Camp Application Form* when being submitted to the Section Head.

In the event of severe weather conditions or bushfire threat then excursions may be cancelled by the Deputy Principal – Operations, in consultation with Executive staff and any external providers. In the event of a Code Red bushfire warning then all excursions into areas with a high risk of bushfire will be cancelled.

### 6.5 Transport

Buses are to be booked through the Student Services Administrator using the *Bus Request Form*. Please indicate on the Bus Request Form should you require any stops on your bus trip for things like toilet stops, lunch, visiting a location on the journey, or any other reason which will require a stop.

### 6.6 Costing

Check with the Business Office for advice on costing, especially with respect to GST and documentation.

- **Estimate cost per student**

If more than two teachers are going, or students come from different classes but require several teachers, you should factor in approximately \$450 per day for every teacher above the first two. This helps to defray casual relief teacher costs. Alternatively, faculty funds may be allocated for this purpose. The cost of an excursion or camp which involves a whole class



or year level is kept to a minimum if the teachers involved are those who mainly teach that class or year level;

- **Cost changes**

If there are any changes in cost to the camp or excursion, see the Business Office immediately for advice. Do not assume that the excursion can go ahead until the new costing is approved;

- **Out of pocket expenses**

If a teacher incurs expenses related to the excursion, write out an official order and submit to the Section Head with receipts. The Section Head will need to approve the expenses before passing on the claim to the Business Office.

### 6.7 *Camp Notice*

Draft the Camp letter/notice and submit it with the camp application and risk assessment. Include with the letter any relevant attachments parents require for the Camp. **All letters and applications** are to be checked by the Deputy Principal – Operations before they are passed onto Student Services and sent out to families.

### 6.8 *Permission slips*

Excursion and Camp Forms and Permission slips along with letters and any other excursion or camp information are to be completed on **Operoo**. This will be completed by the Student Services Administrator. The Teacher-in-Charge of organising the excursion/camp is to ensure that all permission slips are returned electronically using Operoo. In case of any emergency, contact details and medical information will be available for staff to access on their personal device during the event. This information will also be printed to take on the excursion or camp. Money is not to be collected. If an excursion has not been included in school fees, parents will be billed after the excursion.

### 6.9 *Camp Medical Information and Oversight*

For camps, the medical information provided will be available to all staff, the teacher-in-charge and the designated First Aid Officer, who will ensure that all medical action plans, medication plans, alerts, exclusions, and precautions are properly noted and actioned. The First Aid Officer will be in charge of all medical information, storage of medications and the oversight of students taking medication as well as taking charge as a first responder in the case of an accident or sudden illness.

### 6.10 *Not all students in class going?*

If the excursion or camp involves only **some** students in a class, then all of the teachers whose classes will be affected need to be informed by email at least one week prior to the excursion or camp. If only a few students in a class will remain behind, then the class may not run. Alternate supervision arrangements may need to be made for those students that remain behind at school. This is to be organised by the 'teacher-in-charge' in consultation with the Section Head and the Daily Organiser.

### 6.11 *Action required if a staff member feels a student should not go on an excursion or camp because of incomplete work or poor behaviour*

A teacher who is concerned about a student who habitually fails to complete required work or has significant behaviour issues, should report that student to the Section Head. The Section Head, in consultation with other teachers will decide whether it is appropriate for the student to attend the excursion. The Section Head will also communicate this to their staff and the parents of the student concerned.





### 6.12 Minimum Supervision requirements: Staff: Student Ratios

The minimum number of supervising staff on any excursion **is two (2)**. There cannot be a situation where, if a staff member is unable to ensure the health and safety of students because of sudden illness or accident, there is not another staff member on hand. Staff supervisors must always include one woman.

- **Day excursions: 1:20 with a minimum of 2 staff.**
- **Overnight camps: 1:15 with a minimum of 2 staff.**
- **Overnight base camps: 1:10 with a minimum of 2 staff.**
- **Interstate travel: 1:10 with a minimum of 2 staff.**
- **Overseas travel: 1:10 with a minimum of 2 staff.**
- **Adventure activities: Minimum of 1:8 with a minimum of 2 staff. This ratio can vary depending on the activity being conducted. Please check to see what ratio is required for the proposed activity. Contracted qualified instructors, who meet approval standards will run the activity and provide equipment and instruction. For more detail, guidelines for many adventure activities are provided on the DET website:**

<https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/excursions/guidance/adventure-activities>

### 6.13 Immediately prior to departure

- **Students Attending Excursion or Camp**  
The roll is to be marked prior to departure to get an accurate list of those attending the excursion. The accurate list will be used for billing parents if the excursion costs are not included in the school fees. Permission slips will be recorded on Operoo but can be taken as hard copies if necessary;
- **Medical Information**  
All information about the excursion and student medical information is to be uploaded on Operoo;
- **Contact Details**  
Contact details, including the personal mobile of the 'teacher-in-charge' and the phone details of the excursion location, are to be included on the *Excursion Application Form*;
- **Student Uniform**  
A check is to be made that all students comply with the dress code for the excursion. Students who do not comply should be referred to the Section Head for a decision about going on the excursion;
- **Equipment**  
A first aid kit, as well as any student medication, is to be collected from the Administration Office;
- **Changes to Plan**  
If the ETA for the return to school differs from the times given in the planning documentation, the new time is to be given to Reception. The 'teacher-in-charge' is to inform the College if the ETA back at the College is changed **during** the excursion or camp. Reception or the Deputy Principal will inform parents / guardians via the 'the hub' app. The College must be notified of any other changes to pre-arranged times or other arrangements that have to be made on the spot. For example, if extreme weather or fire danger means that a camp has to be cancelled and students brought back earlier than planned;





- **Duty of Care Offsite**

Teachers and accompanying staff are to show consistent duty-of-care at all times during the excursion or camp. For camps this should be managed by the teacher-in-charge, to ensure that there is a roster in place that allows for supervising staff to have appropriate breaks from 24/7 oversight.

**At no time should students have unsupervised free time.** There must always be staff (teachers and approved adults) on duty and observing that students are safe and behaving appropriately for the context. There should always be at least two teachers on duty, preferably one male and one female.

## 7. STUDENT SAFETY

Refer to the **Student Safety Staff Code of Conduct** document regarding child safety on excursions and camps. Every teacher should have a copy of this document downloaded onto their PC for reference. In particular, the expectations about being alone with a child and avoiding physical contact other than to ensure health and safety, are critically important.

St Andrews Christian College has a commitment to child safety and has zero tolerance for child abuse.

Every person working within the St Andrews Christian College community is responsible for the care and protection of students and reporting information about child abuse.