GUIDELINES

Excursions & Incursions

Definitions: An ‘excursion’ is an activity that takes place outside the school grounds and is planned to support a class or group educational program. An ‘incursion’ is such an activity but occurs within the school grounds.

Rationale

At St. Joseph’s, we strive to develop a learning environment in which the education of the whole child is paramount. To this end, we believe it is important for all students to experience life at times, outside of the classroom and in the wider community. To assist this process, appropriate excursions, incursions and camps are organised through the year.

Objectives

Excursions

School excursions are part of the school curriculum and as such, all children are expected to participate. Generally one per term is planned though at times, it may be more educationally advantageous to undertake a more extensive excursion covering a two-term period. Written permission from parents / care givers is required before a child may participate in any such outing.

Incursions

At different times throughout the year, touring groups visit the school. These incursions are generally related to units of work being studied by particular classes though they may have a broader focus and be a ‘one off’ opportunity.

School Camps

Students in Years 5, 6 and 7 participate in overnight camping programmes each year. These camps provide opportunities for developing team building, peer support and engaging in extra curricular activities like canoeing, ladder, mid ropes and sky surfing.

Implementation

1. Excursions and incursions emanate from a sound educational base and/or have strong educational outcomes.

2. The appropriate Request Form—Incursion / Excursion / Camp—is completed by the teachers concerned and submitted to the Finance Secretary 4 weeks prior to the event’s date. Once the Finance Secretary has ‘signed off’ on all expenditure, it is given to the Principal for approval.

3. A note is sent home to parents/caregivers informing them of all relevant details preferably two weeks prior to the excursion. Parents are required to sign and then return a slip acknowledging receipt of the information and giving consent for their child’s participation.
4. Consent forms must be returned to the school prior to the date of departure. Students who do not have permission to attend must attend school and will spend the time in another classroom, as arranged by the class teacher.

5. The principal must be satisfied that health and safety risks associated with the nature and location of the excursion have been addressed. This should be achieved by planning and conducting excursions using risk management principles ie.
   a) Identifying hazards pertaining to the excursion (ie. the potential to cause harm);
   b) Considering the educational justification for introducing the hazard;
   c) Assessing the potential for risks associated with the hazards, (ie. how likely it is that something will go wrong and how serious the consequences would be if something did go wrong;)
   d) Implementing appropriate control measures to eliminate or reduce the risk to acceptable levels; and
   e) Monitoring and reviewing the effectiveness of these actions and recommending changes to improve future excursions. This will include keeping records for use by organisers of similar excursions.

6. The principal must be satisfied that the following specific health and safety issues have been addressed prior to the excursion:
   a) Staff members employed by Brisbane Catholic Education and who, in the opinion of the principal are appropriately qualified to provide an adequate standard of care, must supervise all groups during excursions, including during the transport of students to and from the venue.
   b) The ratio of adults/students must be appropriate to the age and developmental levels of children and the types of activities planned.
   c) The qualifications, licensing of, and safety precautions taken by, outside persons or agencies used as part of an excursion should be verified.
   d) For any excursion the accompanying staff members must carry a record of students’ significant medical conditions. Where the excursion extends overnight, full information regarding any illness, allergies, etc suffered by a student must be supplied by the parent. Where medication is to be administered to student during an excursion, the relevant provisions of the Admin Index section 237 ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION TO STUDENTS must be observed.
   e) At an appropriate time, students should be given a briefing concerning venue/s to be visited, the potential hazards and the precautions to be taken, and the expected behaviour of the students, particularly during transport to and from the venue.
   f) Volunteers accompanying students must be on the Volunteer Register and if not a parent, must have a Blue Card. They should be selected according to the expertise they have relevant to the planned activities. They must be instructed prior to departure regarding their roles, any hazards that might be encountered (eg. sunburn) and the precautions to be taken.
   g) The Brisbane Catholic Education injury recording procedures must be followed in the event of injury.
   h) An emergency contingency plan should be developed. Suitable arrangements should be made to ensure that contact could be made expeditiously with the planned venue, parents, medical authorities and other relevant personnel. During school holidays, the BCE’s Area Supervisor should be advised of a contact telephone number for a school staff member not at the venue.
   i) The local fire fighting authority should be contacted to check restrictions on lighting open fires at campsites.
   j) Prior permission should be sought from property owners where private property is traversed or otherwise entered.
   k) First aid equipment appropriate to the excursion must be readily available at any time on the excursion. Depending on the nature of the activity, it may be appropriate to have one or more qualified first aid staff present. Refer to the fact sheet titled: First Aiders for Excursions.
l) Charter bus services must follow certain rules and meet certain standards that address the safety of passengers. Schools should be aware of these rules and standards to ensure that risks associated with this component of the excursion are fully managed. The document published by Queensland Transport titled “Safe School Travel: Chartering a Bus – A Guide for School Communities” contains specific answers to frequently asked questions about how to charter a bus for school activities, and should be used as the primary guidance source when chartering a bus.

m) Use of private vehicles for excursions is generally discouraged, however it is at times unavoidable. If private vehicles are to be used, principals should satisfy themselves that vehicles are reliable and registered and that the driver is licensed adequately for the type of vehicle. The Transport of Students by Parents /Volunteers form should be obtained from each driver prior to the excursion.

7. Cost of excursions and incursions is covered through the quarterly payment of the Student Levy with camps paid in Term 1, both appearing on the School Fee Account. No child should have to forfeit these opportunities due to financial constraints.

8. All students are expected to attend camps and excursions.

References
Brisbane Catholic Education  OH&S Fact Sheet  April 2010
Brisbane Catholic Education  Administration of Medication to Students 23
Brisbane Catholic Education  First Aiders for Excursions.
Brisbane Catholic Education  Excursion Request Form
Brisbane Catholic Education  Incursion Request Form
Brisbane Catholic Education  Camp / Sporting Event Request Form
Brisbane Catholic Education  Volunteer’s Register