



## Policy Statement

The Diocese of Ballarat Catholic Education Limited (DOBCEL) and the schools it governs strive to provide inclusive and enriching educational experiences for students. DOBCEL recognises that excursions, camps, interstate, and international travel can provide important learning and growth for young people, and is committed to providing a safe, caring, and nurturing environment for all students.

DOBCEL will ensure that:

- school excursions and camps are diligently planned, managed, supervised, and monitored in a manner that ensures the health, safety, and wellbeing of participating students and staff, as well as others who may be affected by the conduct of the activity
- this policy will comply with the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and the suite of policies and supporting documents related to the care, safety, and wellbeing of students as well as policies relating to the Victorian Child Safe Standards
- all students are encouraged to participate in all aspects of excursions and camps as part of the school curriculum  
in accordance with the school's duty of care obligations, school staff will take reasonable steps to minimise the risk of any foreseeable harm to a student
- as part of the school communication process, parents and students are fully informed of their obligations and responsibilities prior to parental consent being obtained.

## Context

Camps, excursions, and travel are offered to students throughout the year as off-site activities that relate to the curriculum and co-curriculum requirements which further enhance the learning outcomes and social skills development of students.

During excursions, camps, and interstate and international travel, the care, safety, and wellbeing of students are assigned to DOBCEL and the supervising school staff who are legally in loco parentis.

The Victorian Child Safe Standards apply when traveling interstate and internationally. The venues, transport, and accommodation on all trips are an extension of the school environment as defined within Ministerial Order 1359. Therefore, schools must comply with Child Safe Standards when planning and conducting these activities/events and all efforts must be made to ensure the duty of care, safety, and wellbeing of students is prioritised.

Excursions, camps, and travel require adequate planning to prevent and mitigate any incidents that might pose a risk to students. While the degree of planning involved will depend on the nature and likelihood of the risks involved, the conduct of any excursion or activity must consider the following:

- ensuring offsite activities have educational, cultural, spiritual and/or personal development purpose and value
- a systematic and transparent approach to the planning, approval, and implementation of all offsite activities
- suitability of the venue and/or environment for the excursion
- obtaining informed consent from parents or carers

- adequate student preparation and clear behaviour expectations
- importance of providing an inclusive excursion experience for all students, including students with disabilities and additional needs
- the need for school staff to meet their responsibilities under the Child Safe Standards.
- requirements of any adventure activities, including skill level of required by students to safely undertake the activity
- assessment of excursion risks and appropriate risk minimization strategies, including appropriate supervision arrangements
- maintenance of excursion records, including clear documentation of the planning process

## Scope

This policy applies to all camps and excursions organised by DOBCEL schools. The school environment extends beyond the school grounds when such activities occur, which broadens the focus of ensuring the health, safety, wellbeing of and inclusiveness for our students, staff, and volunteers.

This policy excludes off site activities related to Vocational Education and Training Courses.

## Legislative Context

- [Education and Training Reform Act 2006 \(Vic\)](#)
- [Equal Opportunity Act 2010](#)
- [Health Records Act 2001 \(Vic\)](#)
- [Ministerial Order 1359: Implementing the Child Safe Standards - Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools and School Boarding Premises](#)
- [Privacy Act 1988 \(Cth\)](#)
- [Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014](#)
- [Victorian Data Sharing Act 2017](#)
- [VRQA Minimum Standards and Requirements for School Registration](#)
- [Work Health and Safety Act 2011 \(Cth\)](#)

## Duty of Care

As the governing authority, DOBCEL is required to ensure DOBCEL schools uphold a duty of care to students in all school environments. All excursions, camps, and travel, taking place either during or outside of school hours, are included within the definition of 'school environment' within *Ministerial Order 1359: Implementing the Child Safe Standards* (MO 1359). Therefore, schools need to comply with *Child Safe Standards* when planning and conducting these activities/events.

DOBCEL and its schools are required to take reasonable care to avoid acts or omissions that they can reasonably foresee would be likely to result in harm or injury to the student, and to work for the positive wellbeing of each child. In accordance with the *Education Training and Reform Regulations 2017* (Vic.) (sch 4 cl 12) schools have a responsibility to ensure that the care, safety, and wellbeing of all students attending the school complies with any applicable State or Commonwealth laws.

## Educational Purpose

School staff are required to ensure that there is an educational purpose for the program and that it is relevant to the school's curriculum, taking into consideration the location and environment, activities, people, equipment needed and assessed risks.

## Definitions

TERM	DEFINITION
Adventure Activities	Activities that involve greater than normal risk which may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• physical activities beyond the scope of the regular physical education curriculum</li><li>• travel into a relatively undeveloped area of the country in which vehicle access is difficult and/or uncertain</li><li>• exposure to natural environmental challenges requiring greater reliance upon personal resources than would normally be required in day-to-day life</li><li>• exposure to the natural elements with less than the normal physical protection provided in day-to-day life</li><li>• the use and operation of amusement rides, attractions or fireworks via engagement of a third-party operator at non-public (that is, enrolled students only) events on non-school sites (for example, hiring a jumping castle to be operated at a local park).</li></ul>
Camps	Camps are excursions involving at least one night's accommodation (including school sleepovers on school grounds). Retreats are included in the definition of camps.
Excursions	Activities organised by the school where the students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• are taken out of the school grounds (eg. a camp, day excursion, school sports including after-school sports)</li><li>• undertake adventure activities, regardless of whether they occur outside the school grounds.</li></ul>
Excursion Staff	Are adults who provide the supervisory, instructional and educational elements of an activity.
In Loco Parentis	Latin for "in the place of a parent", refers to the legal responsibility of a person or organization to take on some of the functions and responsibilities of a parent.
Local Excursion	Any activity beyond the school grounds, within walking distance of the school which does not involve adventure activities.
Residential Campsites	Campsites that have permanent facilities such as; cooking and eating facilities, beds, amenities block and adventure recreation options. This definition does not include caravan parks, hotels/motels, ski lodges or residential schools.
Swimming Pool	Any structure containing water to a depth greater than 300mm and used primarily for swimming, wading, paddling or similar, including bathing or wading or spa

TERM	DEFINITION
	pool. This definition includes all public, private, school, body corporate, hotel and natural swimming pools.
Waterways	<p><a href="#">Transport Safety Victoria – Maritime Safety</a> provide the following definitions of waters in Victoria.</p> <p><b>Inland waters</b> – rivers (inside the seaward entrance), creeks, canals, lakes, reservoirs, and any similar waters either naturally formed or man-made and which are either publicly or privately owned but does not include any navigable rivers, creeks or streams within declared port waters.</p> <p><b>Swift waterways</b> - flowing river water which may be categorised according to the international river classifications system. This covers water commonly known as ‘moving water’ or ‘white water’ but also refers to flowing water which may not look either ‘swift’ or ‘white’ to an observer.</p> <p><b>Enclosed waters</b> – any declared port waters inside the seaward entrance. See the <a href="#">Victorian Recreational Boating Safety Handbook</a> for all listed port waters.</p> <p><b>Coastal waters</b> – all waters other than inland waters or enclosed waters and extending 3 nautical miles seaward.</p>

## Supporting Documentation

### Internal

Behaviour Management Policy and Procedure

Delegations Policy and Instrument

First Aid and Infection Control Policy and Procedure

Privacy Policy

Risk Management Framework

Risk Management Policy

Student Care and Health Policy (First Aid)

Supervision of Students Policy and Procedure

Suspension and Expulsion of Students Policy and Procedure

Volunteer Policy

Working with Children Check Policy and Procedure

## External

[Bushfire and Grassfire Preparedness Policy \(DoE\)](#)

[CECV Implementation Guide: Teacher Time in Lieu](#)

[Public Record Office Victoria \(PROV\) – PROS 22/06 Schools: Student Support, Health and Wellbeing.](#)

[Victorian Recreational Boating Safety Handbook](#)

## Related Links

<https://www.smartraveller.gov.au/>

## DOBCEL Principles of Governance

All DOBCEL policies are founded on and reflect the Principles of Governance stated in the Document:

[DOBCEL Principles of Governance](#)

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