



EXTERNAL PROVIDERS POLICY

OVERVIEW

External providers may be engaged to deliver specific outdoor or adventure activities or a whole program. They may provide expertise in a certain activity and can form a valuable addition to a program.

Clear and open communication that occurs well in advance of the planned program is the key to an effective and well-informed relationship between a school and an external provider.

Before an external provider is selected to assist with the delivery of a program, a thorough check should be completed by the school to ensure that they are appropriate for the program.

Prior to commencement of a program the school should ensure that the external provider has:

- a current public liability insurance certificate (minimum \$10 million) provided by an APRA approved insurer
- discussed with the school who has responsibilities for first aid, emergency communications and other specialist equipment
- demonstrated that staff have the correct qualifications and/or experience for their specific role/s
- a documented system in place to ensure that students are supervised by either a registered teacher or an approved staff member with a current Working with Children Check
- ensure that supervision of students is overseen at all times by a staff member of other individual that has a completed Working with Children Check
- discussed with the school who will be responsible for emergency procedures, and that these are well understood prior to the excursion taking place
- read the relevant sections of the Department's Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors and understood their obligations under these guidelines

RATIONALE

Thomastown Secondary College will provide a positive environment in which all teachers assume responsibility for student welfare, endeavouring to provide successful experiences for all students, where students feel safe and secure in a supportive environment and where a sense of belonging and wellbeing is strengthened.

Our School accepts a duty of care to students accessing an external provider. The school will ensure regulations relating to VIT registration, appropriate qualifications and supervision will be observed. Where the school deems a learning environment to be in accordance with the learning, social and emotional development of the student, and where staff members do not have VIT registration, the school will provide appropriate supervision of our students.

AIMS

- To create and maintain a learning environment that facilitates development of the whole person and to promote a healthy, supportive and secure environment for all students at Our School.
- To enable students to further their learning by complementing classroom lessons with experts and resources from outside the immediate school community by offering special programs.
- For all students have the right to feel and be safe in the framework of programs offered by Our School and in those offered by external providers.

IMPLEMENTATION

The School Council will approve all external providers.

Co-ordination of the external providers will rest with the Principal to ensure that:

- All external providers meet all regulatory requirements
- Students will attend programs offered by external providers only with the express prior written consent of their parents
- Students who do not attend an activity provided by an external provider during school hours will be provided with suitable alternative activities
- The School Council will ensure that professional indemnity, public liability, building and contents and any other necessary insurance to cover the needs of programs offered by external providers is met by the provider if offered off site.

Program Responsibilities

Schools cannot sign 'Waivers of liability' on behalf of students. Regardless of the role of the external provider, schools retain overall responsibility for the program and any activities involving students. Government schools using residential campsites in Victoria as a venue for their camp or excursion are required to use only accredited campsites. For more information see: School Policy and Advisory Guide - [Venue Selection](#)

Accreditation schemes include [Australian Camps Association Accreditation](#), [Australian Tourism Accreditation Program \(ATAP\)](#) and [National Accommodation, Recreation & Tourism Accreditation](#)

Where not directly responsible for the instruction of the activity or assisting the instructor, the teacher present must understand the activity and the environment in which it will be conducted. This teacher must confer with the designated instructor about the supervisory role and establish areas of responsibility. If the teacher is not the designated instructor he/she is to act on the advice of the designated instructor on technical safety issues.

Planning Support

The following materials are essential to guiding the planning and approval process:

- Planning - these pages support your decision-making role*
- Forms - these checklists will inform external providers about the responsibilities of principals, teachers and school councils in preparing for outdoor and adventure-based excursions*
(*<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/health/Pages/outdoorplan.aspx>)

LINKS AND APPENDICES (including processes related to this policy)

Reference: School Policy and Advisory Guide – External

Providers<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/health/Pages/outdoorplan.aspx>

REVIEW PERIOD

This policy was last updated on 2/7/19 and is scheduled for review on July 2020.