



External Providers Policy & Procedures

Debney Meadows Primary School

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:

The school 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.

Appendices: (including processes related to this policy)

Reference: School Policy and Advisory Guide – External Providers

Evaluation:

This policy will be reviewed annually or more often if necessary due to changes in regulations, local circumstances or as a result of incident.

This policy was last ratified by School Council on the

Appendix A

DEECD Guidelines for Working with External Providers

The following guidelines and checklists are to be considered by all staff when utilising external providers.

External providers assist with drug education and intervention, including the provision of parent information, learning and development opportunities for staff, classroom support for teachers, and referral of and counselling for students. The following checklists and guidelines are provided to help schools get maximum benefit from the input of external providers.

Support agencies approved/accepted by the School must:

- Be qualified or trained
- Evaluate their programs or presentations
- Be cost effective
- Enhance the role of the teacher not replace it
- Be consistent with School drug education policy
- Align with current practice, principles and research
- Consider socioeconomic, cultural and/or religious issues

Teacher checklist:

- Planning session with the presenter been conducted?
- Can people within the school provide a similar service?
- Do you have the support of the principal, the staff and the relevant committees?
- Have parents been consulted?
- Does the support agency teach drug education in the context of the Health and Physical Education curriculum?
- Have the age and developmental level of the students, the content and the resources been considered?
- Will feedback be given to the presenter?
- Has the support agency been given a copy of the school's drug education statement and the classroom program?
- What are the costs?

It is a requirement for a teacher to be present with students at all times.

Qualified or Trained External Providers:

- Have formal qualifications or relevant experience
- Are recognised by other professional groups in drug education
- Are successfully engaged in health/drug education programs in other schools
- Provide a range of support options
- Use performance indicators to evaluate the effectiveness of their programs
- Have a good knowledge of appropriate resources
- Are adept in working with/through relevant School committees

External Providers who have an understanding of current practice, approaches and research:

- Avoid using drug related testimonials
- Avoid using scare tactics
- Avoid using an 'information only' approach
- Understand what constitutes an effective drug education program

- Link learning with educational outcomes as outlined in the school program
- Provide ongoing support rather than the one-off session
- Engage in planning with the teacher
- Enhance the central role of the teacher
- Have knowledge of the Years 1-10 Health and Physical Education and other curriculum areas related to drug education
- Include a component on personal skill development

External Providers are to consider socioeconomic, cultural and religious issues:

- Become familiar with aspects of the School highlighted in the situational analysis
- Use information about student cultural experiences to create an atmosphere respectful of cultural diversity
- Ask questions about the impact of religious beliefs on the implementation of drug education programs
- Use strategies proven to be effective in dealing with drug related issues pertinent to students from a variety of socioeconomic backgrounds
- Have well-established and acceptable positions on particular issues which are consistent with the values promoted by the school

General

These forms provide minimum guidelines that should be adhered to and can be expanded as required at a local level.

- [Asthma management form \(Word - 111Kb\) \(doc - 130.5kb\)](#)
- [Notification of School Activity - Student Activity Locator online form \(EduMail password required\)](#)
- [Documentation of participant preparation, prerequisite skills/knowledge \(Word - 120Kb\) \(doc - 139kb\)](#)
- [Staff Qualifications in lieu of formal qualifications \(Word - 132Kb\) \(doc - 151kb\)](#)
- [Clothing and equipment list \(general\) \(Word - 68Kb\) \(doc - 67.76kb\)](#)
- [Emergency response proforma \(Word - 67Kb\) \(doc - 66.69kb\)](#)
- [Risk register template \(Word - 126Kb\) \(doc - 145.5kb\)](#)
- [Risk analysis tools \(Word - 46Kb\) \(doc - 78.5kb\)](#)

Important information

Please note that the forms below have been developed in view of legal advice received by the Department to ensure that schools' legal obligations with regard to the duty of care towards students are met.

Schools should not undertake substantive modifications to the wording or remove questions contained in these forms, without the prior approval of the Department's legal branch.

Schools are also reminded that privacy legislation covers the collection of personal information by schools and schools should attach a privacy notice or statement to any form collecting personal information. Further information about the collection of personal information may be found at the Department's privacy website located at: <https://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/privacy/default.htm>.

- [Approval proforma](#)
- [Parent consent form \(Word - 65Kb\) \(doc - 84kb\)](#)
- [Confidential medical information \(Word - 44Kb\) \(doc - 44.17kb\)](#)
- [Confidential Medical History Form for Introductory Scuba Experience \(Word - 259Kb\) \(doc - 280.5kb\)](#)

Checklists

- [Principal Checklist \(Word - 71Kb\) \(doc - 71.04kb\)](#)
- [School Council Checklist \(Word - 69Kb\) \(doc - 68.8kb\)](#)
- [Teacher Checklist \(Word - 70Kb\) \(doc - 69.99kb\)](#)

