



## Field Trip Policy

### Rationale

Sacred Heart School recognizes that off-site experiences outside the school/parish community are effective learning experiences that enrich the spiritual, intellectual, social, emotional and physical development of students.

### Policy

Sacred Heart School requires that all activities that take place off-site from the school/parish be selected, planned, organized and conducted to enhance the spiritual, intellectual, social, emotional or physical development of students and to ensure the safety and security of all participants.

### Procedure

Prior to authorizing field trips and off-site experiences, the school administrator will make staff aware of all relevant policies and procedures. Staff should also familiarize themselves with the YouthSafe Outdoors: Off-site Experience Safety for BC Schools Resource Manual. The purpose of the manual is to enhance effectiveness, efficiency, and economy of effort, and to provide best practice risk management strategies.

Teachers wishing to organize a field trip must first obtain the approval of the school's Principal by submitting a written proposal that includes

- field trip goals and objectives
- relationship to the curriculum and/or school mission, vision, philosophy
- description of how the trip is appropriate for students of the proposed age/grade and level of preparation
- statement of potential risks to participants
- budget

The YouthSafe Outdoors Resource Manual includes various off-site experience proposal forms to be used along with other useful resources to assist organizers in planning an excursion. Any locally developed off-site experience proposal form used must meet or exceed the standard of safety and preparation as identified by YouthSafe Outdoors Resource Manual.

### 1. Approvals

Prior to planning a field trip or off-site experience the organizer should consult the YouthSafe Outdoors manual to determine the level of risk associated with undertaking such an activity. By first assessing the level of risk entailed the organizer will be in a better position to decide the appropriate proposal form to complete to obtain the relevant level of permission. The manual



generally distinguishes between low risk activities versus higher care outings where the level of advance planning and preparation is greater.

## **A. Same Day Field Trips**

Prior authorization by the Principal or his/her designate must be given for each activity by submitting the appropriate form found in the YouthSafe Outdoors manual (generally same day trips are deemed low risk, however, depending on the activity it may fall into the higher risk category – aquatic activities for example). Approval from the Education Committee is not required.

## **B. Multiple Day Field Trips**

Prior authorization by the Principal or his/her designate must be given for each activity by submitting the appropriate form (such as Offsite Experience Proposal Form A – Local, Low-risk Daytrip; Offsite Experience Proposal Form B – Higher Care Outings) designed for this purpose. Approval from the Education Committee is not required.

## **C. Outside of Provincial Boundaries**

Prior authorization by the Principal or his/her designate must be given for each activity by signing the appropriate form (Detailed Trip Plan Form) designed for this purpose. Approval from the Education Committee is required and is done prior to finalizing arrangements for such trips (before booking travel, undertaking fund-raising, making financial commitments, etc.). The request must include contingency plans for emergencies and medical emergencies.

## **D. Out of Country**

Prior authorization by the Principal or his/her designate must be given for each activity by signing the appropriate forms (Detailed Trip Plan Form) designed for this purpose.

Education Committee approval is required and is done through the Principal prior to finalizing arrangements for such trips (before booking travel, undertaking fund-raising, making financial commitments, etc.). The request must include contingency plans for all emergencies, including those caused by political unrest, medical emergencies, and student disciplinary action. All necessary documentation (passports, visas, etc.) are to be applied for only after approval is given. Participants must have adequate medical coverage for the country/countries to be visited. Student trips should not be planned to countries or regions of countries where there is a possibility of an outbreak of social unrest.

## **E. High-Risk Field Trips**

All field trips deemed to be “High-Risk” according to YouthSafe Outdoors guidelines require Education Committee approval.



## 2. Considerations Regarding Participation

The following considerations apply to participation by students in off-site experiences:

- The suitability of the activity to the students ( ie., age appropriateness; fitness , skill levels)
- The voluntary nature of field-trip participation
- The cost per student
- The provision of meaningful alternative activities for students unable to participate

All students, including special needs students, should have every opportunity to participate in school activities to the best of their ability, including all field trips. Every effort must be made to accommodate individuals with special needs. The Principal is responsible to ensure that adequate planning and preparations are made for all students to participate.

## 3. Trip Plan

Sufficient direction and guidance must be provided to ensure each trip is well planned with safety in mind.

For organized low-risk field trips, the following procedures apply:

- A completed Off-Site Experience Proposal - Form A (or equivalent) should be submitted to the school Principal for approval a minimum of two weeks prior to the proposed trip.

For organized high-risk field trips the following procedures apply:

- A completed Off-Site Experience Proposal - Form B (or equivalent) should be submitted to the school Principal for approval no less than two weeks and in sufficient time to allow for Education Committee approval, prior to the trip.
- The teacher/leader is required to complete a Detailed Trip Plan (or equivalent) for all high-risk field trips.
- The Principal may require a teacher/leader who has requested to take students on a high risk activity to complete a Teacher/Leader Readiness to assess the teacher's/leader's capability to instruct or lead a given activity.
- The Principal may require a teacher/leader who has requested to take students on a high risk outdoor leadership activity to complete an Itinerary Card to help establish the appropriateness of an outdoor leadership activity.



## 4. Parent/Guardian Consent and Acknowledgement of Risk Forms

- Teachers planning an off-site trip are required to provide parents/guardians sufficient information about the trip to make an informed decision about its appropriateness and safety for their child.

## 5. Supervision

### A. Head Teacher

When more than one class is on an excursion, one teacher will be designated “Head Teacher”. The Head Teacher shall be responsible to ensure that all students on the excursion are assigned to specific vehicles. Roll call to identify each student by name and sight shall be taken as often as deemed necessary by the Head Teacher. A head count shall not be considered sufficient to identify students. Roll call shall take place at every departure point in the field trip itinerary.

The names of all students shall be logged and copied to the school office. Any changes on route shall be logged and communicated to the school office. The Head Teacher shall remain at the terminus of the excursion until all returning students are accounted for.

### B. Supervisors

- Field trips should, whenever possible, have a minimum of one supervisor for every 15 students. A higher supervisor/student ratio may be required depending on the nature of the trip and the age and needs of the participating students.
- An adult supervisor may be a teacher, parent, or responsible adult volunteer approved by the Principal who is 19 years of age or older and is a minimum of 3 years older than the students being supervised.
- All overnight field-trips must have at least one (1) staff-member and one additional adult supervisor.
- All overnight field trips require that at least one (1) supervisor be of the same gender as the field trip participants.
- Student supervisory assistants must be a minimum of 16 years of age, be a minimum of 3 years older than the students being supervised, and may only be used to provide additional program support. They are not considered to be supervisors for the purpose of determining acceptable supervision ratios.
- All supervisors are subject to policies, guidelines, and procedures of CISVA and the school, and the statutes of BC and Canada during the time the supervisor is responsible for students. This includes the period between departure to return of extended field trips.



## SACRED HEART SCHOOL

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- A supervisor must act in loco parentis (in place of parent), making wise and judicious decisions that are in the best interest of the students.
- When a specified training certification is required as part of an educational field studies excursion, the Principal shall ensure that the instructor/supervisor possesses such a designated certificate.
- A supervisor shall attempt to contact the school and/or students' parents in a case of an accident but, failing to do so, shall take whatever steps are necessary to care for the students.
- A supervisor shall report all accidents to the Principal at the earliest possible opportunity. All accidents will require a written report of the incident(s).
- A minimum of one supervisor per school bus must be provided, in addition to the driver when students are being transported to and from the field trip destination.
- All motor vehicle safety requirements must be followed (seatbelts, booster seats, etc.)
- Everyone involved in the trip or excursion must be dressed/equipped in a manner appropriate to the activities.