



EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION POLICY

Introduction

Penola Catholic College conducts a range of overnight camps and overnight retreats to enhance curriculum delivery and to offer students opportunities, which may not always be available in the classroom situation.

Rationale

The underlying principles of experiential education bring about the opportunity to explore and develop values and beliefs that are essential to creating a knowledgeable, caring and co-operative society.

Experiential Learning experiences provide a setting and environment designed to facilitate for students, the development of character, and the qualities of compassion, faith development, reflection and social and environmental responsibility, as well as offering challenges and adventure.

The importance of community and compassion for others are emphasised through activities, which challenge students to reflect on their own social and environmental responsibility. Faith Development aspects provide a prayerful and reflective atmosphere in which students can explore their own relationship with God.

Through such experiences we allow students to interact with the wider world, to apply their knowledge and skills in a protected environment, preparing them to take their rightful places in the world.

Curriculum

Approval for camps and retreats will be granted only if the rationale provided by the organisers is related to specific curriculum delivery or is such that elements of the College's Mission Statement objectives will be achieved.

As far as possible, the camp or retreat is to be utilised as a teaching and learning tool in the classroom both prior to and after the activity.

Communal prayer is to be included within the activity and every attempt is to be made to organise attendance at Mass should the activity take place over a period of time, which encompasses Sunday.

Formal evaluation of the activity is to be conducted after the activity by the Activity Leader. The evaluation is to be based on the aims and objectives of the activity and both staff and students are to be given the opportunity to participate in the evaluation.

Staffing

All camps and retreats are to have a designated Leader.

Staffing is to be organised according to the expertise and experience required by the activity's objectives and the nature of a co-educational College. At least one member of staff in attendance is to have formal first aid training.

Attendance of staff on camps and retreats is to be shared amongst the staff, adequate forward notice is to be provided and specific pastoral concerns will be taken into consideration.

Sessional staff may be employed according to College needs. Persons employed by the school must meet all legal requirements pertinent to working with children.

The Principal is to be informed of appropriate details about staff who may be working with students under the auspices of the host site.

C.E.O.M. and Government Guidelines on Supervision of Students and Staff-Student Ratios will be adhered to.

Students

Camps or retreats, deemed by the school, to be compulsory must be attended by all students. Camps or retreats not designated as being compulsory, will be offered to students on a voluntary basis.

Students are to follow the normal behaviour code and their student camp guidelines information booklets.

Students whose behaviour when away is in serious breach of College rules, or is deemed to be a danger to themselves or others, will be sent home at parents' expense. Before such action is taken, the Activity Leader will contact the relevant Head of Campus for approval and will then contact the student's parent to arrange transport to the student's home.

Additional Matters

The Activity Leader is responsible for providing all necessary information to parents about the proposed activity and may consider an information session desirable.

Parents are responsible for providing the College with all relevant medical and personal information about their child.

Parental attendance at a camp or retreat will only be allowed if special circumstances exist. Parents will be required to produce a current and valid Police Check before attendance at a camp or retreat.

Parents must agree to respect and support all decisions taken by the Activity Leader throughout the duration of the camp or retreat.