

SAFETY AND WELFARE OF STUDENTS LEARNING WITH AN EXTERNAL PROVIDER POLICY

1. PURPOSE

Chatham Primary School fosters a supportive and engaging learning environment which aims to develop motivated students who exhibit positive attitudes to learning. We acknowledge the unique abilities of every child and encourage an inquisitive approach to learning to assist students to reach their academic, social, emotional and physical potential. As part of developing the whole child, the school fosters a shared partnership between children, staff, parents and the wider community, by offering services, programs or incursions/excursions that complement and extend personal well-being and classroom learning by engaging experts and resources from outside the immediate school community, within a safe and supportive environment.

Chatham PS accepts a duty of care to students accessing an external provider at the school or organised by the school off site during school hours.

2. DEFINITIONS

An incursion is an activity that involves school visitors / external providers who provide a performance, lesson, program or service for students onsite.

An excursion is an activity that involves school visitors / external providers who provide a performance, lesson, program or service for students offsite.

The school may access outside services to provide support for students and staff which may include: psychologists, speech pathologists, occupational therapists, counsellors, teachers, mentors, tutors (instrumental, drama, artists etc), social workers.

3. GUIDELINES FOR ACTION:

- Principal Class must approve all external providers.
- Co-ordination of the external providers will rest with the Principal Class Officers or approved Teacher in Charge depending on nature of service.
- Checklists should be considered by all staff when looking to utilise external providers. See appendix *
- The school still has a duty of care to its students when they are attending an external provider organised by the school. Appropriate supervision and suitable workplaces to carry out the program, service or activity must be met in line with DET requirements, both on and off site.
- All external providers must meet all regulatory requirements.
- 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 do not have VIT registration, a Working With Children card, and appropriate individual indemnity insurance will be required. The school will provide appropriate supervision of our students.
- The Business Manager will manage the record keeping of all external providers and ensure copies of their qualifications are provided prior to them delivering their program/service.
- Principal Class Officers or the Teacher in Charge 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.
- Prior written parental /guardian consent will be gained for any program or service a student may attend that is provided by an external provider where:
 - families are charged a fee
 - a health professional is involved as part of a referral.
- Students who do not attend an organised activity provided by an external provider during school hours will be provided with suitable alternative activities, under the supervision of another classroom teacher.

4. BASIS OF DISCRETION

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Incursion Policy and Excursions, Camps and Special Activities Policy.

APPENDIX: GENERAL GUIDELINES / CHECKLIST FOR WORKING WITH EXTERNAL PROVIDERS

External providers assist with various elements of the educational program, 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.

External providers approved/accepted by the school should:

- be appropriately qualified or trained for their specific activity
- evaluate their programs or presentations
- be cost effective
- enhance the role of the teacher not replace it
- be consistent with school policies
- align with current practice, principles and research where appropriate
- be consistent with school values of inclusion and respect.

Teacher checklist:

- 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?
- Have the age and developmental level of the students, the content and the resources been considered?
- Has a planning session with the presenter been conducted?
- What feedback will be given to the presenter?
- What are the costs?

Qualified or trained external providers:

- have formal qualifications or relevant experience
- 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:

- link learning with educational outcomes as outlined in the school program
- engage in planning with the teacher
- enhance the central role of the teacher
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External providers are to consider socioeconomic, cultural and religious issues:

- use information about student cultural experiences to create an atmosphere respectful of cultural diversity
- have well-established and acceptable positions on particular issues which are consistent with the values promoted by the school.
- not promote intolerance of religion, disability, race or gender

Status: *Approved by School Council June 2015*

Policy Review Date: *2018*