**OUTDOOR EDUCATION AT BETHANIA**

(July, 2018)

**Purpose**

There is strong evidence that engaging in the outdoors and practical field trips can foster independence, self-esteem, communication skills and add value to classroom learning. Our school camps focus on peer group bonding and developing teamwork skills, utilising the excitement of practical learning in a safe and nurturing natural environment. Our students also learn new skills, engage in challenging activities and experiences.

The Outdoor Education Program at Bethania Lutheran School aims to provide students with valuable educational and interpersonal skills outside everyday school life and responsible interaction with the environment. The school camps aim to provide new physical and social challenges for students and encourages them to develop responsibility for themselves and others.

**Guidelines**

* All students from Years P-6 will be provided with the opportunity to participate in a sequential range of outdoor activities that encourages physical development, aligned with the Australian Cuurriculum.
* All students will have opportunities to participate in activities which encourage and develop both social and emotional development.
* Through interaction in different situations from those normally experienced, social skills such as co-operation, consideration and courtesy will be further developed.
* Through challenges in different situations from those normally experienced, physical capabilities will be tested and developed within a safe, supportive and encouraging framework.
* All students will have opportunities to learn and acquire knowledge, values and skills to understand, appreciate and assume the responsibility of caring for the environment.
* Outdoor Education activities will enhance classroom programs and be a further extension of the integrated and project-based learning approaches to the curriculum.
* All students will have access to the program, regardless of gender, race, family circumstances, or special need where suitably trained, experienced staff can be provided.
* Dates for all Outdoor Education activities will be determined at the beginning of the school year.
* The opportunity will be provided for payments for Outdoor Education activities to be made in instalments however, full payment must be completed two weeks prior to camps.
* Staffing of Outdoor Education activities will involve class teachers of the relevant year level as well as other supporting staff, provided this results in minimum disruption to the rest of the school’s programs as approved by the Principal.
* Parent helpers attending any Outdoor Education excursion or camp will not be expected to pay the cost of the activity

**Camps**

At Bethania Lutheran School a sequential Outdoor Education camping program will be undertaken from Years 3-6:

* Year 3

*Extended day/overnight at school.*

The students will attend an outdoor education-based excursion, currently to Paradise Country, and undertake the educational program *Living vs Non-Living.* This will be followed by afternoon activities, dinner and a sleepover at school in the Bethania Lutheran Church.

* Year 4

*3 Day/2 night with a beach setting*.

This currently held at Currimundi Recreational Camp on the Sunshine Coast.  Students and staff head the Sunshine Coast to develop teamwork onsite and at the surrounding environmental locations to understand nature through direct experiences, fostering deeper human/nature relationships. This camp has excellent facilities, with instructor led activities. Activities on offer include body boarding, low ropes course, night games, an indoor rock wall and a two-story caving system, which is the first of its kind in Australia, as part of the extensive list of activities available. This program is supported by the unique chance to experience typical camp dorm living conditions, making a bed, looking after belongings, working with others and extends to helping in cleaning after meals.

* Year 5

*3 Day/2 night with a bush setting.*

This is currently held at Camp Qld Lake Moogerah. The program for our Year 5 students introduces adventure-based learning through nature-based activities. Students are offered the chance to experience challenges form a range of recreation activities, including the tumble tower challenge, kayaking, night games, team challenges, bush walks, basic camp craft and bush survival skills whilst exploring the natural world. Dormitory styles cabins are simple but comfortable. Watch out for the Mud Commando course- guaranteed to be the muddiest fun ever!

* Year 6

*Sydney, Canberra and Jindabyne (Perisher Blue Resort - Smiggins Hole)*

6 Day/5 nights with a historical and political themed educational tour to Sydney and Canberra with 2 days skiing. Students fly to Sydney then bus to Canberra, visiting numerous significant

buildings and landmarks that are part of the current and past Australian political landscape or of national importance, including Old and New Parliament House, the Australian War Memorial, The Australian Institute of Sport, the National Geoscience centre, the High Court, Questacon, the National Arboretum, Mount Ainslie lookout and the National Capital Exhibition. Students all get the opportunity to spend 2 days and 2 nights in Jindabyne in a ski lodge and bus/ski tube to Smiggins Hole for supervised and differentiated ski lessons.

**Implementation**

Outdoor Education venues, activities and experiences will be linked to the current year-level unit of HPE, Integrated Studies and the Social and Emotional programs at school.

There will be particular consideration toward;

* the educational purpose of the excursion or camp and its contribution to the curriculum.
* maintenance of full records, including documentation of the planning process.
* venue selection, i.e. the suitability of the environment and/or venue for the excursion.
* safety, emergency and risk management
  + assessment of excursion risks
  + procedures in the event of an emergency
  + arrangements if the excursion needs to be cancelled or recalled (for example, due to forecast severe weather conditions)
  + first aid and dietary requirements
  + any other measures necessary for student and staff safety and welfare.

• confidential, student and staff medical and dietary information forms which provide parents or carers with the opportunity to vary any information previously given to the school. These must be completed before each Principal approved excursion. Schools must:

* + ensure that the teacher-in-charge takes the medical information forms on the excursion
  + ensure these forms are available to other excursion staff in emergency situations
  + keep copies of the forms at the school.
  + In consultation with parents regarding notification of nutritional requirements and food allergies and/or some students with Anaphylaxis Management plans, the Teacher in Charge of the Outdoor Education activity will, to the best of his/her ability, ensure that foods and liquids provided for the duration of the activity would not be harmful to particular students.
* staffing and supervision:
  + there are sufficient staff to provide appropriate and effective supervision.
  + staff/student ratio for all external excursions and camps will be:

1:10 Adult : student ratio for Years 4-6.

1:6 Adult : student ratio for Years 1-3.

1:3 Adult : student ratio for Prep Class.

* + the experience, qualifications and skills of each staff member (including volunteers, instructors, etc) will allow them to provide effective supervision in general and for planned activities (as applicable).
  + there are appropriate levels of supervision in view of the activities undertaken and students involved.
* student preparation and behavioural expectations (see next section for details)

•   requirements for any adventure activities

•   transportation requirements

•   communication requirements

•   that staff and students have appropriate clothing and personal equipment

•   that group or technical equipment is in good condition and suitable for the activities undertaken

•   that continuous instruction is provided for students remaining at the school during the absence of staff accompanying the excursion

* any information which has been provided by specialists in the activities proposed
* that the excursion meets the requirements of any school-level policy or procedures
* completion of an online notification of school activity form three weeks prior to the activity
* first aid requirements
* any other measures necessary for student and staff safety and welfare.

**Student Preparation**

A parent information booklet will be distributed prior to the Year 3 Camp to give information of the school camps program.

A parent information meeting will be held prior to the Year 6 SYDCANSKI camp to provide a forum for a two-way discussion between organisers and parents.

In preparation for camps excursions, the school will advise:

* students of:
  + the organisational arrangements
  + relevant safety arrangements or emergency procedures
* students and parents/carers:
  + of expected standards of behaviour
  + that in extreme cases students may be sent home from an excursion at the cost of the parents.
  + informed consent and medical details required to be completed and signed by a legal parent or guardian

**Behaviour Issues:**

In extreme cases where any student who demonstrates that they are likely to endanger themselves or others, damage property, significantly interfere with the learning of others or refuse to follow teacher or camp staff instructions, the excursion staff, following consultation with and the approval of the school Principal, may decide to return a student to their home from an excursion. Excursion staff should:

* advise the student’s parent or carer of the:
  + circumstance associated with the decision to send the student home
  + time when the parent or carer may collect their child from the excursion or the anticipated time that the student will arrive home.
* consider the age and maturity of the student when making travelling arrangements.

**Excursions**

* Teachers will ensure that students participate in a safe and engaging series of learning tasks in line with the planning that has gone into the excursion.
* All staff and students will abide by the rules, guidelines and agreements outlined by the venue and the excursion planning.
* All members of staff will, to the best of their ability, remain flexible and support other staff throughout the duration of the excursion, to ensure a smooth and harmonious time for all personnel involved in the excursion.

**Ongoing**

Evaluation of the Outdoor Education program will be coordinated by relevant teachers in conjunction with the Principal to monitor the effectiveness and appropriateness of the Outdoor Education learning experiences offered.

**Related Forms and Policies:**

Child Protection Policy

Staff Code of Conduct

Classroom Teacher Role Description

Teacher Aide Role Description

Privacy Policy

Camp and Excursion Planner

Camp Medical and Information form

Variation to Routine Checklist