EXCURSION POLICY 2012
To be revised in 2015

RATIONALE
At St. Patrick's Primary School, we believe that offering excursions to children enables students to further their learning and social skills development in a non-school setting. Excursions complement, and are an important aspect of the educational programs offered at our school.

AIMS
At St. Patrick’s Swansea, we aim to:
- Reinforce, complement and extend learning opportunities beyond the classroom.
- Develop an understanding that learning is not limited to school and that valuable and powerful learning takes place in the real world.

IMPLEMENTATION
- An excursion is defined as any activity beyond the school grounds.
- The principal must approve all excursions.
- The principal and staff will determine a schedule of excursions for the school year and ensure that all excursions are maintained at a reasonable and affordable cost, and that they are thoroughly planned and conducted in a manner that complies with all CCI requirements.
- Students will pay for individual excursions as they occur.
- Supervision ratios: Minimum student : staff ratios
  The principal may use his/her discretion for each of the following ratios:
  - Up to 6 students / daytime: One staff member. Principal’s discretion may be used.
  - 7 to 20 students / daytime: Two staff members. At least one staff member must be a teacher.
  - 21 to 40 students / daytime: Three staff members. At least one staff member must be a teacher.
  - 1 to 20 students / overnight: Two staff members. At least one staff member must be a teacher. At least one staff member of each gender.
  - 21 to 40 students / overnight: Three staff members. At least one staff member must be a teacher. At least one staff member of each gender.
  - Add one staff member as the number of students increases to 41, 61, 81, etc.
- Students will not be excluded from excursions simply for financial reasons. Parents experiencing financial difficulty, who wish for their children to attend an excursion, will be required to discuss their individual situation with the Principal. Decisions relating to alternative payment arrangements will be made by the Principal on a case-by-case basis.
- Students in Years 5 and 6 are offered the opportunity to participate in overnight excursions. A condition of attendance at overnight excursions is that parents have accepted their responsibility to pay school fees as per the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle’s Fees Management Policy 2008.
- A small amount of funds will be available to assist families experiencing financial difficulty. From time to time, the P & F may be approached on a needs basis.
- All families will be provided with all excursion details and will be given sufficient time to make payments for excursions. Children whose payments have not been finalised before the departure date will be unable to attend unless alternative payment arrangements have been organised with the parent.
Office staff will be responsible for managing and monitoring the payments made by parents and will provide classroom teachers with detailed records on a regular basis.

An appropriately designated ‘Teacher in Charge’ will coordinate each excursion.

An adequate first aid kit, a suitable outdoor emergency kit (if required) plus a mobile phone will be carried by all groups at all times, and the leader will ensure that copies of signed medical declarations for each student accompany the excursion. A vehicle will be available or within close proximity at all times.

All risk assessment forms are to be completed prior to planning. These are to be signed off by the Principal and stored in the risk assessment folder in the Principal’s office. A copy of the risk assessment should be taken on the excursion.

Completion of the form/s does not indicate approval for the excursion has been granted. These forms must be handed to the principal who will make the judgment.

Where possible costs will be kept to a minimum. This may mean that for class excursions the option of parents providing transport may be considered. All drivers must hold full licenses and have appropriate insurance cover.

The school will continue to provide the opportunity for teachers to update their first aid skills.

Parents may be invited to attend an excursion at the discretion of the teachers. When deciding on which parents will attend, the Teacher in Charge will take into account –

- Any valuable skills the parents have to offer. eg. bus licence, first aid etc
- The need to include both male and female parents.
- The special needs of particular students.
- All parents attending an excursion should have filled out the Child Protection Declaration.

Parents selected to assist with an excursion may be required to pay costs associated with the excursion.

Only children who have displayed sensible, reliable behaviour at school will be invited to participate in school excursions. Parents will be notified if a child is in danger of losing their invitation to participate in an excursion due to poor behaviour at school. The decision to exclude a student will be made by the Principal (or Assistant Principal in his/her absence), in consultation with the classroom teacher and the Teacher in Charge.

Excursions will be postponed or cancelled if the weather, conditions or other factors create potential risks.

**BUDGET**

Funds will be made available to ensure that financial stress is not a hindrance for families not to allow their child to attend the excursion. Staff will be provided with approved CPR and Emergency Care skills. First aid bags will be supplied and maintained through the school budget

**EVALUATION**

Evaluation of this policy will take place:

- Every three years, or
- with significant staff changes, or
- as the need arises, or
- When changes in government or diocesan policy occur.

This will be done by:

- Teaching staff.
- Other nominated personnel.

This will be done at:

- Staff meetings.
- Policy review meetings.