



## EXTERNAL PROVIDERS POLICY

### RATIONALE

External providers may include contractors, psychologists, counsellors, mentors, consultants, tutors, speech pathologists, occupational therapists and social workers engaged by the school to support student learning and wellbeing needs.

External providers may also be engaged to deliver specific outdoor or adventure activities or a whole program either on or off-site.

They may also provide expertise in certain school-based activities and can form a valuable addition to a program. The school accepts a duty of care to students accessing an external provider. All students have the right to feel and be safe in the programs offered by external providers. The school will ensure regulations relating to VIT registration, Working with Children cards, current police check or appropriate qualifications. Program facilitators will work under the direct supervision of school staff and external providers working with students not under the direct supervision of a staff member will remain in line of sight at all times. All precautions will be taken to ensure contractors ie plumbers are not working in the vicinity of students.

Clear and open communication that occurs well in advance of a planned program is the key to an effective and well-informed relationship between a school and an external provider.

This policy forms a critical component of ensuring that Harrisfield PS is a Child Safe School.

### DEPARTMENT POLICY:

Schools cannot sign 'Waivers of liability' on behalf of students. Regardless of the role of the external provider, schools retain overall responsibility for the program and any activities involving students, including first aid. Where not directly responsible for the instruction of the activity or assisting the instructor, the teacher present must understand the activity and the environment in which it will be conducted. This teacher must confer with the designated instructor about the supervisory role and establish areas of responsibility. If the teacher is not the designated instructor he/she is to act on the advice of the designated instructor on technical safety issues.

### RELATED SCHOOL POLICIES:

Child Safe,  
Duty of Care  
First Aid  
Camps Excursions  
On-site Supervision

### AIMS

- To provide support for students with additional learning, physical, social or emotional needs.
- To enable students to further their learning by complementing classroom lessons with experts and resources from outside the immediate school community by offering special programs.
- To create and maintain a learning environment that facilitates the development of the whole person and to promote a healthy, supportive and secure environment for all students.

### IMPLEMENTATION

- All external providers must be approved by the Principal and a thorough check should be completed by the school to ensure that they are appropriate for the program.
- All external providers to sign in at the office prior to commencement of their work.

- All external providers to be inducted on the school's behavioural expectations while on site and must sign a Child Safe Code of Conduct.
- External providers/contractors performing works to the facilities of the school to view the Asbestos Materials Assessment.
- Contractors must communicate on a regular basis with the DET Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee.
- All external providers will only be permitted to bring vehicles on school grounds at the Principal Team's discretion.

**Prior to commencement of a program the school should ensure that the external provider/contractor has:**

- a current public liability insurance certificate (minimum \$10 million) provided by an APRA approved insurer
- discussed with the school who has responsibilities for first aid, emergency communications and other specialist equipment
- demonstrated that staff have the correct qualifications and/or experience for their specific role/s
- a documented system in place to ensure that students are supervised by either a registered teacher or an approved staff member with a current Working with Children Check
- ensure that supervision of students is overseen at all times by a staff member or other individual who has a completed Working with Children Check
- discussed with the school who will be responsible for emergency procedures, and that these are well understood prior to the excursion taking place
- read the relevant sections of the Department's Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors and understood their obligations under these guidelines.

Students will attend programs offered by external providers only with the prior written consent of their parents.

Students who do not attend an activity provided by an external provider during school hours will be provided with suitable alternative activities.

Arrangements will be made for students not attending an incursion to continue their normal program at school, under supervision of another classroom teacher where practicable.

**Support agencies approved/accepted by the school must:**

- Be qualified or trained
- Evaluate their programs or presentations
- Be cost effective
- Enhance the role of the teacher not replace it
- Align with current practice, principles and research
- Consider socioeconomic, cultural and/or religious issues

**Teacher checklist:**

- Has a planning session with the presenter been conducted?
- Can people within the school provide a similar service?
- Do you have the support of the principal, the staff and the relevant committees?
- Have costs been considered?
- Will the incursion/excursion be fully funded by parents?
- Have parents been consulted?
- Have students been consulted? (student voice and agency)
- Have the age and developmental level of the students, the content and the resources been considered?
- Will feedback be given to the presenter?
- Will students be supervised by a teacher at all times?

**Qualified or Trained External Providers:**

- Have formal qualifications or relevant experience
- Are recognised by other professional groups
- Provide a range of support options
- 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 have an understanding of current practice, approaches and research:**

- Avoid using drug related testimonials
- Avoid using scare tactics
- Avoid using an 'information only' approach
- Understand what constitutes an effective program
- Link learning with educational outcomes as outlined in the school program
- Engage in planning with the teacher
- Enhance the central role of the teacher
- Consider socioeconomic, cultural and religious issues:
- Use information about student cultural experiences to create an atmosphere respectful of cultural diversity
- Ask questions about the impact of religious beliefs on the implementation of education programs
- Use strategies proven to be effective in dealing issues pertinent to students from a variety of socioeconomic backgrounds
- Have positions on particular issues which are consistent with the values promoted by the school.

**RESOURCES:**

Planning support - the following materials are essential to guiding the planning and approval process:

☐ Planning - these pages support your decision-making role

☐ Forms - these checklists will inform external providers about the responsibilities of principals, teachers and school councils in preparing for outdoor and adventure-based excursions.

**EVALUATION**

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle.

**ENDORSEMENT**

This policy was ratified by school council on September 17<sup>th</sup>, 2018

This policy is due for review in 2021