

OFF-CAMPUS ACTIVITIES POLICY 2026

Forming part of Giant Steps Tasmania's *Health & Safety Manual*

Policy Statement

The revision of this policy has been brought forward (from November 2025) to reflect the information contained in the Department for Education, Children and Young People (DECYP)'s *Off-Campus Planning Procedures*. While understanding that, as an Independent School, Giant Steps Tasmania is not currently (as of May 2024) required to adhere to the Department's procedures concerning Off-Campus Activities, the School recognises the depth and extent of the work that has gone into developing the DECYP's procedures. It therefore believes that following these procedures as far as is practicable will further improve the School's good practice around student safety and the enjoyment of Off-campus Activities.

Students at Giant Steps Tasmania are given opportunities to engage in enriching off-campus activities such as excursions, cultural performances and sporting activities.

The School understands that successful and purposeful off-campus education activities require careful development and organisation and need to be:

- an integral part of the overall learning experience of students
- adjusted in scope and demand to the capabilities of the students involved
- based around a supportive environment that provides for the differing needs and aspirations of students
- adequately resourced to ensure safety and to enhance positive outcomes
- part of an inclusive programme to enhance the learning experiences of all students

When developing specific programs teachers take into account:

- relevant laws and regulations, e.g. personal floatation devices worn on water where required
- the age, physical and psychological capabilities of the students and their previous experience
- the minimum age recommendations for particular activities
- the preparation required for students to be adequately instructed in the proper use of equipment and safety requirements
- the development of particular skills among the students needed to engage safely and successfully in the activity
- the relevant special requirements such as in relation to e.g. Aboriginal sites, UV protection, behavioural expectations and the minimal impact code for environments
- the provision of equity afforded by the activity for all students
- experience and/or maturity for established classes and continuous programs such as Outdoor Education classes
- the condition of the equipment and the details of the program to ensure activities are safe and minimise potential risks
- advice from the Australian Adventure Activity Standards and associated Good Practice Guides where appropriate
- that the choice of venue is suitable, safe and risks are minimised
- current Public Health advice as appropriate, for example COVID requirements.

Giant Steps Tasmania adheres to the restrictions on the types of permitted activities that the DECYP puts in place from time to time which, at present, are as follows:

- Bungee jumping
- Canyoning
- Caving
- Hang gliding
- Parachuting or skydiving
- Shooting and any use of firearms (including combat sport, paintball, laser tag and other weapons-based real life action games)
- Flying ultra-light aircraft
- Quad bike riding including All Terrain Vehicles (ATVs) and side-by-side vehicles
- Flyboarding (air or water)
- Water skiing
- Jumping castles
- Horse riding (excluded by the School's insurance provider)

It is the intention of Giant Steps Tasmania that all students should take part in off-campus activities. It might however sometimes be necessary, in order to ensure student safety, to limit student involvement during a session, and/ or on one or more occasions. This would only take place after a Risk Assessment had been carried out and with the intention of involving the student in the activity as soon as it was safe to do so.

Purpose

This policy is designed to give clear guidance to staff regarding the development of off-campus activities and programs and how to ensure the safety of all participants.

Implementation

Parent/carer consent for students to participate in off-campus activities is required annually as part of the re-enrolment process. Students will not be able to participate in off-campus activities if consent has not been given.

The following roles and responsibilities are clearly understood by everyone involved in the planning and execution of Giant Steps Tasmania's off-Campus activities.

The Principal

The principal has a non-delegable duty of care to students which extends to when students are participating in a school off-campus activities and has overall responsibility for all off-campus education programs and for individual activities that make up the program.

The Principal is responsible for:

- Ensuring the Procedures for any activities are met.
- Appointing a registered teacher as Teacher in Charge for class excursions who has the authority to make decisions that will be supported and implemented by all other excursion and/or activity staff.
- Approving operational arrangements including any variations to off-campus activities when discretion is used in decision making including modifying plans and actions based on advice from activity qualified guides or instructors.
- Ensuring specific risk management plans for the activity/activities are in place and adhered

to.

- Approving specific risk management plans for the activity/activities.
- Co-ordinating the on-site response to emergencies occurring during off-campus activities.

Teacher in Charge

The Teacher in Charge is responsible for:

- Communicating details of the planned off-campus activity to all parents in writing via a platform such as StoryPark or by email, informing them they can withdraw consent for their child's participation if they wish.
- Ensuring only students who have parent/ carer consent participate in the off-campus activity.
- All decisions made during the course of the activity.
- Adhering to the requirements set out in approved operational arrangements and risk management plans.
- Modifying plans and actions on advice from an activity qualified guide or instructor in response to prevailing conditions on the site of the activity.
- Conducting a head count to ensure that no student is missing which must be completed and recorded in an attendance list before, at relevant times during, and at the completion of the activity.
- Ensuring the attendance list is photocopied and supplied to the admin assistant at the beginning and end of activity and returned to the school office for filing with all other off-campus activity documentation when reasonably practicable or as soon after the activity as possible.
- Organising, coordinating, implementing and supervising particular activities. This may also involve seeking and responding to advice from activity qualified guides and instructors.

Work Health and Safety Committee

The Work Health and Safety Committee is responsible for:

- Assisting the Principal to review Risk Management Plans for particular off-campus activities.

Non-teaching staff, external providers and volunteers

Non-teaching staff, external providers and volunteers are responsible for:

- Assisting teachers to support the safety, health and wellbeing, and supervision of students during an activity or for a group of students to whom they have been assigned.
- Adhering to the approved operation arrangements and risk management plans as directed by the Teacher in Charge.

To ensure student safety, no student may be taken off-campus at any time without the name(s) of the student(s) being written in the **Off-campus Book** kept at Reception.

Each off-campus activity will require different experience and qualifications, but off-campus activities undertaken by Giant Steps Tasmania's students are informed by the following:

- All off-campus activities are accompanied by a registered teacher, or a person designated by the Principal to lead the activity.
- All staff involved in an off-campus activity are approved by the Principal.

- The class teacher is responsible for providing the Principal with an outline of proposed activities for the term by the specified date on the school calendar.
- The class teacher completes the risk assessment form and off-campus activities procedures form (if necessary) for any approved off-campus activities at least 2 weeks prior to the activity and submits this to the principal.
- The Principal reviews the risk assessment form and will determine if it is necessary to request details of public liability insurance from an external provider. Generally off-campus activities with a low risk rating will not require public liability insurance to be obtained. Off-campus activities with a moderate risk rating will require details of appropriate public liability insurance to be obtained.
- The class teacher has the authority to make decisions that must be implemented by all other staff engaged with the activity.
- The staff involved have the specific knowledge, qualifications and experience required to ensure student safety and optimize student enjoyment of the activity.
- The staff involved follow the procedures required for each particular activity including any guidance/ instruction issued by any External Providers.
- The appointment of external providers, expert sports coaches, outdoor and adventure leaders as well as volunteers and other support people must be approved by the Principal.
- All adults involved in the delivery of off-campus activities for Giant Steps students must have in-date Working with Vulnerable People cards (i.e. **not** necessary for employees of third-party providers who have **no contact** with Giant Steps Tasmania's students).
- The class teacher on the activity ensures that:
 - the group has a First Aid kit
 - EpiPens and inhalers are available for students requiring them as part of their anaphylaxis and asthma management plans
 - at least one adult in the group is a suitably trained first aider
 - the group has a fully-charged mobile phone
 - all students have appropriate clothing, footwear and equipment required for the activity
 - all students have adequate food, water and sun protection, as required
 - they have sighted an in-date Working with Vulnerable People card for any external providers and/ or their employees who will have contact with Giant Steps Tasmania's students
 - Giant Steps Tasmania has, on-site, a list of students taking part in the activity and the expected time the group will be returning.

External Providers

An external provider/contractor is a business/individual paid by the school to provide a venue, service and/or expertise for a particular activity (e.g. skiing). It also includes camps which have adventure activities.

Prior to students taking part in an Activity, the external provider must supply Giant Steps Tasmania with:

- details of recent experience (including maintained log books) if the third party is leading the activity;
- current qualifications of staff, accreditation (including Working with Vulnerable People) and any other relevant training if the third party is leading the activity and/ or will have contact with Giant Steps Tasmania's students;

- their risk management plan relevant to the activity which will be reviewed by the Principal as part of the Planning and Approval stages to ensure that the external provider is able to meet the needs of students with ASD, if the third party is leading the activity;
- details of appropriate insurance including public liability (if required) minimum \$10 million
- details of the cost of the Activity

External providers may have their own consent forms which parents/ carers may be required to sign. If parents/ carers have any questions about such forms, they may contact the Principal who may direct them to the external provider to discuss their questions further.

Giant Steps Tasmania will pass on information from external providers/contractors to parents/ carers so that parents/ carers can make informed decisions about whether to consent to their child's participation. Students who have reached the age of 18 are encouraged to make such decisions for themselves, if they are able to do so.

Planning and Approval Stages

Not all off-campus activities (e.g. walks to the park) will involve the Planning and Approval Stages detailed below. The Principal uses an informal risk assessment to decide which off-campus activities need to go through the Planning and Approval Stages before they can form part of Giant Steps Tasmania's Curriculum & Learning Experiences.

These are the stages:

- An Off-campus Activities Proposal (see Addendum 1) is submitted to the Principal with necessary paperwork as follows:
 - a Risk Assessment Form (see Addendum 2) relating to the specific activity
 - a Procedure for undertaking the activity (Addendum 3), if required
 - External Provider paperwork, if required
 - Route Map, if required
- The Off-Campus Activities Proposal must be received by the Principal at least two weeks prior to the proposed activity taking place, unless the activity is to be conducted on, in or near water, in which case the Principal must receive the Proposal at least three weeks prior to the proposed activity taking place.
- The Principal considers the Proposal, the level of risk and the mitigating factors in place with an appropriate member of staff (usually from the WHS Committee)
- The Principal responds to the Activities Proposal
- Parents/ Carers are informed of the Activity via email or a messaging app.
- Necessary permissions and further Risk Assessments are undertaken
- Procedural documents are circulated to staff and included with this policy, if the activity is to become part of students' on-going curriculum. They are reviewed along with the policy unless an earlier review is required (e.g. change of external provider, safety concerns)
- All staff involved in an off-campus activity familiarize themselves with and follow the Emergency Procedures for Off-campus Activities (see Addendum 5)
- Off-Campus Activities are reviewed once a term by staff involved, WHS Committee member(s) and/ or Principal and within 48 hours if an incident or emergency situation occurs during the Activity (including the journey to and/ or from it)

Authorised by:	Paul Bowman
Position:	Chair of Board
Signature:	
Date:	
Original Policy developed by:	Chris Jacobsen
Position:	(Formerly) Education Administrator
Date developed:	March - August, 2016
Date of first review:	June – Sept, 2017
Date of this review:	May, 2024 (brought forward from November 2025)
Reviewed by:	Chris Jacobsen
Position:	Fairlight Educational Consulting
Staff consultation period:	April - May, 2026
Date for next review:	May, 2028

Addenda to Policy

Addendum 1: Excursion Plan & Budget Template

Addendum 2: Off-campus Activity Risk Assessment Form

Addendum 3: Off-campus Activity Procedures Template

Addendum 4: Off-campus Activity Planning and Approval stages

Addendum 5: Emergency Procedures for Off-campus Activities

Addendum 6: Consent Form (from Admissions Policy)

Addendum 7: SRC feedback on Off-Campus Activities

Addendum 1: Excursion Plan & Budget Plan Template

Term _____

Date	Activity	Curriculum Link	Price Breakdown	Total Expected Cost	Payment Method/Plan	Approved Pending Risk Assessment	If Approved			
							Add on GS Calendar	Book bus & driver	Submit risk assessment	Inform parents
Total Cost										

Addendum 2: Off-campus Activity Risk Assessment Form

Class:	
Proposed Activity:	Assessed by (teacher-in-charge):
Location:	Proposed Date of Activity:
Students who will be involved:	
Students in class who will not be involved + reasons:	
Time leaving GST:	Time returning to GST:
Transport to Activity:	Driver:

Risks: Likelihood & Consequences

Likelihood	Consequences				
	Insignificant 1	Minor 2	Moderate 3	Major 4	Catastrophic 5
1 (rare)	Neg	L	M	S	S
2 (unlikely)	L	L	M	S	H
3 (possible)	L	M	S	H	H
4 (likely)	M	S	S	H	VH
5 (almost certain)	S	S	H	VH	EXTREME

Key:

Negligible

Acceptable

Low

Acceptable with controls in place.

Moderate

Need to consider changes, but maybe acceptable to Giant Steps Tasmania as is.

Significant

Controls are required to reduce the risk score, if controls cannot be found refer Principal.

High/ Very High

Do Not Undertake the activity until controls to reduce the risk are in place. Principal must be informed of the risk. Call in an appropriate person to assist with the controls, especially if Very High.

Extreme

Do Not Undertake the activity if the risk cannot be reduced.

RISK*	Risk Rating Before Controls	Controls	Risk Rating After Controls	Completed (Y/N)

*** Ensure that risk of injury/ illness or of emergency situations occurring is considered.**

Signature of teacher-in-charge: _____

Reviewed by Principal: _____ **Date:** _____

Reviewed by other staff member:

Name: _____ **Signature:** _____ **Date:** _____

Document to be read and signed by ALL staff members participating.

Name

Signature

1.

2.

3.

4.

Addendum 3: Off-campus Activity Procedures Form

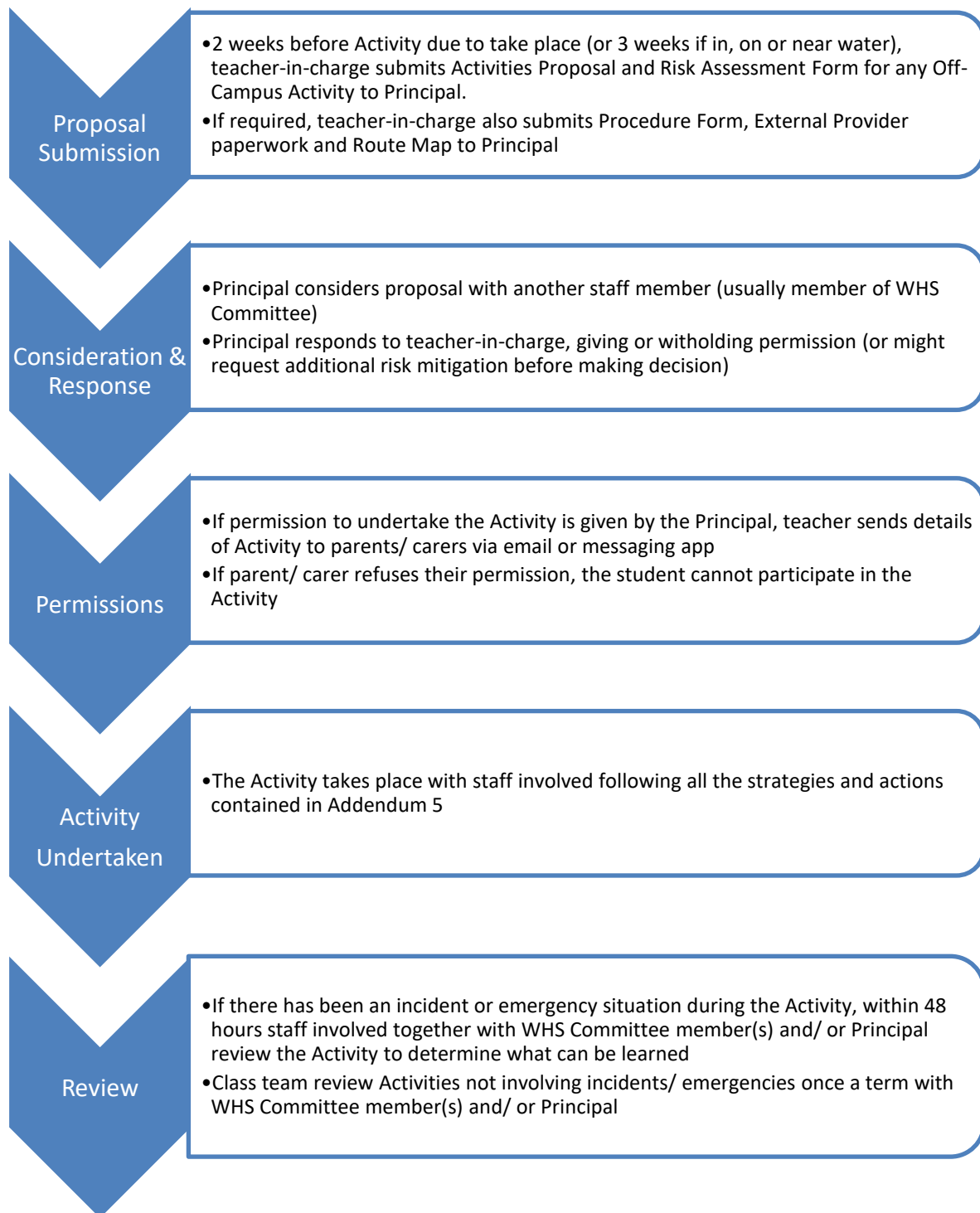
This form must be completed for all Activities which take place regularly and/ or involve an external provider and/ or which carry an element of physical risk. Once the procedures have been discussed with and agreed by the Principal, they will be circulated to all staff involved in the Activity and will be stored together with this Policy.

A Risk Assessment Form is also required.

Nature of Activity	
External Provider	
Contact details of provider	
Regularity of Activity	
Procedures relating to transport to/ from Activity	
Procedures relating to student behaviour and staff supervision at Activity	
Procedures relating to clothing & equipment for Activity	

Procedures relating to emergency situations that might occur during Activity	
Procedures drawn up by:	
Date:	
Agreed by Principal:	
Date:	

Addendum 4: Off-Campus Activity Planning and Approval Stages



Addendum 5: Emergency Procedures for Off-Campus Activities and Excursion

Action strategies

- Off-campus activities and excursions **must** be well-planned.
- Details left with the school **must** include routes, estimated arrival times, itinerary etc.
- The teacher-in-charge **must** also ensure that Risk Assessment Forms include specific strategies to cope with minor and major injury, illness or other crises.
- All participants **must** have a knowledge of these emergency procedures which is consistent with their role.
- Plans will vary in detail, according to the complexity of the crisis, the location and the mix of staff members and students, but they **must** cover the following:
 - response if a participant is lost, injured or becomes ill
 - means of communicating with the school contact person
 - first aid provisions
 - provision of health and personal care support to students with individual needs
 - nearest suitable alternative transport
 - the distance and potential time the party will be from medical help and the best method of obtaining it
 - telephone numbers and locations of emergency services and the fastest way of contacting them
 - emergency evacuation plans covering storm, flood, fire, accident etc.

Such plans should establish escape routes, particularly on bushwalking activities, and allow for the needs of all participants. A copy of the contingency plan **must** be left with the school contact person, together with the itinerary, list of participants and relevant medical information.

These plans must not be changed unless the safety and welfare of students is compromised by the continuation of these plans. The school contact person must be advised of any changes as soon as is practical.

School contact person

There **must** be a school-based contact person for all camps and excursions. This will usually be the Principal. This person **must** be contactable at all times for the duration of the event and have copies of:

- attendance lists
- student health and personal care information
- contact numbers of parents, family etc
- itineraries, including Estimated Times of Arrival (ETA)
- relevant maps, e.g. bushwalking route
- Risk Assessments with contingency plans.

The contact person should be aware of the relevant guidelines for emergencies, **must** be able to communicate readily with the travelling party (e.g. by mobile phone) and **must** be kept up-to-date on any variations to the itinerary.

In case of an emergency such as the failure of the group to arrive at any scheduled destination, or make a scheduled communication, the contact person would:

- immediately contact authorities and provide them with necessary information
- act as liaison between the school, emergency services and parents.

Communications

The teacher-in-charge of the off-campus activity/ excursion **must** ensure that effective communication systems are in place and operating. This may be as simple as notifying appropriate people of departure and expected arrival times. Regular communication may be needed between teachers and the school contact person depending on the Risk Assessment.

The means of communication required will depend on the location, environmental conditions, type of activity and the size and composition of the group. Specific mechanisms depend on the nature and degree of risk involved, but should include a fail-safe system that activates an emergency response when communication breaks down. Where appropriate, effective means of communication should be established between:

- smaller individual groups
- the group and the school
- the group and emergency services

Methods could include:

- visual contact
- fall-back positions
- contact points
- global positioning system (GPS) for locating position
- radios
- mobile or satellite phones

Note: Mobile or satellite phone operation must be checked and assured beforehand, as different networks have different coverage. Mobile telephones and some radios may be inefficient in some areas and atmospheric conditions, including hilly terrain and during electrical storms. Familiarity with the type of radio to be used is essential.

Bushfire prone areas

Camp or excursion planning **must** take careful account of contingency procedures during times of bushfire danger.

Off-campus activities and excursions in high bushfire danger areas during summer, particularly in the period December–March will not be approved.

Emergency services

For incidents requiring search or rescue, the police will co-ordinate the response and should be immediately contacted by the group, the school contact person or both. Emergency services can respond most effectively when they have accurate knowledge of the location and the nature of the group they are dealing with. The school contact person acts as liaison.

The emergency services are called on 000 (or 112 from a mobile phone).

Accurate and current knowledge is important. If a party diverges from an itinerary, the swiftness of an emergency services response can be seriously compromised.

Addendum 6: Consent Form (from Admissions Policy)

STUDENT DETAILS

Name	
Date of birth	

C. OFF-CAMPUS ACTIVITY CONSENT

I give consent for my child to be taken on excursions associated with Giant Steps Tasmania programmes.

I understand that this may entail walking outside the school environs and may require a student to travel on a school bus.

I understand that staff with current first aid and CPR qualifications will be present.

I understand that all Off-Campus Activities are planned in accordance with Giant Steps Tasmania's Off-Campus Activity Policy to ensure the safety of all participants.

I understand that as part of Giant Steps Policy, there are planning and approval stages which need to be completed before an activity can be undertaken.

These include:

- The submission of an Off-Campus Activities Proposal Form, or an Off-Campus Activities Procedure Form.
- The submission of a risk assessment, outlining any identified risks and mitigating factors in place.
- Collection of any required external provider documentation such as WWVP cards.

I understand that it may at times be necessary to limit a student's participation for safety reasons, based on Giant Steps Tasmania risk assessment procedures.

I also understand that it is the school's practice to allow participation to resume as soon as it is safe to do so.

I understand that for all major Off-Campus Activities (anything other than a community walk), I will be notified of the details by my child's class teacher, prior to the activity.

I can choose to exclude my child from an Off-Campus Activity by contacting the School Office.

The Off-Campus Activity Policy can be viewed on the Giant Steps Tasmania website, or by contacting the school office for a copy.

YES ☐

NO ☐

Addendum 7: SRC feedback on Off-Campus Activities (May 2024)

1. What is the best Off-Campus Activity you have taken part in?

- Agfest
- Anvers chocolate factory tour
- Craft fair
- Don River Railway, so that we could start and finish our movies.
- Any event with freebies
- The Launceston Museum
- At my old school, a camp to Port Arthur. There were cabins with a kitchen area where they cooked food for you. We had hot jam donuts. Downstairs there was an eightball table, five trampolines side by side and a basketball court.
- Mole Creek Community Garden
- Wallaby Walkabout Tour

2. Why was it the best?

- It was fun
- Chocolate
- Because you get a ton of freebies
- It was fun I guess. It wasn't boring. Most of the other ones were boring tours when they talk and talk and I don't understand
- Because I love trains like Thomas the Tank engine and I was making a railway movie
- Because there was free stuff
- Outside
- Relaxing

3. Are there any Off-Campus Activities you have taken part in that you did not enjoy?

- Table tennis
- No, unless you're counting the activities I liked, but something that I didn't like was part of the activity such as bad weather, getting hurt.
- The tours where there's lots of talking.
- The excursions at my old school where the excursion was all about school work and I was only doing mild stuff, because I wasn't as smart.
- Boring walking excursions

4. Why did you not enjoy them?

- Because it was boring
- It was loud and boring
- They were boring and I didn't understand them.
- Because it was just a walk, which we do anyway.

5. Are there any Off-Campus Activities you would like to take part in that you haven't yet?

- Beach
- Car museums in Launceston
- Hikes
- Airtime 360
- Toy world in Devonport
- Entally house
- Platypus house
- Turners beach berry farm
- Kart magic
- Wood working
- Seeing how a chocolate factory works
- Honey farm
- The Hive
- Bowling
- Seahorse World

6. Are there any reasons why it might not be possible to arrange some of these Activities?

- Weather
- Not enough money
- Not enough interest
- Time

7. Do you have any advice for your teachers and aides on how they could make Off-Campus Activities better?

- I don't know
- Let other students choose their favourite excursions for their last year in Grade 12.
- Have more fun ones.

8. Do you have any advice for your classmates on how they could make Off-Campus Activities better?

- Don't give up and try their best
- Stop screaming
- Be well behaved and don't ruin it for everyone.

SRC feedback on Off-Campus Activities (April 2026)

Feedback provided by SRC 14th April 2026

1. What is the best Off-Campus Activity you have taken part in?

- Too many to pick from
- All of them
- Maybe agfest
- Maybe one of the markets

2. Why was it the best?

- Got to choose what you're doing
- Get to hang out with a lot of people

3. Are there any Off-Campus Activities you have taken part in that you did not enjoy?

- Not really. Except for places I've already been to, but that's a personal issue
- No, we've liked them all

4. Why did you not enjoy them?

- N/A

5. Are there any Off-Campus Activities you would like to take part in that you haven't yet?

- Agfest
- Platypus House (for Blue Room)

6. Are there any reasons why it might not be possible to arrange some of these Activities?

- There would be activities in Hobart, but that's too far to travel.

7. Do you have any advice for your teachers and aides on how they could make Off-Campus Activities better?

- Not using the little bus, because it's not comfortable
- Take care of themselves

8. Do you have any advice for your classmates on how they could make Off-Campus Activities better?

- Listening to music
- Don't pay attention to others on the bus