

BUSHWALKING POLICY

Given the good fortune of being located in the midst of forests, Alice Miller and Candlebark students are enabled to enjoy bushwalking, in environments that are relatively hazard free.

The following precautions and procedures apply for student bushwalkers. They take into account the potential hazards which could be encountered, which comprise the chance of being hit by a falling branch or tree, the chance of snake or spider or insect bite, the possibility of contact with stinging nettle or other noxious plants, the risk of falling while running or climbing, the risk of drowning in the dams, and the risk of bites or injuries from encounters with domestic, farm or wild creatures.

1. The students are regularly briefed at morning meetings about the restrictions that apply to bushwalking and the procedures to be followed. In particular, there are regular briefings, including role-plays, about procedures to be followed in the event of snake or spider or insect bite. Students are taught that if someone is injured, one person must stay with them whilst another person returns to school to get help.
2. Students from grade 6 onwards are trained in first aid by the St John's Ambulance Association or similar, to a level II standard.
3. The boundaries of the properties are clearly fenced and students are made aware that they are restricted to these boundaries. The dam is securely fenced and the fence is checked regularly by the maintenance crew for damages or holes.
4. Students are not allowed into the bush during times of high winds, heavy rain, prolonged drought, or on days of high bushfire risk.
5. At other times, students of grade 4 age or older are allowed into the bush, but only in groups of three minimum. They must take with them a first aid kit. They must report out to a teacher. It is the teacher's responsibility to ensure that the students have a first aid kit and know how to use its contents. Students must inform the teacher of the direction in which they are going and how long they expect to be away. The teacher must nominate an alternate teacher to whom the students report upon their return, should the original teacher be unavailable, and the teacher must inform the alternate teacher of this arrangement.
6. Teachers must be vigilant about students with special medical needs, including diabetes, asthma and potential anaphylactic reactions, and ensure that appropriate medication is carried. If medical issues involve a high degree of risk, students cannot be given permission to go into the bush without an adult. Conservative standards must be applied, so that students with a significant risk of anaphylactic reaction to insect bites, for example, must be accompanied by an approved adult who carries and knows how to use an epi-pen.
7. Younger students may go into the bush with a teacher or other adult approved by the Principal, or with two secondary school students who have been adjudged sufficiently mature and responsible for this privilege. As above, another teacher must be notified of the group's plans, a first aid kit must be carried.
8. Students at Candlebark are taught from their earliest years in class and out of class (during cleanup and Friday electives) how to interact with domestic and farm animals in a way which will ensure the safety of both the students and the animals. Apart from snakes, spiders and insects, there are no wild creatures on the property

which pose a threat to humans... given that there have been no drop bear sightings in recent years...

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John Marsden