John XXIII College
Seek Justice

John XXIII College Guidelines for Parent Organised Activities

John XXIII College prides itself on the strength of the school community, including the students, staff, parent body and alumni. The strength of our community has given rise to some parent year groups organising their own activities, such as camping weekends at various locations in and around Perth.

We are encouraged that parents are seeking opportunities to form closer relationships with each other and each others' children. As well as the fun of closer relationships, there are hazards for the unwary. It is the purpose of these guidelines to assist parents in avoiding these hazards. Some of the avoidable hazards include: bullying, social exclusion and antisocial behaviour towards people outside the group.

The school's primary concern, as for parents, is for the physical and emotional wellbeing of the students. The reputation of the school and its students is also important to protect.

The school's experience in organising group activities outside school has provided some useful insights. The following matters are therefore provided for the consideration of parents thinking of organising or attending group student/parent activities:
• The school does not permit parents the use the school system for advertising nor organising privately organised activities.
• Any facilities involved in the group activity must not be booked under the school's name.
• The integrity of the school curriculum is important. Given that school attendance is compulsory, any activity that takes children out of school must be authorised by the school. Privately organised activities must, therefore, not interfere with the school programme and hours.
• The school calendar should be considered in terms of other activities in which the children and/or parents are involved, to avoid interference or conflicts.

Specific matters for consideration:
• Bullying – social dynamics can play out differently when large groups of children are in a less structured, less supervised environment. Some structured activities for the group including both parents and students are advisable, to try and minimise opportunities for this to occur.
• Medical/dental/emergency services – it is a good idea for all planning to attend privately organised group activities to confirm and identify access to emergency services, should they be required.
• Cost – individual parents may not be aware of other families' financial constraints, so this should be kept in mind when planning activities.
• Modelling behaviour – parents should be mindful of setting an example to impressionable minds, for example, the responsible use of alcohol in the presence of your own and other children.
• Representation – even if the activity is not booked in the school's name, please remember that you are likely to be identified as a group from the school. The school's reputation will be important for all students as they enter the workforce, apply for scholarships etc.
• Respect for other patrons – consideration should be given to other patrons of campsites/facilities that you may be utilising during the activity.

The following are a few websites that may be informative for all those involved in privately organised activities:
http://www.bullyingnoway.com.au http://www.drinkwise.org.au
http://www.alcohol.gov.au/internet/alcohol/publishing.nsf/brochure-teen-alcohol

This is by no means an exhaustive list, it is hoped that the issues raised in these guidelines will ensure that any future activities organised privately by parent groups will have positive outcomes for all involved.