



Title	Field Trip Policy
Effective Date:	November 27, 2019
Approval Date:	November 26, 2019
Approving Body:	Board of Directors
Supersedes:	

## Rationale

This policy is intended to provide administrators, teachers, support staff, parents, and students clear guidelines for the planning and approval of all off-campus activities.

Goals of the policy are to:

- affirm that Pacific Christian School encourages educational staff to consider off-campus learning experiences and service opportunities as an integral part of a student's learning experience
- provide policy guidelines to limit the risks to the safety and well-being of students, staff and others participating in all PCS off-campus activities
- provide staff with current best-practice guidelines and due-diligence expectations for planning off-campus activities
- provide clarity about the number, scope, and timing of off-campus activities at PCS.

## Guidelines

### A. General

For the purpose of clarity, PCS engages in three types of off-campus activities:

**Course-Based Activities:** These include activities that are directly linked to the learning outcomes of a specific subject in which the student is enrolled. Most often these are day trips.

**Extracurricular Learning Activities:** These include activities that are not directly linked to the learning outcomes of a specific subject, but that are intended to enhance cultural understanding, an appreciation for a subject or topic, or the development of Christian character linked to the PCS mission statement.

**Sport, Drama, or Music Activities:** These include sports competitions, concerts, festivals, or other activities where the students have spent time in advance preparing to represent PCS.

**A special note on International Trip approval:** International trips pose additional potential travel and other risks. In general, PCS will not approve travel to or through areas where Foreign Affairs Canada advises against travel. Additionally, such trips will comply with any applicable health notices/advice (which may, for instance) recommend or require vaccinations.

**Low-risk Trips** – for low-risk local trips\* that are less than a day in length, parents may provide permission via the annual low-risk permission form (that is generally completed as part of the admission/re-enrollment process). Examples of this type of trip would include: parks, farms, museums, concerts, plays, and sporting events. Parents will still be informed of such events as well as the intended purpose and inherent risks of participating. Use of the low-risk approval process must be approved by the Principal or Superintendent.

\* local is defined as areas within the Capital Regional District except for those areas to the west of the municipality of Sooke.

1. The maximum number of instructional days a group of students can be away from school for any one activity is five. When it is possible, trips longer than 3 school days should take place during non-instructional periods. Exceptions to this can be made at the discretion of the Superintendent.
2. PCS will take all reasonable steps to ensure that all students, regardless of financial limitations, will be able to participate in off-campus activities that are part of a course.
3. The Superintendent and the school Principals are collectively responsible for ensuring that an appropriate balance is struck in terms of the number and frequency of approved activities, the educational programs highlighted, the impact of activities on the entire PCS educational program, fund-raising efforts and coordination, and the financial impact of activities on the PCS community at large. The Superintendent will maintain a planning calendar of all off-campus activities of more than three days in length.
4. The PCS campus behavioural expectations as specified in all PCS and campus discipline policies such as the Student Handbooks and Staff Code of Conduct apply.
5. At the end of the activity students must be transferred to their custodians in an age appropriate and safe manner.
6. Medical protocols must be addressed as outlined in the Informed Consent Form.
7. At the discretion of the Principal or Superintendent, any activity may be cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances. Those circumstances may include, but are not limited to, political concerns, unusual health risks or unanticipated weather risk.

#### *B. Staff Sponsor*

1. The staff member initiating an off-campus activity is the Staff Sponsor (generally a teacher). Initiation begins with the completion and submission to the Principal of the “Pacific Christian School Field Trip Request Form”.
3. The Staff Sponsor must establish a clear purpose for the trip. Additionally, connections with the PCS mission/vision and/or the BC Learning Outcomes must be established.

4. When choosing other staff members or approved others to act as supervisors, the Staff Sponsor will consider student/supervisor ratio, gender requirements, areas of expertise, medical qualifications, and leadership abilities.
5. For trips not covered by the low-risk consent form, the staff sponsor must take information including phone numbers, medical information and procedures to follow for each trip participant.
6. Once the activity has been approved, the Staff Sponsor will inform the rest of the staff and office as soon as possible. The Staff Sponsor will also share a list of participating students with the office and staff well in advance and provide a confirmation list with the office at the time of departure.
7. For all out-of-country activities, the school will purchase travel/health insurance valid for the duration of the trip. The coverage must include repatriation insurance.
8. The Staff Sponsor will be the off-campus spokesperson for the activity off-campus .

#### *C. School Principal/Superintendent*

1. All events must be approved by either a Principal or the Superintendent.
2. The Campus Principal is responsible for the school academic calendar and will ensure that the number and type of off-campus activities are appropriate in a given year. The Superintendent in consultation with the Campus Principals will also determine a reasonable multi-year schedule for activities that have a greater impact on the educational program, teaching staff and the parent community.
3. The Campus Principal, in consultation with the Staff Sponsor, will make final decisions in terms of which students participate and which if any additional adults will be chosen to be chaperones.
4. In exceptional circumstances, the Campus Principal or Staff Sponsor may accept informed parental/guardian consent orally for participation in a field trip involving low-risk activities (as defined in the Field Trip approval form and below).

#### *D. School Office*

1. Each school Administrative Assistant will maintain a file of each approved volunteer drivers complete with a criminal records check, a copy of the driver's license, a copy of the driving abstract, and a copy of the driver's insurance (with a minimum of \$2 million third party liability insurance).
2. The school Administrative Assistant will also maintain a file of approved chaperones and coaches with evidence that they have undergone criminal records checks.

#### *E. Superintendent*

1. Any new multi-day proposals will need approval by the Superintendent.
2. The Superintendent is responsible for ensuring that the amount of liability insurance necessary for each activity is the amount recommended by the school's insurance provider.

3. Should there be some question about whether an off-campus proposal is consistent with this policy, the Principal will solicit advice from the Superintendent. The Superintendent may either approve/disapprove the proposal or ask for clarification from the Board.
4. The Superintendent (or a campus administrator designate, if they are unavailable) is the official on-campus spokesperson for all PCS off-campus activities.

### Transportation

1. Generally for trips during the school day, students are expected to use school arranged transportation.
2. Volunteer drivers may become approved PCS drivers when their file is complete. At the discretion of the school Principal that privilege could be revoked.
3. Drivers must comply with all the requirements of the BC Motor Vehicle Act with regard to the safe transportation of passengers. To be clear, this includes all requirements related to safety restraints (for example - seat belts, car seats and booster seats).
4. The school office, supervising teachers and drivers/chaperones should have a list of cell phone numbers of attending teachers, drivers and chaperones, along with a list of which students they are driving.
5. For trips not covered by the low-risk approval process, medical and emergency information as appropriate for each student, staff and volunteer should be in the vehicle (or with the attending teacher)
6. Drivers should be informed of any medical or unique conditions when transporting children.
7. Transportation and driver information should be submitted to the office along with a list of the children's names and relevant information. An updated list of certified bus drivers will be kept in the school office.

### Off- Campus Activity Categories

Due diligence with regard to off-campus activities involves a comprehensive evaluation of the activity in terms of, among other factors; the number of students involved, the potential level of risk to student safety, the amount of time students will be in the care of school personnel, the level of supervision required, and modes of transportation employed. To facilitate the preparation and evaluation process, PCS recognizes different categories of off-campus activities such as One Day Events and Overnight Events. Within each of these categories, activities are identified as being either Low Risk, Medium Risk or High Risk. The Policy mandates that activities identified as higher risk require a greater level of preparation and evaluation prior to being approved, and more stringent protocols during the activity.

### General Supervision Guideline –

In general, the level of supervision required for any trip should reflect the risk of the activity, and the age of the participants. Additional notes are found below.

## 1. One Day Events:

a. **Low Risk Activity:** This type of activity is very common at PCS. Trips such as these may have the following features:

- The activity does not involve a level of risk beyond what would be considered normal on school property or in a normal interaction within the community.
- Transportation to and from the event and the activity itself typically occurs during the school day
- All transportation is provided by a contracted bussing service or the PCS vehicle driven by a PCS approved driver.

Consent -

- Consent may be provided by the annual low risk trip approval process for trips if authorized by the school Principal or Superintendent. Parents must be informed in accordance with the low-risk process noted above.
- Otherwise:
  - Parents must be informed about the event in question no later than one week before the event. In the event of a season or repeated activity, parents can give consent for multiple trips.
  - If not approved as part of the annual low risk trip approval process, parents must complete a written “Informed Consent” form to indicate acknowledgement of risks and consequences of injury inherent in the activity.  
(Appendix B: Informed Consent of Parent/Guardian and Acknowledgement of Risk Standard Form)

B. **Medium Risk Activity:** Additional features may include:

- The activity involves greater risk than would be experienced in a normal school day at school
- The activity requires additional time before and/or after the typical school day

Consent -

- Parents must be informed about the event in question no later than one week before the event. In the event of a season or repeated activity, parents can give consent for multiple trips.
- Parents must complete a written “Informed Consent” form to indicate acknowledgement of risks and consequences of injury inherent in the activity. (Appendix B)

C. **High Risk Activity:** Additional features of this type of activity may include:

- Significantly more risk than would be experienced at school or regular interactions in the community. These activities might include, but are not limited to: rock climbing, scuba diving, multi-day backpacking trips, hikes with exposed cliffs, high ropes courses, river rafting
- These activities may include multiple vehicles
- The leaders of any activity should hold an appropriate level of certification and training for the activity they are leading. The training must be up to a standard expected in the industry. This would include national standards for outdoor guides and certification in technical aspects of specific activities, such as kayaking or rock climbing.

Consent -

- Parents must be informed about the event in question no later than one week before the event. In the event of a season or repeated activity, parents can give consent for multiple trips.
- Parents must complete a written “Informed Consent” form to indicate acknowledgement of risks and consequences of injury inherent in the activity.  
(Appendix B: Informed Consent of Parent/Guardian) and may also include third party waiver forms.

## 2. Overnight Events:

Supervision –

There will be a minimum of 2 supervisors for any overnight trip. For trips with mixed sex participants, a minimum of one male and one female supervisor (PCS employees and PCS approved volunteers) are required. All trips require enough supervisors to maintain a minimum ratio of one supervisor for every 15 students.

a. **Low Risk Activity:** Trips such as these may have the following features:

- Activity limited to the province.
- All transportation is provided by a contracted transportation service or the PCS vehicle driven by a PCS approved driver
- Aside from overnight accommodation and provision of meals, the activity does not involve a level of risk beyond what would be considered normal on school property

Consent -

- Parents must be informed about the event no later than one month before the event wherever possible.
- Parents must complete a written “Appendix B: Informed Consent of Parent/Guardian” form to indicate acknowledgement of risks and consequences of injury inherent in the activity.

**b. Medium Risk Activity:**

- Transportation factors that increase travel risk such as travelling at night, in adverse weather or significant highway travel should be considered
- The activity involves greater risk than would be experienced in a normal school day at school
- The activity or duration of the activity may increase supervisor or participant fatigue
- Includes any trips out of province

Consent -

- Parents must complete a written "Informed Consent" form to indicate acknowledgement of risks and consequences of injury inherent in the activity. (Appendix B: Informed Consent of Parent/Guardian)

**c. High Risk Activity:** Additional features of this type of activity may include:

- Transportation factors that increase travel risk such as travelling at night, in adverse weather or significant highway travel should be considered and/or
- The activity involves significantly greater risk than would be experienced in a normal school day at school and/or
- The activity or duration of the activity may increase supervisor or participant fatigue and/or
- Includes any trips out of province

Supervision Ratio -

- There will be a minimum of 2 supervisors for any overnight trip with a minimum of 1:15 ratio supervisor to student. For trips with mixed sex participants, a minimum of one male and one female supervisor (PCS employees and PCS approved volunteers) are required. All trips require enough supervisors to maintain a minimum ratio of one supervisor for every 15 students.
- For trips over 5 days, we need to bring one extra chaperone over and above the ratio requirements in order to give each chaperone a half day off during the trip in order to rest.

All trips require a PCS staff member, PCS approved volunteer or third party first aid attendant with current and appropriate first aid certification.

Informed Consent includes:

- Purpose
- Specific risks associated with the trip/activity
- Itinerary (dates, departure and return times, schedule of planned activities) Risk assessment for each activity
- Supervision
- Transportation and accommodation arrangements
- Behavioural expectations
- Emergency contact information
- Emergency planning/Cancellation of trip information
- Student medical and personal information

- Costs
- Student insurance requirements as necessary
- Fundraising initiatives if any
  
- Parents must complete a written “Informed Consent” form to indicate acknowledgement of risks and consequences of injury inherent in the activity
- Parents and students need to be informed that if students violate the school’s behavioural expectations, students may be sent home at the expense of the parents.