



CATHOLIC REGIONAL COLLEGE  
CAROLINE SPRINGS

# Student Cultural Immersion And International Exchange Policy

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| Date Approved    | June 2019   |
| Review Date      | June 2022   |

# Table of Contents



## Contents

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| <b>Table of Contents .....</b>  | <b>2</b>  |
| <b>Student Cultural Immersion and International Exchange Policy .....</b> | <b>3</b>  |
| Rationale .....   | 3         |
| Policy Statement.....   | 3         |
| Scripture .....   | 3         |
| <b>Student Participation in Cultural Immersion Opportunities.....</b>     | <b>4</b>  |
| Application .....   | 4         |
| <b>Students Procedures on a Cultural Immersion Tour.....</b>              | <b>5</b>  |
| <b>Cultural Immersion (Sister School Partnerships).....</b>               | <b>6</b>  |
| Benefits of a Sister School Partnership .....                             | 6         |
| Purpose of Homestay .....   | 6         |
| Responsibilities of Parties Involved in Homestay .....                    | 6         |
| <b>Student Code of Conduct – (Cultural Immersion Tour).....</b>           | <b>9</b>  |
| <b>Cultural Immersion Tour Endorsement Form .....</b>                     | <b>11</b> |
| <b>Student Checklist .....</b>  | <b>20</b> |
| <b>References .....</b>   | <b>21</b> |

# Student Cultural Immersion and International Exchange Policy



## Rationale



Participation in Cultural Immersion Tours are an optional addition to College activities and allow students to develop and grow beyond a classroom environment. Melbourne Archdiocese Melbourne (MAC's) *Horizons of Hope Framework* encourages students to embrace difference and diversity and develop a deeper understanding of self. Our Cultural Immersion Tours also links to the Victorian Curriculum capabilities: Intercultural and Personal and Social. Through these learning experiences, students will better understand themselves and manage their relationships with others. Taking part in international travel allows students to increase their independence, self-confidence and personal growth (Stone & Petrick, 2013).

## Policy Statement



At Catholic Regional College Caroline Springs, Cultural Immersion Tours are viewed as an additional and optional learning experience, which aims to complement and support classroom learning as well as develop skills such as confidence building, improved academic performance, growth and independence and a more global perspective of the world. Students are encouraged to take part in the various Cultural Immersion opportunities that the College has to offer with a strong focus on their strengths and interests. This policy must be read in conjunction with the Catholic Education Commission of Victoria (CECV) *Guidelines for Interstate and Overseas Excursions*.

## Scripture



Proverbs 22:6

Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it.

# Student Participation in Cultural Immersion Opportunities



## Application



Participation in Cultural Immersion Opportunities at Catholic Regional College Caroline Springs are optional and are open to students in Year 9 and 10. Year 9 students are invited to express their interest in either the **Italy Tour** or the **Kokoda Trail** whereas Year 10 students are invited to express their interest in the **STEM Trip, Italy Tour** or the **Central Australia Trip**. Families wishing to apply for a Cultural Immersion Tour are required to be full fee-paying and up to date with all College school fees. They must also submit a **Code of Conduct** and **Endorsement** (see Appendix 2 and 3) and meet the Student Selection Criteria below before receiving provisional approval. Full approval will be given once students have met all requirements set by the Tour Leader and Deputy Tour Leader/s.

## Student Selection Criteria

Students wishing to participate in a Cultural Immersion Tour must address the following criteria:


- be a full fee-paying student and up to date with all College school fees.
- demonstrated commitment to our College motto *Live Fully Act Justly*
- demonstrated commitment to the Cultural Immersion Tour they are applying for
- demonstrated commitment to their academic studies
- ability to work well in a team environment
- the Student Endorsement form is signed by the Homeroom teacher and Year Level Leader and both agree that the students is suitable for the tour
- the Code of Conduct is signed and understood by the students and parents
- the students' family is up to date with College school fees
- there are no behavioural, physical, social, emotional concerns that may prohibit the student from fully participating in the tour
- students studying a language will be given preference to attend the Italy tour
- hosting a student from Italy is a reciprocal requirement of attending the Italy tour

## Withdrawal from Participation in a Cultural Immersion Tour

- If families wish to withdraw a student from a tour, they are to do so in writing before payments are made. All deposits and payments for a tour are non-refundable by the College.

- If a medical issue or an unforeseen circumstance occurs such as a death in the family, the Tour Leader will work with the family and travel Insurance provider to determine if a refund can be offered.
- If a student fails to meet the requirements of the Code of Conduct and/or other requirements set by the College, their application may be rejected. No refunds will be given.

## Students Procedures on a Cultural Immersion Tour



Whilst partaking in a **Cultural Immersion Tour**, students are expected to:

- abide by the Tour Code of Conduct at all times. Breaches to the code may result in consequences. Please see the Code of Conduct document (Appendix 2) for more details
- provide the Tour Leader with all relevant documentation including a valid passport, current medical information and immunisation records, and other documentation as requested by the Tour Leader
- look after their own personal belongings including passports and luggage. Any changes to travel itineraries that occur as a result of a lost passport will be paid for by the student and not the College
- be respectful to staff and students alike during the tour
- follow instructions given to them by the Tour Leader whilst with the group and whilst doing 'out of direct line of sight activities'
- always remain contactable with the Tour Leader
- fully participate in all activities unless a Tour Leader has given direct permission to sit out
- respect hotel rooms and leave them in an orderly state
- follow the instructions of the Tour Leader swiftly in the unlikely chance of an emergency

Whilst partaking in a **Cultural Immersion Homestay**, students are expected to:

- be respectful of the cultural differences that may arise during homestay
- inform the Tour Leader of any concerns that may arise regarding their host family immediately
- be conscious that they are representing the College and therefore act in an appropriate manner when at the hosting school and during their stay with the host family

- abide by school rules and expectations whilst spending time at the hosting school

### **Promotion of Cultural Immersion Tours (students)**

All students that attend a Cultural Immersion Tour are required to assist in promoting future tours. This may involve speaking at Staff Meetings, Assemblies, Parent Information Nights etc. It may also involve creating promotional resources such as videos and presentations.

## **Cultural Immersion (Sister School Partnerships)**



### **Benefits of a Sister School Partnership**



A Sister School Partnership is a reciprocal relationship between two schools with a clear set of goals. The goals can include developing students' intercultural understanding, language learning, broadening students' perspectives, community engagement and building teaching capacity. Sister school partnerships can also enhance the language program in your school. (Sister School Resource Kit, 2015).

### **Purpose of Homestay**



The purpose of the homestay program is for students to be able to:

- Have the experience of living with a family in the host country
- Develop a deeper understanding of the culture and customs of the host country
- Develop communicative competence in the language of the host country
- Become familiar with and appreciate the host family's lifestyle during the homestay period
- Develop new friendships with host sisters/brothers
- Develop intercultural understanding and awareness

### **Responsibilities of Parties Involved in Homestay**



#### **The Host School will:**

- Develop a timetable for the visiting school during the period of homestay
- Ensure host families are suitably screened to participate in this program in line with Child Safe Policy

- Provide Student Profiles for their students and match host students based on common interests (where possible)
- Ensure that any student feeling uncomfortable during homestay is moved immediately
- Cover the cost of excursions and incursions during the period of homestay with the exception of night excursions (subject to sister school arrangements)
- Assist host school staff to travel to school each morning
- Provide lunch and dinner to host school staff during the period of homestay
- Communicate relevant information and expectations to the host families in writing
- Plan for host students to experience daily school life with their host brother or sister
- Provide supervision of students at all times while at school
- Cater for special requests made by the visiting school (with the approval of the Principal)

**The Host Family will:**

- Provide suitable accommodation for the host student and accept them as a member of the family during the period of homestay
- Assist the host student with traveling to and from school each day and provide them with three meals a day
- Clarify any concerns with the Cultural Immersion and Exchange Coordinator at least 1 week prior to the arrival of the host students
- Plan weekend activities for their family and the host students to explore the visiting country and develop cultural awareness
- Communicate with the Cultural Immersion and Exchange Coordinator during the period of homestay to express concerns especially medical issues that may arise. Medical costs are covered through travel insurance and therefore host families will be fully reimbursed for these costs
- Ensure host students attend organised excursions and at times drop/pick up students off at a different destination (i.e. Watergardens Station)

**The Visiting School will:**

- Liaise with the host school to develop an itinerary during the period of homestay
- Endorse suitable participants for the exchange program (a maximum of 20 students per visit)
- Provide the host school with student profiles so that students can be matched accordingly
- Organise travel arrangements, flights and itinerary (for outside of the period of homestay) and communicate this to the Cultural Immersion and Exchange Coordinator
- Communicate with their own students to ensure they are content with their homestay arrangements

- Communicate with the parents of their own students to address questions or concerns
- Communicate relevant information and expectations to their own students in conjunction with the host school
- Respect school property, rules and procedures during time spend at school.
- Fully participate in incursions and excursion prepared by the host school unless a medical reason prohibits this





## Student Code of Conduct – (Cultural Immersion Tour)

Student Name:

Homeroom:

The aim of this code of conduct is to promote harmony within the group and maintain the safety and wellbeing of all students throughout the (*title of tour* \_\_\_\_\_). This code outlines the expectations of Catholic Regional College Caroline Springs regarding student behaviour while participating in the (*title of tour* \_\_\_\_\_). Prior to departure, this form is to be signed by each student and co-signed by his/her parent or carer. This code outlines the guidelines for students to follow, alongside the potential consequences for minor and serious breaches to the code.

### **Student Code of Conduct Guidelines:**

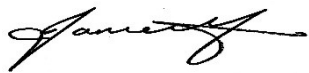
1. Students must follow the directions of the accompanying staff members at all times.
2. Students may not leave the group at any time without the explicit permission of one of the accompanying staff members, this includes being punctual to agreed upon timeframes.
3. Students are not permitted to smoke, consume alcohol or take any form of drug that is not explicitly listed on their medical consent form.
4. Students must not deviate from their allocated sleeping arrangements and should keep their hotel rooms neat and tidy at all times.
5. Students are expected to participate to their best ability in all planned activities, unless they have the express permission from an accompanying staff member to withdraw from a particular activity (i.e. through injury / illness).
6. Students are required to attend, and actively listen to any instructions given in arranged meetings and activities. When unsure of expectations, students are required to ask the appropriate clarifying question to ensure they fully understand the requirements of them for any given day/activity.
7. Any difficulties experienced throughout the trip, whether these be social, emotional or physical, should be communicated to a staff member so that they have the opportunity to address the issue.
8. Students are required to follow all safety instructions given, ensuring that they pack their bags with the appropriate equipment and medical supplies.
9. Students are not permitted to purchase/return to Australia with any inappropriate items, for example, knives, swords, light lasers, prohibited foods.
10. Students are responsible for their own belongings including their passport.
11. Students are to use social media responsibly and to contact family whilst on a Cultural Immersion Tour.

**Consequences for Breach of the Student Code of Conduct:**

Students should be aware that the possible consequences for uncooperative or inappropriate behaviour include one or more of the below listed points:

- Being assigned additional duties or chores during the program
- Participation in a restorative session during the program and back at school
- Being required to stay with teachers during certain activities or days
- Being excluded from certain activities
- Having sleeping arrangements altered to separate uncooperative students
- Exclusion from future international experiences and excursions

Major breaches to the Student Code of Conduct may result in the lead teacher of the excursion returning the student home prematurely from the program. This situation is reserved for serious misconduct, and will involve the students family bearing responsibility for any cost incurred in the return of the student to Australia prematurely.



Mr. Jamie Madigan  
Principal

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**Student Acceptance of Code of Conduct**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, understand and accept the code of conduct agreement. I understand that I need to adhere to the above stated code of conduct and guidelines. I understand that should I be in breach of any of these guidelines, I may be liable to face the consequences as stated above.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of «First» «Last»

**Parent/Carer Acceptance of Code of Conduct**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, understand and accept the abovementioned code of conduct agreement.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent / Carer for «First» «Last»



## Cultural Immersion Tour Endorsement Form

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Homeroom: \_\_\_\_\_

Which Cultural Immersion Tour are you applying for? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have a valid Australian Passport? (This is only for International Tours).

### 1. To be filled in by the applicants Homeroom Teacher

The applicant \_\_\_\_\_ is in my Homeroom and I endorse his/her application for this Cultural Immersion Tour. He /she has a record of good behavior and has demonstrated all the values reflected in our College Motto, Live Fully Act Justly.

|                       |                |                         |          |                   |
|-----------------------|----------------|-------------------------|----------|-------------------|
| <b>Please circle:</b> | Strongly agree | Agree with reservations | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|-----------------------|----------------|-------------------------|----------|-------------------|

Homeroom Teacher Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. To be filled in by the applicants Year Level Leader

The applicant \_\_\_\_\_ is in my Year Level Group and I endorse his/her application for this Cultural Immersion Tour. He /she has a record of good behavior and has demonstrated all the values reflected in our College Motto, Live Fully Act Justly.

|                       |                |                         |          |                   |
|-----------------------|----------------|-------------------------|----------|-------------------|
| <b>Please circle:</b> | Strongly agree | Agree with reservations | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|-----------------------|----------------|-------------------------|----------|-------------------|

Year Level Leader Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**I support my child's application to participate in a Cultural Immersion Tour at Catholic Regional College, Caroline Springs.**

Parent/Carer Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Student Checklist



Below is a checklist for students wishing to apply for a Cultural Immersion Tour.

| <b>TASKS</b>  | ✓ |
|---|---|
| 1. Express interest in a Cultural Immersion Tour to the Cultural Immersion and Exchange Coordinator |   |
| 2. Attend a Parent Information Night with parents and/or guardians                                  |   |
| 3. Ensure school fees are up to date  |   |
| 4. Complete Code of Conduct and Student Endorsement Form  |   |
| 5. Make deposit to reception (this is non-refundable)   |   |
| 6. Complete additional paperwork promptly as requested by the tour leader                           |   |
| 7. Attend all preparation sessions with tour leaders/deputy leaders prior to travel                 |   |
| 8. Maintain good academic results   |   |
| 9. Maintain positive behaviour  |   |
| 10. Finalise payment for the tour by set date   |   |
| 11. Finalise additional requirements as set by the tour leader                                      |   |

## References



Australian Learning and Teaching Council (2010). Finding Common Ground: enhancing interactions between domestic and international students.  
[https://emedia.rmit.edu.au/learninglab/sites/default/files/FindingCommonGround\\_web.pdf](https://emedia.rmit.edu.au/learninglab/sites/default/files/FindingCommonGround_web.pdf)

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