ACTIVITIES, EXCURSIONS AND CAMPS POLICY

Off-site learning and immersive experiences

Proprietor	Global Village Learning Ltd (ABN 52 090 773 470)
School	Global Village Learning, New Gisborne Campus
Policy owner	Board of Directors
Responsible officer	Executive Director, with Campus Lead for day-to-day implementation
Date adopted	May 2024 (reviewed October 2026)
Review cycle	Every two years
Next review	March 2028
Regulatory context	Ministerial Order No. 1359 (clause 13); Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic); Worker Screening Act 2020 (Vic); Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic); Crimes Act 1958 (Vic); Wrongs Amendment (Organisational Child Abuse) Act 2017 (Vic); Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic); Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth); Disability Standards for Education 2005 (Cth)

1. Policy overview

At Global Village Learning, off-site learning experiences are integral to our day-to-day learning. Off-site learning happens regularly and sometimes spontaneously. Off-site experiences may be small or large. When on off-site learning experiences, our community expectations continue. Our young people continue to support each other to take safe risks while exploring the world around them. We encourage our young people to interact with the world around them with curiosity and a sense of play.

2. Purpose of this Policy

Global Village Learning (GVL) offers a range of activities, camps and off-site learning experiences for young people as an integral part of their learning.

This Policy sets out the principles and framework governing GVL's approach to these activities. It should be read and understood by all those planning, leading and participating in such activities.

3. Principles

Activities, camps and off-site learning arranged by GVL have an educational purpose. GVL believes these experiences supplement, enrich and extend young people's learning.

The activities, camps and off-site learning offered and arranged by GVL are fully integrated within the curriculum.

GVL is committed to ensuring the activities, camps and off-site learning are inclusive. GVL ensures such experiences increase a sense of belonging for all young people, including those from differing economic, cultural, religious and linguistic backgrounds.

GVL endeavours to maintain a reasonable balance in the activities, camps and off-site learning it offers to young people, bearing in mind the potential impact on the taught curriculum, on parents' financial outlay and on the additional contributions made by Guides.

All activities, camps and off-site learning will be age-appropriate.

4. Aims of this Policy

To set out the framework within which activities, camps and off-site learning are conducted at GVL.

5. Key definitions and duty of care

GVL has a duty of care to ensure the safety and wellbeing of young people. In discharging this duty, the Executive Director and Guides are held to a high standard of care regarding our young people. The duty requires the Executive Director and Guides to take all reasonable steps to reduce the risk of harm to young people wherever and whenever the young person is in the care of GVL.

It is reasonable to assert that the duty of care expected of Guides on off-site learning experiences exceeds that of the comparatively safe, predictable and familiar school environment.

The duty is non-delegable, meaning that it cannot be assigned to another party.

The legal and regulatory requirements underpinning the Child Safe Standards will continue to be met by GVL in full throughout all such activities:

- GVL's duty of care, including GVL's duty to meet the Child Safe Standards as set out in Ministerial Order No. 1359, cannot be delegated
- parent volunteer helpers involved in child-related work (as defined under the Worker Screening Act 2020 (Vic)) must hold a current Working with Children Check and have shared these details with GVL.

6. Planning and risk assessment

All activities, camps and off-site learning undertaken by GVL require a detailed risk assessment, including contingency planning for emergencies. Risk assessments are recorded in the Compass young person management system (Event Module). Guides must complete the risk assessment in order for the event to be published.

As part of the risk assessment, any off-site learning site will be well researched in advance. The Guide-in-charge must check the bushfire risk in the activity location and obtain copies of the Emergency Management Plan for bushfire preparedness. Guides involved in the activity should review the Emergency Management Plan for bushfire first aid.

All medical forms, permission forms and information letters must be checked off by the Guide-in-charge.

7. Approval

GVL has clearly defined procedures for the approval of the different types of activities undertaken:

- trips and off-site learning experiences involving overnight stays require the approval of the Executive Director
- the Campus Lead is responsible for overseeing and approving the annual calendar so that GVL's overall camps, off-site learning and incursions program is balanced
- planning and information must be provided in the required format before approval can be given. The risk assessment must be completed before approval.

8. Inclusion and affordability

GVL is committed to ensuring that its activities, camps and off-site learning experiences are inclusive. GVL plans activities that are within the financial reach of most families and will seek to ensure that the total financial burden over the lifetime of a young person at GVL is not excessive.

9. Guide-in-charge and GVL contact person

9.1 The Guide-in-charge

Although it will often be the case that a team of adults is involved in the preparation and supervision of the activity, the Executive Director will nominate one Guide as the Guide-in-charge with direct responsibility for all aspects of the event, including the safety of young people.

During an overnight or extended activity and when the Guide-in-charge is rostered off duty, the role of Guide-in-charge may be delegated to another named Guide. The Guide-in-charge should carry a school mobile phone and charger at all times.

9.2 GVL contact person

The Executive Director or the Campus Lead is on call for the duration of the activity or event, except as specifically delegated when the contact person is rostered off-duty. Arrangements must be made so that the Guide-in-charge is able to communicate with the GVL contact person, or the delegate, at all times during the event.

10. Parent communication

The plans for activities, camps and off-site learning should state clearly the way in which parent communication will take place, both before and during the activity:

- parent communication relating to the activity or off-site learning experience will be channelled through the Guide-in-charge so that parents have a single point of contact
- GVL will ensure parents have clear information as to the itinerary for the event and the range of activities being proposed. The plans include contingency arrangements
- any communication with parents will be done through the Guide-in-charge of the activity or event
- for longer trips and off-site learning, arrangements will be made by the Guide-in-charge and school reception for real-time communication (usually by SMS) about the expected return to school so that parents are able to make plans for meeting and picking up their young people.

11. High-risk activities

High-risk activities will only be approved where there is a clear educational benefit for young people. High-risk activities will always be voluntary and approved by the GVL Board before the off-site learning or camp. The Executive Director will ensure that even greater attention is paid to GVL's duty of care, the risk assessment, supervision and Guide training.

12. Parental consent

GVL will obtain digitally informed consent from parents in advance of any activity, camp, off-site learning experience or trip, and has clear procedures to manage that process. GVL will ensure that parental permission is obtained from the person or people empowered to provide consent, specifically in cases where custody or care of the young person is shared between one or more parents or guardians.

GVL will take all possible steps to ensure consent to attend is received. Digital and reminder communications will be sent to parents or guardians. If written consent is still not received by the day of an off-site learning experience, verbal consent over the telephone will be accepted, but only after parents or guardians are reminded about the details of the activity.

In the case of overnight trips, the young person will not be permitted to take part unless digital consent has been received.

The consent form is a legal document. It must be accompanied by sufficient information to indicate that the parent is aware of the nature of the activity and that they give informed consent

for the young person to participate. Parents will be provided with information including, but not limited to:

- the educational purpose of the activity or trip, its link to the curriculum and the ways in which it enhances young person learning
- the locations, activities, itinerary being planned, including any 'free time' arrangements and contingency plans
- transport details
- sleeping arrangements (where applicable)
- safety information, risk management and information relating to any high-risk activities
- the names of the Guide-in-charge and GVL contact person, the number of adults, and the supervision arrangements
- behavioural expectations
- clothing requirements or dress code
- any part of the trip involving indirect or delegated supervision, or any activities in which young people will be self-reliant
- the expected total cost for the trip and details of any financial assistance available
- arrangements being made in response to emergencies, including medical care. Recommendations and requirements regarding insurance and vaccinations (as applicable)
- the program of preparation for young people.

Normally, separate consent forms are required for each off-site learning experience or camp. If there is a series of activities or similar activities taking place on a regular basis, one consent form at the beginning of the period can cover these, although where possible individual dates should be listed.

13. Medical information

The Guide-in-charge must have access to up-to-date medical information and an individual health care plan, where appropriate, for each young person. In giving consent to participate in the activity, camp or off-site learning, parents are required to confirm that:

- the medical information held by GVL is up to date
- medications and instructions for use are provided
- dietary requirements (medical rather than food preferences) are specified
- permission is given for the Guide-in-charge to take action in a medical emergency. The information for parents must set out the range of actions and decisions available to the Guide-in-charge and how the cost of those will be met.

14. Scope

This Policy applies to the GVL Board, Executive Director, GVL Guides, young people and parents involved in planning and participating in activities, camps and off-site learning.

15. Roles and responsibilities

15.1 The GVL Executive

- Reviewing and approving the annual activities, camps and off-site learning plan
- approving high-risk activities
- ensuring GVL's activities are non-discriminatory and inclusive
- the provision of a financial assistance scheme.

15.2 The Director of Village Operations

- Preparation of the annual activities, camps and off-site learning plan, including information about the ways in which these activities are integral to the curriculum, the groups of young people and Guides involved
- ensuring the plan takes into account the potential impact of such experiences on the taught curriculum, on parents' financial outlay and on the additional contributions made by Guides
- approval of each activity following a review of the detailed planning and risk assessment
- application of GVL's Supervision and Duty of Care Policy, including the setting of supervision ratios for different types of activities, camps and off-site learning.

15.3 The Guide-in-charge

- Planning the activity, camp or off-site learning
- the risk assessment (via Compass)
- young person safety
- overseeing bushfire preparedness
- emergency and contingency plans
- identifying, managing and recording Guide training needs
- communications with parents and with the named GVL contact
- holding young person medical records and individual health plans
- making decisions when an emergency arises, including those relating to the medical treatment of injured and ill young people
- directing supervising Guides, non-teaching Guides and volunteers
- directing any accompanying family members
- making and retaining records of the activity, including records of phone calls to parents, first aid interventions, accidents or other incidents involving Guides and young people, and young person behaviour matters
- providing the general office a final list of young people attending.

15.4 Supervising Guides

- Their individual duty of care to young people
- following direction of the Guide-in-charge
- supervising young people as directed
- being aware of emergency and contingency plans and their roles within those.

16. Selection of camp venues

Camp venues are selected on the basis of their safety and suitability for the activities proposed. It is recommended that venues be selected based on recent first-hand knowledge (for example, through an inspection of the site) of at least one member of the planning and supervising Guides. All safety requirements are considered and adequately resolved prior to the camp.

Criteria for the selection of camp venues include:

- health and hygiene
- buildings and facilities
- activity equipment and the conduct of activities
- certification and qualifications of venue staff
- participant supervision provided
- risks posed by other users of the site
- relevant accreditations

- emergency and risk management plans of venues
- fire precautions
- first aid facilities
- references from other schools
- recent first-hand knowledge of at least one member of the planning and supervising Guides.

17. Emergency communications

Parents and carers are advised of the telephone numbers (both during and outside school hours) for the designated GVL contact person in the event of an emergency.

Parents and carers are advised that during the off-site learning, if parents have reason to believe an emergency may have occurred (such as a media report), they should in the first instance call the contact person and not personnel on the off-site learning. This will keep the telephone lines free at the off-site learning site.

Arrangements for communicating with parents in the event of an emergency, cancellation or recall of the off-site learning are made in advance.

Consent forms remain at GVL with the designated school contact person, and copies are taken on the camp by the Guide-in-charge.

18. Cancellations and alterations

The Executive Director informs parents that any costs associated with the young person returning to school from an off-site learning experience due to illness or serious misbehaviour are the responsibility of the parent.

Parents are advised of the possibility of cancellations or alterations and of any cancellation fees imposed on GVL by third parties.

With respect to arrangements between GVL and third parties, the Executive Director carefully negotiates terms and conditions with third parties (for example, camp providers, specialist instructors) prior to accepting arrangements.

19. Supervision

The following general minimum guidelines for supervision apply:

- there must be sufficient supervisors to provide appropriate and effective supervision
- the experience, qualifications and skills of each supervisor (including volunteers and instructors) must be sufficient to provide effective supervision in general and for planned activities
- for official GVL off-site learning, the activity must be under the control of a Guide employed by GVL and at least one other off-site learning supervisor must be present.

A Guide in charge of an off-site learning experience cannot delegate their duty of care to a young person or non-Guide.

The Executive Director ensures that off-site learning supervisors have levels of first aid training appropriate to the off-site learning activities and location.

There must be appropriate levels of supervision in view of the activities undertaken and young people involved. The nature and location of the off-site learning and the activities to be undertaken must be considered.

20. Off-site learning supervisors

Off-site learning supervisors must be approved by the Executive Director, must have read the Child Safety Code of Conduct, and may include:

- Guides employed by GVL
- other adults on a volunteer or paid basis, including parents or carers, education support Guides, community members or trainee Guides.

Off-site learning supervisors who are not registered Guides and who will provide supervision of young people:

- must hold a current Working with Children Check (unless exempt as a VIT-registered teacher)
- must have agreed to and be compliant with the Child Safety Code of Conduct.

Where approved off-site learning supervisors who are not Guides employed by GVL are in attendance, they can be included in the supervisor-to-young person ratio for the duration of a specific activity for which they have a designated supervisory responsibility, or for the overall ratio for the program where they are on duty and available on the same basis as other supervisors (usually 24 hours).

The specific roles and responsibilities of each supervisor (Guides, instructors, campsite staff, volunteers) must be clarified and understood by all supervisors and young people prior to the commencement of the off-site learning.

20.1 Specialist instructors

Where specialist instructors are employed, they must:

- have the necessary skills or qualifications for the activity
- have appropriate experience for the age and skill level of the young people.

While specialist instructors have the technical knowledge and expertise to instruct young people, GVL Guides have overall responsibility for the safety and welfare of the young people, even where GVL Guides do not directly provide the instruction.

21. Emergency planning for camps

- The Guide-in-charge ensures all young people and adults attending the camp are aware of evacuation and emergency procedures
- when staying at a residential campsite, emergency procedures are explained as soon as practicable after arrival and a trial evacuation exercise is carried out immediately to ensure that procedures are appropriate and Guides and young people are familiar with them
- planning covers arrangements if the off-site learning needs to be cancelled or recalled, for example due to forecast severe weather conditions or an emergency
- emergency procedures include the effects of an emergency on young person supervision, in the event of off-site learning supervisors being required to assist injured young people or to go for help
- young people who may have difficulty communicating in an emergency because of age or disability wear identity tags on off-site learning
- Guides leaving GVL on a school camp carry a mobile phone, first aid kit and asthma plans, other relevant medication, emergency anaphylactic kits and management plans where applicable
- seat-belted buses are required for all camps
- GVL Board-approved off-site learning, including school camps, must have an emergency response plan
- Guides take mobile phones to the camp. The Guide-in-charge is responsible for checking if mobile phones are available at the camp.

22. Fire danger and fire bans

- Risk assessments are undertaken for bushfire in the activity location

- the Executive Director reviews planned off-site learning ahead of forecast days of significant fire risk or total fire ban days and decides whether the off-site learning should be cancelled
- if an off-site learning is not cancelled, special fire safety precautions may be required, depending on the location
- when required, GVL follows its Emergency Management Plan and Emergency Management (Bushfires) procedures for all off-site activities.

23. First aid and medication

- At least one Guide responsible for each group of young people has first aid qualifications
- the Guide-in-charge ensures that young person medications and permission medical forms are always available at the site, and that all camp supervisors are aware of special medical issues, medication requirements or special dietary needs of any young person or Guide if appropriate
- one Guide is designated to take responsibility for administering young person medication if required, following consultation with parents or carers and appropriate medical practitioners. Administration of medication is noted on Compass
- GVL provides a first aid kit appropriate for each camp location as well as asthma plans and emergency asthma and anaphylactic kits and management plans where applicable. The Guide-in-charge is responsible for collecting these prior to leaving.

24. Young people's behaviour

- Parents are notified if a young person is in danger of losing their invitation to participate in an off-site learning experience due to poor behaviour at school. The decision to exclude a young person is made by the Executive Director in consultation with the Guide and Guide-in-charge
- young people and their parents or carers are made aware that acceptable standards of behaviour are expected during a school camp
- behaviour expectations apply consistent with the Young Person Wellbeing and Engagement Policy and the Bullying Prevention Policy
- in extreme cases, a young person may be sent home from an off-site learning experience or camp at the cost of the parents.

25. Off-site learning not involving adventure or physical activities

An off-site learning experience is defined as an activity organised by GVL whereby young people leave GVL grounds for the purpose of engaging in educational activities (including camps, adventure activities and sport). It does not include work experience.

Significant factors in determining what constitutes adequate supervision include the age, maturity, knowledge of behaviour of groups from previous experience of the young people, the nature and location of the off-site learning, and the mode of transport required. GVL understands its duty of care requires it to ensure that young people are appropriately supervised during the activity, camp or off-site learning.

Guide to young person ratios for off-site activities and camps:

- local day off-site learning: minimum one off-site learning supervisors per fifteen young people (1:15)
- base camps in residential premises or under canvas: minimum one off-site learning supervisors per ten young people (1:10)
- local study camps in residential premises: minimum one off-site learning supervisors per ten young people (1:10)

- local and interstate tours: minimum one off-site learning supervisors per ten young people (1:10).

26. Adventure activities

An adventure activity is an activity that involves greater than normal risk, which may include:

- travel into a relatively undeveloped area of the country in which vehicle contact is difficult or uncertain
- confrontation with natural environmental challenges requiring greater reliance upon personal resources than would normally be required in day-to-day life
- less than normal contact by person or telephone with medical and other public services available in normal day-to-day life
- exposure to the natural elements with less than normal protection provided in day-to-day life.

Adventure activities include, but are not limited to:

- abseiling
- artificial climbing and abseiling walls
- base camping
- bushwalking
- canoeing and kayaking
- cross-country skiing
- cycling
- horse riding
- orienteering
- rafting
- rock climbing
- ropes courses
- sailing
- scuba diving
- snorkelling
- snow skiing
- water skiing
- wind surfing.

27. Related policies

- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Child Safety Code of Conduct
- Supervision and Duty of Care Policy
- Young Person Wellbeing and Engagement Policy
- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Visitor Policy
- Volunteer Policy
- Procurement Policy
- Data Management Policy
- Anaphylaxis Policy.

28. Compliance and review

This Policy must be complied with at all times. Failure to comply with this Policy may lead to disciplinary action including termination of employment or engagement. Serious cases may result in legal proceedings or referral to appropriate authorities.

Endorsement

Endorsement by Board	28 October 2026
Review date	October 2026
Next review date	October 2028