Introduction:
It has long been recognised that a person’s learning takes place not only in a classroom but through broader life experiences. Appropriately planned and supervised retreats, camps and excursions which enhance the relevant curriculum assist greatly in the holistic development of students.

Definition:
A retreat, camp and excursion is any Our Lady of the Southern Cross College student activity conducted within and outside the College site that is organised by the College and authorised by the College Principal.

Participants are any students, College staff and parent helpers of Our Lady of the Southern Cross College; as well as retreat, camp and excursion facilitators.

Retreats, camps and excursions can range from a brief visit of less than one hour to a local point of interest; to an extended journey occupying a number of days, weeks or months requiring overnight or long term accommodation both within Australia and overseas.

Values:
The Retreat, Camp and Excursion Policy gives expression to the six Defining Features of Catholic Schools (Voices: 2001) which are inherent in the creation of a college faith community.

The Retreat, Camp and Excursion Policy seeks to reflect truth, learning, faith, community, service, equity and compassion, openness, joy, sense of wonder, trust and responsibility, respect, reconciliation and witness as espoused by Jesus. The College desires that these values are imbedded in the retreat, camp and excursion experience.

Policy Statement:
Our Lady of the Southern Cross College has a responsibility to provide educationally based retreat, camp and excursion opportunities. Retreats, camps and excursions will be diligently planned, risk assessed, managed, supervised and monitored in a manner which ensures the health, safety and security of participating students, parent volunteers and staff, as well as others who may be affected by the conduct of the retreat, camp and excursion.
Consequences

The College will ensure that:

- Retreats, camps and excursions are educationally based within the context of the College curriculum.
- The College retreats, camps and excursions program Prep to Year 12 is developed with the following considerations:
  - College needs and resources
  - Student needs: physical, emotional, social, intellectual and spiritual
  - Financial capability/capacity of parent community
  - Senior subject requirements for example biology and geography field studies
- Retreats, camps and excursions are inclusive, with all students within the specific learning group provided with the opportunity to participate:
  - All effort will be made to ensure students are not excluded due to financial reasons
  - All effort will be made to include students with special and behavioural needs
- The duty of care for students while on retreats, camps and excursions is ultimately the responsibility of the college staff and may be delegated to parents, caregivers, volunteers or employees of external organisations who assist on or facilitate retreats, camps and excursions.
- Teacher to student ratio is approved by the Principal and takes into account factors such as: age of students, their maturity, specific needs of students, anticipated behaviour, location of retreat, camp and excursion and nature of activities to be undertaken.
- Supervision and accommodation arrangements on overnight and extended retreats, camps or excursions ensure that no college staff or accompanying adults are placed in a position where there is potential for allegations of improper conduct to be made.
- Student protection obligations and requirements outlined in the TCEC Student Protection and Risk Management Procedures and the Diocesan Code of Conduct are carried out throughout all stages of a retreat, camp and excursion.
- A retreat, camp and excursion risk management plan is developed and documented on a risk management plan proforma; and includes:
  - Hazard identification
  - Risk assessment
  - Control options
  - Monitoring and review of all activities undertaken
- Parental consent and medical information and consent to medical attention forms must be obtained from parents or caregivers prior to commencement of retreat, camp and excursion.
- Toowoomba Catholic Education Office is notified of retreats, camps and excursions outside the Catholic Diocese of Toowoomba, including overseas trips, prior to such excursions being undertaken.
- All excursions must be planned using the appropriate forms and authorised by the College Principal.