



JOHN PAUL COLLEGE RETREAT POLICY 2-A1

Rationale

School retreats are an integral part of the life-long faith formation of young people. They promote systematic, intentional catechesis as part of the comprehensive evangelisation of students.

Catholic school retreats are relational at heart. To be effective, retreat programs acknowledge the individual's unique reality and bring the power of the Gospel into contemporary culture in a way that engages and empowers young people.

The Catholic school retreat aims to put students in 'communion and intimacy with Jesus Christ' (GDC 80).¹ Through the retreat experience students come to know Christian love and are exposed to a Gospel centered way of life. Students hear the Gospel and are empowered to connect the Gospel message to their lives and to find ways of continuing the Church's mission. They participate in the life of the Christian community through liturgy and through activities which emphasise growth in Christian faith.

2. Definitions

The term retreat refers to time away from the normal school program where students have the opportunity to reflect on their relationship with God. The emphasis is on students' awareness of the presence of God in their lives. Retreats may vary in style and duration. They include experiences of prayer, discussions, reflective silence and quiet time alone. The celebration of the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist is strongly encouraged.

3. Principles

3.1 Retreats aim to provide experiences for students to know, contemplate and celebrate Jesus.

3.2 Retreats are an integral part of John Paul College life. They need to be inclusive, purposeful, meaningful and take into account the culture, developmental needs and experiences of students.

3.3 Retreats complement the catechesis experiences offered by John Paul College.

3.4 Retreat planning needs to take into consideration the charism, ethos and mission of John Paul College.

3.5 Retreats need to be planned in a way that engages students in rich experiences of Catholic symbol and ritual.

3.6 Retreat staff will be committed to the faith formation of young people.

4. Procedures

4.1 The planning of the College Retreats follows the CECWA Policy Statement 2B.4 'Camps and Excursions'.

4.2 Retreats form part of John Paul College's curriculum program and therefore shall normally be attended by students. Where parents have any issues regarding the attendance of their child/children on Retreat these issues need to be discussed with the Principal or the Principal's delegate prior to the Retreat taking place. Care shall be taken to protect the right of parents to decide whether or not to send their children to a Retreat.

4.3 Prior to a Retreat the Religious Education Co-ordinator or designated person prepares a relevant programme after consultation with staff and / or the external facilitator. The programme prepared will incorporate suitable prayer, reflection and liturgical experiences. The activities conducted on the Retreat shall include creative and engaging activities and approaches with young people which connect to systematic catechesis.

4.4 The Year 12 Residential Retreat shall follow the outline of the Edmund Rice Education style and is usually facilitated by an external facilitator appointed by the Principal in liaison with the Religious Education Co-ordinator or person designated to organise the Retreat. In the event an external facilitator not being available, staff attending the Retreat will facilitate the sessions. The Year 12 Retreat has a student and staff workbook printed.

4.5 Retreats will be provided to students from Year 9 – 11 as a one day experience. The Year 12 Retreat is a four day residential style retreat conducted in Perth normally facilitated by an external facilitator.

4.6 Each Year group Retreat reflects the developmental stage of students and complements the Religious Education Programme of the year group.

4.7 Once the staff have been identified and asked to attend a Retreat will be made familiar with the Retreat with meetings to go through and discuss the programme developed.

4.8 A written permission slip is provided to each student prior to the Retreat being conducted. Prior to a student attending the Retreat the permission slip must be returned to the College. The permission slip will also require information from the parents / guardians in regards to medical information, emergency contacts and dietary requirements. Students will not be permitted to attend the Retreat if this permission slip is not returned with the relevant information.

4.9 Staff attending a Retreat will be determined by the College Leadership Team in consultation with the Religious Education Co-ordinator or person designated to prepare the Retreat. The Year 12 Retreat staff will be invited by the Principal to attend the retreat.

4.10 Planning for Retreats at John Paul College shall be in accordance with the School Camps and Excursions – Guidelines for Catholic Schools and cover:

- the medical requirements of participants

- the student to adult ratio
- the medical kit required and the first aid qualifications of staff in attendance
- the duty of care of staff, including a ban on intoxicating substances
- appropriate CrimTrac 100 Point Check Police Clearance for supervisors and volunteers
- insurance cover
- transport arrangements, including drivers' licences

4.11 At the conclusion of the camp a written report shall be submitted by the teacher in charge to the Principal. The report shall cover:

- the adequacy of the camp site
- recommendations for the future use of the camp site
- the overall management of the camp
- any injuries that occurred
- the achievement or otherwise of the objectives of the camp
- other information relating to specific incidents on the camp
- any other information which may assist in the planning of future camps

4.12 When during the course of a Retreat:

- a student suffered an injury or
- experienced ill health or

Where an incident related to student discipline, safety, or any serious consequence occurred, a report shall be submitted to the Principal by the teacher in charge of the excursion.

5. References

¹General Directory for Catechesis (Congregation for the Clergy, 1997) 80

6. Related Documents

Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia, Policy statement 2-B4 'School Camps and Excursions'

7. Review History

To be reviewed following CEOWA Review 2013