

Outdoor Education I

Rationale

Outdoor Education is an integrated area of study that actively engages students holistically in intellectual, social, emotional and physical development and learning in, about and through physical, recreational and sporting activities.

The Outdoor Education course will enable students to:

- develop knowledge, skills, understanding and values to establish and maintain healthy, satisfying lives
- develop physical skills which promote cognitive and academic performance e.g. functioning of the brain, learning memory, concentration and mood
- plan activities independently and collaboratively
- communicate ideas
- develop self-awareness and personal identity that enables them to manage their emotional, mental, spiritual and physical well-being.

Curriculum

When students undertake practical activities in Outdoor Education they gain knowledge through experiential learning. The general objectives of acquiring, applying, synthesising, evaluating and appreciating reflect the notion that skills and knowledge, once acquired, can be applied in a range of physical activity contexts. In addition, they access and use information by developing research skills that help them critically analyse contemporary issues.

The four units covered over two years are;

- **Fundamentals and the Ocean.**

Students cover the fundamentals of outdoor activities and the environmental and recreational use of the Oceans resources. Swimming, snorkeling, diving and fishing are skills that are developed and then applied in a 4 day field trip to Beqa Island. Beqa has a shark reserve.

- **Risk management and Rivers**

Standards of risk management and emergency response is covered and then used in all units thereafter. The use of a river as an environment resource and a recreation source is an interesting study here in Fiji as both are under developed. Students look at the traditional use of the river, through the construction and use of a bamboo raft (bilibili). All skills are later

incorporated in a 3 day field trip on the river doing white water rafting and looking at the sustainable use of the river environment.

- **Leadership and the Rock**

This unit looks at teamwork and responsibility all of which is incorporated in the study of caves, cliffs and canyons. Students are trained in rope tying techniques and abseiling. All skills are applied during a 3 day field trip to explore a number of caves throughout the main island of Fiji. During the trip, students learn from the indigenous land owners the historic significance of the caves as well as the geographic structure.

- **Wilderness and the Bush.**

Students look at the planning of journeys through the bush and the need to conserve the natural resources. A major application of skill is a three day hike and camp in the bush. Mapping skills, compass reading, packing and personal fitness are all skills needed to be developed before the field trip. The bush area is largely untouched and provides an exceptional challenge to the students to practice teamwork and responsibility.

It is to be expected, that much of the practical skill classes are out of the classroom and off-site. Sometimes the activity will extend outside of normal school hours due to the distances they need to travel.

Where does this lead?

This course is relevant to all students with a wide range of interests and aspirations, including those who wish to pursue further formal study at tertiary level or in vocational education and training settings. It also provides valuable knowledge and skills for participation in contemporary society.

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This course supports students as they develop into young adults, encouraging enhancement of personal wellbeing, lifelong physical activity and the capacity to develop themselves as a lifelong learner and make a positive contribution to society.