

# CAMP POLICY



## Rationale:

The school's camping program enables students to further their learning and social skills development in a non-school setting. Camps may have a cultural, environmental or outdoor emphasis and are an important aspect of the educational programs offered at our school.

## Aims:

1. To provide all children with the opportunity to participate in a sequential camping program.
2. To build relationships between the camp participants
3. To provide shared class experiences and a sense of group cohesiveness.
4. To reinforce and extend classroom learning.
5. To provide a program that delivers skills and knowledge that may lead to a lifelong involvement in worthwhile leisure pursuits.
6. To provide a program that promotes self-esteem, resourcefulness, independence, leadership, judgement, cooperation and tolerance.
7. To encourage students to attend external camps such as Somers camp.
8. Term 1 is the preferred term as it helps to build relationships between the camp participants.

## Implementation:

### General:

1. A camp is defined as any activity involving at least one night's accommodation, including sleepovers at school.
  - Year 3 - overnight at school
  - Year 4/5/6 - three, four or five day camp in cabin accommodation
1. Plan a 3 year rotation for 4/5/6 camp in order to secure the preferred camps, with Term 1 being the preferred term.
2. Adventure activities are those that involve greater than normal risk such as base camping, bush walking, canoeing, snow activities, orienteering, cycling, horse riding, rock climbing and abseiling, challenge ropes courses, swimming (other than school swimming programs), surf activities, sail boarding, and similar activities. School Councillors may not have detailed knowledge of adventure activities. In such instances organising staff should consult the [adventure activities](#) website, or seek advice from peak bodies or skilled and experienced staff with recent experience instructing the activity to satisfy Council's requirements. [Emergency management plans](#) are to be developed when adventure activities are being undertaken.
3. School camps are an outdoor education activity and as such are subject to specific planning and approval guidelines.

4. The primary references that must be consulted when considering all camps is the Safety Guidelines for Outdoor Education Activities website:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/management/schooloperations/edoutdoors/default.htm>

as well as the Vic Govt Schools Reference Guide 4.4.2.2 – Student Safety & Risk Management.

5. To be read in conjunction with the “Excursions” policy.

**Staff:**

1. A meeting should be held between the Principal and teachers who attend the camp during the week following the camp to review all aspects of the camp and to assist future planning.
2. Confirm arrangements with camp personnel and check if they are on site at night.
3. In the case of a new campsite it is desirable for teachers to visit prior to the students attending.
4. All details of the camp and emergency evacuation procedures need to be set out in the camp information pro forma and left with the business manager.
5. Prior to the commencement of any detailed planning relating to a proposed school camp, the Teacher in Charge must familiarise themselves with the DEECD’s Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors website. They must meet formally with the Principal to present him/her with a planning summary , to discuss the proposed camp, and to seek ‘in principle’ support for the event.
6. If the Principal’s approval is granted, detailed planning should commence using the planning questions proforma as a guide. This must include a site visit and risk assessment.
7. The school only uses residential campsites accredited by the ‘*Australian Camps Association*’ or the ‘*National Accommodation, Recreation & Tourism Accreditation Program (NARTA)*’ for overnight camps.
8. Prior to seeking School Council approval for the camp, organising staff are required to meet again with the Principal and present him/her with all documentation, including the completed School Council approval proforma and all attachments, ensuring that time permits for the matter to be placed on a School Council agenda and, if approved, that the online Notification of School Activity form then be submitted three weeks prior to the activity.
9. The School will set aside a budget each year to cover the cost of replacing teachers attending camp.
10. The Teacher in Charge will oversee the operations of the camp, take charge of events, make key decisions and accept ultimate responsibility for the camp.
11. The Teacher in Charge must be aware that Council will consider the following:-
  - ❖ the purpose of the camp and its connection to student learning
  - ❖ staff members attending have the competence to provide the necessary supervision of
  - ❖ students throughout the camp
  - ❖ the number of appropriately trained school staff members able to provide first aid
  - ❖ staff members and attending parents who are not registered teachers have completed a Working with Children Check
  - ❖ a record of emergency contacts for supervising staff accompanying the camp is available
  - ❖ a record of emergency contacts for all students and staff is available
  - ❖ copies of the parental consent and confidential medical advice forms for those students on the camp are available at the school
  - ❖ a copy of the completed School Council approval proforma (including all attachments) has been submitted and approved
  - ❖ the online Notification of School Activity form has been submitted three weeks prior to the excursion
12. The Teacher in Charge will oversee the operations of the camp, take charge of events, make key decisions and accept ultimate responsibility for the camp.

13. Arrange for one vehicle to be available in case of emergency and for transporting personal items for staff. This vehicle should be currently registered and comprehensively insured.
14. Reimbursement of petrol money to be paid by the school to the owner of the private vehicle taken on camp.

### **Students and Parents:**

1. Timely correspondence will provide parents with dates and costs associated with the camp. A camp information session will be held to inform parents of details of the camp as soon as practicable.
2. Students will not be excluded from camps for financial reasons. Parents experiencing financial difficulty, who wish for their children to attend camp, will be required to discuss their individual situation with the Principal. Decisions relating to alternative payment arrangements will be made by the Principal on a case-by-case basis.
3. All families will be given sufficient time to make payments. Children whose parents have not paid deposits by the due date, who do not make full payment by the due date, or who have not made alternative arrangements with the Principal will not be eligible to attend.
4. Any family who has not met the required alternative payment for a previous camp will be unable to participate in the camping program until the outstanding payment is finalised.
5. Students and parents must sign a camp code of conduct prior to departure.
6. The expectation is that parents will not send children to camp if unwell
7. Parents may be invited to assist in the supervision of school camps. When deciding which parents will attend, the Teacher in Charge will take into account –
  - ❖ any valuable skills the parents have to offer. e.g. bus licence, first aid etc
  - ❖ the preference to include both male and female parents.
  - ❖ the special needs of particular students.
8. Parents selected to assist with the camps program will be required to undertake a Working with Children Check. The school will pay for any associated costs.
9. Parent volunteers may be required to pay the accommodation and meals cost of the camp.
10. Only children who have displayed sensible, reliable behaviour at school will be invited to participate in the camping program. Parents will be notified if a child is in danger of losing their invitation to participate in a camping experience due to poor behaviour at school. If the unsatisfactory behaviour continues, the child will then be excluded from camp.
11. The decision to exclude a student will be made by the Principal, in consultation with the Teacher in Charge.
12. Parents will be requested to collect their child from camp if their child exhibits behaviour that is considered unacceptable or they become unwell. The Teacher in Charge will make this decision. Costs incurred will be the responsibility of the parent.

### **School Council and DEECD**

1. School Council will ensure that all school camps are costed at a reasonable and affordable rate, and comply with all Department of Education and Early Childhood Development requirements.
2. School Council requires that a report be tabled after each school camp, detailing feedback regarding the event, in particular any mishaps or areas for future improvement.
3. School Council is responsible for approval of all overnight excursions; camps, interstate and overseas visits, excursions requiring sea or air travel, excursions involving weekends or vacations, and adventure
4. DEECD requires that all students travel only on buses fitted with seat belts.

## **Medications**

1. Ensure that parents have completed general medical forms and a separate asthma and/or anaphylaxis management plan.
2. Collate the medical information and have forms available at all times during the camp.
3. Collect all medications from students prior to departure, ensuring that names and directions are clearly marked.
4. It is desirable for one member of the school staff with current first aid training to be responsible for administering medications and general first aid.
5. First aid kit must be taken to camp.
6. Include staff members with First Aid Qualifications.

## **Student/Teacher Ratios**

1. For Year 4-6 camps a student / adult ratio of 1:10 is recommended with teacher supervision.
2. For adventure activities e.g. horse riding, cycling a smaller ratio is required.
3. For swimming activities, a ratio of 1:10 is recommended with Teacher Vic Swim Qualifications.
4. The school will aim to have better than minimum student / adult ratios for contingency purposes
5. Ensure all groups are organized prior to leaving school.

## **Staffing**

1. Staff with students attending camp will be given preference to attend.
2. When students with special needs attend camp integration aides will attend if possible.
3. Expressions of interest will be sought from all staff prior to the final staff list being confirmed.
4. Parents will be approached if extra adults are required to attend.
5. If staff need to leave the camp after hours (e.g. transporting a sick child to hospital late at night), they have the option to make alternative accommodation arrangements for reasons of health and safety.
6. The Teacher in Charge will communicate with the school in regards to the anticipated return time on the final day of the camp.

## **Evaluation:**

This policy will be reviewed annually at the conclusion of the school's camps program, and as part of the school's three-year review cycle.

*This policy was ratified by School Council on 19<sup>th</sup> June, 2012*

# Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) – Victoria

## S192-2012 Reminder – Student Activity Locator Completion Requirements Prior to Camps and Excursions

### Main Points

- The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development has detailed policies in place to ensure the safety of students and staff participating in camps and excursions.
- This is a reminder that all schools are required to complete the online notification of school activity form for any school camp or excursion. The requirements are detailed in the *School Policy And Advisory Guide* at: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/management/governance/spag/safety/excursions/planning.htm>
- School approved camps and excursions must be entered into the *Student Activity Locator* (SAL) database at least three weeks before the activity using the online notification form (EduMail password required) available at: [www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/forms/school/sal](http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/forms/school/sal)
- The SAL allows Department and Emergency Services to quickly locate and identify the numbers of staff, chaperones and students on camps and excursions who may be at risk during an emergency such as a bushfire or flood facilitating their immediate evacuation.

### Actions Required

- Principals should ensure that school staff coordinating camps or excursions are thoroughly conversant with the Student Activity Locator and the requirements to complete it for all camps and excursion approved by the school council.

### Critical Dates

- N/A

### Additional Information

- Further information may be obtained from the Emergency Management Division on telephone 9637 2487.

### Gail Hart

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