

# CAMPS AND EXCURSIONS

## PURPOSE

Camps and excursions are seen as an integral part of the school curriculum as they enable students to explore, extend and enrich their learning and provide an opportunity practise and use functional and social skills in a non-school setting. Camps and excursions will have an educational purpose and a clearly defined link to learning outcomes.

### Aims:

- To provide students with the opportunity to participate in external programs which are linked to social, cultural and educational outcomes.
- To provide opportunities for students to develop positive relationships with peers and others through team building and shared experiences.
- To re-enforce and extend school – based learning.
- To provide a program that develops skills and knowledge as a foundation which may lead to lifelong involvement in worthwhile leisure pursuits.
- To provide a program that promotes self-esteem, resourcefulness, independence, leadership, judgement, co-operation and tolerance.
- To extend understanding of the local and wider community.

### Implementation:

#### Camps

The Principal or nominee will ensure that full records are submitted to school council well in advance of the starting date of the event and that no camp occurs unless all the formal record keeping has been completed and approved.

Ideally, all camps should be submitted to school council for in-principle approval at the November school council meeting in the preceding year.

- Staff wishing to organise a camp must complete a camp proposal form and lodge this with the team leader. All camps must be approved prior to taking place. This decision will be made by the Principal. The Principal / Assistant Principal in consultation with appropriate staff will consider the educational outcomes of the camp as well as the impact on the wider school program for the proposed dates.

- The Principal / Assistant Principal in consultation with organising teachers will ensure that all camps, transport arrangements, emergency procedures and student/staff ratios comply with DET guidelines.
- The Teacher In Charge of the camp will complete the 'Notification of School Activity' on the Student Activity Locator online 4 weeks prior to the camp departure date and pass on to the Assistant Principal to ensure all relevant details are recorded and entered on the school calendar.
- Camp plans need to be provided to the Section Team Leader and Principal for discussion, with risk assessments, planning documents, costs and alternate arrangements for students and staff not participating in camp included.
- Full documentation, including risk assessments must be completed and approved by Section Team Leader and Principal before any notices or expressions of interest are sent out.
- Planning for a camp needs to be completed at least 12 weeks in advance. Parents need adequate time to plan for additional expenses. A payment plan over 2 terms to is to be offered if at all possible.

Information presented to School Council should include:

- The educational aims and objectives of the camp
  - The names of all students and staff attending.
  - Travel arrangements and costs.
  - Venue details and itinerary of activities.
  - Safety and emergency procedures.
  - Arrangements for students who may not be attending.
- School Council will ensure that camps are kept at a reasonable cost.
  - Once approved, a full copy of all camp documentation needs to be filed in the Camps and Excursions folder at the front office and a copy given to the Principal. A full copy of camp documentation is to be taken on camp.
  - The details of camps, including costs will only be distributed to parents after school council approval for the camp has been given.
  - Any changes to approved camps must be approved by the Principal.
  - Every endeavour will be made to include students whose parents may be experiencing financial difficulties. Any financial concerns are to be discussed with the Principal or Assistant Principal.
  - Staff are encouraged to participate, personal circumstances permitting.

- When documentation is returned by parents to the school, the Medical Consent Form must be returned to the organising teacher.
- Staffing for each camp must include a trained first aider.
- The camp organising teacher must ensure all necessary medical management documentation, details of medication and a full camp first aid kit are taken to the camp. The school nurse can assist with this planning and organisation.
- Where possible, ensure all staff attending the camp are involved in the discussions and development of the camp program. Ideally, a briefing meeting should be held prior to the camp so that all staff attending are aware of arrangements and expectations.
- Approval needs to be sought from the Principal if any of the following conditions arise after the initial planning has been completed: staff changes, transport changes, total fire ban day, code red or extreme fire danger rating, or any other extra-ordinary circumstances. Camps may need alternate arrangements, postponement or cancellation.
- In liaison with the OHS representative ( Management Nominee or HSR), risk assessments will be conducted including personal care, health care, manual handling, behaviour management, supervision and this may necessitate staff visiting the venue prior to the camp.

### **Access to camp**

- Financial assistance can sometimes be accessed to support families experiencing financial hardship. This is agreed upon on an individual case by case basis.
- All aspects of the camp will be outlined to families in writing including cost, sleeping arrangements, itinerary, activities, clothing and equipment lists, contact phone numbers, transport arrangements, student management processes, permission and medical forms and clearly stated payment dates.
- All families will be given sufficient time to make payments for camps. All family consent and medical forms must be completed, signed and returned and all money must be paid prior to leaving. Copies of completed permission notes and medical information must be accessible to staff at the camp location at all times.
- All medication required by a student on camp must be supplied and handed to the Teacher in Charge or school nurse before the camp has begun. It is strongly recommended that the medication is provided in a Webster Pack.
- It is important that the school takes all reasonable steps to ensure that all students participate in a camp experience. However, medical needs and behaviours of concern form a crucial part of a risk assessment. This may include modifying the camp experience for some students to make inclusion possible.

## **Organisation**

- All food, equipment, staffing, organisation of activities and student management procedures must be addressed prior to the camp. Consideration needs to be given to students and staff with special dietary and medical requirements. Families should notify the school in writing regarding special dietary and medical requirements when returning consent forms.
- Office staff will be responsible for managing and monitoring the payments made by parents and will provide organising teacher with detail records on a regular basis.

The teacher in charge must provide office staff with the following information prior to departure:

- Dates and Itinerary of Camp
- Destination and contact number
- Staff attending the camp and mobile numbers
- List of students attending and copies of confidential medical information forms.
- Arrangements made for students not attending camp.
- Transport details for the camp.

The school will ensure a First Aid kit, including an Epipen and Ventolin Asthma Inhaler accompanies each camp. The teacher in charge is responsible for collecting these prior to leaving.

Families may be invited to assist in the delivery of camps. When deciding which parents will attend, the teacher will take into account any skills offered (e.g. bus licence, First Aid qualification), gender balance and special needs of particular students.

For high risk outdoor education activities, the staff member organising must have suitable training and current qualifications. All staff members must be aware of the increased duty of care.

The teacher in charge will ensure that student medical forms are available at the site and all camp staff are aware of special medical issues or medication requirements of any student.

One staff member will be designated to administer student medication if required. The date and time will be recorded on a medication administration form and counter signed by a second checking staff member.

## **Implementation**

### **Excursions**

- All excursions must be approved by the Principal or Assistant Principal. Excursions involving a high level of risk ie. Adventure activities may need School Council approval. A list of these can be found at

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/pages/adventure.aspx>

- Teachers organising an excursion must complete a Part A Excursion form and lodge this with the Principal or Assistant Principal for approval.
- The Principal/ Assistant Principal in consultation with appropriate staff will consider the educational outcomes of the excursion as well as the impact on the school program.
- The Principal / Assistant Principal in consultation with organising teachers will ensure that all camps, transport arrangements, emergency procedures and student/staff ratios comply with DET guidelines.
- The teacher in charge of the excursion will complete the Student Activity Locator (SAL) online notification on the DET website prior to the excursion.
- The details of the excursion including copies of permission forms, risk management forms, contact details and emergency management plans will be kept at the school in the front office. A copy will also be taken on the excursion.
- The staff must also take an Excursion first aid kit, and any other required medication, including student's EpiPen, asthma medication, epilepsy emergency medication and regular medication that is due to be taken during the time of the excursion.

### **Emergency Planning**

The emergency management planning in schools extends to and incorporates school excursions and camps.

All excursion and camp staff and where appropriate, students, must be familiar with emergency procedures for each excursion.

Planning must cover arrangements if the camp or excursion needs to be cancelled, re-called or altered. (For example due to forecast severe weather conditions, changes to DFAT travel advice or an emergency). This should include arrangements for communicating with families.

Principals are responsible for negotiating terms and conditions with any third parties.

School Council approved camps and excursions must have an emergency response plan. See DET emergency response.

When staying at a residential campsite, emergency procedures should be explained as soon as practicable, after arrival and a trial evacuation exercise should be carried out immediately to ensure that procedures are appropriate and staff and students are familiar with them.

### **Site Safety**

All safety requirements will be considered and a risk assessment carried out prior to departure.

A designated teacher in charge will co-ordinate each camp. All camps will have an experienced teacher in attendance where possible.

Families will be requested to collect their child from camp if, in consultation with the Principal/ Assistant Principal, it is decided that it is not safe for a child to remain on camp.

Staff will ensure that appropriate Child Safe Policy, Code of Conduct and related procedures are adhered to and that the organisation of the camp/ excursion includes strategies to ensure the safety of all students.

The teacher in charge of camps will communicate the anticipated return time with the school office in the case where camps are returning out of school hours. Parents/carers will be informed prior the students leaving for the camp that they can phone the office to receive an updated anticipated return time.

Fire danger or fire ban: it may be necessary to review planning camps/excursions ahead of forecast days of significant fire risk or total fore ban days and liaise with the region about whether the excursion should be cancelled.

If an excursion is not cancelled, special fire safety precautions may be require, depending on the location.

When required, the school will follow their Emergency Management Plan and the Department's emergency management (bushfires) procedures for off-site activities for off-site activities for all excursions.

On days determined Code Red by the Emergency Management Commissioner, all camps in the CFA fire district determined Code Red must be cancelled.

This policy was completed on 6/4/2019 and is due for review in April 2022