

School Outdoor Education and Camping Policy

Rationale

The school's outdoor education and organised tour program enables students to further their skills, understandings and attitudes in personal and interpersonal development through cultural, intercultural and environmental studies in both non-school and classroom settings.

Aims

- To provide children the opportunity to participate in the program.
- To provide shared experiences and a sense of group cohesiveness.
- To reinforce and extend learning across our broad curriculum inclusive of the Arts, Physical Education, History, Science, LOTE (Mandarin), Personal and Interpersonal Areas and the cross curricular priorities of Asian and Aboriginal intercultural understandings and Sustainability.
- To provide experiences that promotes lifelong engagement with both active leisure and learning pursuits.
- To provide a set of experiences that promotes our school values of resilience, respect, responsibility and excellence and enable young people to demonstrate independence, leadership, cooperation, tolerance and empathy towards others.

Sequential Programs of Activities from 2015 to 2018

	P/1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
2015 - 2018	Participation in after school events	Sleep-over at school in gym	2 night outdoor education camp	2 night outdoor education camp	4 night outdoor education and leisure pursuits	4 night outdoor education and leisure pursuits

Other programs, if approved by the Principal and School Council, will be added to this policy as addendums from time to time.

In addition to the school's sequential program outlined above, certain children may be selected to represent the school at Somers Camp. This camp is owned and operated by DEECD and run by trained teachers for groups of Year 5/6 students from a network of schools. The camp is not intended to replace the school's camps and educational tours program but is offered for up to 16 (from across the network) young people to extend their personal, interpersonal and outdoor education development. It is a low cost program and as such may be offered to those families who may not be able to afford similar experiences.

Implementation

Definition

A camp is defined as any activity involving at least one night's accommodation, including sleep-overs at school. The program will be developed sequentially throughout the school.

Finance

The Principal and School Council will ensure that all school camps as outlined in the sequential program are maintained at a reasonable and affordable cost for the proposed event, and comply with all DEECD requirements. Parents will be notified of the exact cost and other relevant details of individual camps as soon as practicable.

Students will not be excluded from school outdoor education camps for financial reasons. Parents experiencing financial difficulty, who wish for their children to attend school's sequential camping program, will be required to discuss their individual situation with the Student Wellbeing Coordinator. Decisions relating to alternative payment arrangements are made on a case-by-case basis. All families will be given sufficient time to make payments for individual camps. 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 Student Wellbeing Coordinator will not be eligible to attend.

School Council may set aside a budget each year that will cover the cost of replacing teachers who are involved in camps, or the costs for staff replacement can be borne by the participants.

Planning Processes

While school camps are a team activity requiring the cooperation and common-sense of all participants, it is the Principal/Teacher in Charge who oversees the operations of the camp, takes charge of events, makes key decisions and accepts ultimate responsibility for the camp.

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 activities.

Prior to the commencement of any detailed planning relating to a proposed school camp, the Teacher in Charge must familiarise themselves with the Department's [Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors](#) website.

Once the Principal's approval is granted, detailed planning should commence including a base camp site visit and [risk assessment](#) where possible. The school only uses residential campsites accredited by the 'Australian Camps Association' or the 'National Accommodation, Recreation & Tourism Accreditation Program (NARTA)' for overnight camps within Australia.

Prior to seeking School Council approval for the camp, organising staff are required to meet again with the Principal and present 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.

When presenting information to School Council, the Principal or Teacher in Charge must be aware that School Council will consider the following:

- Do staff members attending have the competence to provide the necessary supervision of students throughout the camp?
- Is an appropriately trained member of staff able to provide [first aid](#)?
- Are copies of the parental consent and [confidential medical advice](#) forms for those students on the camp available at the school?
- Has a copy of the completed School Council approval proforma (including all attachments) been submitted and approved?
- Will the online Notification of School Activity form be submitted three weeks prior to the excursion?

Adventure Camps

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, sailboarding, and similar 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 provide additional relevant information to School Council. Emergency management plans are to be developed when adventure activities are being undertaken.

Standards Applicable to All Camps

- School Council requires that students only travel on buses fitted with seatbelts.
- 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.
- Classroom teachers will be given the first option to attend the sequential camping events.
- The school will provide a mobile phone for all camps.

Volunteers

Parents may be invited to assist in the supervision of school camps where the school is unable to staff camps at the appropriate ratio. 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.
- Parents selected to assist with the camps program will be required to undertake a Working with Children Check.
- Parent volunteers may be required to pay the accommodation and meals cost of the camp.

Student Behaviour

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. The decision to exclude a student will be made by the Principal, in consultation with the Teacher in Charge after discussions with the parent.

For intrastate camps, parents will be requested to collect their child from camp if their child exhibits behaviour that is considered unacceptable or if they become unwell. The Principal and Teacher in Charge will make this decision after discussions with the parent. Costs incurred will be the responsibility of the parent.

For interstate and overseas camps, a staff member will accompany a student back home if the student exhibits behaviour that is considered unacceptable or if they become unwell. The Principal and Teacher in Charge will make this decision. Costs incurred by both the staff member and student will be the responsibility of the parent.

Evaluation:

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's four-year review cycle in 2018.