



Camp Policy

Rationale:

The school's camp program enables students to further their learning and social skills development in a non-school setting. Camps complement, and are an important aspect of the educational programs offered at Montrose Primary School. They reinforce and extend student-learning opportunities beyond the classroom. Students develop an understanding that learning is not limited to school, and that valuable and powerful learning takes place in the real world.

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

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

Implementation:

- Overnight camps and excursions must be approved by school council.
- School approved camps and excursions must be entered into the *Student Activity Locator* (SAL) database at least three weeks prior to the activity at: www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/forms/school/sal (EduMail password required)
The information recorded on SAL allows DEECD to provide emergency services with information to contact or quickly locate camps and excursions that may be at risk during an emergency in order to facilitate assistance.
- Staff are to confirm the accreditation of camps prior to making or confirming bookings. The *School Policy and Advisory Guide* also states that schools are only permitted to engage the services of accredited camp providers to ensure these venues meet minimum criteria regarding safety and suitability. The Department recognises three accreditation providers as detailed in the *School Policy And Advisory Guide* at: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/venue.aspx>
- School staff coordinating camps and excursions should monitor conditions via emergency information services.

Planning and Approval

The camp planning and approval process should take into account the following considerations:

- the educational purpose of the camp and its contribution to the curriculum
- maintenance of full records, including documentation of the planning process
- venue selection:
 - the suitability of the environment and/or venue for the camp
- safety, emergency and risk management:
 - assessment of camp risks
 - procedures in the event of an emergency
 - arrangements if the camp needs to be cancelled or recalled (for example, due to forecast severe weather conditions)

- completion of an online notification of school activity form three weeks prior to the activity
- first aid requirements
- any other measures necessary for student and staff safety and welfare.
- staffing and supervision:
 - there are sufficient staff to provide appropriate and effective supervision
 - the experience, qualifications and skills of each staff member (including volunteers, instructors, etc) will allow them to provide effective supervision in general and for planned activities (as applicable)
 - there are appropriate levels of supervision in view of the activities undertaken and students involved.

Supervision ratios are to be followed:
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/staffing.aspx>
- informed consent from parents or carers
- adequate student and staff medical information
- student preparation and behaviour
- requirements for any adventure activities
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/adventure.aspx>
- communication requirements
- that staff and students receive notification of the appropriate clothing and personal equipment required
- that group or technical equipment is in good condition and suitable for the activities undertaken
- that continuous instruction is provided for students remaining at the school during the absence of staff accompanying the camp
- requirements for interstate or overseas camp
- that the camp meets the requirements of any school-level policy or procedures.

Communications

Parents or carers should be advised of the telephone numbers (both during and outside school hours) for a designated school contact person in the event of an emergency.

During the camp, if parents have reason to believe an emergency may have occurred (such as a media report) they should be informed that in the first instance they should call the contact person and not personnel on the camp as this will keep the telephone lines free at the camp site.

Arrangements for communicating with parents in the event of an emergency, cancellation or recall of the camp must be made.

Consent forms must remain at the school with the designated school contact person and copies of each form must be taken on the camp by the teacher in charge.

In the event of an emergency, accident or injury:

- staff on the camp should: take emergency action and immediately notify the school principal.
- the principal should make arrangements for the Department's Security Services Unit to be telephoned on 9589 6266.

All parents are welcome to contact the office if they need to raise any issues, make general inquiries about charges or make a complaint. Alternative payment options are generally available and the parent should contact the office if they wish to discuss these.

Risk management

An assessment of camp risks must be undertaken that includes consideration of risks across the entire camp (including transportation, activities undertaken and camp venues). Venue managers and activity providers should be consulted in the preparation of the school's risk management plan and where appropriate, the risk management plans of venues or activity providers should be used to inform the school risk assessment process.

Excursion & Camp Staff

Staff must be approved by the principal or school council (as outlined in [Excursions – Planning and Approvals](#)) and may include:

- teachers employed by the Department or school council
- other adults on a volunteer or paid basis such as: parents or carers, education support class officers, community members, trainee teachers, campsite staff, specialist instructors for camp/excursion activities. **Important:** school students cannot be used as camp staff.

Camp staff who will provide supervision of students and who are not registered teachers must have a Working with Children check.

The names of volunteer workers must be recorded for the purposes of volunteer workers insurance. Names of volunteers must be given to the Business Manager to be ratified at School Council prior to the camp.

The specific roles and responsibilities of each staff member (teachers, instructors, campsite staff, volunteers, etc) must be clarified and understood by all staff and students prior to the commencement of the camp.

Parents are welcome to express interest in attending the camp to assist supervision ratios. Places are limited due to accommodation and costs and parents are required to submit an application form outlining their skills and prior experience for consideration. Only those volunteers approved at School Council may be part of the camp program. In line with safety regulations and our Duty of Care policy, other adults and children cannot join the camp group of their own free will.

Student Behaviour

Only children who have displayed sensible, reliable behaviour at school will be invited to participate in school camps. Parents will be notified if a child is in danger of losing their invitation to participate in a camp due to inappropriate behaviour at school. The decision to exclude a student will be made by the Principal, in consultation with senior staff, the classroom teacher and the Teacher in Charge.

Travel

All buses that schools hire, use or own must have seat belts for all passengers.

Permission Form Return & Payment

Payment and permission forms need to be received by the school **no later than two weeks before departure** or at a time stipulated on the permission form.

- No payment will be accepted after this time due to the processing requirements for camp
- **Failure to make payment by the stipulated time, will result in students not being taken on the camp**, unless prior arrangements have been made.

Parents are welcome to contact the office regarding payment requests for optional activities. Alternative payment options are generally available. Refer to the 'Parent Payment Policy' for detailed information on payment of optional activities.

Excerpt from the Parent Payment Policy: Payment arrangements and non-payment

- *Unpaid optional extras payments may compromise a student's ability to be involved in the optional activity in question. Payment plans may be organised with the Principal to permit the child to participate. Regular payments must be adhered to. Failure to show commitment to the payment plan will result in exclusion from other optional extras until payment is made in full*
- *Parents and guardians are provided with an alternative option for their children if they choose not to participate in an incursion, excursion or camp.*

Responsibility: Principal, Vice Principal, Teaching Staff

Ratified at School Council: 18th October 2016

Due for Review: May 2017