

Camps and Excursions Policy



1. BASIC BELIEFS

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 their social skills development, in a non-school setting. Camps and excursions may have a cultural, environmental or outdoor emphasis and are an important aspect of the educational programs offered at our school. A camp is defined as any activity that involves at least one night's accommodation. An excursion is an activity organised by a school during which students leave the school grounds to engage in educational activities. Adventure activities are included in this definition.

2. AIMS

- To provide students with the opportunity to participate in a camping program that is linked to social, cultural and educational outcomes for students.
- To provide shared class and year level experiences, team building and a sense of group cohesiveness.
- To reinforce and extend classroom learning.
- To provide a program that delivers skills and knowledge that may lead to a lifelong involvement in worthwhile leisure pursuits.
- To provide a program that promotes self-esteem, resourcefulness, independence, leadership, judgement, cooperation and tolerance.
- To further develop their problem solving and life survival skills
- To extend understanding of their physical and cultural environment
- To foster the ability to enjoy various outdoor recreation leisure pursuits safely
- To enable children to develop an appreciation and understanding in a variety of outdoor settings.

3. IMPLEMENTATION

- Children in Prep, Grade 1 and 2 shall be given the opportunity to participate in an after school activity including tea and going home at approximately 7.00-7.30pm. Year 2 students will camp overnight at the school or local attraction.
- Children in Grades 3 and 4 shall be given the opportunity to spend up to two nights (3 days) at an accredited camp on a biannual basis.
- Children in Grades 5 and 6 shall be given the opportunity to spend up to three nights (4 days) at an accredited camp biannually.
- Class teachers together with the Physical Education teacher will organise and co-ordinate the various camps and outdoor education programs.
- Students in Prep, Grade 1 & 2 will undertake a major excursion every year

- Students in Grades 3-6 will undertake a major excursion in alternate years to the school camp

GUIDELINES FOR ACTION

- All camps and excursions must be approved by the Principal and School Council.
- The principal or their nominee will ensure that full records are submitted to council regarding the camp or excursion well in advance of the starting date of the event and that no camp or excursions occurs unless all the formal record keeping has been completed and approved. Ideally all camps should be submitted to Council for in principle approval in the November/December Council meeting in the preceding year.
- Staff wishing to organize a camp or excursion must complete a camp proposal form and lodge this with the Principal for approval. All camps and excursions must be approved prior to running. This decision will be made by the Principal. The Principal in consultation with appropriate staff will consider the educational outcomes of the camp or excursion as well as the impact on the school program for the proposed dates.
- The Principal and Assistant Principal in consultation with organizing teachers will ensure that all camps, transport arrangements, emergency procedures and student/staff ratios comply with DET guidelines.
- The School office will complete the “Notification of School Activity” online at www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/forms/school/sal/enteractivity.asp 4 weeks prior to the camp or excursion departure date, and pass on to the Assistant Principal to ensure relevant staffing arrangements are made.
- All approved camps and excursions will then be presented to School Council for their approval.

Access to Camp or Excursions

- All efforts will be made not to exclude students simply for financial reasons. Parents experiencing financial difficulty, who wish for their children to attend a camp or excursion are invited to discuss alternative arrangements with the Business Manager. Decisions relating to alternative payment arrangements will be made by the Business Manager in consultation with the appropriate staff, on an individual basis.
- All aspects of the camp or excursion will be outlined to parents 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 finalization dates.
- All families will be given sufficient time to make payments for camps and excursions. All parental 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 at the camp or excursion location by staff at all times.
- Only students that have displayed sensible, reliable behaviour at school will be permitted to participate in school camps and excursions. Parents will be notified if their child is in danger of losing the privilege to participate in a camp or excursion due to poor behaviour at school. The decision to exclude a student will be made by the Principal or Assistant Principal in consultation with the organizing teacher. Both the parent and the student will

be informed of this decision prior to the camp. All students participating in a school camp will be asked to sign a contract agreeing to abide by all camp rules.

- Parents will be requested to collect their child from camp or excursion if their child exhibits behaviour that is considered unacceptable or a danger to others. The Teacher in Charge, in consultation with a member of the leadership team, will make this decision. Costs incurred will be the responsibility of the parent.
- Complete a risk assessment for bushfire in the activity location (see Appendix A).
- Principals may need to cancel camps at short notice on fire danger days rated as Extreme or Code Red, or days of total fire ban.

• Organisation

- All food, equipment, staffing, organization of activities and student management procedures must be addressed prior to the camp or excursion. Consideration needs to be given to students with special dietary and medical requirements. Parents should notify the staff 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 organizing teachers with detailed records on a regular basis.
- The Teacher in Charge must provide a list of students attending the camp or excursion to office staff.
- In the case where a camp or excursion involves a particular class or year level group, the organizing teacher will ensure that there is an alternative program available for those students not attending the camp.
- The school will provide a mobile phone and first aid kit for each camp and excursion. The teacher in charge is responsible for collecting these prior to leaving.
- For high risk Outdoor Education activities the staff member organizing 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 and excursion staff are aware of special medical issues or medication requirements of any student.

One staff member will be designated to take responsibility for administering student medication if required. (following consultation with parents and/or appropriate medical practitioners)

Volunteer and external provider checks

Specimen Hill primary school requires all parent or carer camp or excursion volunteers and all external providers working directly with our students to have a current Working with Children Check card.

Parent/carer consent

For all camps and excursions, other than local excursions, Specimen Hill School will provide parents/carers with a specific consent form outlining the details of the proposed activity. Specimen Hill School uses SENTRAL to inform parents about camps and excursions and to seek their consent **OR** informs parents about school camps and excursions by placing a note in student bags and asking

parents/carers to return the part of the note that asks for parents/carers signature confirming they consent to their child's participation. Parents/carers are encouraged to contact the school to discuss any questions or concerns that they or their child may have with a proposed camp or excursion.

For local excursions, Specimen Hill Primary School will provide parents and carers with an annual Local Excursions consent form at the start of each school year or upon enrolment if students enrol during the school year. Specimen Hill Primary School will also provide advance notice to parents/carers of an upcoming local excursion through a note home in the student's bag]. For local excursions that occur on a recurring basis (for example weekly outings to the local oval for sports lessons), Specimen Hill Primary School will notify parents once only prior to the commencement of the recurring event.

Site Safety

- All safety requirements must be considered and adequately resolved prior to the camp or excursion. Telephone numbers of all emergency services must be provided to the school, and be taken on camp. If any swimming activities are to occur, there must be sufficient staff attending with appropriate swimming qualifications to enable safe supervision.

Refer: [Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors](#)

- A designated "Teacher in Charge" will coordinate each camp and excursion. All camps and excursions will have an experienced teacher in attendance where possible.
- The Teacher in Charge will ensure all students and adults attending the camp and excursion are aware of evacuation and emergency procedures.

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

APPENDIX A - EXCURSION RISK MANAGEMENT ASSESSMENT

Assess each of the following hazards and any others you think relevant and assess risk based on charts below.

- Bushfires
- Severe storms and flooding
- Earthquake
- School bus accident/vehicle incident
- Missing student
- Medical emergencies
- Aggressive student behavior
- Intruders
- Internal fires and smoke
- Snakes and other wildlife
- Other relevant to excursion area

DET RISK RATING MATRIX

		Consequence				
		Insignificant	Minor	Moderate	Major	Severe
Likelihood	Almost Certain	Medium	High	Extreme	Extreme	Extreme
	Likely	Medium	Medium	High	Extreme	Extreme
	Possible	Low	Medium	Medium	High	Extreme
	Unlikely	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	High
	Rare	Low	Low	Low	Medium	Medium

DET ACCEPTABILITY CHART

Extreme = Intolerable (without Executive Oversight)	Immediately consider whether this activity should cease. Any decision to continue exposure to this level of risk would be made at Executive Officer level, would be subject to comprehensive analysis to generate a detailed risk treatment plan and be the subject of on-going oversight and high level review.
High = Tolerable (with continual Management review)	Consider whether this activity should continue. This decision would normally be made at senior levels, would be based on detailed analysis to generate a risk treatment plan and be subject to on-going review to ensure treatments remain effective and the benefits balance the risk.
Medium = Tolerable (with frequent risk owner review)	Exposure to the risk may continue provided it has been appropriately assessed, has been mitigated to <i>As Low As Reasonably Practical</i> (ALARP) and is subject to frequent review to ensure the risk analysis and treatment remain valid. Permanent/long term actions to reduce the risk should be considered.
Low = Acceptable (with periodic review)	Exposure to this risk is acceptable but is subject to periodic review to ensure the risk does not increase and evolving treatment(s) or accepted standards do not vary.

For a comprehensive assessment of bushfire, please see the DET's Bushfire and Emergency Management Self-Assessment Tool:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/training/providers/learnlocal/program/bushfireselfasses.doc>

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Supervision Ratios

Type of Excursion	
Day Excursion	One excursion staff member per number of students
Day excursions	-Twenty students.
Adventure Camps	-specific guidelines for the activity. See: Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors within Department resources
Base camps in residential premises or under canvas	-Ten students
Overseas excursion	-Ten students

NB: APPENDICES (including processes related to this policy)

Appendices which are connected with this policy are:

- Appendix A: Pupil/Teacher Ratios
- Appendix B: Pro-forma for school approval for all camps
- Appendix C: Guidelines for teachers planning a camp or excursion
- Appendix D: Notification of School Activity (camps and excursions)
- Appendix E: Risk Assessment

Links which are connected with this policy are:

[DEECD Excursion Policy](#)

[Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors](#)

EVALUATION

Date implemented	1 February 2018
Reviewed by	Mandi Jennings
Approved By	School Council
Approval Authority (signature & date)	
Date reviewed	5/5/2019
Responsible for Review	Consultative Committee
Review date	2021
References	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/health/Pages/anaphylaxisschool.aspx http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/school/teachers/health/Anaphylaxis_MinisterialOrder706.pdf

