

CAMPS AND EXCURSIONS POLICY



PURPOSE

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

The Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors are in place to support the planning and approval of excursions and camps, including interstate and overseas excursions involving weekends or vacations and adventure activities. These excursions and camps all require the approval of the School Council.

When undertaking excursions and camps planning, Principals, teachers, School Councillors and others involved in school excursions and camps must anticipate the possibility of litigation following an incident or injury. They must be prepared for a detailed examination of their planning, actions and the curriculum role of any activity.

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

The school's excursions and camps program enables students to further their learning and social skills development in a non-school setting. Excursions and camps complement, and are an important aspect of the educational programs offered at our school.

SCOPE

An excursion or camp is an activity organised by the school during which students leave the school grounds to engage in educational activities (including sport). Adventure activities are included in this definition (regardless of whether they occur outside the school grounds or not).

Camps are activities that involve at least one night's accommodation for students. Parkwood Green Primary School may also run annual events for Foundation and Grade 1 students that require attendance outside school hours for a meal and associated activities. This document provides an overview of camping and excursions, and then describes what Parkwood Green Primary School will do to ensure our camps and excursions:

1. Are safe and inclusive
2. Teach students resilience
3. Foster independence and self-reliance
4. Help develop interpersonal skills
5. Expose students to a range of activities and locations

An adventure activity is an activity that involves greater than normal risk which may include travel into a relatively undeveloped area of the country, confrontation with environmental challenges, remoteness

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CAMPS AND EXCURSIONS POLICY

with limited access to telephone and services normally available in everyday life and/or exposure to natural elements with less than the normal physical protection afforded in everyday life.

Activities may include among others: abseiling, bushwalking, canoeing/kayaking, rope courses, orienteering, horse riding, overnight camping, surfing, rafting and cycling. Activities such as bungee jumping, hang gliding, parachuting and flying ultra-light aircraft are deemed unsuitable.

Flying foxes may be used at school camps provided:

- safety precautions are taken in its construction and maintenance;
- it can be locked or have the carriage removed when not in use;
- all students are carefully briefed on its use and associated dangers;
- staff supervise all use;
- a safety harness is always used.

Parkwood Green Primary School provides a variety of camping experiences from Foundation to Grade 6. As students move from Foundation to Grade 6 the length, variety of experience and challenge involved in the camping experience increases.

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

The Principal is responsible for the conduct during all excursions and camps and must ensure an online notification of school activity form is completed prior to the activity.

A planning and approvals process is undertaken, to ensure camps, excursions and adventure activities are planned and approved in accordance with DET policy and guidelines, which takes into account the following considerations:

- venue selection;
- safety, emergency and risk management;
- informed consent from parents/guardians for their child to participate in an excursion or camp;
- medical information;
- appropriate staffing and supervision;
- student preparation and behaviour;
- requirements for any adventure activities.
- The camp or excursion reinforces, complements and extends learning opportunities beyond the classroom;
- The camp or excursion develops an understanding that learning is not limited to school, and that valuable and powerful learning takes place in the real world.

CAMPS AND EXCURSIONS POLICY

Staff organising camps will complete the following steps to ensure camps are safe and inclusive for Parkwood Green Primary School students:

- Distribute an expression of interest with preliminary details and an estimated cost to families
- Ensure transport has been organised, including buses with seatbelts where relevant
- Obtain signed informed consent from parents/guardians
- Obtain a completed medical form for all students and staff. If a student requires medication, they must complete the medication authority form.
- Send a copy of the DET guidelines regarding administration of analgesics to each family for overnight camps
- Ensure there is at least one level 2 trained first aid staff member. This may be a paramedic hired specifically for the camp. This staff member will collate the medication authority forms and distribute all medications throughout the camp
- Create a detailed itinerary with specific locations and contact numbers
- Source a copy of a map of the camp, with a map name, access routes and grid references if required
- Distribute staff and student clothing and equipment list
- In consultation with Principal class, create a supervision plan for activities and non-programmed periods. This may form part of the itinerary. It must also adhere to DET mandated staff/student ratios for specific activities.
- Complete the staffing details pro-forma
- Obtain a risk management plan from the camp, or develop a risk management plan for school on-site activities.
- Develop/obtain an emergency response plan including contacts for police, ambulance, doctor, hospital, fire brigade and 24 hour school emergency number. This is to be held by staff on the excursion and by the nominated school contact person
- Complete school council approval documentation
- Hold a parent information evening two weeks before overnight camps
- Ensure one staff member has a comprehensively insured car available on site

In addition to these steps, staff will ensure:

- Students will not be excluded from camps for financial reasons. Parents experiencing financial difficulty, who wish for their child to attend camp, can discuss their individual situation with the Principal. Decisions relating to alternative payment requirements will be made by the Principal on a case-by-case basis.
- Students have the right to attend camp only if their behaviour is such that staff are confident they will be safe and reliable in an environment other than the school. Parents/Carers may be asked to collect from the camp any student whose behaviour whilst on camp is deemed to place themselves or others at risk.

CAMPS AND EXCURSIONS POLICY

1. APPROVALS

All excursions and camps must be approved before they can take place.

Staff wishing to organise an excursion or camp must complete an excursion/camp proposal form and lodge this for approval by the Principal (or their nominee) for the approval of all single-day excursions or to the School Council for approval of:

- Overnight excursions
- Camps
- Interstate visits
- International visits
- Excursions requiring sea or air travel, weekends or vacations
- Adventure activities

2. DUTY OF CARE

All school staff attending the camp or excursion owe a duty of care to the students. This means that they must ensure that reasonable steps are taken to prevent any reasonably foreseeable harm to students. This duty is non-delegable, which means that it cannot be delegated to external camp or education providers, parents or volunteers. The designated teacher in charge has ultimate responsibility for all students in their care.

Teachers participating in an excursion and/or camps will:

- understand the purpose of the program and its connection to student learning
- be aware of their supervisory responsibilities throughout the program, see: [Excursion support - supervision](#)
- know who is the nominated member of staff who will provide first aid if required, see: [Excursion support - first aid](#)
- know the exact location of students they are responsible for at all times including during travel.

In addition the nominated teacher-in-charge will:

- know the exact location of students at all times including during travel
- maintain a record of telephone contacts for the supervising staff accompanying the excursion
- know who the school contact person is and their phone number
- have a copy of the names of family contacts for all students and staff on the excursion
- have copies of the parental approval and medical advice forms for those students on the excursion
- maintain a copy of the completed approval form (including all attachments) submitted to the school council, see: [Approval pro forma](#) (Appendix B)
- have submitted a notification of school activity using the Student Activity Locator online form three weeks prior to the excursion, see: [Student Activity Locator online form](#) (EduMail password required)

External education providers and para-professionals must have appropriate certification (e.g. Working with Children's Registration) and ensure that supervision guidelines are followed.

Prior to the camp or excursion parent/carers should be made aware that DET does not provide student accident cover and that they need to make their own arrangements for cover.

3. FIRST AID

At least one member of staff responsible for each group of students will hold an appropriate first aid qualification. For adventure activities, the minimum acceptable level of first aid training is the senior first aid

CAMPS AND EXCURSIONS POLICY

certificate (often referred to as a level 2 first aid qualification) or its competency based equivalent HLTAID003 Apply First Aid.

For remote activities, a higher level of first aid training is required appropriate to the setting, such as Wilderness First Aid or its competency based equivalent THHGHS11A Manage casualty in a remote area.

Staff must also have a first aid kit appropriate to the excursion location and activities undertaken.

4. STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students should not be denied attendance to any excursion or camp because of disability or medical condition. Parents and carers will be consulted about reasonable adjustments that may be implemented by the school to enable the student to safely attend the excursion or camp.

Principals will ensure that appropriate emergency and risk management planning is undertaken for students with disabilities attending excursions and camps.

5. OVERSEAS TRAVEL

The [Smartraveller](#) website is the Australian Government, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), travel advisory and consular assistance service. This site also provides useful travel information and tips.

Parkwood Green Primary School will ensure that they:

- comply with any DFAT travel advice current for the proposed location;
- subscribe to receive automatic travel advice updates from the Smartraveller website both prior to the excursion and when overseas;
- review their risk assessment if there are any changes to the DFAT travel advice.

The cost of medical and hospital treatment is high in some countries; therefore Parkwood Green Primary School recommends that all students and staff take out travel and medical insurance for the entire overseas trip.

6. EMERGENCY NOTIFICATIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

In the event of an emergency, to ensure information is provided to emergency services, Parkwood Green Primary School will notify the:

- DET of any approved school camp or excursion at least three weeks beforehand using the [Student Activity Locator online form](#). A user guide has been developed to help schools complete the online form, see: [Student Activity Locator - User Guide](#)
- [Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade](#) (DFAT) of overseas travel plans so that DFAT can help staff and students remain safe and secure while overseas.

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

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

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

CAMPS AND EXCURSIONS POLICY

In the event of an emergency, accident or injury:

- staff on the excursion will:
 - take emergency action as documented in the excursion and camp's emergency and risk management plan
 - immediately notify the school principal
- the principal will make arrangements for the Department's Security Services Unit to be telephoned on 9589 6266.

7. FIRE DANGER OR BAN

The Principal may need to cancel excursions and camps at short notice on days of extreme fire danger or total fire ban. On such days, the Security Services Unit liaises with fire authorities to obtain up to date information for communication to schools that may be affected by wildfire, including schools with students attending camps in areas affected by wildfire. If an excursion is not cancelled, special fire safety precautions will be required.

When required, Parkwood Green Primary School will follow the Department's emergency management (bushfires) procedures for off-site activities.

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Related School Policies

- Duty of Care Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Anaphylaxis Policy
- Asthma Policy
- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Work Place Bullying Policy

Related DET Resources

Excursions and activities

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

Student Activity locator

[Student Activity Locator \(SAL\)](#)

[Excursions and Outdoor Education](#)

Appendices which are connected with this policy are:

- Appendix A: Student/Teacher Ratios
- Appendix B: Excursions Approval Pro-forma
- Appendix C: Explanatory Notes to DEECD Excursion Approval Proforma

APPENDIX A

Student / Teacher Ratios

Click on the hyperlink to take you to the SPAG for all relevant information and the current staff – student ratios for the following outdoor activities.

<p><u>Abseiling and Rock Climbing</u></p> <p><u>Abseiling Walls and Artificial Climbing Walls</u></p> <p>http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/health/Pages/outdoorabseilpeople.aspx</p> <p>http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/health/Pages/outdoorclimb.aspx</p>	<p><u>Rock Climbing</u></p> <p>http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/health/Pages/outdoorclimbrock.aspx</p>
<p><u>Bushwalking</u></p> <p>http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/health/Pages/outdoorwalk.aspx</p>	<p><u>Ropes Course Challenge</u></p> <p>http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/health/Pages/outdoorrope.aspx</p>
<p><u>Camping - Overnight</u></p> <p>http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/health/Pages/outdoorcamp.aspx</p>	<p><u>Sailing (Small Boats - Dinghies, Catamarans)</u></p> <p>http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/health/Pages/outdoorsail.aspx</p>
<p><u>Canoeing and Kayaking</u></p> <p>http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/health/Pages/outdoorcanoe.aspx</p>	<p><u>Snorkelling</u></p> <p>http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/health/Pages/outdoorsnorkel.aspx</p>
<p><u>Cross Country Skiing</u></p> <p>http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/health/Pages/outdoorskicountry.aspx</p>	<p><u>Scuba Diving</u></p> <p>http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/health/Pages/outdoorscuba.aspx</p>
<p><u>Cycling</u></p> <p>http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/health/Pages/outdoorcycle.aspx</p>	<p><u>Sea Kayaking</u></p> <p>http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/health/Pages/outdoorkayak.aspx</p>
<p><u>Downhill Skiing and Snowboarding</u></p> <p>http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/health/Pages/outdoorskidown.aspx</p>	<p><u>Surfing</u></p> <p>http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/health/Pages/outdoorsurf.aspx</p>
<p><u>Horse Riding</u></p> <p>http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/health/Pages/outdoorride.aspx</p>	<p><u>Swimming - Recreational</u></p> <p>http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/health/Pages/outdoorswim.aspx</p>
<p><u>Orienteering</u></p> <p>http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/health/Pages/outdoororient.aspx</p>	<p><u>Water Skiing</u></p> <p>http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/health/Pages/outdoorwaterski.aspx</p>
<p><u>Rafting</u></p> <p>http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/health/Pages/outdoorraft.aspx</p>	<p><u>Windsurfing</u></p> <p>http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/health/Pages/outdoorwindsurf.aspx</p>

APPENDIX B

Approval Proforma for all Excursions and Activities Requiring School Council Approval Department of Education & Training

This proforma details minimum requirements for school council approval. It must be submitted to the principal for school council approval prior to the excursion.

All information on this proforma is required. Add attachments if necessary.

School councils are responsible for approving:

- overnight excursions
- camps
- interstate/overseas visits
- excursions requiring sea or air travel
- excursions involving weekends or vacations
- adventure activities.

Complete the [Student Activity Locator online form](#) three weeks prior to the excursion.

Sections with an * have explanatory notes included at the end of this document.

Ensure you have the most current version of this template

Download from the [Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors](#) website at:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/health/Pages/outdoor.aspx>

PROGRAM NAME, YEAR, LOCATION, DATE(S), TEACHER-IN-CHARGE

Name of program:

Year level(s):

Location(s):

*** Date(s):**

Name of teacher-in-charge:

*** EDUCATIONAL PURPOSE**

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PROGRAM DETAILS

* Program outline, including:

- Detailed daily itinerary (including morning, afternoon and evening activities)
- Supervision strategy for all aspects of the itinerary
- Alternative program in the event of changed circumstances

* Overnight accommodation

Type of accommodation

- Accredited residential campsites Tents/camping Other

Physical location. For example, name, address, or map and grid reference.

Contact phone number(s):

- Residential campsite (if applicable)
- Staff mobiles
- Other

Adventure activities

Tick the [adventure activities](#) that have been planned to occur during the program:

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Abseiling | <input type="checkbox"/> Base camping | <input type="checkbox"/> Bushwalking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Canoeing/kayaking – low | <input type="checkbox"/> Challenge ropes course – high | <input type="checkbox"/> Challenge ropes course |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cycling | <input type="checkbox"/> Horse riding | <input type="checkbox"/> Indoor rock climbing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Orienteering | <input type="checkbox"/> Rafting | <input type="checkbox"/> Rock climbing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sailing | <input type="checkbox"/> SCUBA diving | <input type="checkbox"/> Snorkelling |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Snow activities | <input type="checkbox"/> Surfing | <input type="checkbox"/> Swimming |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Water skiing | <input type="checkbox"/> Windsurfing | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |

The conduct of each activity will comply with the requirements outlined in the [Safety Guidelines](#) for that activity.

Staff providing instruction activities have read the relevant safety guidelines YES



A risk management plan for the excursion must be completed and attached with this submission. Guidance on the risk management process is available in the section of the website called [Planning – Managing Risk](#).

*** Transport arrangements**

Internal External Both

Type of transports and seating capacity:

Will a member of the supervising staff be driving students? Yes No

If yes, list driver(s).

Approximate distance between school and destination:

All transport requirements comply with the advice in the School Policy and Advisory Guide, [Transporting Students](#) and [VicRoads](#) regulations. YES

Budget	
<i>INCOME</i>	<i>EXPENDITURE</i>
Student Fees	Transport
<i>Other income:</i>	Food
	Accommodation
	Staffing
	Equipment
	<i>Other expenditure:</i>
Total income:	Total expenditure

STUDENTS AND STAFF

Students

Number of female students:

Number of male students:

List required [student preparation](#), if any:

* Supervising staff

Where possible all staff members including teachers, school support staff, parents, volunteers and external contractors should be listed. Indicate those who have a current first aid qualification. Indicate staff members with first aid and CPR training including the qualification or certification held.

APPENDIX C

Explanatory Notes to Approval Proforma

Dates

Consider how the time of year may impact on the wider school program or the effect of seasonal weather conditions.

Educational purpose and program outline

Whatever you hope the students will learn from the program is its educational purpose. The program overview should give school council a basic understanding of how the program aims to achieve the educational purpose.

For example: A three-day residential camp including bushwalking and orienteering to encourage an understanding of the natural environment; develop team working ability; and, introduce map reading and navigational skills in an experiential way.

The supervision strategy should include the nature and level of supervision provided throughout the excursion or activity. You must consider all programmed and non-programmed periods.

Each different location in must be detailed, including the dates at each location. This will have an impact on transport requirements and the emergency response needs of the program.

Contact land managers to determine if permit or access requirements apply for activities that are conducted on public land or in state/national parks.

Joint excursions with other schools must be approved by each school council. Each school must submit an online notification to the Emergency Management and Security Branch.

Overnight accommodation

This includes all forms of overnight accommodation.

Residential camping is at sites with permanent facilities like dormitories, kitchen, showers, toilets, phones and recreation options.

Residential campsites operated or used by Victorian government schools must be accredited with a Department of Education & Training recognised accreditation provider. Refer to the School Policy and Advisory Guide, [Venue Selection](#) for current accreditation providers.

When using venues that do not require accreditation such as caravan parks, motels/hotels or ski lodges, schools may wish to refer to the accreditation criteria of a recognised accreditation provider when developing their risk management plan.

Provide details of all accommodation being used with your submission to school council.

Transport

Internal transport is provided by school-owned or private, staff-owned vehicles. External transport is transport provided by contractors, parents or other external providers.

The parent consent form should include a statement advising parents if a private vehicle is used as part of the emergency management plan for a camp or excursion.

If a teacher or staff member will be driving students, the program should allow them adequate rest time prior to driving, consistent with the advice on the [transport](#) page of the Safety Guidelines.

Give careful consideration to securing equipment during transportation, including equipment on trailers, roof racks and inside vehicles.

Supervising staff

A [Working with Children Check](#) is required for staff members who will supervise students and who are not registered teachers.