

Park Ridge Primary School Camps and Excursions Policy October, 2023

Purpose

To explain to our school community the processes and procedures Park Ridge Primary School will use when planning and conducting camps, excursions and adventure activities for students.

Scope

This policy applies to all camps and excursions organised by Park Ridge Primary School. This policy also applies to adventure activities organised by the school, regardless of whether or not they take place on or off school grounds.

This policy is intended to complement the Department's policy and guidelines on excursions, camps and adventure activities which all Victorian government schools are required to follow. Park Ridge Primary School will follow both this policy, as well as the Department's policy and guidelines when planning for and conducting camps and excursions.

This policy does not apply to student workplace learning or intercampus travel.

Definitions

Excursions:

For the purpose of this policy, excursions are activities organised by the school where the students:

- are taken out of the school grounds (for example, a camp, day excursion, school sports);
- undertake adventure activities, regardless of whether or not they occur outside the school grounds;

Camps are excursions involving at least one night's accommodation

Local excursions are excursions to locations within walking distance of the school and do not involve 'Adventure Activities'.

Adventure activities are activities that involve a greater than normal risk. Further information and examples of adventure activities are available on the Department's Policy and Advisory Library, at the following link:

<https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/excursions/guidance/adventure-activities>

Policy

Camps and excursions can provide a valuable educational experience for our students which are complementary to their learning, as they provide access to resources, environments and expertise that may not be available in the classroom. 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 may have a cultural, environmental or outdoor emphasis and are an important aspect of the educational programs offered at our school. Social skills, leadership, participation, respect for the environment and enjoyment are important facets.

For all camps and excursions, including adventure activities, our school will follow the Department's Policy and Advisory Library: Excursions.

Planning process for camps and excursions

All camps and excursions will comply with Department planning requirements.

Part of this planning process includes conducting risk assessments, to ensure that reasonable steps are taken to minimise the risks associated with each proposed camp or excursion. Park Ridge Primary School's risk assessment will include consideration of arrangements for supervision of students and consideration of the risk of bushfire or other natural disaster activity in the excursion location. In the event the Bureau of Meteorology forecasts a Catastrophic fire danger rating (FDR) day, excursions or camp activities in affected locations will be cancelled or rescheduled. Planning will also cover arrangements for cancelling, recalling or altering the camp or excursion for any other reason.

Park Ridge Primary School is committed to ensuring students with additional needs are provided with an inclusive camps and excursions program and will work with families during the planning stage, as needed, to support all students' attendance and participation in camp and excursion activities.

In cases where a camp or excursion involves a particular class or year level group, the Organising Teacher will ensure that there is an alternative educational program available and appropriate supervision for those students not attending the camp or excursion.

Organisation

Learning Leaders or the designated Teacher in Charge of organising the camp are required to follow the *Camp Checklist* and ensure all DET guidelines are met when planning and organising a camp

Administration Team staff will be responsible for managing and monitoring the payments made by parents/carers and will provide organising teachers with detailed records on a regular basis

The Teacher in Charge must provide the Administration Team with a final student list, along with a copy of all medical and permission forms. In the case where a camp involves a particular class or year level group, the organising teacher will ensure that there is an alternative program available for those students not attending the camp

Supervision

Park Ridge Primary School follows the Department's guidelines in relation to supervision of students during excursions and camps.

All excursion staff (including parent volunteers) will be familiar with supervision requirements and the specific procedures for dealing with emergencies on each camp and excursion.

All school staff will be aware that they retain overall responsibility for the supervision and care of students throughout all camps and excursions (including adventure activities), regardless of whether or not external providers are managing the activity.

Site Safety

- All safety requirements must be considered and adequately resolved prior to the camp or excursion
- The Learning Leader or the Teacher in Charge of the camp or excursion must complete a Risk Analysis during the planning phase, which includes consideration of the risk of bushfire in the activity location using the school's *Camps and Excursions Risk Assessment* templates on Compass
- Telephone numbers of all emergency services must be provided to the Business Manager, 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 on the DET website
- A designated Teacher in Charge will coordinate each camp or excursion. All camps will have an experienced teacher / or member of the School Leadership Team in attendance where possible
- The Teacher in Charge will ensure all students and adults attending the camp or excursion are aware of evacuation and emergency procedures
- The Teacher in Charge will communicate the anticipated return time with the Administration Team in the case where camps are returning out of school hours. Parents/carers will be informed prior to students leaving for the camp, via Compass School Manager.
- Adequate staffing for the camp must be arranged by the organising teacher/s – see the table below for requirements

Parent volunteers

Parents may be invited to assist with camps and excursions. School staff will notify parents/carers of any costs associated with attending. School staff are in charge of camps and excursions and parent/carer volunteers are expected to follow teachers' instructions.

- The process for selecting parents/carers to attend camps or excursions will be based on the following criteria:
 - Current *Working with Children Check*
 - First Aid qualifications
 - Past camp experience
 - Involvement in the school community
 - Attendance does not detrimentally affect their child's camping experience
 - Gender ratio
 - Skill set appropriate to camp activities

- School Council will endorse parent representatives attending and assisting at each camp, prior to parents/carers being notified of their attendance
- Parents/carers endorsed by School Council will be provided with a copy of the *Information for Parents and Carers Attending Camp* (see Appendix 3) and attend a meeting prior to camp, to discuss expectations of conduct and responsibilities whilst on camp

Volunteer and external provider checks

Park Ridge 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, Park Ridge Primary School will provide parents/carers with a specific consent form outlining the details of the proposed activity. Park Ridge Primary School uses Compass to inform parents about camps and excursions and to seek their consent. 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, Park Ridge 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. Park Ridge Primary School will also provide advance notice to parents/carers of an upcoming local excursion through Compass.

Parent Payments for camps and excursions

Most camps and excursions provided by Park Ridge Primary School enhance and broaden the schooling experience of our students but are not a mandatory component of our curriculum. These activities are provided on a user-pays basis in accordance with the Department's Parent Payments Policy.

Consent forms will have clearly stated payment amounts and finalisations dates, and families will be given sufficient time to make payments.

Students who have not finalised payment by the required date for camps and excursions provided on a user pays basis will not be able to attend unless the Principal determines exceptional circumstances apply.

Where a camp or excursion is provided as part of the standard curriculum requirements, parents may be invited to make a voluntary contribution but all students will be able to attend regardless of whether their parents contribute.

Financial Help for Families

Park Ridge Primary School will make all efforts to ensure that students are not excluded for financial reasons. Families experiencing financial difficulty are invited to discuss alternative payment arrangements with the Business Manager. The Business Manager can also discuss family eligibility for the Department's Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund (CSEF), which provides payments for eligible students to attend school activities, including camps and excursions. Applications for the CSEF are open to families holding a valid means-tested concession card or temporary foster parents and are facilitated by the school. Further information about the CSEF and the application form are available at [Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund](#).

Refunds

If a camp or excursion is cancelled or altered by the school, or a student is no longer able to attend part or all of the camp or excursion, our school will consider requests for partial or full refunds of payments in line with our Refunds policy.

Student health

Parents and carers need to ensure the school has up-to-date student health information prior to camps and excursions. A member of staff will be appointed with responsibility for the health needs of the students for each camp/excursion.

All staff members must be aware of the increased duty of care required on camps. All food, equipment, staffing, organisation of activities and student management procedures must be addressed prior to the camp. The needs of students with special dietary and medical requirements must be addressed. Parents/carers should notify the staff in writing regarding special dietary and medical requirements when returning medical and consent forms.

Teachers will administer any medication provided according to our *Medication* policy and the student's signed *Medication Authority Form*. The school will provide a first aid kit and take all school-based Adrenaline Auto-Injectors for those students who are at risk from Anaphylaxis and school-based Asthma medication for those students who are at risk of Asthma, to each camp. The Teacher in Charge is responsible for collecting this, prior to leaving.

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, staff and parent representatives. At least one member of staff attending the camp must hold a current Level 2 First Aid qualification.

One staff member will be designated to take responsibility for administering student medication and will ensure thorough documentation of medication and the administering of medication is maintained. All medication administered will be witnessed and signed off by another staff member.

It is the responsibility of parents and carers to ensure their child/children are in good health when attending excursions and camps. If a student becomes ill during a camp and is not able to continue at camp it is the parent/carer's responsibility to collect them and cover any

associated costs. If the Principal approves a student joining a camp late, transport to the camp is the parent/carer's responsibility.

Behaviour expectations

Students participating in camps and excursions are required to cooperate and display appropriate behaviour to ensure the camp or excursion is a safe, positive and educational experience for all students involved.

Parents/carers will be notified if their child is in danger of losing the privilege to participate in an excursion or camp due to behaviour that does not meet the standards of behaviour set out in the school's *Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy*. The decision to exclude a student will be made by the Principal or Assistant Principal, in consultation with the Organising Teacher. Both the parent/carer and the student will be informed of this decision prior to the camp or excursion.

If on a camp or excursion the Teacher in Charge considers an individual student's behaviour does not meet required standards, then the Principal or their nominee may determine that a student should return home during the camp or excursion. In these circumstances the parent/carer is responsible for the collection of the student and any costs associated with this.

Disciplinary measures apply to students on camps and excursions consistent with our school's *Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy*, *Student Code of Conduct* and *Bullying Prevention Policy*.

Electronic Devices

Students will not be permitted to bring electronic devices to camps or excursions except with prior approval from the Principal. The Principal will only approve students bringing electronic devices to a camp or excursion in exceptional circumstances and when it is in the best interests of the student, and may place conditions on its location and use during the camp or excursion.

Food

Students are not permitted to bring their own supply of food items to camps and excursions unless the item is medically indicated and discussed with the Organising Teacher, or included as an item on the clothing and equipment list for that camp or excursion.

Accident and Ambulance Cover

Any costs associated with student injury rest with parents/carers unless the Department is liable in negligence (liability is not automatic).

Unless otherwise indicated, Park Ridge Primary School and the Department do not provide student accident or ambulance cover. Parents/carers may wish to obtain student accident insurance cover and/or ambulance cover, depending on their health insurance arrangements and any other personal considerations.

Communication

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following way:

- Included in staff induction processes and staff training
- Available publicly on our school's website and on the schools' Compass App
- Included in staff handbook/manual
- Discussed at staff briefings/meetings as required
- Discussed at parent information nights/sessions
- Reminders in our school newsletter

Further information and resources

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following Department policies and guidelines:

- Excursions
- Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund
- Parent Payments Policy
- Medication Policy

Evaluation

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

Policy:	Camps Policy		
Date Approved:	October, 2023	Approved By:	Education Committee / Principal
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