

CAMPS AND EXCURSIONS REQUIRING SCHOOL COUNCIL APPROVAL POLICY

PURPOSE

Camps and excursions are seen as an integral part of the school curriculum as they enable students to explore, extend and enrich their learning, development of social skills and enhance engagement with their peers and the school 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 the school.

The purpose of this policy is to explain to our school community the obligations to seek permission from School Council before conducting higher risk, off site or out of hours school related activities.

Aims:

- To provide students with the opportunity to participate in a camping/excursion program that is linked to social 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 provide real life experiences whereby future planning and learning can take place.
- To allow students to observe and relate with participating staff members in different contexts. This can provide an outlet for situational discussions that may arise. These conversations are valuable in forming relationships with students and are encouraged.

SCOPE

Camps and excursions relate to activities undertaken outside the school setting. These activities can be within school hours/day, overnight or longer. Excursions and camps provide education that ordinarily would be either impossible or difficult to provide effectively within the normal school setting. They provide opportunities for students to experience real life examples and sample real life activities in order to make their education more meaningful and contextual.

POLICY

Guidelines:

- Staff wishing to organise a camp/excursion must complete the event template on XUNO and submit to the designated Principal Class Officer (PCO) for initial approval. Where a proposal has not been submitted, that camp/excursion will not run, unless special circumstances apply. This decision will be made by the Principal or Assistant Principal. The PCO will consider the educational outcomes of the camp/excursion as well as the impact on the College for the proposed dates.
- The designated PCO will ensure that all camps/excursions, transport arrangements, emergency procedures and student/staff ratios comply with DET guidelines.
- The Department provides legislation regarding the use of private transport for students on excursion. Staff are directed to be aware of this legislation and provide legal means of transportation for students under their care. Required documentation must be completed provided and approved before the use of private transport. Related documents are available from the front office.
- A risk assessment that addresses DET requirements must be completed for required camps/excursions and submitted with the proposal for the camp/excursion to School Council for approval. Examples include camps or excursions involving high-risk activities such as abseiling or rock climbing.

The approval pro forma can be accessed at:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/studentmanagement/excursions/Pages/outdoorrisk.aspx>

- The “Notification of School Activity” must be completed by the designated PCO online at: <https://edugate.eduweb.vic.gov.au/sites/emergencymanagement/DEECDSAL/default.aspx> four weeks prior to the camp departure date, ensuring relevant details are entered on the daily planning sheets.
- All camps/excursions requiring approval by School Council will then be presented to School Council for approval.
- All camps/excursions must comply with DET requirements. All safety requirements must be considered and adequately resolved prior to the camp/excursion. Telephone numbers of all emergency services must be provided to the school, and be taken on the camp/excursion. If any swimming activities are to occur, there must be sufficient staff attending with a current Bronze Medallion qualification.
- Refer: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/pages/excursions.aspx>
- All food, equipment, staffing, organization of activities and student management procedures must be addressed prior to the camp/excursion. Consideration needs to be given to students with special medical or dietary requirements. Parents should notify the staff in writing regarding these dietary requirements when returning consent forms. Sunshine College Camps and Excursions Policy 2
- The school will ensure that all camps/excursions are affordable. 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/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/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 camp/excursions. All parental consent and medical forms must be completed, signed and returned and all money must be paid prior to the designated closing date for that camp/excursion (usually a minimum of one week prior to the activity). Copies of completed permission notes and medical information must be accessible at the camp/excursion location by staff at all times.
- Office staff will be responsible for managing and monitoring the payments made by parents and will provide organising teachers with detailed records on a regular basis.
- A designated “Teacher in Charge” will coordinate each camp/excursion. All camps/excursions will have an experienced teacher in attendance where possible.
- The Teacher in Charge must provide the General Office with a final student list as well as posting a copy on the staff excursion notice board.
- In the case where a camp/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/excursion.
- The school mobile phone is available and staff must ensure that they take the appropriate first aid kit for each camp/excursion. The teacher in charge is responsible for collecting these prior to leaving and for returning these items
- The Teacher in Charge will ensure all students and adults attending the camp/excursion are aware of evacuation and emergency procedures.
- The Teacher in Charge will communicate the anticipated return time with the College office in the case where camps/excursions are returning out of school hours. Parents will be informed prior to students leaving for the camp/excursion, that they can phone the office to receive an updated anticipated return time.
- Parents may be invited to assist in the delivery of school camp/excursions. When deciding which parents will attend the organizing teacher will take into account any valuable skills offered (e.g. bus licence, first aid, etc), gender balance and special needs of particular students.
- Only students that have displayed sensible, reliable behaviour at school will be permitted to participate in school camps/excursions. Parents will be notified if their child is in danger of losing the privilege to participate in a camp/excursion due to poor behaviour at school. The decision to exclude a student will be made by the Principal, Assistant Principal, Sub-school Leader or House Manager in consultation with the organizing teacher. Both the parent and the student will be informed of this decision prior to the camp/excursion. All students participating in a school camp/excursion will be asked to sign a contract agreeing to abide by all camp/excursion rules.
- Parents will be requested to collect their child from camp/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. • Where a student fails to attend an excursion or camp no refund will be given unless extenuating circumstances apply.

REVIEW CYCLE

This policy was last updated on 1st June 2018 and is scheduled for review in June 2019.