



Hurstbridge Primary School

CAMPS POLICY & PROCEDURES POLICY

Rationale

The school's camping program enables students to further their learning and 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.

Aims

- To provide all children with the opportunity to participate in a sequential camping program.
- To provide shared class experiences and a sense of group cohesiveness.
- To reinforce and extend classroom learnings.
- 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.

Implementation

- A camp is defined as any activity involving at least one night's accommodation, including sleep overs at school.
- The program will be developed sequentially throughout the school.
- School Council will ensure that all school camps are maintained at a reasonable and affordable cost, and comply with all Department of Education requirements.
- Students will not be excluded from camps simply for financial reasons. Parents experiencing financial difficulty, who wish for their children to attend camp, will be required to discuss their individual situation with the Principal. Decisions relating to alternative payment arrangements will be made by the Principal on a case-by-case basis.
- All families will be given sufficient time to make payments for individual camps. Children whose parents have not paid deposits by the due date, who do not make full payment by the due date, or who have not made alternative arrangements with the Principal will not be eligible to attend.
- Any family who has not met the required alternative payment for a previous camp will be unable to participate in the camping program until the outstanding payment is finalised.
- School Council may set aside a budget each year that will cover the cost of replacing teachers who are involved in camps, or the costs for staff replacement can be borne by the participants.
- School camps are an outdoor education activity and as such, are subject to specific planning and approval guidelines.

- School Council is responsible for approval of all overnight excursions; camps; interstate and overseas visits; excursions requiring sea or air travel; excursions involving weekends or vacations; and adventure activities.
- Prior to the commencement of any detailed planning relating to a proposed school camp, the Teacher in Charge must familiarise themselves with the Department's [Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors](#) website. They must meet formally with the principal, to present the principal with a [planning summary](#), to discuss the proposed camp, and to seek 'in principle' support for the event.
- If the principal's approval is granted, detailed planning should commence using the [planning questions](#) proforma as a guide (Appendix E). This must include a site visit and [risk assessment](#).
- The school only uses residential campsites accredited by the 'Australian Camps Association' or the 'National Accommodation, Recreation & Tourism Accreditation Program (NARTA)' for overnight camps.
- Prior to seeking School Council approval for the camp, organising staff are required to meet again with the principal and present him/her with all documentation, including the completed School Council [approval](#) proforma and all attachments, ensuring that time permits for the matter to be placed on a School Council agenda and, if approved, that the online [Notification of School Activity](#) form then be submitted three weeks prior to the activity.
- When presenting information to School Council, the Teacher in Charge must be aware that Council will consider the following:-
 - What is the purpose of the camp and its connection to student learning?
 - Do staff members attending have the competence to provide the necessary supervision of students throughout the camp?
 - Is an appropriately trained member of staff able to provide [first aid](#) ?
 - Have staff members who are not registered teachers completed a Working with Children Check?
 - Is the location of staff and students throughout the camp including during travel known?
 - Is a record of telephone contacts for supervising staff accompanying the camp available?
 - Is a record of the names and family contacts for all students and staff available?
 - Are copies of the [parental consent](#) and [confidential medical advice](#) forms for those students on the camp available at the school?
 - Has a copy of the completed School Council [approval](#) proforma (including all attachments) been submitted and approved?
 - Will the online [Notification of School Activity](#) form be submitted three weeks prior to the excursion?
- Adventure activities are those that involve greater than normal risk such as base camping, bush walking, canoeing, snow activities, orienteering, cycling, horse riding, rock climbing and abseiling, challenge ropes courses, swimming (other than school swimming programs), surf activities, sailboarding, and similar activities. School Councillors may not have detailed knowledge of adventure activities. In such instances organising staff should consult the [adventure activities](#) website, or seek advice from peak bodies or skilled and experienced staff with recent experience instructing the activity to satisfy Council's requirements. [Emergency management plans](#) are to be developed when adventure activities are being undertaken.
- School Council requires that students only travel on buses fitted with seatbelts.

- School Council requires that a report be tabled after each school camp, detailing feedback regarding the event, in particular any mishaps or areas for future improvement.
- Classroom teachers will be given the first option to attend camps.
- The school will provide a mobile phone for all camps.
- A senior staff member will be in attendance at school whilst the children are returning from camp. The Teacher in Charge will communicate with this person in regards the anticipated return time.
- Parents will be invited to assist in the supervision of school camps. When deciding which parents will attend, the Teacher in Charge will take into account
 - Any valuable skills the parents have to offer e.g. bus licence, first-aid etc.
 - The preference to include both male and female parents.
 - The special needs of particular students.
- Parents selected to assist with the camps program will be required to undertake a Working with Children Check. The school will pay for any associated costs.
- Parent volunteers may be required to pay the accommodation and meals cost of the camp.
- While school camps are a team activity requiring the cooperation and common-sense of all participants, it is the Teacher in Charge who oversees the operations of the camp, takes charge of events, makes key decisions and accepts ultimate responsibility for the camp.
- Only children who have displayed sensible, reliable behaviour at school will be invited to participate in the camping program. Parents will be notified if a child is in danger of losing their invitation to participate in a camping experience due to poor behaviour at school. If the unsatisfactory behaviour continues, the child will then be excluded from camp. The decision to exclude a student will be made by the Principal, in consultation with the Teacher in Charge.
- Parents will be requested to collect their child from camp if their child exhibits behaviour that is considered unacceptable or they become unwell. The Teacher in Charge will make this decision. Costs incurred will be the responsibility of the parent.
- The primary references that must be consulted when considering all camps is the Safety Guidelines for Outdoor Education Activities website:
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 - <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/management/schooloperations/edoutdoors/default.htm> as well as the Vic Government Schools Reference Guide 4.4.2.2 – Student Safety & Risk Management.
 - To be read in conjunction with the 'Excursions' policy.

BUSHFIRES AND CONTROL PROCEDURES

- Pre-activity planning will include consideration of the possible fire risk and potential for bushfire in the relevant location. The camp will be cancelled in the event of a bush fire. Alternatives will be planned to allow for last-minute change in the event of severe fire danger.
- Fires and open fire places will be used in accordance with the requirements of the fire and/or land management authorities.
- Students will be briefed on the safe siting and use of fuel stoves and alerted to the risks associated with open flames in a bush setting.
- The communication strategy will include mechanisms to ensure that the group is alerted to a potential Total Fire Ban or other communications from fire authorities.
- In addition, staff will consider prevailing local conditions and adjust the camp accordingly. Adjustments could include further consultation with the school and/or land management authorities to determine course of action, evacuation, changing location or cancellation of the activity.

SITE SAFETY

- All safety requirements must be considered and adequately resolved prior to the camp. 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. All camps will have an experienced teacher in attendance where possible.
- The Teacher in Charge will ensure all students and adults attending the camp are aware of evacuation and emergency procedures. When staying at a residential campsite emergency procedures should be explained as soon as practicable after arrival and a trial evacuation exercise should be carried out immediately to ensure that procedures are appropriate and staff and students

are familiar with them.

- The teacher in charge will communicate the anticipated return time with the school office in the case where camps are returning out of school hours. Parents will be informed prior to students leaving for the camp the anticipated return time.
- For further ratios refer to 4.4.2.6 of the Victorian Government Schools Reference Guide

For further information regarding safety please check the policy documents below.

Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed annually at the conclusion of the school's camps program, and as stipulated in the Hurstbridge PS Policy Review Cycle (or more often if necessary due to changes in regulations or circumstances).

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: Planning Questions