



Werrimull P-12 School

Camps 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. A camp is defined as any activity involving at least one night's accommodation away from home.

Aims:

- To provide all children with the opportunity to participate in a broad and varied camping program.
- To provide shared class experiences 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.

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 and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) requirements.
- Parents will be notified of the exact costs and other relevant details of individual camps as soon as practicable.
- Students will not be excluded from camps solely 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.
- Once the permission form is returned a non-refundable deposit will be required.
- All families will be given sufficient time to make payments for individual camps. Parents will be sent reminder notices a fortnight before the camp departure date reminding them of the need to finalise payment. Children whose payments have not been finalised at least two school days before the departure date will not be allowed to attend unless alternative payment arrangements have been organised with the Principal.
- 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.
- Camps must be self-funding including the cost of Casual Relief Teachers (CRTs)
- All school staff should be given the opportunity to participate in the camps program. However, if required, priority will be given to staff with the prerequisite skills.
- Non DEECD personnel should be permitted to attend a camp provided the procedures set down by DEECD guidelines are followed.
- The school reserves the right to determine the final list of students attending the camp.

- 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 organising teacher and other key members 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.
- 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, organising staff 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?
 - 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.
- Classroom teachers will be given the first option to attend camps.
- The school will provide a mobile phone for all camps.
- The Teacher in Charge will communicate with the Principal in regards to the anticipated return time.

- On occasions parents will be invited to assist in the supervision of school camps. When deciding which parents will attend, the camps committee will take into account –
 - Any valuable skills the parents have to offer. e.g. bus licence, first aid etc.
 - The need 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.
- 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 classroom teacher.
- The primary references that must be consulted when considering all camps:
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/pages/excursions.aspx>

During the camp

- Students must follow existing school policies.
- Parents will be requested to collect their child from camp if their child exhibits behaviour that is considered unacceptable. The Teacher in Charge, in consultation with the Principal, will make this decision. Costs incurred will be the responsibility of the parent.
- In the event of an emergency the Teacher in Charge will follow the School Emergency Management procedures.
- All medication will be held by a designated teacher and administered by that teacher.

Upon returning from the camp

- Permission forms will be returned to the office for filing.
- Mobile phones and first aid kits will be returned.
- A camp report will be given to the Principal detailing any staff or students accident and/or misdemeanours.
- The Teacher in Charge will be responsible for preparing a report for the school Magazine and/or Pipeline.

Evaluation:

- This policy will be annually reviewed at the conclusion of the school's camps program, and as part of the school's three-year review cycle.

This policy was last ratified by School Council in **2013**

References: *School Policy & Advisory Guide*

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

