

# Moonee Ponds West Primary School



## Camps & 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 Councilors 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 compliment, 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. Moonee Ponds West Primary School also runs 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 Moonee Ponds West 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

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.

Moonee Ponds West 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.

The table below outlines our camping program:

<i>Foundation/Grade 1</i>	Activities after school, followed by dinner then parent/carer pick up
<i>Grade 2</i>	Activities after school followed by a sleepover on school grounds
<i>Grade 3/4</i>	Adventure camp (two nights)
<i>Grade 5/6</i>	Adventure Camp (three nights)
<i>MVIMP Music Camp</i>	Music Camp (three nights)
<i>Japan Tour (biannual)</i>	Overseas language tour (12 nights)

## 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.

All camps offered at Moonee Ponds West PS need to be accessible to all students. When choosing activities on the camps they must demonstrate 'reasonable adjustment' for maximum participation.

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 is safe and inclusive of all students;
- safety, emergency and risk management;
- informed consent from parents/carers 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, compliments 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.

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The policy will be reviewed as part of the review cycle, in line with DET policy and directives. Due to be reviewed in 2021.



Staff organising camps will complete the following steps to ensure camps are safe and inclusive for Moonee Ponds West 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, with all student needs accommodated.
- Obtain signed informed consent from parents/carers
- 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/carer 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.

## **FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES**

### **Related School Policies**

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

### **Related DET Resources**

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## **Excursions and activities**

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

## **Student Activity locator**

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

[Excursions and Outdoor Education](#)