

BELMONT PRIMARY SCHOOL

CAMPS & EXCURSIONS 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.

AIMS

- To explain to our school community the processes and procedures Belmont Primary School will use when planning and conducting camps, excursions and adventure activities for students.
- To ensure the school has proper procedures in place for the supervision of students when engaged in off-site activities which include consideration of the risks involved in the activity, location and weather conditions.
- To ensure the safety and welfare of our students learning with an external provider.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all camps and excursions organised by Belmont Primary School. This policy also applies to adventure activities organised by Belmont Primary School, regardless of whether or not they take place on or off school grounds, and to school sleep-overs. This policy is intended to complement the Department's guidelines on excursions, camps and adventure activities. Belmont Primary School will follow both this policy, as well as the Department's guidelines when planning for and conducting camps and excursions.

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 Belmont Primary, this could be a camp, day excursion, school sports);
- undertake adventure activities, regardless of whether or not they occur outside the school grounds;
- attend school 'sleep-overs' or activities in extended school hours on school grounds.

Camps are excursions involving at least one night's accommodation (including school sleep-overs).

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 website under Adventure Activities, at the following link:

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

IMPLEMENTATION

- For all camps and excursions, including adventure activities, our school will follow the Department's School Policy and Advisory Guide: [Excursions and Activities](#).
- For camps and excursions requiring school council approval, our school will also follow the Department's School Policy and Advisory Guide: [Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors](#).

Planning process for camps and excursions

- All camps and excursions will comply with Department planning requirements. This will include using the recommended relevant planning templates.
- 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. Belmont Primary School's risk assessment will include consideration of arrangements for supervision of students and consideration of the risk of bushfire activity in the excursion location. Planning will also cover arrangements if the camp or excursion needs to be cancelled, recalled or altered.
- Belmont 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.

Approvals

- The Department's guidelines provide that the principal is responsible for the approval of all day excursions (other than those involving adventure activities). The School Council is responsible for the approval of overnight excursions, camps, interstate visits, international visits, excursions requiring sea or air travel, weekends or vacations, and adventure activities.
- The Principal or their nominee will ensure that full records are submitted to council regarding the camp well in advance of the starting date of the event and that no camp occurs unless all the formal record keeping has been completed and approved.

Notification

- Schools are expected to record student activities and excursions that occur outside the school, or are in school grounds but outside normal school hours. The Principal or nominee will ensure that the online 'Notification of School Activity' <https://partner.eduweb.vic.gov.au/sites/sal#/> will be submitted at least three weeks prior to the activity.

Supervision

- Belmont 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 primary 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.

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. When deciding which parents/carers will attend, the Teacher in Charge will take into account: any valuable skills the parents/carers have to offer (e.g. bus licence, first aid etc.) and the special needs of particular students.

Volunteer and external provider checks

- In line with our school's *Volunteers Policy*, Belmont Primary School requires all parent or carer volunteers attending camps or excursions 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, other than local excursions, Belmont Primary School will provide parents/carers with a specific consent form outlining the details of the proposed activity. Belmont Primary School will inform parents about school camps and excursions by distributing notes to students and asking parents/carers to return the part of the note that asks for parents/carers signature confirming they consent to their child's participation. 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, Belmont 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. Belmont Primary School will also provide advance notice to parents/carers of an upcoming local excursion through online parent communication tool, the newsletter or notes home in the student's bag. For local excursions that occur on a recurring basis (such as weekly outings to the local oval for sports lessons), Belmont Primary School will notify parents once only prior to the commencement of the recurring event.

Cost of camps and excursions, refunds and support

- The cost of all camps and excursions are to be paid by parents/carers unless alternative arrangements have been agreed to by the Principal prior to the excursion. All families will be given sufficient time to make payments for all activities. Consent forms will have clearly stated payment amounts and payment finalisation dates.
- Students who have not finalised payment by the required date may not be able to attend unless the principal determines exceptional circumstances apply or an established payment plan is in place.
- Belmont 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 or Principal.
- The Business Manager or Principal 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](#).
- 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 made by parents/carers on a case-by-case basis taking into account the individual circumstances. The school may not be able to refund payments made for costs that have already been paid where those funds have already been transferred or committed to a third party and no refund is available to the school. Where possible, we will provide information about refunds to parents/carers at the time of payment.

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. Teachers will administer any medication provided according to our *Administration of Medication* policy and the student's signed *Medication Authority Form*. To meet the school's obligations relating to safety, a first aid kit and mobile phone will be taken by teachers on all camps and excursions and wherever possible, a trained first aid officer will be in attendance.
- 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 costs of this. 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* and the School's *Statement of Values*. The decision to exclude a student will be made by the 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.
- The principal and the teacher in charge will give due consideration to the discrimination laws regarding disabilities and seek advice from the Department before making a decision to exclude a student, who is diagnosed with a disability that presents with challenging behaviours, from a camp or excursion.
- Disciplinary measures apply to students on camps and excursions consistent with our school's *Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy*.

Electronic Devices

- Students will be permitted to bring electronic devices (such as iPads, iPods, mobile phones) if deemed required by the camp or excursion co-coordinator, but these may only be used during times set, by the teacher in charge. Students are responsible for the care of any personal electronic device brought to a camp or excursions and the school will not be responsible for lost or damaged devices.

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 "teacher in charge", or included as an item on the clothing and equipment list for that camp or excursion. Other exemptions may relate to students with specific food allergies or specific dietary needs.

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, Belmont 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.
- For excursions that require greater than normal risk, such as interstate or overseas trips, Belmont Primary School may consider obtaining travel insurance on these occasions. In this case, the school will refer to Department's *School Policy and Advisory Guide: Travel Insurance*.

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES:

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

- School Policy and Advisory Guide:
 - [Excursions and Activities](#)
 - [Emergency and Risk Management](#)
- [Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors](#)
- [Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund](#).
- [Code Red Days](#)

The following school policies and documents are also relevant to this Camps and Excursions Policy:

- *Statement of Values and School Philosophy*
- *Student Engagement Policy*
- *Child Safe Policy and Statements*
- *First Aid Policy*
- *Administration of Medication Policy*
- *Anaphylaxis Policy*
- *Asthma Policy*
- *Duty of Care Policy*
- *Inclusion and Diversity Policy*
- *Parent Payment Policy*
- *Emergency Management Plan*

EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed every three years in accordance with the school's policy schedule or as required if regulations or circumstances change.

This policy was last ratified by School Council in.....

December 2018

Review Date: 2021