



Kalinda Primary School No. 5121

School Camps Policy

Rationale:

Camps, as with other 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 skill development, in a non-school setting. Camps may include 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 that involves at least one night's accommodation.

Purpose:

- To provide students with the opportunity to participate in a camping program that is linked to social, cultural 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 further develop the problem solving and life survival skills of students.
- To extend understanding of their physical and cultural environment.

Guidelines:

- All camps must be approved by the Principal and School Council.
- The Principal or their nominee will ensure that full records are submitted to School 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.
- Staff wishing to organise a camp must complete a camp proposal form and lodge this with the Principal for approval. The camp should be at an affordable cost and comply with the Department of Education and Training (DET) policy and requirements.
- The Principal in consultation with appropriate staff will consider the educational outcomes of the camp as well as the impact on the school program for the proposed dates.
- **The Principal and Assistant Principal in consultation with organising teachers will ensure that all camps, transport arrangements, emergency procedures and student/staff ratios comply with DET policy and requirements including compliance with the Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors.**
- Approvals for teachers or principals who are to accompany any interstate or overseas excursion/camp must be sought from the Regional Director in the case of interstate and the Deputy Secretary, Regional Services Group at least 6 weeks prior to the excursion/camp.
- Risk Assessment documentation must be completed prior to approval of a camp.
- Once the excursion has been approved all relevant documentation must be completed.
- All approved camps must be recorded on the online notification of school activity form three weeks prior to the camp taking place.

- The school will ensure that the relevant details are recorded in the Daily Organisational Diary and are entered on the daily absence/planning sheets.
- All school camps will then be presented to School Council for their approval.

School Council is responsible for the approval of:

- Overnight excursions
- Camps
- Interstate visits and international visits
- Excursion requiring sea or air travel, weekends or vacations
- Adventure activities
- All excursions requiring School Council approval must comply with the Safety Guidelines of Education Outdoors.
- The school will follow Department of Education and Training (DET) policy and requirements for all adventure activities where appropriate.
- Staff with appropriate experience and qualifications to manage high risk environments such as school camp must be included in the staffing arrangements

Adventure Activities:

An adventure activity is an activity that involves greater than normal risk which may include:

- travel into a relatively undeveloped area of the country in which vehicle contact is difficult and/or uncertain
- confrontation with natural environmental challenges requiring greater reliance upon personal resources than would normally be required in day-to-day life
- less than normal contact by person or by telephone, with medical and other public services available in normal day-to-day life
- exposure to the natural elements with less than the normal physical protection provided in day-to-day life

Activities listed in the Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors such as:

- abseiling
- artificial climbing and abseiling walls
- bush walking
- canoeing/kayaking
- challenge ropes courses
- cross country skiing
- cycling
- downhill skiing and snowboarding
- horse riding
- orienteering
- overnight camping
- rafting
- recreational swimming
- rock climbing
- sailing
- scuba diving
- sea kayaking
- snorkelling
- surfing
- water skiing
- windsurfing.

Note: Bush walking, cycling and overnight camping may be considered adventure activities where they involve greater than normal risk (as outlined above) and in the circumstances outlined in the activity descriptions in the Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors.

All adventure activities:

- are to be treated as excursions regardless of whether they occur on school grounds or not
- require the approval of school council and the planning and guidelines relevant to school excursions apply see: Excursions Policy
- must also be conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors, which includes a planning and risk management process as well as specific activity guidelines

Flying foxes:

Flying Foxes may be erected at school camps provided that:

- 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 at all times
- a safety harness is always used

Implementation:**Planning and Approvals:**

The Principal must ensure that:

- Excursions are appropriately planned and approved in accordance with Departmental policy and requirements
- All excursions requiring school council approval meet the requirements of the Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors.

Important: When undertaking excursion planning, principals, teachers, school councillors and others involved in school excursions (including camps and adventure activities), 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 excursion planning and approval process should take into account the following considerations:

- the educational purpose of the excursion and its contribution to the curriculum
- maintenance of full records, including documentation of the planning process

venue selection:

- the suitability of the environment and/or venue for the excursion

safety, emergency and risk management:

- assessment of excursion risks
- procedures in the event of an emergency
- arrangements if the excursion needs to be cancelled or recalled (for example, due to forecast severe weather conditions, changes to DFAT travel advice, or students returning early due to illness/serious misbehaviour)
- completion of an online notification of school activity form three weeks prior to the activity using the Student Activity Locator
- first aid requirements
- any other measures necessary for student and staff safety and welfare.

minimising disruptions or costs to parents in the event of cancellations or alterations:

- the Principal should inform the parents that any costs associated with the student returning to school from an excursion due to illness or serious misbehaviour are the responsibility of the parent.
- parents should be advised of the possibility of cancellations or alterations and of any cancellation fees imposed on the parents by third parties.

- with respect to arrangements between the school and third parties the Principal should
 - carefully negotiate terms and conditions with third parties (e.g. travel agents, travel insurance companies, camp providers, specialist instructors) prior to accepting arrangements.
 - ensure the terms of any travel insurance offered to the school by the third party are satisfactory.

staffing and supervision:

- there are sufficient staff to provide appropriate and effective supervision
- the experience, qualifications and skills of each staff member (including volunteers, instructors, etc) will allow them to provide effective supervision in general and for planned activities (as applicable)
- there are appropriate levels of supervision in view of the activities undertaken and students involved.
- informed consent from parents or carers
- adequate student and staff medical information
- student preparation and behaviour
- requirements for any adventure activities (these involve greater than normal risk – there are additional considerations associated with these activities)

transportation requirements – noting that:

- public transport should be used if practicable, where transport authorities should be consulted as to appropriate travel times and at least a fortnight's notice of travel provided
- excursions that run late, failing to meet times agreed to with private bus operators, are likely to incur significant costs

communication requirements:

- that staff and students have appropriate clothing and personal equipment
- that group or technical equipment is in good condition and suitable for the activities undertaken
- that continuous instruction is provided for students remaining at the school during the absence of staff accompanying the excursion
- that the Regional Director has been informed if an excursion/school camp leaves the school unoccupied
- any information which has been provided by specialists in the activities proposed
- requirements for interstate or overseas excursions
- where external providers have been engaged to deliver specific activities or programs for students, or provide other services, the school retains responsibility for its students, as the duty of care of the school staff to students cannot be delegated to a third party
- that the excursion meets the requirements of any school-level policy or procedures.

Organisation:

- The Teacher in charge will provide the General Office with a final student list.
- All students must have returned a signed permission, completed medical forms and payment to be able to attend the camp.
- Copies of completed permission and medical forms will be carried by teachers on the excursion and will be archived following the excursion in accordance with DET policy and requirements.
- The Teacher in Charge will communicate the anticipated return time with the General Office in the case where excursions are returning out of school hours.
- Students not attending a camp will be placed in another class and have an appropriate learning program provided by the class teacher.
- All food, equipment, staffing, organisation of activities and student management procedures must be addressed prior to the camp.
- Consideration needs to be given to students and staff with special dietary and medical requirements.
- Occasions may arise where staff may need to transport students in their own cars. In such instances staff must obtain specific permission from the Principal as well as permission from parent/carers. The Department policy and requirements for Private Car Use will also need to be followed.

- Parents/carers may be invited to assist in the delivery of camps. When deciding on which parent will attend, the teacher in charge will take into account:
 - Any valuable skills the parents have to offer e.g. first aid etc.
 - The need to include both female and male parents.
 - The special needs of particular students.
 - The currency of **Working With Children Check**
 - Parent/carer agreement to and compliance with the school's **Child Safety Code of Conduct**

Risk management:

The Principal must ensure that appropriate emergency and risk management planning is undertaken for excursions/camps.

For **excursions requiring school council approval**, an excursion risk assessment plan must be provided which includes consideration of risks across the entire excursion (including transportation, activities undertaken and excursion venues and staff or student illness) and any significant financial risks to the school and/or parents (for example if an excursion/camp needs to be cancelled).

Venue managers and activity providers should be consulted in the preparation of the school's risk management plan and where appropriate, the risk management plans of venues or activity providers should be used to inform the school risk assessment process

Venues:

The school will use accredited campsites when using residential campsites to ensure these venues meet minimum criteria regarding safety and suitability.

Definition:

Residential campsites are campsites that have permanent facilities such as cooking and eating facilities, an amenities block, as well as adventure recreation options.

The Department recognises three accreditation providers:

- (i) Australian Camps Association's Campsite and Outdoor Activity Provider program (ACA)
- (ii) Australian Tourism Accreditation Program (ATAP)
- (iii) National Accommodation, Recreation and Tourism Accreditation (NARTA)

- **Other venues may include:**

Overnight campsites and venues that only provide accommodation such as caravan parks, hotels/motels or ski lodges
 Victorian Government residential schools
 Interstate camps or excursions
 Overseas venues

ACA or NARTA programs' accreditation criteria may be used to assess the suitability and safety of these venues. However, this criteria, should be used when assessing overseas venues.

Selection of camp venues:

Camp venues will be selected on the basis of their safety and suitability for the activities proposed.

It is recommended that venues are selected based on the recent first-hand knowledge (for example through an inspection of the site) of at least one member of the planning and supervising staff.

All safety requirements will be considered and adequately resolved prior to the camp.

Criteria for the selection of camp venues should include:

- health and hygiene
- buildings and facilities
- activity equipment and the conduct of activities
- certification and qualifications of venue staff
- participant supervision provided
- risks posed by other users of the site
- relevant accreditations
- emergency and risk management plans of venues
- fire precautions

- first aid facilities
- references from other schools
- recent first-hand knowledge of at least one member of the planning and supervising staff

Emergency Planning:

The emergency management planning in schools extends to and incorporates school camps.

- 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.
- Planning must cover arrangements if the excursion needs to be cancelled or recalled (for example, due to forecast severe weather conditions changes to DFAT travel advice or an emergency).
- Emergency procedures should include the effects of an emergency on student supervision in the event of excursion staff being required to assist injured students or to go for help.
- Students who may have difficulty communicating in an emergency because of age or disability should wear identity tags on excursions.
- Children on the Program for Students with Disabilities will need to be accompanied by an ES Staff Member where necessary.
- School council approved excursions including school camps must have an emergency response plan.
- The Department's requirements and guidelines relating preparation and safety will be observed in the conduct of all excursions/camps.
- Teachers leaving the school on a school camp must carry a **mobile phone**, first aid kit, asthma plans other relevant medication, emergency anaphylactic kits and management plans where applicable.
- Seat belted buses are required for all school camps.
- A designated "Teacher in Charge" will coordinate each camp and is responsible for ensuring the camp transport arrangements and camp activities comply with DET policy and requirements.
- **Teachers must take mobile phones to the camp. The Teacher in Charge is responsible for checking that mobile phones are available at the camp.**
- Seat belted buses are required for all camps.

Emergencies:

In the event of an emergency, accident or injury – school camp staff should:

- Take emergency action
- Immediately notify the school Principal who will then notify the Department's Security Services Unit
- The Principal should make arrangements for the Department's Security Services Unit to be telephoned on 9589 6266

Fire danger or ban:

- Risk assessments will be undertaken for bushfire in the activity location.
- Principals may need to review planned excursions ahead of forecast days of significant fire risk or total fire ban days and liaise with the region about whether the excursion should be cancelled.
- If an excursion is not cancelled, special fire safety precautions may be required, depending on the location.
- When required, schools must follow their Emergency Management Plan and the Department's emergency management (bushfires) procedures for off-site activities for all excursions.
- On days determined Code Red by the Emergency Management Commissioner, all camps in the CFA fire district determined Code Red must be cancelled.

Supervision:

Department of Education and Training (DET) guidelines provide minimum requirements for staff-student ratios. The school may need to enhance these measures to ensure student safety.

In determining appropriate and effective levels of supervision, excursion planning should take into account:

- the experience, qualifications and skills of staff (including volunteers and instructors etc.)
- the age, maturity, physical characteristics and gender of students
- the ability and experience of the students

- the size of the group
 - the nature and location of the excursion
 - the activities to be undertaken
 - requirements outlined in the Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors, for specific adventure activities
 - any other relevant factors
- All camps will have an experienced teacher in attendance.
 - All staff members will be aware of the increased duty of care any outdoor education activities

Most excursions must:

- Be under the direct control of a teacher employed by the DET or the School Council with at least one other excursion staff member present
- Have enough teachers employed by the DET or School Council to maintain appropriate control of the excursion and of each activity
- Have teachers comprising at least half of the excursion staff

Overnight stays for mixed gender groups must:

- Include excursion staff of at least one person of each sex

NOTE: In primary schools this requirement may be waived, where staff of each sex are not available.

Other excursion staff must:

Be approved by the Principal or school council and may include:

- Teachers employed by the Department of Education and training or School Council
- Other adults on a volunteer or paid basis (e.g. parents, trainee teachers, campsite staff, specialist instructors, community members, education support class officers)

All excursion staff must:

- Agree to and be compliant with the school's **Child Safety Code of Conduct**.

Important:

School students cannot be used as excursion staff

Excursion staff – who will provide supervision of students and who are **not registered teachers**

- Must have a **Working with Children Check**
- Must have agreed to and are compliant with the **Child Safety Code of Conduct**.

The names of volunteer workers must be recorded for the purposes of volunteer workers insurance

Where approved excursion staff who are not teachers employed by the Department or School Council are in attendance they can be included in the staff-student ratio:

- For the duration of a specific activity for which they have a designated supervisory responsibility or,
- For the overall staff-student ratio for the program, where they are on duty and available on the same basis as other staff (usually 24 hours).

Important:

The specific roles and responsibilities of each staff member (teachers, instructors, campsite staff, volunteers etc.) must be clarified and understood by all staff and students prior to the commencement of an excursion.

Specialist staff – schools must ensure that where specialist instructors are employed they:

- Have the necessary skills or qualifications for the activity
- Have appropriate experience for the age and skill level of the students
- Hold appropriate public liability insurance

Note:

While specialist instructors have the technical knowledge and expertise to instruct the students, the teachers have overall responsibility for the safety and welfare of the students, even where the teachers do not directly provide the actual instruction.

Professional Behaviour – all school camp staff:

- Must contribute to a safe, inclusive and caring learning environment during the school camp
- Must recognise, respect and affirm the authority of the school teachers at the camp
- Must not be overly familiar with students
- Must avoid unnecessary physical contact with students. In instances where this may be necessary as part of the instruction, the intent should be made clear and volunteers should be called for.
- Must respect, accept and be sensitive to other people's views, values and beliefs including their cultural and religious perspectives
- Must treat children fairly and with respect and give equal opportunity for participation to all including children of Torres Strait and Aboriginal cultural background and children with culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- Must be respectful of children with a disability and consider their safety
- Must not provide the media/internet access to photos or information related to students at this school
- Must not contact children of this school through networking sites or email nor in any personal manner.
- **Must respect the privacy of all attendees at the camp including both staff and students. This includes keeping confidential any information related to health issues, medication, behavioural issues disability and other pertinent matters. "What happens on the camp, stays on the camp".**
- **See the school's Child Safety Code of Conduct**

Inspection on arrival:

- The teacher-in-charge must check the excursion venue on arrival to assess apparent dangers and hazards and prepare contingency plans if required.
- 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.

First aid and Medication:

- At least one staff member responsible for each group of students must have first aid qualifications.
- The Teacher in Charge will ensure that student medications, permission medical forms are available at the site at all times and that all camp staff are aware of special medical issues, medication requirements, or special dietary needs of any student or staff member if appropriate.
- One staff member will be designated to take responsibility for administering student medication if required (following consultation with parents/carers and/or appropriate medical practitioners).
- The school will provide a first aid kit appropriate for each camp location as well as asthma plans and emergency asthma and anaphylactic kits and management plans where applicable.
- The Teacher in Charge is responsible for collecting these prior to leaving.

Additional camp equipment:

The School Council and Principal:

- must supply smoke detectors if indoor accommodation facilities do not have them
- should consider providing communication equipment to be used in emergencies

Communications:

- Parents/carers should be advised of the telephone numbers (both during and outside school hours) for the designated school contact person in the event of an emergency.
- Parents/carers should be advised that during the excursion, if parents have reason to believe an emergency may have occurred (such as a media report) they should in the first instance call the contact person and not personnel on the excursion as this will keep the telephone lines free at the excursion site.

- Arrangements for communicating with parents in the event of an emergency, cancellation or recall of the excursion must be made.
- Prior to the school camp parents/carers will be made aware that DET does not provide student accident cover and that they need to make their own arrangements.
- Consent forms must remain at the school with the designated school contact person and copies of each form must be taken on the school camp by the teacher in charge.

Student Preparation

In preparation for excursions the school should advise students of:

- the organisational arrangements
- the relevant safety arrangements or emergency procedures
- behavioural expectations

Student Behaviour

- Only children who have displayed sensible, reliable behaviour at school will be invited to participate in school camps.
- Parents will be notified if a child is in danger of losing their invitation to participate in an excursion due to poor behaviour at school. The decision to exclude a student will be made by the Principal, in consultation with the classroom teacher and teacher in charge.
- Students and their parents/carers need to be made aware that acceptable standards of behaviour will be expected during a school camp.
- Disciplinary measures apply to students on school camp consistent with the school's Student Engagement and Behaviour Management policies.
- In extreme cases, students may be sent home from an excursion/camp at the cost of the parents.

Returning a student home

In extreme cases the excursion staff, following consultation with and the approval of the school Principal, may decide to return a student to their home from a school camp.

School camp staff should advise the student's parent/carer of:

- The circumstance associated with the decision to send the student home
- The time when the parent/carer may collect their child from the excursion or the anticipated time the student will arrive home
- That any costs associated with the student's return will be the responsibility of the parents/carers

Staff will consider the age and maturity of the student when making travel arrangements.

Arrangements for payments

- All aspects of the camp 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 camps. All parent/carer consent and medical forms must be completed, signed and returned and all money must be paid prior to leaving.
- 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, will be required to discuss their individual situation with the Principal. Alternative payment arrangements may be made to enable all students to attend school camps.
- **Class teachers will be responsible for collecting permission and medical forms as they are returned to the school and the monitoring of payment. Money will be sent to the office for processing.**

This Policy is underpinned by the:

- Anaphylaxis Management Policy
- Asthma Management Policy
- Behaviour Management Policy
- Bullying, Cyber-bullying and Harassment Policy
- Child Safe Policy
- Duty of Care Policy
- Excursion Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Health Care Needs Policy
- Mandatory Reporting Policy
- Medication Management Policy
- On-Site Supervision of Students Policy
- Parent Concern and Complaints Policy
- Safety and Welfare of Students with External Providers
- School Camps Policy
- School Attendance Policy
- Student Engagement Policy
- Student Welfare Policy

Date Ratified by School Council 08/05/2017

Date of Review: 08/05/2020