



CAMPS

Approved by School Council: 2021



If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact the school on 9547 1224

PURPOSE

- Enable students to further their learning and social skill development in a non-school setting through:
 - Shared level experiences that deliver a sense of cohesiveness
 - Delivering skills and knowledge that may lead to lifelong involvement in worthwhile leisure pursuits
 - Promoting self-esteem, resourcefulness, independence, leadership, judgement, cooperation and tolerance

GUIDELINES

- This policy is intended to complement the Department's policy and guidelines on camps and adventure activities which all Victorian government schools are required to follow. Athol Road Primary School will follow both this policy and the Department's policy and guidelines when planning for and conducting camps and adventure activities.
- A camp is defined as an activity involving at least one night's accommodation and includes sleepovers
- The program will be developed specifically for the Year 4 – 6 students but may include other year levels if approved by School Council for any given year
- School Council will ensure that camps are maintained at an affordable cost and comply with all DET requirements
- Athol Road Primary School strictly adheres to the Department of Education guidelines in relation to supervision of students during camps
- All camp staff (including parent volunteers) will be familiar with supervision requirements and the specific procedures for dealing with emergencies on each camp.
- All school staff will be aware that they retain overall responsibility for the supervision and care of students throughout all camps and adventure activities regardless of whether or not external providers are managing the activities
- Athol Road Primary School is committed to ensuring students with additional needs are provided with an inclusive camps program and will work with families during the planning stage, as needed, to support all students' attendance and participation in camp activities.
- In cases where a camp or excursion involves a particular year level group/s, 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.
- Parents will be provided with approximate dates and costs associated with camps in the preceding year and notified of the exact costs and other relevant details as soon as practicable
- Students will not be excluded from camps for financial reasons. Parents experiencing financial difficulty, who wish their child/ren to attend camp, will be encouraged to discuss their individual situation with the principal. Decisions related to alternative payment arrangements will be made by the principal on a case-by-case basis
- If a camp is cancelled or altered by the school, or a student is no longer able to attend part or all of the camp, 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. Generally the school will 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, the school will provide information about refunds to parents/carers at the time of payment.
- Electronic devices are not permitted to be brought on camp except with prior approval of the principal.
- School Council requires that students only travel on buses fitted with seatbelts
- The DET online Student Locator must be completed three weeks prior to the activity
- Camps are an outdoor education activity and are subject to specific planning and approval guidelines
- The primary references that must be consulted when considering camps are:
 - the 'Safety Guidelines for Outdoor Education website:
 - <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/management/schooloperations/edoutdoors/default.htm>
 - Victorian Government Schools Reference Guide 4.4.2.2 – Student Safety & Risk Management
- Immediately prior to departure, the risk of bushfire in the vicinity of the camp must be reassessed and where there is any danger to students or staff, regardless how small, the camp will be postponed or cancelled as appropriate
- The school uses only residential campsites accredited by the Australian Camps Association or the National Accommodation, Recreation & Tourism Accreditation Program (NARTA) for overnight camps

IMPLEMENTATION

- Camps must have sufficient staff willing to participate and to cover the required teacher/student ratio
- All families will be given sufficient time to make payments for individual camps. Parents will be sent a reminder notice two weeks before the camp departure date reminding them of the need to finalise payment. Students whose parents have not been finalised at least two school days before the departure date will not be able to attend unless alternative 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
- School Council is responsible for approval of all overnight camping experiences
- A designated teacher will coordinate each camp to ensure that all arrangements comply with DET guidelines
- A risk assessment will be conducted to ensure that reasonable steps are taken to minimise risks
- Given that planning may cross over two years this teacher may change, so hand-over arrangements will need to be completed to ensure continuity of organisation/planning
- Prior to the commencement of any detailed planning relating to a proposed camp, the organising teacher and other key members must meet formally with the principal, to present a planning summary, discuss the proposed camp, and seek 'in principle' support for the event.
- If the principal's approval is granted, detailed planning should commence to meet the school and DET requirements including a site visit and risk assessment.
- 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.
- 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 students available at school?
 - Has 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 camp?
 - 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.
- 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.
- Teachers directly involved with student learning will be given the first option to attend camps.
- A senior staff member will be in attendance at school whilst the children are returning from camp. The organising teacher will communicate with this person in regards the anticipated return time.
- Only children who have displayed sensible, reliable behaviour at school will be invited to participate in the school camp program. Parents will be notified if a child is in danger of losing their invitation to participate 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 relevant teachers. Payment of camping fees will be refunded.
- Parents will be requested to collect their child from camp if s/he exhibits behaviour considered unacceptable or they become unwell. The Teacher in Charge will make this decision. Costs incurred will be the responsibility of the parent.

COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- School's website
- Staff induction processes
- Staff handbook/manual
- Staff briefings/meetings as required
- Parent Information sessions
- Newsletters
- Hard copy from school administration upon request

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	November 2021
Approved by	School Council
Next scheduled review date	November 2022