



# Metung Primary School

## CAMPS AND EXCURSIONS POLICY

### RATIONALE

Metung Primary School's camps and day excursions programs enable students to further their learning and social skills development in a non-school setting. Camps and day excursions may have a cultural, environmental or outdoor emphasis. They complement, and are an important aspect of the educational programs offered at our school.

### AIMS

#### Camps aim to:

- provide all children with the opportunity to participate in a sequential camping program
- provide shared class experiences and a sense of group cohesiveness
- reinforce and extend classroom learning.
- provide a program that delivers skills and knowledge that may lead to a lifelong involvement in worthwhile leisure pursuits
- provide a program that promotes self-esteem, resourcefulness, independence, leadership, judgement, cooperation and tolerance.

#### Day excursions aim to:

- reinforce, complement and extend learning opportunities beyond the classroom
- develop an understanding that learning is not limited to school, and that valuable and powerful learning takes place in the real world.

#### Child safety:

- All staff, volunteers, contractors, camps and any other member of the school community involved in child related work will be informed about, and expected to adhere to, the Metung Primary School Child Safety Commitment and Code of Conduct.
- The Child Safety Commitment and Code of Conduct applies in all school situations, including school camps and in the use of digital technology and social media.

### IMPLEMENTATION

- A camp is defined as any activity involving at least one night's accommodation, including sleep overs at school
- Day excursions are defined as any organised and supervised school activities that require children to venture beyond the school boundary
- 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
- The principal is responsible for the approval of all non-adventure single-day excursions other than those that must be approved by the school council
- Students will not be excluded from camps or excursions simply for financial reasons. Parents experiencing financial difficulty, who wish for their children to attend camps or excursions, 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



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- All families will be given sufficient time to make payments for individual camps and excursions.
- Children whose parents have not paid deposits by the due date, who do not make full payment by the due date, or who have not made alternative arrangements with the principal will not be eligible to attend
- Any family who has not met the required alternative payment for a previous camp or excursion will be unable to participate in future camps or excursions until the outstanding payment is finalised
- School camps are an outdoor education activity and as such, are subject to specific planning and approval guidelines.
- Prior to the commencement of any detailed planning relating to a proposed camp or day excursion, the teacher in charge and other key members must meet formally with the principal, to present the principal with a planning summary, to discuss the camp or to discuss the proposed day excursion activity, and to seek 'in principle' support for the event. The principal will complete a checklist to ensure all information and planning is in order.
- If the principal's approval is granted, detailed planning should commence using the planning proforma as a guide. This must include a risk assessment and may include a site visit.
- 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 camp information to school council or excursion information to the principal, the teacher in charge must be aware that the principal or school council will consider the following:
  - What is the purpose of the camp or excursion and its connection to student learning?
  - Do staff members attending have the competence to provide the necessary supervision of students throughout the camp or excursion?
  - Is an appropriately trained member of staff able to provide first aid?
  - Have staff members or supervisory adults who are not registered teachers completed a Working with Children Check?
  - Is the location of staff and students throughout the camp or excursion 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 excursion completed to be taken to the activity, with copies retained at school?
  - 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 camp?



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- 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.
- Emergency management plans are to be developed when adventure activities are being undertaken
- School council requires that students only travel on buses fitted with seatbelts
- Classroom teachers will be given the first option to attend camps
- The school will provide a mobile phone for all camps
- Parents may be invited to assist in the supervision of school camps and excursions. When deciding which parents will attend, the teacher in charge will take into account:
  - Any valuable skills the parents have to offer. E.g. bus licence, first aid etc.
  - The preference 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
- While school camps and excursions are a team activity requiring the cooperation and common-sense of all participants, it is the teacher in charge who oversees the operations of the camp or excursion, takes charge of events, makes key decisions and accepts ultimate responsibility for the camp or excursion
- Only children who have displayed sensible, reliable behaviour at school will be invited to participate in camps or excursions. 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 a camp or excursion. The decision to exclude a student will be made by the principal, in consultation with the teacher in charge
- Parents will be requested to collect their child from a camp or excursion if their child exhibits behaviour that is considered unacceptable or they become unwell. The teacher in charge will make this decision. Costs incurred will be the responsibility of the parent
- School camps or excursions will be cancelled in the threat of a bushfire or a code red classification.

## FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

The primary references that must be consulted when considering all camping activities (including adventure activities) is the Safety Guidelines for Excursions which can be found at: <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/studentmanagement/excursions/Pages/outdoorguidelines.aspx>

as well as the Victorian government 'School Policy and Advisory Guide'.

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

Excursion forms can be found at:

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/studentmanagement/excursions/Pages/outdoorforms.aspx>



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## RELATED POLICIES

- Child Safety Commitment and Code of Conduct
- Parent Payment policy
- Volunteers policy
- Working with Children and Suitability Checks

## REVIEW CYCLE AND EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed annually at the conclusion of a school camps or after any unexpected or adverse incident originating from an excursion, and as part of the school's three-year review cycle.

This policy was last updated in **August 2018** and is scheduled for review in **2022**.

School council approved this policy in **August 2018**.