

Camp Policy

North Melbourne Primary School

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SCHOOL Nº 1402



Rationale:

North Melbourne Primary School strives for academic excellence in an environment, which is supportive of students. The camping program at NMPS is an integral part of engaging students, enriching our curriculum, extending students' learning opportunities and developing personal and social skills. School camp is an extension of our curriculum programs.

The purpose of the School Camps Policy is to provide:

- Guidance to staff, students and the school community about the structure of the school camp program and the school's obligations for student safety and wellbeing.
- Students with the opportunity to participate in a camping program that enhances their learning and personal development.
- Students and staff with shared experiences that develop a sense of group cohesiveness.
- Experiences to extend classroom learning and support a theme or integrated curriculum topic.
- Experiences that challenge students and develop self-esteem, resourcefulness, independence, leadership, judgement, cooperation and tolerance.

Implementation:

- A camp is any activity involving at least one night's accommodation away from school.
- The camping program will be offered to Year 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 students once per year.
- The duration of each camp will be as follows:
 - Year 2 – overnight
 - Year 3 – 2 nights
 - Year 4 – 2 nights
 - Year 5 – 2 nights
 - Year 6 – 4 nights

Selection of Venues:

- Camp venues and activities should be selected to support the educational program.
- Students will be offered a variety of venues and camp environments.
- Forward planning and booking of camps is highly recommended to secure the best venues for camp programs.
- Campsites selected for the camping program must be accredited by the Australian Camping Association or similar credible body.
- When planning camps, every effort should be made to maintain camps at a reasonable and affordable cost to maximise student participation.
- Camping programs must comply with all Department of Education requirements.



Responsibilities of the principal:

The Principal has a responsibility to:

- Supervise the organisation of a camp
- Ensure suitable arrangements and provisions are made for the safety of students and adults involved in the camp, especially those with food allergies / anaphylaxis and/or other medical conditions such as asthma
- Ensure that sufficient camp staff and teachers have valid and appropriate first aid training, including First Aid training in Anaphylaxis (22099VIC) and the Emergency Asthma Management (22024VIC EAM) course
- Ensure that financial costs allow for all students to participate
- Ensure that the program is balanced and suitable for the age group
- Ensure that DET camp and excursion requirements are met
- Ensure that the chosen campsite meets acceptable safety standards

Responsibilities of teachers:

The teacher-in-charge must:

- Complete the Approval proforma
- Submit the Approval proforma to the principal
- Submit the Approval proforma to school council before the camp can proceed
- Submit a Notification of School Activity form prior to camp
- Communicate with the camp staff about medical and allergy requirements of those attending the camp
- Liaise with camp organisers and parents of students with anaphylaxis and allergies in regards to suitable menus, ingredients and activities.
- Liaise with camp organisers and parents of students with asthma in regards to triggers and other factors
- Establish that camp staff are sufficiently trained to manage students with anaphylaxis and asthma
- Ensure up-to-date medical information is provided by parents and adequate medication is provided
- Ensure that a camp does not discriminate against students because of cost
- Ensure that the program is forwarded to the Principal for approval
- Ensure DET regulations and guidelines are followed
- Ensure that all medical information and medication is collected and available
- Ensure that the chosen campsite meets acceptable safety standards

Responsibilities of students:

Students have a responsibility to:

- Follow the direction of teachers and parent helpers
- Observe school and class rules
- Act responsibly with other students
- Act responsibly to care for other's property and rights
- Be responsible for one's own belongings



Responsibilities of parents:

Parents have a responsibility to:

- Support the school's program by encouraging their child's participation in camps
- Notify the school if cost of camp prohibits participation of their child
- Provide full up to date medical information to the teacher in charge and any required medication for students with medical conditions
- Provide up-to-date information to the teacher-in-charge in regards to any medical conditions

Responsibility of school council:

School councils are responsible for approving overnight excursions, camps, adventure activities, interstate and overseas trips, excursions involving sea or air travel, and excursions involving weekends or vacations. In approving a camp, excursion or trip, school councils must be satisfied that adequate planning and preparation has been taken to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the students involved. They must follow DET requirements for school council. Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors School council members should also refer to the School Councils page in the Safety Guidelines and may wish to use the School council checklist to ensure that the council has met all its obligations for a proposed camp.

Preparation for Camp:

- Camps will be planned and booked two years in advance, according to the NMPS Integrated Curriculum cycle.
- Staff and parents will be advised of camp dates and estimated costs at least 1 term prior, where possible 1 semester ahead.
- Parents will be notified of the costs and other relevant details of individual camps as soon as possible, after camp numbers; activities and expenses have been confirmed.
- Families will be given sufficient notice to make payments for camp. Students 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, may not be eligible to attend camp.
- Students should not be excluded from camps for financial reasons. Parents experiencing financial difficulty, who wish for their children to attend camp, are encouraged 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.



School Management During Camping Programs

NMPS recognises that the Camping & Outdoor Education program is conducted by the good will of all staff and support of the entire school community.

Camping / Outdoor Education programs require significant investment of school resources and staff time, with major re-organisation of whole school programs for that week. It is expected that staff and the community will be flexible during camp weeks to ensure adequate staffing for camps and maintenance of programs for the remainder of the school.

Non-Campers:

- All students will be encouraged to attend camp. Those students who do not attend camp will have a modified program for the duration of the camp. They will be working with other year levels whilst their cohort is on camp.

Legal Requirements:

- School camps, are subject to specific planning and approval guidelines. The principal is responsible for ensuring these obligations are met.
- School Council is responsible for approval of all overnight camps and adventure activities.
- Prior to the commencement of any detailed planning relating to a proposed school camp, the Teachers in Charge must familiarise themselves with the Department's **Safety Guidelines on the DET** website.
- It is highly recommended that if a new or unfamiliar camp venue is selected, a preliminary visit is organised to gain a sense of student management needs and environmental risk assessment.
- If the camp is confirmed, the planning commences. Approval for the camp will be sought from principal and school council. The camp dates and details must be placed on the School Council Agenda, for approval, at least 6 weeks before the camp date – earlier if possible. The camp dates are added to the school calendar, website and COMPASS.
- Once the camp is confirmed, the DET online Notification of School Activity form is completed at least three weeks prior to the camp.
- Buses fitted with seatbelts must be used and all passengers must wear seatbelts.
- When presenting information to School Council, the Teacher in Charge must be aware that Council would consider the following:
 1. What is the purpose of the camp and its connection to student learning?
 2. Do staff members attending have the experience and capability to provide the necessary supervision of students throughout the camp?



3. Is an appropriately trained member of staff able to provide first aid?
 4. Is the location of staff and students throughout the camp, including during travel, known?
 5. Is a record of telephone contacts for supervising staff accompanying the camp available?
 6. Is a record of the names and family contacts for all students and staff available?
 7. Are copies or spreadsheet summaries of the parental consent and confidential medical advice forms for those students on the camp available at the school?
 8. Has a copy of the completed School Council approval proforma (including all attachments) been submitted and approved?
 9. Will the online Notification of School Activity form be submitted three weeks prior to the A duty of care exists at all times as a teacher-student relationship exists throughout the camp.
- The same code of conduct applied during school hours is expected of all students, staff and supervisors for the duration of the camp.

Adventure Activities at Camp:

- Adventure activities involve greater than normal risk: bush walking, canoeing, orienteering, cycling, horse riding, rock climbing and abseiling, challenging ropes courses, swimming (other than school swimming programs), surfing and similar activities.
- If adventure activities are part of the camp program, organising staff should consult the adventure activities website, or seek advice from skilled and experienced staff onsite at individual camps with recent experience instructing the activity, to satisfy safety and risk management requirements

Staffing of School Camps:

- Staffing ratios at camp must be in accordance with DET guidelines
- At least one staff member attending camp will have training in the Emergency Asthma management course
- At least half of staff attending camp will be up to date with first aid, asthma and anaphylaxis training
- Classroom teachers are expected to attend camps involving their cohort.
- If there is a staffing shortfall for camp, staff members (including SSOs) and pre-service teachers will be invited to submit an expression of interest to assist in the supervision of school camps.
- When deciding whom to select supervising staff for camp, the Teacher in Charge and the Principal will take into account relevant skills the applicant offers. These requirements may include:
 1. First Aid/ medical qualifications, expertise in adventure activities, previous experience of camping or working with groups of children.
 2. When teachers outside the cohort are selected this process will look at PLT's ability to cover staff and lack of disruption to learning.



3. The need to balance male and female staffing of camp
The special needs of students: e.g. Integration Aides or similar supervision is required
4. Non-teaching staff selected to assist with the camp will be required to have a current Working with Children Check.
5. While school camps are a team activity requiring the cooperation of all participants, it is the Teacher in Charge who oversees the operations of the camp, takes charge of events, makes key decisions and accepts ultimate responsibility for the camp.

Communications plan

Communicating effectively during a crisis is critical. All staff attending camps will be provided relevant information regarding:

- Students with known allergies
- Location of first aid equipment
- Location of emergency management plans
- Emergency contact details

Risk Assessment Management

- Prior to camp, staff should identify the potential risks a particular activity presents to students and supervising adults.
- Identified risks will be analysed so appropriate corrective measures may be applied to eliminate the risks or to control the risks to an acceptable level.
- “Risk Management” may include the management of ‘at risk students’ who are given the opportunity to attend camp to develop their personal and social skills.
- Consideration will be given to medical requirements of students participating on camps. This will include information such as:
 1. Known medical conditions
 2. Medication which is required
 3. Allergies
 4. Any medical condition which may prevent a student from participating in a particular activity
 5. Dietary needs
- Written instruction will be obtained from parents or guardians for the administration of medication.
- Specific staff responsibilities for First Aid and Medication will be allocated. The nominated staff will be responsible for First Aid and Medication for the duration of the camp.
- Teachers, the principal and Teacher in Charge shall ensure that students attending camp have signed permission with all details fully completed, with the correct contact information.



Student Safety and Wellbeing

- Students need to demonstrate that they are capable of participating effectively in camp.
- Students who have demonstrated sensible, reliable, trustworthy, behaviour and co-operative skills at school will be invited to participate in the camping program.
- Parents will be notified if, due to poor behaviour choices made at school, a student is at risk of losing his/her invitation to attend camp.
- If the student is not capable of operating at the high level of trust and co-operation required at camp, he/she will forfeit their right to attend camp.
- The decision to withdraw a camp invitation will be made by the Principal, in consultation with the classroom teacher, the Teacher in Charge and the student's family.
- Parents will be requested to collect their child from camp if their child becomes ill or behaves in a way that compromises his/her own wellbeing and safety, or that of other students.
- The Teacher in Charge, in consultation with the principal, will make the decision to call for a child to be collected from camp. Costs incurred will be the responsibility of the parent and no refunds can be made.
- Unless otherwise advised by the school, students are not to bring money, valuable items or foods such as lollies, chocolate, sweets etc. to camp.
- Mobile phones and similar devices are not required at camp.