



# Camping Program

## POLICY

### Rationale

Camps 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 on or off school grounds. Camps may have 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 (including school sleep-overs).

The purpose of the School Camps policy is to:

- Provide students with the opportunity to participate in a camping program that is linked to social, cultural and educational outcomes for students.
- Provide shared class and year level experiences, team building and a sense of group cohesiveness
- Reinforce and extends 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, judgment, cooperation and tolerance
- Further develops students problem solving and life survival skills
- Extend understandings of their physical and cultural environment.

This policy is intended to complement the Department's policy and guidelines on excursions, camps and adventure activities which all Victorian government schools are required to follow. Karoo Primary School will follow both this policy, as well as the Department's policy and guidelines when planning for and conducting camps and excursions.

### 1. Guidelines

- 1.1 All camps must be approved by the Principal and School Council
- 1.2 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
- 1.3 Staff wishing to organise a camp must complete the excursion approval form and lodge this with the Principal for approval. The camp should be at an affordable cost and comply with Department (DET) policy and requirements
- 1.4 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
- 1.5 The Principal class officers, in consultation with organising teachers, will ensure that all camps, transport arrangements, emergency procedures and student/staff ratios comply with DET policy and requirements
- 1.6 Risk Assessment documentation must be completed prior to approval of a camp
- 1.7 Once the excursion has been approved all relevant documentation must be completed
- 1.8 All approved camps must be recorded on the online notification of school activity form at least four weeks prior to the camp taking place

- 1.9 The Teacher in Charge will ensure that the relevant details are recorded on the school calendars, provide updates on the school's electronic app (Compass) and are entered on the weekly bulletin and in the CRT diary
- 1.10 All school camps will then be presented to School Council for their approval
- 1.11 School Council is responsible for the approval of overnight excursions, camps, interstate visit, international visits, excursions requiring sea or air travel vaccinations and adventure activities
- 1.12 All excursions requiring School Council approval must meet the requirements of the Safety Guidelines of Education Outdoors
- 1.13 The school will follow Department of Education and Training (DET) policy and requirements for all adventure activities where appropriate
- 1.14 The approval process will take into account the following considerations:
- The educational purpose of the camp and its contribution to the curriculum
  - Maintenance of full records, including documentation of the planning process
  - Venue selection, including the suitability of the environment and/or venue for the excursion
  - Safety, emergency and risk management
  - Procedures in the event of an emergency
  - Arrangements if the camp needs to be cancelled or recalled (e.g. severe weather)
  - Completion of an online notification of school activity form four weeks prior to the camp
  - First Aid requirements
  - Any other measures necessary for student and staff safety and welfare
  - Staffing and supervision (sufficient staff/experience/qualifications/appropriate level of supervision)
  - Informed consent from parents/carers
  - Adequate student and staff medical information
  - Student preparation and behaviour
  - Requirements for any adventure activities
  - Transport requirements
  - 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 camp meets the requirements of any school-level policy or procedures.

## 2. Implementation

### Safety

- 2.1 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
- 2.2 Other venues may include:
- School sleep overs on school grounds
  - 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
- 2.3 Camp venues will be selected on the basis of their safety and suitability for the activities proposed. Criteria may include:
- Health and hygiene
  - Buildings and facilities
  - Activity equipment and the conduct of activities
  - Certification and qualifications of venue staff
  - Participant supervision provided
  - Relevant accreditations
  - Emergency and risk management plans of venues
  - Fire precautions
  - First aid facilities
  - References from other schools
- 2.4 All safety requirements will be considered and adequately resolved prior to the camp
- 2.5 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
- 2.6 All camps will have an experienced teacher in attendance where possible
- 2.7 The Teacher in Charge will ensure all students and adults attending the camp are aware of evacuation and emergency procedures
- 2.8 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
- 2.9 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)
- 2.10 The school will provide a first aid kit for each camp including 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
- 2.11 Teachers must take a mobile phone to the camp. The Teacher in Charge is responsible for checking that mobile phones are available at camp
- 2.12 Students on the Program for Students with Disabilities will need to be accompanied by an ESO staff member where appropriate
- 2.13 DET’s policy and requirements relating to preparation and safety will be observed in the conduct of all camps
- 2.14 The emergency management process of the school will extend to and incorporate all camps
- 2.15 School Council approved excursions including camps must have an emergency response plan
- 2.16 When required, schools must follow the DET’s emergency management (bushfires) procedures for off-site activities for all excursions including camps
- 2.17 All staff members will be aware of the increased duty of care any outdoor education activities
- 2.18 Risk assessments will be undertaken for bushfire in the activity location
- 2.19 On days of extreme fire danger or total fire ban, the Principal or their nominee may need to cancel a camp at short notice. Where a camp is not cancelled special fire safety precautions will be implemented
- 2.20 Prior to the camp parents/carers will be made aware that DET does not provide student accident cover and that they need to make their own arrangements
- 2.21 Seat belted buses are required for all camps off school grounds
- 2.22 In the event of an emergency, accident or injury staff will:

- Take emergency action
- Immediately notify the school Principal who will then notify the Department's Security Services Unit

## **Organisation**

- 2.23 The Teacher in charge will provide the General Office with a final student list
- 2.24 All students must have returned a signed permission, completed medical forms and payment to be able to attend the camp
- 2.25 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
- 2.26 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
- 2.27 Students not attending a camp will be placed in another class and have an appropriate learning program provided by the class teacher
- 2.28 All food, equipment, staffing, organisation of activities and student management procedures must be addressed prior to the camp
- 2.29 Consideration needs to be given to students and staff with special dietary and medical requirements
- 2.30 Occasions may arise where staff may need to transport students in their own cars. In such instances the Department policy and requirements for Private Car Use will need to be followed
- 2.31 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

## **Behavioural Issues**

- 2.32 Only students 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
- 2.33 Disciplinary measures apply to students on school camp consistent with the school's Wellbeing and Behaviour Management policies. In extreme cases the camp staff, following consultation with the Principal or their nominee, may determine that a student should return home during a camp. In such circumstances the parent/carer will be advised of the circumstances, a time to collect their child or the anticipated time that the student will arrive home. Any costs associated with the student's return will be the responsibility of the parents/carers

## **Arrangements for payments**

- 2.34 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 finalisation dates
- 2.35 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

- 2.36 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
- 2.37 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.

### **3. Resources**

- 3.1 This policy is underpinned by the:
- a) Behaviour Management Policy
  - b) Bullying, Cyber-bullying and Harassment Policy
  - c) Duty of Care
  - d) Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy
  - e) Student Welfare Policy
  - f) Yard Duty and Supervision

### **4. Evaluation**

- 4.1 The Education Sub Committee and Karoo PS staff will review the effectiveness of the school's Camping Program Policy on a cyclical basis in accordance with DET guidelines and priorities.