



HIGHVALE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Excursions, Activities and Camps Policy

Ratified by School Council: November 2012

Review date: November 2015

Rationale

Excursions and 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 skills development, in a non-school setting. Excursions complement, and are an important aspect of the educational programs offered at the school. An excursion is defined as any activity beyond the school grounds.

Aims

- To reinforce, complement and extend the learning opportunities beyond the classroom
- To develop an understanding that learning is not limited to school, and that valuable and powerful learning takes place in the real world.
- To provide a safe, secure learning experience for students in a venue external to the school.
- To further develop social skills such as cooperation, tolerance, communication, individual and group interaction.
- To further develop problem solving and life survival skills.
- To extend understanding of their physical and cultural environment.

Guidelines for action

All excursions and camps must be approved by the Principal. Once approved by the Principal, all camps and high risk excursions require School Council approval. The organising staff member must liaise with, and submit all necessary approval paperwork to School Council, via the Camps Coordinator. The Principal will ensure that all excursions, transport arrangements, emergency procedures and staffing comply with DEECD guidelines. Refer to:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/management/governance/spag/safety/excursions>.

School Council is responsible for the approval of:

- Overnight excursions
- Camps
- Interstate visits
- International visits
- Excursions requiring sea or air travel, weekends or vacations
- Adventure activities

The Principal is responsible for the approval of all single-day excursions other than those that must be approved by school council as mentioned above. A range of factors are taken into consideration by The Principal and or School Council, including:

- the contribution of the activity to the school curriculum
- the adequacy of the planning, preparation and organisation in relation to the school policy and the guidelines and advice provided by DEECD
- information provided by community groups and organisations that specialise in the activity proposed
- appropriateness of the venue
- the provisions made for the safety and welfare of students and staff
- the experience and competence of staff relevant to the activities being undertaken
- the adequacy of the student supervision

- the high risk nature of some activities
- emergency procedures and safety measures
- staff-student ratios
- student experience

Students not attending a camp or excursion will be placed in another class and have an appropriate learning program provided by the class teacher.

Parent information sessions will be held prior to the camp to inform parents of activities, daily routines and behaviour expectations. At this meeting it will be made clear to parents that DEECD does not provide student accident cover and that they need to make their own arrangements for cover. This information will also be sent home.

Expectations

- The Department's requirements and guidelines relating to preparation and safety will be observed in the conduct of all excursions.
- The principal or their nominee will ensure that full records are maintained regarding the camp/excursion.
- The principal or their nominee will ensure that adequate pre-excursion planning and preparation, including the preparation of students, takes place.
- Satisfactory arrangements will be made to provide continuous instruction for the students remaining at the school during the absence of staff accompanying an excursion.
- The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) will not be involved in any expense associated with the conduct of excursions. The school may choose to subsidise some excursions or some student's expenses.
- Prior to conducting a camp or excursion, the approval of the School Council or the Principal will be obtained. Council must approve overnight or adventure activities. The Principal must approve these and other activities.
- Students and their parents/carers need to be made aware that acceptable standards of behaviour will be expected during a camp or an excursion.
- The emergency management process of the school will extend to and incorporate all camps and excursions.
- All DEECD requirements and guidelines that apply to the conduct of excursions are also applicable to all overseas and interstate (domestic) camps/excursions.

Program

Prior to conducting the camp or excursion, the Department's requirements and guidelines relating to camps or excursions, will be observed.

Consideration in planning may include information from the following DEECD and related sites:

[Adventure Activities](#)

[Student Preparation and Behaviour](#)

[Planning and Approvals](#)

[Safety, Emergency and Risk Management](#)

[Venue Selection](#)

[Parent or Carer Consent](#)

[Staffing and Supervision](#)

[Student Medical Information](#).

Arrangements for payments

All efforts will be made not to exclude students simply for financial reasons. Parents experiencing financial difficulty, who wish for their children to attend an excursion, are invited to discuss alternative arrangements with the Principal. Decisions relating to alternative payment arrangements will be made by the Principal in consultation with the appropriate staff, on an individual basis.

All families will be given sufficient time to make payments for excursions. Parents will be provided with permission forms and excursion information clearly stating payment finalisation dates. Students whose payment have not been finalised within published timelines will not be allowed to attend unless alternative payment arrangements have been previously organised with the Principal. Office staff will be responsible for managing and monitoring the payments made by parents and will provide organising teachers with detailed records on a regular basis.

Teacher Responsibilities

A designated “Teacher in Charge” will coordinate each excursion. The Teacher in Charge must complete all relevant forms.

In the case where an excursion involves a particular class or year level group, the organizing teacher will ensure that there is an alternative program available for those students not attending the excursion.

All students must have returned a signed permission note and payment to be able to attend the excursion. Copies of completed permission notes and medical information must be carried by excursion staff at all times. A copy of the permission form is also to be sent to the office.

The teacher in charge must ensure a working and fully charged mobile phone with credit is carried by at least one staff member. A school phone is available for this purpose as an alternative to a teacher’s personal phone. The teacher in charge is responsible for collecting the first aid kit and individual medication for students, such as Epipens, prior to leaving.

The teacher in charge will communicate the anticipated return time with the office in the case where excursions are returning out of school hours. Parents will be informed prior to students leaving for the excursion, that they can phone the office to receive an updated anticipated return time.

Parents may be invited to assist in the delivery of excursions and camps.

Only students that have displayed sensible, reliable behaviour at school will be permitted to participate in school excursions. Parents will be notified if their child is in danger of losing the privilege to participate in an excursion due to poor behaviour at school. The decision to exclude a student will be made by the Principal or Assistant Principal, in consultation with the organising teacher. Both the parent and the student will be informed of this decision prior to the excursion.

Disciplinary measures apply to students on camps and excursions consistent with the School’s student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy. In extreme cases the camp or excursion staff, following consultation with, and the approval of, the principal or their nominee, may determine that a student should return home during a camp or excursion.

In such circumstances, the parent/carer will be advised:

- of the circumstance associated with the decision to send the student home
- of the time when the parents/carers may collect their child from the camp or excursion
- of the anticipated time that the student will arrive home
- of any costs associated with the student’s return which will be the responsibility of the parents/carers

All excursion staff and, where appropriate, the students will be familiar with the specific procedures for dealing with emergencies on each excursion. On days of extreme fire danger or total fire ban, the principal or their nominee may need to cancel an excursion at short notice. Where an excursion is not cancelled, special fire safety precautions will be implemented.

Responsibility and Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed every three years or more often if necessary due to changes in regulations or circumstance.