

## CAMPS AND EXCURSIONS



### Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact Mill Park Heights Primary School Tel: (03) 9436 8866

Email: [mill.park.heights.ps@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:mill.park.heights.ps@education.vic.gov.au)

### PURPOSE

To explain to our school community the processes and procedures Mill Park Heights Primary School will use when planning and conducting camps, excursions and adventure activities for students.

### SCOPE

This policy applies to all camps and excursions organised by Mill Park Heights Primary School. This policy also applies to adventure activities organised by Mill Park Heights Primary School, regardless of whether or not they take place on or off school grounds.

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. Mill Park Heights Primary School will follow both this policy, as well as the Department's policy and guidelines when planning for and conducting camps and excursions.

This policy does not apply to student workplace learning or intercampus travel.

### DEFINITIONS

#### Excursions:

For the purpose of this policy, excursions are activities organised by the school where the students:

- are taken out of the school grounds (for example, a camp, day excursion, school sports);
- undertake adventure activities, regardless of whether or not they occur outside the school grounds;

**Camps** are excursions involving at least one night's accommodation (including school sleep-overs).

**Local excursions** are excursions to locations within walking distance of the school and do not involve 'Adventure Activities'.

**Adventure activities** are activities that involve a greater than normal risk. Further information and examples of adventure activities are available on the Department's Policy and Advisory Library, at the following link:

<https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/excursions/guidance/adventure-activities>

## POLICY

Camps and excursions can provide a valuable educational experience for our students which are complementary to their learning, as they provide access to resources, environments and expertise that may not be available in the classroom.

For all camps and excursions, including adventure activities, our school will follow the Department's Policy and Advisory Library: [Excursions. https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/excursions/policy](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/excursions/policy)

### Planning process for camps and excursions

All camps and excursions will comply with Department planning requirements.

### BROAD GUIDELINES

At Mill Park Heights Primary School:

- camps will have an Educational purpose
- camps will be run for students in years 3,4, 5 & 6. This will be dependent on the availability of suitable staff to run the camp
- A twilight picnic may be held for the community
- each camp proposal must be ratified by School Council and the online DET 'Notification of School Activity' proforma completed at:  
[www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/forms/school/sal/enteractivity.asp](http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/forms/school/sal/enteractivity.asp) in consultation with the School Business Manager and Principal
- should the camp proposal attract insufficient numbers the camp may be shortened or cancelled
- the camp will be staffed as is appropriate to the type of activities to be undertaken and in line with DEECD requirements
- camps will be self-funding
- an online notification of school activity form is completed at least three weeks prior to the activity using the [Student Activity Locator \(SAL\)](#)
- a full itinerary outlining activities to be undertaken and supervision provision will be developed prior to the camp
- an organisational checklist will be maintained throughout all planning stages
- a risk assessment and risk register will be conducted on the camp according to DEECD requirements
- all safety issues and emergency procedures (Camp site and activity Risk assessment/register) will be documented and discussed prior to departure
- safety procedures will be discussed with students prior to and on arrival at the campsite
- arrangements are in place if the camp needs to be cancelled, recalled, or altered (for example: severe weather conditions, changes to DFAT travel advice, or students returning early due to illness/serious misbehaviour)
- prior to a parent information meeting specific criteria for the selection of volunteer assistants will be developed
- all camp staff and assistants will attend a briefing to discuss guidelines, procedures and responsibilities
- parent information meeting/s may be held prior to the camp to address:
  - Organisation details
  - Staffing
  - Proposed health and welfare procedures
  - Cost / payment arrangements
- to secure a place on camp a deposit and signed commitment is to be collected well in advance of the camp. A parent wishing to cancel the booking may forfeit the deposit or payments unless a suitable replacement can be found
- prior to a teacher negotiating a camp payment plan with a parent they must discuss needs with the school business manager
- any family who has not met the required payment for a previous camp will be unable to participate in the camping program until this payment is finalised
- coaches will be required to be fitted with seat belts
- where a camp is oversubscribed placements will be allocated in order of receipt of the deposit
- students have the right to attend camp only if their behaviour is such that staff are confident, they will be safe and reliable in an environment other than the school – all students & parents/guardians to sign the 'Student Camp Code of Conduct Agreement'

- parents/guardians may be asked to collect from the camp, any student whose behaviour, whilst on camp, is deemed to place themselves or others at risk – Student Camp Code of Conduct Agreement
- will inform parents that any costs associated with the student returning from an excursion early due to illness or serious misbehaviour are the responsibility of the parent.
- wherever possible, camps will cater for individuals with different needs
- parents must submit a confidential student medical report 7 days prior to departure
- a staff member will be assigned as the Medical Officer. This person will be responsible for dispensing any necessary medication. Such medication must be accompanied by written instructions regarding administering the medication and handed to the staff member in charge prior to leaving for camp. A receipt will be supplied to parents as they provide medication
- a confidential current medical form for all supervisory staff will be completed and placed in a sealed envelope. This will be held by the first aid officer and if not needed, will be returned unopened to the staff member on arrival back at school
- a mobile telephone, first aid kit and, where ever possible, a staff car will be taken to the camp
- a minimum of 2 adults, trained in First Aid, will attend the camp
- the suitability of each camp will be evaluated after each camp and recommendation made for future camps
- students who do not attend camp will be provided with an alternative program that addresses, wherever possible, similar learning objectives to the camp
- selection of a camp site/accommodation will, wherever possible be on the basis of first hand inspection/approval
- all staff, parents and volunteers attending the camp will hold a current clear police check which will have been verified through the SAM4School site.
- all guidelines published in the School Reference Guide for Camping and Adventure Activities will be complied with.

Part of this planning process includes conducting risk assessments, to ensure that reasonable steps are taken to minimise the risks associated with each proposed camp or excursion. Mill Park Heights Primary School's risk assessment will include consideration of arrangements for supervision of students and consideration of the risk of bushfire or other natural disaster activity in the excursion location. In the event the Bureau of Meteorology forecasts a Catastrophic fire danger rating (FDR) day, excursions or camp activities in affected locations will be cancelled or rescheduled. Planning will also cover arrangements for cancelling, recalling or altering the camp or excursion for any other reason.

Mill Park Heights Primary School is committed to ensuring students with additional needs are provided with an inclusive camps and excursions program and will work with families during the planning stage, as needed, to support all students' attendance and participation in camp and excursion activities.

In cases where a camp or excursion involves a particular class or year level group, 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.

### Supervision

Mill Park Heights Primary School follows the Department's guidelines in relation to supervision of students during excursions and camps.

All excursion staff (including parent volunteers) will be familiar with supervision requirements and the specific procedures for dealing with emergencies on each camp and excursion.

All school staff will be aware that they retain overall responsibility for the supervision and care of students throughout all camps and excursions (including adventure activities), regardless of whether or not external providers are managing the activity.

### Parent volunteers

### Volunteer and external provider checks



Mill Park Heights Primary School requires all parent or carer excursion volunteers and all external providers working directly with our students to have a current Working with Children Check card.

For more information about when a WWC Clearance is required, see [Volunteers page](#) on the School Policy Templates Portal.

### **Parent/carer consent**

For all camps and excursions, other than local excursions, Mill Park Heights Primary School will provide parents/carers with a specific consent form outlining the details of the proposed activity. Mill Park Heights Primary School uses Compass to inform parents about camps and excursions and to seek their consent. Parents/carers are encouraged to contact the school to discuss any questions or concerns that they or their child may have with a proposed camp or excursion.

For local excursions, Mill Park Heights Primary School will provide parents and carers with an annual Local Excursions consent form at the start of each school year or upon enrolment if students enrol during the school year. Mill Park Heights Primary School will also provide advance notice to parents/carers of an upcoming local excursion through Compass communication. For local excursions that occur on a recurring basis Mill Park Heights Primary School will notify parents once only prior to the commencement of the recurring event.

### **Parent Payments for camps and excursions**

Most camps and excursions provided by Mill Park Heights Primary School enhance and broaden the schooling experience of our students but are not a mandatory component of our curriculum. These activities are provided on a user-pays basis in accordance with the Department's Parent Payments Policy.

Consent forms will have clearly stated payment amounts and finalisations dates, and families will be given sufficient time to make payments.

Students who have not finalised payment by the required date for camps and excursions provided on a user pays basis will not be able to attend unless the Principal determines exceptional circumstances apply.

Where a camp or excursion is provided as part of the standard curriculum requirements, parents may be invited to make a voluntary contribution but all students will be able to attend regardless of whether their parents contribute.

### **Financial Help for Families**

Mill Park Heights Primary School will make all efforts to ensure that students are not excluded for financial reasons. Families experiencing financial difficulty are invited to discuss alternative payment arrangements with the Business Manager or Finance Officer. The Business Manager or Finance Officer can also discuss family eligibility for the Department's Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund (CSEF), which provides payments for eligible students to attend school activities, including camps and excursions. Applications for the CSEF are open to families holding a valid means-tested concession card or temporary foster parents and are facilitated by the school. Further information about the CSEF and the application form are available at [Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund](#).

### **Refunds**

If a camp or excursion is cancelled or altered by the school, or a student is no longer able to attend part or all of the camp or excursion, 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 we 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, we will provide information about refunds to parents/carers at the time of payment.

### **Student health**

*At Mill Park Heights Primary School, we uphold our school values of  
Respect, Responsibility, Care & Compassion, Honesty & Trust, Personal Best and Team Work*

Parents and carers need to ensure the school has up-to-date student health information prior to camps and excursions. A member of staff will be appointed with responsibility for the health needs of the students for each camp/excursion. Teachers will administer any medication provided according to our *Medication* policy and the student's signed *Medication Authority Form*. To meet the school's obligations relating to safety, a first aid kit and mobile phone will be taken by teachers on all camps and excursions.

It is the responsibility of parents and carers to ensure their child/children are in good health when attending excursions and camps. If a student becomes ill during a camp and is not able to continue at camp it is the parent/carer's responsibility to collect them and cover any associated costs. If the Principal approves a student joining a camp late, transport to the camp is the parent/carer's responsibility.

### **Behaviour expectations**

Students participating in camps and excursions are required to cooperate and display appropriate behaviour to ensure the camp or excursion is a safe, positive and educational experience for all students involved.

Parents/carers will be notified if their child is in danger of losing the privilege to participate in an excursion or camp due to behaviour that does not meet the standards of behaviour set out in the school's *Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy*, *Student Code of Conduct* and *Bullying Prevention Policy*. The decision to exclude a student will be made by the Principal or Assistant Principal, in consultation with the Organising Teacher. Both the parent/carer and the student will be informed of this decision prior to the camp or excursion.

If on a camp or excursion the Teacher in Charge considers an individual student's behaviour does not meet required standards, then the Principal or their nominee may determine that a student should return home during the camp or excursion. In these circumstances the parent/carer is responsible for the collection of the student and any costs associated with this.

Disciplinary measures apply to students on camps and excursions consistent with our school's *Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy*, *Student Code of Conduct* and *Bullying Prevention Policy*.

### **Electronic Devices**

Students will not be permitted to bring electronic devices to camps or excursions except with prior approval from the Principal. The Principal will only approve students bringing electronic devices to a camp or excursion in exceptional circumstances and when it is in the best interests of the student, and may place conditions on its location and use during the camp or excursion.

### **Food**

Students are not permitted to bring their own supply of food items to camps and excursions unless the item is medically indicated and discussed with the Organising Teacher, or included as an item on the clothing and equipment list for that camp or excursion.

### **Accident and Ambulance Cover**

Any costs associated with student injury rest with parents/carers unless the Department is liable in negligence (liability is not automatic).

Unless otherwise indicated, Mill Park Heights Primary School and the Department do not provide student accident or ambulance cover. Parents/carers may wish to obtain student accident insurance cover and/or ambulance cover, depending on their health insurance arrangements and any other personal considerations.

## **COMMUNICATION**

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

- Included in staff induction processes and staff training
- Available publicly on our school's website
- Included in staff handbook/manual
- Discussed at staff briefings/meetings as required
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- Discussed at parent information sessions
- Reminders in our school newsletter
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request

## FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following Department policies and guidelines:

- [Excursions](#)
- [Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund](#)
- [Parent Payments Policy](#)

The following school policies are also relevant to this Camps and Excursions Policy

- Statement of Values and School Philosophy
- Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy
- Volunteer Policy
- Duty of Care Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy

## POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Last Reviewed	Nov 2019
Reviewed and Approved	Principal and School Council 22/5/2023
Next Review	22/5/2026