

CAMPING & EXCURSION POLICY

RATIONALE:

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. This policy applies to all camps and excursions organised by Findon Primary School, including adventure activities, regardless of whether or not they take place on or off school grounds, including sleepovers. 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. Findon Primary School will follow both this policy, as well as the Department's policy and guidelines when planning for and conducting camps and excursions, including following Departmental guidelines for camps and excursions requiring School Council approval.

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 sleepovers).

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 website under Adventure Activities, at the following link:

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

AIMS:

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

IMPLEMENTATION:

Planning process for camps and excursions

All camps and excursions will comply with Department planning requirements. 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. Findon Primary School's risk assessment will include consideration of arrangements for supervision of students and consideration of the risk of bushfire activity in the excursion location. In the event of a Code Red Day being announced, excursions or camp activities in effected locations will be cancelled or rescheduled. Planning will also cover arrangements for cancelling, recalling or altering the camp or excursion for any other reason. Findon 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. External camps and excursions will be logged with the Department via the Student Activity Locator.

Supervision

Findon Primary School follows the Department's guidelines in relation to supervision of students during excursions and camps. All excursion staff 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/Caregiver consent

For all camps and excursions, other than local excursions, Findon Primary School will provide parents/caregivers with a specific consent form outlining the details of the proposed activity. Findon Primary School informs parents/caregivers about school camps and excursions by placing an explanatory note in student bags and asking parents/caregivers to return the part of the note that asks for a signature confirming they consent to their child's participation. Parents/caregivers 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. Should a camp or excursion require a date change, new consent forms will be required to be signed by parents/caregivers.

For local excursions, Findon Primary School will provide parents/caregivers with a Local Excursions consent form upon enrolment and at the beginning of each school year. Findon Primary School will also provide advance notice to parents/caregivers of an upcoming local excursion through either Compass, Newsletters or a note home in the student's bag. For local excursions that occur on a recurring basis (for example weekly outings to the local oval for sports lessons), the school will notify parents/caregivers once only, prior to the commencement of the recurring event.

Parent/Caregiver volunteers

At times parents may be invited to attend excursions or camps for a variety of reasons. School staff will notify parents/caregivers of any costs associated with attending. School staff are in charge of camps and excursions and parent/caregiver volunteers are expected to follow teachers' instructions. When deciding which parents/caregivers will attend, the Organising Teacher will take into account: any valuable skills the parents/caregiver may have to offer (e.g. bus licence, first aid etc.) and the special needs of particular students. Findon Primary School requires all parents/caregivers, camp or excursion volunteers and all external providers working directly with our students to have a current Working with Children Check card and current Health Department requirements.

Cost of camps and excursions, refunds and support

The cost of all camps are to be paid by parents/caregivers unless alternative arrangements have been agreed to by the Principal prior to the camp. All families will be given sufficient time (approximately three months OR as soon as cost details are finalised) to make payments for all camps. Consent forms will have clearly stated payment amounts and payment finalisation dates.

Students who have not finalised payment or returned permission notices will not be allowed to attend unless the Principal determines exceptional circumstances apply.

The cost of excursions related to curriculum content will be covered by the school or voluntary parent payments.

Findon 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 Principal. The Principal 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, and will direct the Business Manager accordingly.

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/caregivers 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/caregivers at the time of payment.

Student Health

Parents/caregivers need to ensure the school has up to date student health information prior to camps and excursions. A member of staff with current first aid qualifications will be appointed with responsibility for the health needs of the students for each camp/excursion. Teachers will administer any medication provided according to the *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/caregivers to ensure their child/children are in good health when attending excursions and camps. If a student becomes ill during a camp/excursion and is not able to continue at camp it is the parent/caregivers responsibility to collect them and cover any associated costs. If the Principal approves a student joining a camp/excursion late, transport to the camp is the parent/caregivers responsibility.

Behaviour expectations

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

Parents/caregivers 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, Behaviour Management Policy or Anti Bullying Policy*. The decision to exclude a student will be made by the Principal, in consultation with relevant staff. Both the parent/caregiver 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 may determine that a student should return home during the camp or excursion. In these circumstances the parent/caregiver is responsible for the collection of the student and any costs associated with this.

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 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. On excursions, direction is provided about food requirements.

Accident and Ambulance Cover

Any costs associated with student injury rest with parents/caregivers unless the Department is liable in negligence (liability is not automatic). Unless otherwise indicated, Findon Primary School and the Department do not provide student accident or ambulance cover. Parents/caregivers 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 ways:

- Tabled and discussed at staff briefing
- Available publicly on our school's website
- Included in staff handbook/manual
- Reminders in our school newsletter
- Discussed at parent information nights/sessions as required
- Discussed at student forums
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request

EVALUATION:

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three year policy and review process.

REFERENCE:

DET A-Z Policy Guide

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

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

To be read in conjunction with the following Findon Policies:

Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy

Volunteer Policy

Working with Children Policy

Parent Payment Policy

Supervision Policy

Behaviour Management Policy

Student Anti Bullying Policy

Duty of Care Policy

Medication & First Aid Policies

ICT Policies