

CAMPS AND EXCURSIONS

PURPOSE

To explain to our school community the processes and procedures Tulliallan 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 Tulliallan Primary School. This policy also applies to adventure activities organised by Tulliallan 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. Tulliallan 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 website under Adventure Activities, at the following link:

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

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

Excursions at Tulliallan Primary School aim to:

- Reinforce, complement and extend learning opportunities beyond the classroom.
- Develop an understanding that learning is not limited to school, and that valuable and powerful learning takes place in the real world.

Camps at Tulliallan Primary School aim to:

- Provide all children with the opportunity to participate in a sequential camping program.
- Provide shared class experiences and a sense of group cohesiveness.
- Reinforce and extend classroom learnings.
- 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, judgement, cooperation and tolerance.

For all camps and excursions, including adventure activities, our school will follow the Department's School Policy and Advisory Guide: [Excursions and Activities](#). For camps and excursions requiring school council approval, our school will also follow the Department's School Policy and Advisory Guide: [Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors](#).

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. Tulliallan 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.

Tulliallan 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.

The following steps will be implemented in the planning and running of excursion and camp events:

Excursions:

- The Principal is responsible for the approval of all non-adventure single-day excursions that other than those that must be approved by the School Council.
- A designated 'Teacher in Charge' will coordinate each day excursion.
- Prior to the commencement of any detailed planning relating to a proposed day excursion, the 'Teacher in Charge' must meet formally with the Principal, to present the Principal with a planning summary, to discuss the proposed activity, and to seek 'in principle' support for the event. The Principal will complete the Principal Checklist to ensure all information and planning is in order.
- If the Principal's approval is granted, detailed planning should commence using the planning questions proforma as a guide. This must include a site visit and risk assessment.
- When presenting information to the Principal, the Teacher in Charge must be aware that the Principal will consider the following:
 - What is the purpose of the excursion and its connection to student learning?
 - Do staff members attending the excursion have the competence to provide the necessary supervision of students throughout the excursion?
 - Is an appropriately trained member of staff able to provide first aid?
 - Have supervisory adults who are not registered teachers completed a Working with Children Check?
 - Is the location of staff and students throughout the excursion, including travel time, known?
 - Is a record of the names and family contacts for all students and staff available?
 - Are copies of the parental consent and confidential medical advice forms for those students attending the excursion completed?
- If approved, the online Notification of School Activity form must be submitted three weeks prior to the activity, if required.
- The school prefers that students only travel on buses fitted with seatbelts, if available.
- The Principal requires that a report from the Teacher in Charge occur after each day excursion if any mishaps or concerns have arisen.
- The schedule of excursions, including estimated costs, will be distributed by the February edition of the school newsletter, and will be updated on a needs basis.
- Information will be provided to parents of non-English speaking families in a manner that allows them to provide an informed consent to their children attending excursions.
- Classroom teachers will be given the given the first option to attend excursions.
- The school will continue to provide the opportunity for teachers to update their first aid skills.
- The school will provide a mobile phone and a first aid kit for all day excursions.
- Copies of completed Permission forms, and signed Confidential Medical Information forms must be carried by excursion staff at all times, and copies remain at school.
- A senior staff member will be in attendance at school whilst the students are returning from any out-of-school-hours excursion. The Teacher in Charge will communicate with this person with regards to anticipated return time.
- Parents may be invited to participate in excursions. When deciding on which parents will attend, the teacher in Charge will take into account:
 1. Any valuable skills the parents have to offer e.g. bus licence, first aid training, etc
 2. The preference to include both male and female parents
 3. The special needs of particular students
- Parents selected to assist with day excursions may be required to pay their excursion costs.

Camps:

- The program will be developed sequentially throughout the school.
- School Council will ensure that all school camps are maintained at a reasonable and affordable cost, and comply with all Department of Education requirements.
- Parents will be provided with approximate dates and costs associated with the following year's camps as much as possible. Parents will be notified of the exact costs and other relevant details of individual camps as soon as practicable.
- School Council may set aside a budget each year that will cover the cost of replacing teachers who are involved in camps, or the costs for staff replacement can be borne by the participants.

- School camps are an outdoor education activity and as such, are subject to specific planning and approval guidelines.
- School Council is responsible for approval of all overnight excursions; camps; interstate and overseas visits; excursions requiring sea or air travel; excursions involving weekends or vacations; and adventure activities.
- Prior to the commencement of any detailed planning relating to a proposed School Council approved camp, the Teacher in Charge and other key members must meet formally with the principal, to present the principal with a [planning summary](#), to discuss the camp, and to seek 'in principle' support for the event. The principal will complete the [Principal Checklist](#) to ensure all information and planning is in order.
- If the principal's approval is granted, detailed planning should commence using the [planning questions](#) proforma as a guide. This must include a site visit and [risk assessment](#).
- The school only uses residential campsites accredited by the 'Australian Camps Association' or the 'National Accommodation, Recreation & Tourism Accreditation Program (NARTA)' for overnight camps.
- Prior to seeking School Council approval for the camp, organising staff are required to meet again with the principal and present him/her with all documentation, including the completed School Council [approval](#) proforma and all attachments, ensuring that time permits for the matter to be placed on a School Council agenda and, if approved, that the online [Notification of School Activity](#) form then be submitted three weeks prior to the activity.
- When presenting information to School Council, the Teacher in Charge must be aware that Council will consider the following:-
 - What is the purpose of the camp and its connection to student learning?
 - Do staff members attending have the competence to provide the necessary supervision of students throughout the camp?
 - Is an appropriately trained member of staff able to provide [first aid](#) ?
 - Have staff members who are not registered teachers completed a Working with Children Check?
 - Is the location of staff and students throughout the camp including during travel known?
 - Is a record of telephone contacts for supervising staff accompanying the camp available?
 - Is a record of the names and family contacts for all students and staff available?
 - Are copies of the [parental consent](#) and [confidential medical advice](#) forms for those students on the excursion completed to be taken to the activity, with copies retained at school?
 - Has a copy of the completed School Council [approval](#) proforma (including all attachments) been submitted and approved?
 - Will the online [Notification of School Activity](#) form be submitted three weeks prior to the camp?
- Adventure activities are those that involve greater than normal risk such as base camping, bush walking, canoeing, snow activities, orienteering, cycling, horse riding, rock climbing and abseiling, challenge ropes courses, swimming (other than school swimming programs), surf activities, sailboarding, and similar activities. School Councillors may not have detailed knowledge of adventure activities. In such instances organising staff should consult the [adventure activities](#) website, or seek advice from peak bodies or skilled and experienced staff with recent experience instructing the activity to satisfy Council's requirements.
- [Emergency management plans](#) are to be developed when adventure activities are being undertaken.
- The school prefers that students only travel on buses fitted with seatbelts if available. Classroom teachers will be given the first option to attend camps.
- A senior staff member will be in attendance at school whilst the children are returning from camp. The Teacher in Charge will communicate with this person in regards the anticipated return time.
- Parents will be invited to assist in the supervision of school camps. When deciding which parents will attend, the Teacher in Charge will take into account –
 1. Any valuable skills the parents have to offer. e.g. bus licence, first aid etc
 2. The preference to include both male and female parents.
 3. The special needs of particular students.
- Parents selected to assist with the camps program will be required to undertake a Working with Children Check. The school will pay for any associated costs.
- Parent volunteers may be required to pay the accommodation and meals cost of the camp.
- While school camps are a team activity requiring the cooperation and common-sense 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.
- The primary references that must be consulted when considering all camping activities (including adventure activities) is the Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoor website: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/safety/pages/outdoor.aspx>

as well as the Victorian government 'School Policy and Advisory Guide'.

Supervision

Tulliallan 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.

Volunteer and external provider checks

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

Parent/carer consent

For all camps and excursions, other than local excursions, Tulliallan Primary School will provide parents/carers with a specific consent form outlining the details of the proposed activity. Tulliallan 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, Tulliallan 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. Tulliallan Primary School will also provide advance notice to parents/carers of an upcoming local excursion through Compass alerts. For local excursions that occur on a recurring basis (for example weekly outings to the local oval for sports lessons), Tulliallan Primary School will notify parents once only prior to the commencement of the recurring event.

Cost of camps and excursions, refunds and support

All families will be given sufficient time to make payments for excursions. Children whose parents have not paid deposits by the due date, who do not make full payments by the due date, or who have not made alternative arrangements with the school Principal will not be eligible to attend. Office staff will be responsible for managing and monitoring the payments made by parents and will provide classroom teachers with detailed records on a regular basis.

Tulliallan 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 school 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. 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](#).

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

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, Tulliallan 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.

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

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

- School Policy and Advisory Guide:
 - [Excursions and Activities](#)
 - [Emergency and Risk Management](#)
- [Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors](#)
- [Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund.](#)
- [Code Red Days](#)

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

- [Statement of Values and School Philosophy](#)
- [Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy](#)

Evaluation

This policy was ratified by School Council on 23 October 2019. This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle or if guidelines change.