



## CAMPS AND EXCURSIONS

### PURPOSE

To explain to our school community the processes and procedures Seaford North 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 Seaford North Primary School. This policy also applies to adventure activities organised by Seaford North 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. Seaford North Primary School will follow both this policy, as well as the Department's policy and guidelines when planning for and conducting camps and excursions.

### 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. They provide a shared class experience and a sense of group cohesiveness. Camps and excursions can promote self-esteem, resourcefulness, independence, leadership, good decision making, 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.

The camp program will be developed sequentially throughout the school. Middle School (Grades 3-4) will be conducted annually at suitable venues. Senior School (Grades 5-6) up to 5 day camps conducted annually at a venue deemed suitable by the level teaching team and the Principal.

All camps, excursions and incursions require Principal approval, with camps requiring School Council approval. These approvals include information regarding: the educational aims and objectives, the adults attending, the travel and cost arrangements, venue details and itinerary, procedures to ensure student safety. This information will be provided to the Principal prior to any notification of activity to students or parents. Approval application and planning document templates can be found on the school policy portal.

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. Seaford North 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.

Designated 'Teacher in Charge' of each camp, excursion or incursion, will ensure all arrangements including buses, comply with DEET guidelines. The Notification of School Activity form will be completed online 3 weeks prior to departure date. A final student attendance list will be provided to the General Office on the day of departure.

Seaford North 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

Seaford North Primary School follows the Department's guidelines in relation to supervision of students during excursions and camps.

All camp and excursion staff (including parents included in the student to adult supervision ratios) will be familiar with supervision requirements and the specific procedures for dealing with emergencies on each camp and excursion. Supervision staff (including parent volunteers required for supervision) will not be required to pay associated costs.

Integration Aides may be included in the adult to student supervision ratio where appropriate.



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.

A senior staff member will be in attendance at the school whilst students are returning from a camp.

### **Additional Volunteers**

Additional volunteers may be invited to assist with camps and excursions. School staff will notify parents/carers of any costs associated with attending. School staff are in charge of camps and excursions and parent/carer volunteers are expected to follow teachers' instructions. When deciding which parents/carers will attend, the Organising Teacher will take into account: any valuable skills the parents/carers have to offer (e.g. bus licence, first aid etc.) and the special needs of particular students.

### **Volunteer and external provider checks**

Seaford North 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. [For more information about when a WWCC is required, see Volunteers page on the School Policy Templates.]

### **Parent/carer consent**

For all camps and excursions, other than local excursions, Seaford North Primary School will provide parents/carers with a specific consent form outlining the details of the proposed activity. Seaford North Primary School informs parents about school camps and excursions by providing students with a permission notice and asking parents/carers to return the part of the note that asks for parents/carers signature confirming they consent to their child's participation. 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.

### **Cost of camps and excursions, refunds and support**

The cost of all camps and excursions are to be paid by parents/carers unless alternative arrangements have been agreed to by the Principal prior to the excursion. All families will be given sufficient time to make payments for all activities. Consent forms will have clearly stated payment amounts and payment finalisation dates.

Office staff will be responsible for managing and monitoring payments made by parents and will provide classroom teachers with detailed records on a regular basis. Classroom teachers will contact parents or guardians to discuss payments in arrears.

Students who have not finalised payment by the required date will not be allowed to attend unless the Principal determines exceptional circumstances apply.

Seaford North 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 Principal. The Business Manager or 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. A minimum of one adult attending a camp will have at least one first aid qualification. 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.

A copy of permission forms and any 'Confidential Medical Information Forms' must be carried by excursion staff at all times.

### **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*. 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. The parent or guardian will be advised of the circumstances associated with the decision, the time of required collection, the manner and time to which a student will return home if the parent or guardian is unable to collect the student, and any costs associated with the students' return.

[NOTE: Sometimes a student's disability may manifest in challenging behaviour. Examples of disabilities that can present with challenging behaviour includes Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, Oppositional Defiant Disorder and Autism Spectrum Disorder. In these cases, excluding a student from a camp or excursion may raise disability discrimination law issues. Please contact Legal Division for advice if you are considering excluding a student for failing to comply with behavioural standards, if their disability presents with challenging behaviour)

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.

Students, parents and guardians will be made aware of the school's eSmart policy in regards to using technology on excursions or camps, particularly involving taking photos.

### **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, Seaford North 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.

### **Emergencies**

The school's emergency procedures do include the effect of an emergency on student supervision in the event of excursion staff being required to assist injured students or to go for help. All excursion staff and, where appropriate, the students will be familiar with the specific procedures for dealing with emergencies on each excursion.

A comprehensively insured car will be present at each camp, for emergency usage, with the exception of interstate camps.



## 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
- Volunteer Policy
- Duty of Care Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy
- Parent Payment Policy
- Visitors Policy

## REVIEW CYCLE

This policy was approved by Education Sub-Committee, November 2019 and is scheduled for review November, 2021.

