

Camps and Excursions Policy

Responsibility	Assistant Principal (Excellence Teaching and Learning) <i>herein referred to as Camps and Excursions Coordinator</i>
Endorsed by Council	June 2021
Due for Review	June 2024



Replacement	This policy replaces the Camps Policy (August 2020) and Excursions Policy (August 2020).
Purpose	<p>At Berwick Fields we believe that camps and excursions offer students experiences that combine academic learning with social skills development and provide opportunities to learn in an environment other than a school setting. Camps and excursions complement, and are an important aspect of, the educational programs offered at Berwick Fields.</p> <p>This belief aligns with our mission to provide innovative and meaningful learning experiences.</p>
Scope	<p>This policy applies to all camps and excursions organised by Berwick Fields Primary School. This policy also applies to adventure activities, regardless of whether or not they take place on or off school grounds, and to school sleep-overs.</p> <p>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. Berwick Fields Primary School will follow both this policy, as well as the Department’s policy and guidelines when planning for and conducting camps and excursions.</p>
Definitions	<p>Excursions: For the purpose of this policy, excursions are activities organised by the school where the students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 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; ▪ Attend school ‘sleep-overs’ on school grounds. <p>Camps are excursions involving at least one night’s accommodation (including school sleep-overs).</p> <p>Local excursions are excursions to locations within walking distance of the school and do not involve ‘Adventure Activities’.</p> <p>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</p>

Aims of Camps and Excursions	<p>Through involvement in the camps program, students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ experience an extension to the school based curriculum through hands-on and immersive experiences. ▪ develop an understanding that learning is not limited to school, and that valuable and powerful learning takes place in the real world. ▪ reinforce and extend classroom learning ▪ become more aware of the environment, in line with our school vision. They will be able to enjoy, appreciate, care and be responsible for its preservation. ▪ further develop their social and personal responsibility, self-esteem, confidence, initiative, leadership and independence skills. ▪ take responsibility for themselves in daily life staying away from home for a period of time. ▪ develop cooperative, communication and collaboration skills and strengthen relationships with their teachers and peers.
Camping Philosophy	<p>Berwick Fields will provide overnight and camping experiences for students in years two through six. Camps will be selected in line with the guidelines outlined by the Department of Education and Training. Consideration will be given to planning a variety of experiences including environmental and outdoor based experiences (ie Phillip Island, Cave Hill Creek) and curriculum experience based (ie Canberra, Sovereign Hill).</p> <p>Careful consideration will be given to timing to ensure costs are spread across the year and for families with multiple students.</p> <p>School Council will approve camps for the following year at the end of each year. Camps will be staffed as per Department requirements, at a 1:10 adult ratio. All adult camp attendees will require either Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) registration or a Working with Children's Check. Parent volunteers will be selected by the Principal team, based on the needs of students and staff attending the camp.</p>
Planning Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Camps and Excursions Coordinator is responsible for the approval of all camps and excursions other than those that must approved by the School Council. ▪ 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. ▪ A designated 'Teacher in Charge' from the staff attending will coordinate each excursion. ▪ Prior to commencement of any detailed planning relating to a proposed excursion, the Teacher in Charge must meet with the Camps and Excursions Coordinator, to present a planning summary, discuss the proposed activity, and seek 'in principle' support for the event. The Coordinator will ensure all information and planning is in order and the excursion aligns with the Whole School Learning Plan and financial expectations for families.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If approval is granted, detailed planning should commence. ▪ Part of this coordination process includes conducting risk assessments, to ensure that reasonable steps are taken to minimise the risks associated with each proposed camp or excursion. Berwick Fields' risk assessment will include consideration of arrangements for supervision of students whilst on the excursion 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. ▪ Berwick Fields 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 class and year level teachers will ensure that there is an alternative educational program available for those students not attending the camp or excursion.
Supervision	<p>Berwick Fields follows the Department's guidelines in relation to supervision of students during excursions and camps.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>
Parent and Carer Volunteers	<p>Parents and carers may be invited to assist with camps and excursions. School staff are in charge of camps and excursions and parent/carer volunteers are expected to follow teachers' instructions.</p> <p>Decisions on parents attending excursions will be made by the school leadership team, and will take into account –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Any valuable skills the parents have to offer. eg. bus licence, first aid etc ○ The preference to include both male and female supervisors. ○ The special needs of particular students. <p>Berwick Fields requires all volunteers and all external providers working directly with our students to have a current Working with Children Check registered with the school.</p>
Consent to attend	<p>For all camps and excursions, other than local excursions, Berwick Fields will provide parents/carers with a specific consent form outlining the details of the proposed activity. Compass will be used to communicate this form and 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.</p> <p>For local excursions, Berwick Fields will provide parents and carers via Compass with an annual Local Excursions consent form at the start of each school year or upon enrolment if</p>

	<p>students enrol during the school year. We will also provide advance notice to parents/carers of an upcoming local excursion through the Compass Newsfeed.</p>
Cost of camps and excursions	<p>A calendar of excursions, including costs, will be distributed on the Term Calendar at the end of each term for the term about to commence and via the school newsletter.</p> <p>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 notice about activities and time to make payments for all activities – five weeks prior to the event for excursions, and ten weeks for camps. Consent forms will have clearly stated payment amounts and payment finalisation dates.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Families who have not finalised payment by the required date (two weeks prior to an event) will not be allowed to attend unless the Principal determines exceptional circumstances apply.</p> <p>Berwick Fields 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. The Business Manager 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 <u>Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund</u>.</p> <p>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.</p>
Transportation	<p>Transport of students in private vehicles will be done in line with the Department’s policies (www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/privatecar.aspx)</p>
Student Health	<p>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 or 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.</p> <p>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.</p>

<p>Behaviour Expectations</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>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 a member of the Principal team. Both the parent/carer and the student will be informed of this decision prior to the camp or excursion.</p> <p>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.</p>
<p>Mobile phones and electronic devices</p>	<p>Students will not be permitted to bring electronic devices to camps or excursions except with prior approval from the Principal, in line with the school's Mobile Phone Policy and the Ministerial policy formally issued by the Minister for Education under section 5.2.1(2)(b) of the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic). 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.</p>
<p>Accident and Ambulance Cover</p>	<p>Any costs associated with student injury rest with parents/carers unless the Department is liable in negligence (liability is not automatic).</p> <p>Unless otherwise indicated, Berwick Fields 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.</p>
<p>Further reading</p>	<p>This policy should be read in conjunction with the following Department policies and guidelines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Excursions ▪ Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund