



McDonald Park School

CAMPS AND EXCURSIONS POLICY

Reviewed 24/07/23



McDonald Park School community will work collaboratively to develop respectful, thriving and engaged problem solvers.

PREAMBLE:

Camps and excursions are a valuable part of a student's educational program. They complement and reinforce student's learning outside the confines of a classroom, enhancing and enriching student learning.

For the purpose of this policy, the following definitions apply:

Excursions – curriculum / learning based experiences individualised according to learning within the class – these may occur on, off site, single classes, or in conjunction with others.

Camps- year level or team based opportunities for students to participate in camp experiences that are progressive throughout their schooling, increasing in length and distance.

On-site sleepovers and end of year celebrations such as class parties, aquatics day, disco, big day out, wheels day are not included as a camp / excursion.

Camps and excursions will be planned to support a curriculum area and will serve an educational purpose. Teachers build into their class-teaching program a lead-up to camps/excursions and a follow-up afterwards. This may involve all areas of study and may cover a term or part thereof. Excursions are likely to be organised at a specific class level to meet the learning needs of that class and may be planned and undertaken in conjunction with another class. Camps are a year level opportunity involving significant cost to families and consequently are planned as a team.

PRINCIPLES:

The school aims to provide camp and excursion opportunities for all students so that they may:

- engage in relevant real life learning that assists them to transfer their classroom knowledge into other situations – to develop their critical and creative thinking skills
- further develop social skills such as co-operation, tolerance, communication, individual and group interaction, as per the personal and social capability
- further develop their problem solving and life survival skills, developing independence skills
- interact with adults and other students on a closer personal level than is normally achieved in the classroom situation
- extend their understanding of their physical and cultural environment, thus developing ethical and intercultural understandings
- be involved in the decision making, planning, preparation and presentation processes associated with these opportunities.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF PRINCIPAL:

The Principal has a responsibility to:

- supervise the organisation of a camp or excursion
- ensure that financial costs allow for all students to participate, this may involve an application process for part of the cost after deposit is paid
- ensure that the program is balanced and suitable for the age group
- ensure suitable arrangements are made for the safety of students and adults involved in the camp/excursion
- ensure that Department for Education guidelines are met
- ensure the program conforms to school policies including social justice
- ensure that all staff have training and development and access to information so that effective programs can be developed
- ensure that staff are familiar with the excursion site or camp so that maximum use can be made of the program
- ensure that camps and excursions are held as regularly as this policy provides for
- ensures that the chosen campsite meets acceptable safety standards
- ensure that staff are repaid NIT

RESPONSIBILITIES OF PRINCIPAL: cont.

The Principal has a responsibility to:

- provide opportunities for time payment if requested by parents
- ensure that ratios are compliant with standards and supervision is equitable in meeting the needs of the camp and school
- ensure that the true cost is reflected in the school budget / camp costs and known to organisers of the camp (senior staff, SSO, NIT, part time staff)
- ensure that the annual program of camps and excursions is collated early in the year outlining expected events for each class
- support staff to manage personal commitments, participation open to all staff if class teachers are unable to attend
- devise a list of available staff each year (week zero)
- ensure facilities for safe transport and storage of controlled medications (lockable box)
- The Principal may restrict or cancel camp activities for any student prior due to poor behaviour prior to the camp

RESPONSIBILITIES OF TEACHERS:

Teachers have a responsibility to:

- provide opportunities for a wide range of educationally valuable experiences through camps or excursions
- ensure that a camp or excursion does not discriminate against students because of cost, ensure there is a disability or behaviour plan in place for inclusion (class teacher of student is responsible for parent meeting and written plans)
- ensure that the program is forwarded to the Principal for approval in a timely manner
- plan for unexpected staff illnesses or unforeseen circumstances and have a back-up plan
- refer to checklist to ensure all aspects of planning are covered-including NIT and yard duty (senior leader may organise at whole school level)
- provide an outline of known and possible events planned for the year, beginning of term for excursions if known, so that families are aware of possible costs that may be incurred – school events to be included
- notify parents of the intent, purpose, venue, date and requirements – in outline provided in above dot point include statement that individual classes may incur costs that are relevant for their class only and notification will be provided in a timely manner
- ensure that all excursion fees and permission slips are received no less than two days prior to the event, camp fees 10 days prior
- plan for and make alternative arrangements for students not attending the week before camp
- ensure Department for Education regulations and guidelines are followed
- ensure that when using private cars each child wears an approved seatbelt and the vehicle has Comprehensive and Third Party insurance cover-complete online form
- provide four weeks' notice to parents to ensure that all medical information and medication is collected and available
- ensure first aid knowledge and provisions are available
- complete an evaluation of the camp/excursion
- ensure that the chosen campsite meets acceptable safety standards. Visit beforehand if possible
- risk assessment - teachers to be familiar with campsite to include in risk assessment eg safety aspects around dormitories, location of doors etc: include disabilities, behaviour, volunteers, car accidents and general information completed one month prior
- teachers may negotiate with other staff members about their participation in class camps, taking into account personal circumstances and commitments. They would be involved in the camp planning regardless of attendance and will swap duties with teacher they are replacing - communication with parents/students if class teacher not attending
- follow the criteria provided for the selection of parents attending camps - plan conservatively to cover ratio, include additional teaching staff as a precaution
- it is expected that planning responsibilities are shared amongst the team. This aside, it is recognised that the paperwork and compliance requirements of a camp are a significant additional workload, particularly if multiple venues, activities or companies are used. One TRT day per year level will be allocated for the lead teacher who is responsible for the planning/paperwork. Half of the cost of one TRT day is to be divided amongst the students attending and one half will be funded by the site. This day may be split into two half days by negotiation with relevant staff

RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENTS:

Students have a responsibility to:

- participate in class planning for the camp/excursion
- follow the direction of teachers and parent helpers
- observe school and class rules
- act responsibly with other students
- act responsibly to care for other's property and rights
- be responsible for one's own belongings
- provide feedback on the camp/excursion

Refunds policy

- a non-refundable deposit will be required upon initial expression of interest in a camp. This shall not be refunded under any circumstances
- until two weeks prior to camp date, a refund for additional costs may be reimbursed at Principal's discretion, for, but not limited to, food, accommodation, entrance and activities for illness or unforeseen circumstances
- less than two weeks prior to camp date, no refunds will be given for last minute illnesses or unforeseen circumstances, due to the fact that campsites and activities finalise numbers and require full payment

Teachers responsibility

- to include this refund information with initial camp details

RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS:

Parents have a responsibility to:

- support the school's programs by encouraging their child's participation in camps/excursions
- notify the school if cost of camp/excursion prohibits participation of their child
- assist on camps/excursions if able, ensuring that selection criteria is met
- pay a deposit indicating their child's interest in attending, knowing that deposits are non-refundable, due to the fixed costs that camps/excursions incur
- provide feedback on the camp/excursion
- provide full medical information and any required medication
- collect their child from the event if their behaviour is inappropriate

FREQUENCY:

Excursions:

The number of excursions in any one year will vary amongst classes and will depend upon the classroom teacher's evaluation of the needs of the students bearing in mind the principles underlying this policy. Each opportunity should provide strong links to the curriculum and learning.

Camps:

Minimum activity for year can include local excursions and any lesser activities at class teacher's discretion. Class composition will also influence this - these are guidelines.

F	After school onsite activity
1 / 2	Overnight camp - on or off site
3 / 4	1 or 2 night camp - local area
5 / 6	2 or 3 night camp

Generic Statement

No payments will be accepted past two days prior to excursion or ten days prior to camp unless negotiated with class teacher.

Ratified at Governing Council **24 July 2023**. To be reviewed **July 2025**