

NARRE WARREN NORTH PRIMARY SCHOOL



Camps and Excursions Policy

RATIONALE

Narre Warren North Primary School is committed to child safety and establishing and maintaining child safe and child friendly environments where all children are valued and feel safe. We have zero tolerance of child abuse.

By providing all school environments (this includes onsite, online activities and offsite for excursions, camps, etc. and outside of school activities) that are stimulating, safe, happy and positive, we foster the learning potential of our children.

The school's excursion and camping programs enable students to explore, extend and enrich their learning and their social skills development, in a non-school setting. Camps and day excursions may have a cultural, environmental or outdoor emphasis that complement, and are an important aspect of, the educational programs offered at the school. A camp is defined as any activity that involves at least one night's accommodation, including sleepovers at school.

PURPOSE

To explain to our school community the processes and procedures Narre Warren 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 Narre Warren North Primary School. This policy also applies to adventure activities organised by Narre Warren North Primary School, regardless of whether or not they take place on or off school grounds, and to school sleep-overs.

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. Narre Warren 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.

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;
- Attend school 'sleep-overs' on school grounds

Camps:

Camps are excursions involving at least one night's accommodation (including school sleep-overs).

Local excursions:

Local excursions are excursions to locations within walking distance of the school and do not involve 'Adventure Activities'.

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 Policy and Advisory Library, at the following link:

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

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.

- To further develop problem solving and life survival skills.
- To extend understanding of their physical and cultural environment.
- To provide students with the opportunity to participate in camping and excursion programs that are linked to social and educational outcomes for students.
- To provide shared class and year level experiences, team building and a sense of group cohesiveness.
- To provide a program that delivers skills and knowledge that may lead to a lifelong involvement in worthwhile leisure pursuits.
- To provide a program that promotes self-esteem, resourcefulness, independence, leadership, judgement, cooperation and tolerance.
- To provide an opportunity to try new activities, build new friendships and overcome challenges.

For all camps and excursions, including adventure activities, our school will follow the Department's Policy and Advisory Library: Excursions.

Planning process for camps and excursions

All camps and excursions will comply with Department planning requirements.

The DET Guidelines replace the previous Excursions and Adventure Activities Policy and the Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors. The Guidelines are mandatory and school staff must follow them in planning and conducting all excursions as defined in the DET Excursions Policy.

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. Narre Warren North Primary School's risk assessment will include consideration of arrangements for supervision of students and consideration of the risk of bushfire or other natural disaster activity in the excursion location. In the event the Bureau of Meteorology forecasts a Catastrophic fire danger rating (FDR) day, excursions or camp activities in affected locations will be cancelled or rescheduled. Planning will also cover arrangements for cancelling, recalling or altering the camp or excursion for any other reason.

Narre Warren 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.

- The Principal is responsible for the approval of all single-day excursions other than those that must be 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; and excursions involving weekends or vacations; and adventure activities.

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

- If the principal's approval is granted, detailed planning should commence using the DET planning documentation including the excursion and camps planning checklist, pre activity checklist, risk register, etc found at:

<https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/excursions/resources>

- 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 Excursion – Principal Approval Form (using above link) and all attachments, ensuring that time permits for the matter to be placed on a School Council agenda and, if approved, that the online Student Activity Locator (SAL) form then be submitted three weeks prior to the activity.

Adventure activities – including swimming and water-based activities

The following information is additional to the requirements relating to all excursions. Mandatory guidelines are also provided in relation to specific adventure activities, under each activity name below.

An adventure activity is an activity that involves greater than normal risk which may include:

- physical activities beyond the scope of the regular physical education curriculum
- travel into a relatively undeveloped area of the country in which vehicle contact is difficult and/or uncertain
- confrontation with natural environmental challenges requiring greater reliance upon personal resources than would normally be required in day-to-day life
- less than normal contact by person or by telephone, with medical and other public services available in normal day-to-day life
- exposure to the natural elements with less than the normal physical protection provided in day-to-day life
- theme parks, fun parks and trampoline centres
- the use and operation of amusement rides, attractions or fireworks via engagement of a third-party operator at non-public (that is, enrolled students only) events on non-school sites (for example, hiring a jumping castle to be operated at a local park). Schools must also follow the Amusement Rides, Attractions and Fireworks Policy
- an activity listed under the adventure activities guidelines, outlined below.

If a principal does not have detailed knowledge of an adventure activity as listed in the adventure activities guidelines below, it is recommended that further information and advice is sought from:

- activity peak bodies (see activity specific guidelines)
- teachers or other qualified person with recent experience instructing the activity, who can offer an understanding of both the technical requirements and the educational context.

Swimming and water-based activities

The Swimming and water-based activities guidelines (DOCX) apply to instructional swimming programs, lifesaving programs and recreational activities.

Excursions e-learning module

School staff with primary responsibility for organising a school camp and/or water-based excursion activity must have completed the mandatory excursions e-learning module. These staff are encouraged to complete the module annually.

Staff responsible for organising excursions of any other type are also encouraged to complete the module.

The module is located in eduPay.

The module aims to:

- increase awareness and understanding of the excursions policy and guidelines to ensure safety of students
- set out obligations for schools in managing excursions to ensure that they are aware of what steps they need to take

- establish awareness and understanding of the mandatory requirements for school excursions, including how to carry out risk assessments.

Supervision

Narre Warren North 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.

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Staff and volunteers must abide by our school's Child Safety Policy and Code of Conduct which specifies the standards of conduct required when working with children.

The Teacher in Charge is to complete the correct documentation as outlined in the school's **Excursions and Activities Protocols** including following the **Activity/Camp/Excursion Checklist** and completing the **Risk Assessment** documentation for each activity as outlined above.

- A designated Teacher in Charge, not necessarily the organiser, will coordinate each excursion/camp.
- Classroom teachers will be given the first option to attend excursions/camps involving their class.
- DET staff to student ratio policy must be adhered to (Appendix 6)
- A senior staff member will be in attendance at school whilst the children are returning from any out-of-school-hours excursion/camp. The Teacher in Charge will communicate with this person regarding the anticipated return time. The Teacher in Charge will communicate the anticipated return time with the school office in the case where camps are returning out of school hours.
- The Teacher in Charge is responsible for ensuring that a mobile phone and first aid kits are taken on the excursion/camp.
- All camps will have an experienced teacher or Leadership Team member in attendance where possible.
- The Teacher in Charge must provide the Principal and office with a final student list before departure to the camp.
- The Teacher in Charge is responsible for ensuring that Duty of Care is followed at all times.
- The Teacher in Charge will ensure all students and adults attending the camp are aware of evacuation and emergency procedures.
- If any mishaps or concerns arise during the excursion, the Principal will require the Teacher in Charge to write a written report outlining all details.

- Excursions outside the school require the teacher to fully comply with current DET guidelines, and brings with it an increased duty of care. It is a teacher's responsibility to be aware of these guidelines and remain the person designated with duty of care.
- Excursion activities require the teacher to ensure that the venue and transport adhere to DET guidelines.
- School policy is for students to be counted on and off transport and at other times on a regular basis whilst on excursions.
- The Teacher in Charge will have copies of all Confidential Medical Forms and Permission Notes with contact details. These need to be filed in the Business Manager's office after the activity and must be kept at the school. *There is currently a disposal freeze on these records. Do not dispose of these records until further notice.*
- The Teacher in Charge or designated teacher of an excursion will carry mobile contact known to the school and a first aid kit.
- If the return time from an excursion is delayed, the Teacher in Charge will contact the school to inform the Principal or Office of the new arrival time so that parents can be contacted and a senior staff member will remain at school until they arrive.

Parent volunteers

Parents 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 Teacher in Charge of Organising, in conjunction with the Principal will take into account:

- Any valuable skills the parents/carers have to offer, e.g. bus licence, first aid, experience working with students in a teaching role such as a coach, qualification, etc.
- A requirement that parents have a current Working with Children Check or VIT registration.
- Any preference to include both male and female parents.
- The special needs of particular students.
- Experience in school assistance programs, i.e. parent helpers, past camps, sport helpers, etc.
- Experience or qualification in outdoor adventure activities.
- Parent volunteers may be required to pay their excursion costs or accommodation and meals cost for the camp. School staff will notify parents/carers of any costs associated with attending.
- Parents are to be briefed before the excursion on their role and school expectations while assisting on an excursion.
- It is the teachers' responsibility and duty of care to supervise all students. Parents are not to supervise students unattended.
- Parents are not to take any photos of students while at an excursion/camp.
- A list of parents and their contact details, including an emergency contact number is to be left at the school administration office before departure.
- Parent volunteers are not to make contact with other parents of students at camp while on the camp, except for their own families.
- There will be no smoking while on camp.

Only parents who have been approved by the Principal are able to attend excursions. Parents attending a selected activity must present their WWCC or VIT Registration to the Teacher in Charge at an event to sit with the group.

Volunteer and external provider checks

Narre Warren 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 Clearance or VIT Registration card. Refer to the school's Volunteer Policy.

Parent/carer consent

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

Parent Payments for camps and excursions

Most camps and excursions provided by Narre Warren North Primary School enhance and broaden the schooling experience of our students but are not a mandatory component of our curriculum. These activities are provided on a user-pays basis in accordance with the Department's Parent Payments Policy.

Consent forms will have clearly stated payment amounts and finalisation dates, and families will be given sufficient time to make payments.

Students who have not finalised payment by the required date for camps and excursions provided on a user pays basis will not be able to attend unless the Principal determines exceptional circumstances apply.

Where a camp or excursion is provided as part of the standard curriculum requirements, parents may be invited to make a voluntary contribution but all students will be able to attend regardless of whether their parents contribute.

Financial Help for Families

Narre Warren 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 Principal. 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 [Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund](#).

Refunds

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, and their parents, will be required to sign a 'Campers' Contract' (Appendix 5). 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 an 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 or 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 Teacher in Charge in conjunction with 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.

Students are to wear full school uniform to all excursions.

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, Narre Warren 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.

COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following way:

- Included in staff induction processes and staff training
- Available publicly on our school's website
- Discussed at staff briefings/meetings as required
- Discussed at parent information sessions
- Reminders in our school newsletter
- Hard copy available from school office upon request

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

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

- Excursions
- Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund
- Parent Payments Policy

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

- Child Safety Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Statement of Values and School Philosophy
- Excursions Policy
- Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy
- Volunteer Policy
- Duty of Care Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy
- Privacy Policy

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	April 2024
Consultation	Newsletter: April 2024 School Council: 21 st May 2024
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	May 2026