



Watsonia North Camping Policy

RATIONALE

Watsonia North Primary School considers the provision of an Outdoor Education Program to be a valuable part of the education of all students. The Outdoor Education Program is designed to provide students with a variety of challenging and exciting learning experiences not usually available in the school and home environments. Watsonia North's students' health, safety and security are the highest priority to all adults attending camp. It is important that each child be given the opportunity to gain knowledge, experience and a sense of achievement through a variety of learning situations. The camping experience provides children with the opportunity to develop social skills, group responsibilities and independence in an alternate setting, away from daily home and school routines.

PURPOSE

- To promote and develop cooperation, communication and interpersonal relationships with fellow students and staff.
- To provide a program that promotes confidence, resourcefulness, independence, judgement, cooperation and tolerance.
- To develop an awareness and appreciation of the environment.
- To extend, enhance and support the school programs.
- To provide a program that delivers skills and knowledge that may lead to a lifelong involvement in worthwhile leisure pursuits.

IMPLEMENTATION

- A camp is defined as any activity involving at least one night's accommodation.
- A staff member will be designated as Teacher in Charge and the Principal will ensure that the camp's program will adhere to and maintain the standards and procedures set out for excursions and other out of school activities by the Department of Education & Early Childhood Development (DEECD).
- School Council will ensure that all school camps are maintained at a reasonable and affordable cost, and comply with all DEECD requirements.
- Parents will be informed of all camp details in writing. Additional information will be provided by the way of information evenings and Wednesday Weekly articles.

- All children are expected to participate in the Camping Program. The program will cater for individual student needs where necessary and appropriate, ie on the basis of the disability or on cultural or religious grounds.
- Students who do not attend camp will participate in classroom activities at Watsonia North Primary School for the duration of camp.
- Where possible, parents should be given four months notice of the approximate costs and dates of each camp.
- One or two vehicles will accompany the group to camp as an emergency vehicle.
- Prior to and during camp experiences, Watsonia North Primary School cannot accept children with the following symptoms and conditions:
 - Elevated temperature.
 - Diarrhoea or vomiting.
 - Undiagnosed rash.
 - Any infectious disease listed on the school's exclusion table.
- Parents will be notified of the exact costs and other relevant details of individual camps as soon as practicable.
- Students will not be excluded from camps simply for financial reasons. Parents experiencing financial difficulty, who wish for their children to attend camp, will be required to discuss their individual situation with the Principal. Decisions relating to alternative payment arrangements will be made by the Principal on a case-by-case basis.
- All families will be given sufficient time to make payments for individual camps. Children whose parents have not paid deposits by the due date, who do not make full payment by the due date, or who have not made alternative arrangements with the Principal will not be eligible to attend.
- Any family who has not met the required alternative payment for a previous camp will be unable to participate in the camping program until the outstanding payment is finalised.
- 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 camp, the Teacher in Charge must familiarise themselves with the Department's [Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors](#) website. They must meet formally with the principal to discuss the proposed camp, and to seek 'in principle' support for the event.

- The school only uses residential campsites accredited by the 'Australian Camps Association' or the 'National Accommodation, Recreation & Tourism Accreditation Program (NARTA)' for overnight camps.
- School Council requires that students only travel on buses fitted with seatbelts.
- School Council requires that a report be tabled after each school camp, detailing feedback regarding the event, in particular any mishaps or areas for future improvement.
- Classroom teachers will be given the first option to attend camps.
- The school will provide a mobile phone for all 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.
- 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.
- Only children who have displayed sensible, reliable behaviour at school will be invited to participate in the camping program. Parents will be notified if a child is in danger of losing their invitation to participate in a camping experience due to poor behaviour at school. If the unsatisfactory behaviour continues, the child will then be excluded from camp. The decision to exclude a student will be made by the Principal, in consultation with the Teacher in Charge.
- A student may be excluded or removed from a camp for the following reasons:
 - Behaving in a manner which endangers the safety and wellbeing of him/herself or others.
 - Causing damage to property.
 - Persistent refusal to carry out the instructions of the teacher in charge.
 - Persistent attempts to disrupt the learning and participation of others.
- Parents will be requested to collect their child from camp if their child exhibits behaviour that is considered unacceptable or they become unwell. The Teacher in Charge will make this decision. Costs incurred will be the responsibility of the parent.
- The primary references that must be consulted when considering all camps is the Safety Guidelines for Outdoor Education Activities website: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/management/schooloperations/edoutdoors/default.htm> as well as the Vic Govt Schools Reference Guide 4.4.2.2 – Student Safety & Risk Management.

EVALUATION AND REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed annually at the conclusion of the school's camp program.

This policy was ratified by School Council on 15/05/2012