



EDUCATING the WHOLE CHILD

Camps and overnight excursions

Definitions

Any program involving an overnight stay is defined here as a camp.

- a) Camps are usually not optional, but are seen to be a part of the classes' social development, and are usually integrated with curriculum and main lesson work.
- b) Parents will be notified prior to each camp, by letter from the Class Teacher outlining all necessary details including the cost of the camp.
- c) All students must return a signed permission form before the outing and must have paid the costs involved. The signed permission form will be carried by the teacher for the duration of the trip. It is not acceptable for parents to give verbal permission over the phone.
- d) Parents of students requiring medication, special diets or other special considerations must inform the responsible teacher in writing before the start of the camp.
- e) In case of emergency, parents or guardians can contact the responsible teacher directly via mobile phone. The responsible teacher will carry a mobile phone at all times, and check for messages on a regular basis. In the event of there being no mobile coverage, emergency contact will be arranged through the nearest available landline.
- f) The responsible teacher will have a roll of all children on the camp, and will confirm numbers frequently.
- g) The class teachers for each camp will ensure transport arrangements and excursion activities comply with Department of Education and Training guidelines.
- h) Ballarat Steiner School encourages and welcomes parental/community involvement and as such, parents may be invited to assist in the delivery of the camp. When deciding on which parents will attend, the class teacher will take into account
 - Any valuable skills the parents have to offer e.g. bus licence, first aid
 - The need to include both male and female parents.
 - The special needs of particular students.
 - Current Working with Children Check.
- i) Child-Adult ratios will be decided in light of the age of the children, the venue, the travel, activities undertaken and the risks identified.
- j) Only students who can function within the parameters of the school values will be able to participate in school camps. Students may be excluded by the class teacher if their behaviour falls outside these guidelines. Parents will be notified if a child is in danger of losing their invitation to participate in a camp due to poor behaviour at school. The class teacher will carry their incident book and record any incident for documenting in the central incident log upon return from the camp.
- k) In extreme cases the excursion staff may determine that a student should return home during an excursion. In such circumstances, the parent/guardian will be advised of the circumstance associated with the decision to send the student home and of the time their

child may be collected from the excursion or the anticipated time that the child will arrive home.

- l) The arrangements for how and when the student will be sent home will be discussed with the parent/guardian and agreed upon. If the parent/guardian cannot collect their child, they will be transported home by one of the qualified staff or camp assistants as per the pre signed authorisation.
- m) A copy of the school camp policy will be sent to parents of children attending camps/excursions along with the camp authorisation form prior to camp. A copy will also be placed in the school diary.
- n) Students failing to return a signed permission form will be excluded from the camp.
- o) Administration 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) A copy of this school camp policy will be sent to parents of children who are attending camps/excursions along with a camp authorisation form, prior to camp. A copy will also be placed in the school diary.

Excursion Planning & Risk Assessment

- a) A risk management checklist must be completed before each planned camp.
- b) This checklist is the official School Record of the planned camp and must be completed for all overnight excursions or excursions involving adventure activities.
- c) The responsible teacher must advise the Facilitator of camp dates and that the risk management checklist has been completed at least four weeks before the excursion date for approval.
- d) This checklist is intended as a guide to the teacher of all aspects of organisation that need to be considered to ensure a safe and successful camp.
- e) The use of private vehicles is voluntary, and no remuneration to owners / drivers is permissible, as this validates insurance policies. Only vehicles covered by Third Party Insurance (Current Registration), driven by a currently licensed driver can be used - one passenger per seat belt. Parents / Teachers transporting children in private vehicles are required to complete a transport permission form available from the Front Office.
- f) Relevant details about approved excursions will be provided to the Department's Emergency And Security Management Unit (DESMU) using the online notification form available at www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/forms/school/sal/enteractivity.asp at least three weeks prior to the activity. In the event of an emergency, an accident or an injury to a participant or staff on the excursion, in addition to undertaking appropriate emergency action, school administration will be notified. DESMU will be contacted on 9589 6266. This is a twenty-four hour service.
- g) Parents will be advised of telephone numbers of the designated school contact person who they can contact in the first instance and not personnel on the excursion. This will ensure that the telephone lines are kept free at the excursion site.

Special Consideration:

1. Non - Attendance

A family will be charged for non-attendance unless there are extenuating circumstances that preclude the child's attendance at the activity. Application for waiving the camp/excursion charge due to non-attendance must be made in writing by the family to the College of Teachers via the Class Teacher. Circumstances that may be considered include:

- * **Health** All previously known health conditions need to be considered by the teacher in planning the activity. All applications for exemption from attendance for health reasons must be accompanied by a medical certificate (see note on Special Needs, Asthma and Anaphylaxis below).

* **Bereavement**

* **Pre-planned holiday/absence of which the class teacher was already aware**

2. Attendance of Students with a Special Need

It would not be expected that a particular class carry the extra costs incurred when a child has particular needs which must be catered for on a camp/excursion. A full risk assessment must be undertaken by the Class Teacher in planning the activity, to ensure that the program and the resources required for any children with special needs, or asthma or anaphylaxis are considered. The costing of extra resources is to be included in budgets, and the allocation of these extra costs to either the family or the school, must be determined in the planning of the activity. Where there are extra costs incurred because of a child with Special Needs, the school will endeavour to negotiate sharing of additional costs with the family involved. The school must, however, budget for the possibility to fully cover additional costs in these circumstances (refer to Special Needs Policy).

3. Payment for Parent Volunteers and Extra Parent Attendees

- (i) Parent Volunteers are those parents who have been specifically requested by the Class Teacher to attend the camp or excursion in order to fulfil the needs of the required adult/student ratios defined by Section 1 points 5 & 6 of this policy. The cost of these parents will be fully budgeted into the cost of the camp and charged to the families in the class.
- (ii) Any other adults attending must be self funded and will not be charged to the families in the class.

The school's "Camps" program embraces all the relevant Guiding Principles of the Commonwealth Government's National Safe Schools Framework (NSSF).

(Refer to Section 3)

The program in fact offers opportunities for the development of many of the NSSF Guiding Principles as the nature of the program requires a high level of co-operation between all involved. Specifically, the Camps program provides the chance to:

- * Promote care, respect and co-operation and (to) value diversity (GP 2)
- * Recognise that quality leadership is an essential element that underpins the creation of a safe and supportive school environment (GP 4)
- * Provide opportunities for students to learn through the formal curriculum the knowledge, skills and dispositions needed for positive relationships (GP 8)

Furthermore, the program embraces all the Guiding Principles relating to the creation, maintenance and monitoring of the elements vital for a safe school environment.

(Refer to Section 9: NSSF Guiding Principles)

Every teacher who has helped at a camp observes the changes that occur in children through their experiences. Social difficulties are often resolved, and children see aspects of each other and their teachers which can only arise through really living together. The camping program usually begins in class 2, and each year successively grows in terms of distance and time spent away from home. There will always be at least one teacher and some parents present on camp with the assurance that there will be supervising adults of both genders.

Though every care of children is taken, accidents sometimes happen. In view of the possibilities in camp situations, as our children grow older and venture further, a set of procedures has been formulated.

1. Camp Safety:

1. Preparation

- The relevant parts of the "Camp Risk Assessment Checklist" must be worked through and submitted to the College in advance of the camp
- Wherever possible a representative of the school must be familiar with the site
- Where any adventure activities are proposed, the school will:
 - i. Only engage outdoor education providers with fully qualified staff and the relevant insurance liability cover and
 - ii. Require that leaders of the activities must previously have actually done all the proposed activities at the site

2. Transportation to, from and during the camp must meet accepted community standards of safety. No private vehicles can be used except in exceptional circumstances.

3. An itinerary and daily schedule must be left in the office before departure.

4. An emergency contacts/procedures list must be taken by the teacher.

5. Two qualified First Aid Officers, school staff members or volunteers (i.e. Level 2) equipped with a suitable first-aid kit, must be present at any camp/excursion.

6. Adult-student ratios must:

- i. Account for adequate supervision of both genders
- ii Account for adequate supervision should any child require first aid transportation

7. The class teacher will, in general, be the person with overall responsibility for a camp. Shared responsibilities, e.g. where the PE or swimming teacher in charge of the activities on camp, need to be clearly defined beforehand so that loads are sensibly shared and there is clarity for both staff and students.

8. Where parents or other volunteers make up part of the adult contingent, they must be fully briefed as to their responsibilities beforehand. (Refer to the "School Camp/Excursion Volunteer Information" document)

9. The rules for camps and adventure activities, and their importance for safety, must be made clear to students beforehand. The rules may be sent home for parents to see, so that they may reinforce them in advance. Where a student breaks safety rules, it will be at the discretion of the teacher to require parents to come and take the student home.

10. Bullying/Harassment and Child Safety

- i. ALL attending adults (Staff and Parents) should be made fully aware of the school's policies and procedures concerning Bullying/Harassment and the Child Safety as stated in the school's official policies.
- ii Teachers supervising school camps shall ensure that no student shall be billeted to a sleeping quarter (or tent) containing only one other adult (with the exception of a child needing to share accommodation with their parent or guardian). In the event of a child becoming ill, injured and/or so distressed that they require transportation, the supervising teacher shall ensure that the remaining group is always placed in the care of two adults, one of whom should be a supervising staff member. Note: This will have implications for the planning of staffing for the camp.

11. Transport

The school will ensure that children are transported safely and cost effectively on all camps and excursions within the insurance parameters and legal responsibilities of the school.

- i. All teachers should request the Business Manager to arrange travel/transport details
- ii. The school will utilize drivers paid by the bus hire company to drive buses for school activities. However, designated drivers can be appointed
- iii. The school may at times engage drivers directly to drive "hire" buses for camps or school activities. These drivers must only be **Approved Drivers** according to the following criteria:
 - * A current driver's license to drive heavy or articulated vehicles
 - * For non-teachers, a current "Working with Children" check (not more than one year old)