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## Camp, Excursions and In-School Visits Policy

### Background

At Huntingdale Primary School camps, excursions and in-school visits are an integral part of the wider school program and enable students to further their learning with experts and resources from outside the immediate school community.

Excursions are an important part of the learning experiences of all students from Foundation to Year 6. Excursions can support quality curriculum delivery and can provide important social and emotional development opportunities for students beyond the classroom. These might include teamwork, resilience and confidence-building through challenge, problem-solving, connecting with nature, creative and imaginative play and coordination and strength.

The school ensures that these activities provide an enriching experience for our students and are relevant to the current curriculum. These activities 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.



### Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact the school office.

### Purpose

To ensure:

- All excursions are planned in accordance with DET requirements and policies.
- The school explains the processes and procedures Huntingdale Primary School will use when planning and conducting camps, excursions, in school visits and adventure activities for students.
- The school is compliant with policies and procedures set out by the Department of Education and Training (DET) and the Child Safe Standards.
- Maintain the DET values of leadership, respect, responsiveness, human rights, integrity, impartiality and accountability.

### Scope

This policy applies to all camps and excursions organised by Huntingdale Primary School. This policy also applies to adventure activities organised by Huntingdale Primary School, regardless of whether or not they take place on or off school grounds, and to school sleepovers.

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. Huntingdale Primary School will follow both this policy, as well as the Department's policy and guidelines when planning for and conducting camps and excursions.



## 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.

**Camps** are excursions involving at least 1 night's accommodation (including school sleepovers on school grounds). There are 2 different classifications of camps:

- Base camps are camps that are undertaken at accredited residential camp sites or camping under shelters such as tents. Camping as an adventure activity has its own specific guidelines.
- Study camps are camps that often involve VCE students. There is a focus on study skills, team building, communication, time management and wellbeing.

**Local excursions** are excursions to locations within walking distance of the school and do not involve '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 website under Adventure Activities, at the following link:

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

**In-school visits** are activity groups that visit the school for educational purposes e.g., musical performers, educational talk, science experiments.

### Implementation

- The principal has the overall responsibility of implementing this policy but may delegate certain roles to suitably qualified staff.
- For all camps and excursions, including adventure activities, our school will follow the Department's School Policy and Advisory Guide: [Excursions and Activities](#).
- All school staff must have completed the mandatory excursions e-learning module annually. The module is located in [eduPay](#).
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### Planning process

- All camps, in-school visits and excursions will comply with Department planning requirements.
- 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. Huntingdale 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.
- Huntingdale Primary School is committed to ensuring students with additional needs are provided with inclusive camps, in-school visits 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.
- All camps must be booked 2 years ahead.
- Where practicable, excursions and in-school visits are to be planned on a yearly basis.
- Camp and excursion/incursion organisers must meet formally with the principal, to discuss the proposed camp or activity to seek 'in principle' support for the event.
- Then the organising teacher must follow DET's *Adventure Activity Guidelines* and use the *Camps Excursion, Swimming and/or Water-based activity checklist* to plan the event.
- The *DET Camps, Excursion, Swimming and/or water-based activities Principal Approval* form must be signed by the principal as well as the *Excursions Risk Register*. A site visit may be requested.
- The office Manager must enter the excursion details into the Student Activity Locator (staff login required) at least 3 weeks prior to the excursion date.
- The Camp Coordinator or excursion/in-school visit organiser should provide a summary to the Principal and Business Manager about the events to be shared with School Council.
- School Council approves the camp in so far as it relates to the school's budget, the parent payments policy or entering into any contract or other such agreement with a third party, as these aspects of excursions fall within the scope of school council powers and functions. If appropriate, principals can consult with school council on other aspects of excursions.
- The Regional Director is responsible for approving interstate and overseas visits.
- The Principal approves cancellations or alterations to camp/excursion arrangements.
- When planning excursions and in-school events, teachers should take into account the school timetable and ensure that the excursion day works well for **both** the English and Japanese Teachers in that area of the school. It is strongly advised that a day should be chosen where the Japanese Teacher has the most time in that area.
- All teachers involved in the excursion must ensure they swap yard duty if they are scheduled on duty at school. They must advise the Assistant Principal via email a week prior to the excursion.
- The teacher in charge of the excursion must check the timetable to see if swaps to classes need to be made. This must be done in conjunction with the Assistant Principal at least two weeks prior.
- Teachers should ensure they have booked a space in the school for an in-school visit prior to the date.
- All camp, excursion and in-school visit notes must be approved by the Principal/Assistant Principal and distributed to families on Operoo at least three weeks prior to the event. Camps should be at least 8 weeks.

### **Supervision**

- Huntingdale 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.



### ***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 organising teacher will take into account: any valuable skills the parents/carers have to offer (e.g., experience in that field, first aid etc.) and the special needs of particular students.

### ***Volunteer and external provider checks***

- Huntingdale 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 Check card. Please refer to the school's Volunteers Policy and Visitors Policy.

### ***Parent/carer consent***

- For all camps and excursions, other than local excursions, Huntingdale Primary School will provide parents/carers with a specific consent form outlining the details of the proposed activity.
- Huntingdale Primary School uses Operoo to inform parents about camps, in school visits and excursions and to seek their consent using this platform.
- Parents/carers are encouraged to contact the school to discuss any questions or concerns that they or their child may have with a proposed activity.
- For local excursions, Huntingdale 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 on Operoo.
- Huntingdale Primary School will also provide advance notice to parents/carers of an upcoming local excursion through Operoo.

### ***Parent Payments for camps and excursions***

- Most camps and excursions provided by Huntingdale 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.
- 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 time to make payments for all activities. Consent forms will have clearly stated payment amounts and payment finalisation dates.
- QKR and BPAY are our preferred method of payment. All cash transactions must be sent to the office for processing.
- 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***

- All endeavours will be made not to exclude students from excursions for financial reasons. Parents experiencing financial difficulty, who wish their child to attend a camp, excursion or in school visit will be required to discuss their individual situation with the principal. Decisions regarding alternative payment arrangements will be made by the principal on a case-by-case basis.
- Any parent wishing to use the Government Camps and Excursions Allowance must apply for this through the Business Manager. 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 refund 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.
- Please refer to the school's Refund Policy.

### ***Student health***

- Parents and carers need to ensure the school has up-to-date student health information on Operoo 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 participating in camps, in-school visits 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.
- 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 Engagement Policy*.
- The decision to exclude a student will be made by the principal, in consultation with the organising teacher. Both the parent/carer and the student will be informed of this decision prior to the camp, in-school activity 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 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 Engagement Policy*.

### ***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, Huntingdale 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.
- The school will be obtaining travel insurance for excursions that they consider involve a greater than normal risk, for example interstate or overseas trips.

### ***Travelling to and from activities***

- The school requires that students only travel on buses fitted with seatbelts.
- The organiser of the activity will communicate to parents on the anticipated return time and if needed update this on Operoo (particularly for camp)

### ***During Camp, Excursion and In-School Visit Activities***

- The school will provide a mobile phone for all camps.
- A member of staff will be allocated the role as First Aid Leader. They are responsible for transporting all medication and administering it while at the activity.
- The First Aid Leader and teachers will have access permission/medical forms on Operoo.
- All student medication must be handed to the First Aid Leader on the day of camp.
- While school camps and excursions are a team activity requiring the cooperation and common-sense of all participants, it is the Camp Leader who oversees the operations of the camp, takes charge of events, makes key decisions and accepts ultimate responsibility for the camp.
- Teachers can take photos of students during the activity.



### After

- Organisers of camps, excursions or in-school visits can write an article for the school newsletter or provide an update on Operoo.
- If accidents or injuries occur during excursions it must be reported to the office.

### Further Information and Resources

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

- School Policy and Advisory Guide:
  - [Excursions](#)
  - [Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund](#)
  - [Parent Payments Policy](#)
- The following school policies are also relevant to this Camps and Excursions Policy:
  - Statement of Values and School Philosophy
  - Student Engagement Policy
  - Volunteer Policy
  - Duty of Care Policy
  - Inclusion and Diversity Policy
  - Parent Payment Policy

### Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school’s three- year cycle or as needed to comply with DET policy changes.

### Document Status

Reviewed	School Council Ratification	Next Review
October 22 – DET policy changes	N/A	October 2021
15 June- Business Manager 24 July- Principal 28 July- E& FD sub-committee 2020	N/A	July 2023
20 January 2023- Principal	N/A	January 2026