

PURPOSE

To explain to our school community the processes and procedures Meeniyan 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 Meeniyan Primary School. This policy also applies to adventure activities organised by Meeniyan 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. Meeniyan 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 are excursions involving at least one night's accommodation (including school sleep-overs).

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://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/pages/adventure.aspx>

POLICY

Camps and excursions are seen as an integral part of the school curriculum as they enable students to explore, extend and enrich their learning and their social skills development, in a non-school setting. Camps may have a cultural, environmental, historical or outdoor emphasis and are an important aspect of the educational programs offered at our school. A camp is defined as any activity that involves at least one night's accommodation.

Excursions complement, and are an important aspect of the educational programs offered at the school. An excursion is defined as any activity beyond the school grounds excluding camps.

For all camps and excursions, including adventure activities, our school will follow the Department's School Policy and Advisory Guide: [Excursions and Activities](#). For camps and excursions requiring school council approval, our school will also follow the Department's School Policy and Advisory Guide: [Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors](#).

Planning process for camps and excursions

All camps 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. Meeniyan Primary School's risk assessment will include consideration of arrangements for supervision of students and consideration of the risk of bushfire activity in the excursion location. In the event of a Code Red Day being announced, excursions or camp activities in effected locations will be cancelled or rescheduled. Planning will also cover arrangements for cancelling, recalling or altering the camp or excursion for any other reason.

Meeniy 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.

Supervision

Meeniy 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. bus licence, first aid etc.) and the special needs of particular students.

Volunteer and external provider checks

Meeniy 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.

Parent/carer consent

For all camps and excursions, other than local excursions, Meeniy Primary School will provide parents/carers with a specific consent form outlining the details of the proposed activity. Meeniy Primary School uses a Compass note given to students for parent signature to be returned to school, to inform parents about camps and excursions. 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, Meeniy 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. Meeniy Primary School will also provide advance notice to parents/carers of an upcoming local excursion through the newsletter and/or a note home in the student's bag. lessons),

Cost of camps and excursions, refunds and support

The cost of all camps and excursions are to be paid by parents/carers unless alternative arrangements have been agreed to by the Principal in consultation with the relevant staff member, prior to the camp or excursion. Decisions will be made on an individual basis. Meeniy Primary School will make all efforts to ensure that students are not excluded for financial reasons.

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.

Students who have not finalised payment by the required date will not be allowed to attend unless the Principal determines exceptional circumstances apply.

The Business Manager/Principal 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](#).

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 refunds of payments (less any non-refundable deposit) 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

Only students that have displayed sensible, reliable behaviour at school will be permitted to participate in school camps. Parents/carers will be notified if their child is in danger of losing the privilege to participate in a camp due to poor behaviour at school. 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. All students participating in a school camp will be asked to sign a contract agreeing to abide by all camp rules.

Parents/carers will be requested to collect their child from camp if their child exhibits behaviour that is considered unacceptable or a danger to others. The 'Teacher in Charge', in consultation with the Principal, will make this decision. Costs incurred will be the responsibility of the parent.

Students not attending a camp or excursion will be placed in another class and have an appropriate learning program provided by the class teacher.

Disciplinary measures apply to students on excursions consistent with the School's 3Rs (Code of Conduct) policy. In extreme cases the excursion staff, following consultation with, and the approval of, the principal or their nominee, may determine that a student should be collected by their parents/carers during an excursion.

In such circumstances, the parent/carer will be advised:

- of the circumstance associated with the decision to send the student home
- of the time when the parents/carers may collect their child from the excursion
- of any costs associated with the student's return which will be the responsibility of the parents/carers

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, Meeniyam 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.

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

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

- School Policy and Advisory Guide:
 - [Excursions and Activities](#)
 - [Emergency and Risk Management](#)
- [Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors](#)
- [Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund.](#)
- [Code Red Days](#)

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

- 3R's (Code of Conduct)
- Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy
- Volunteer Policy
- Duty of Care Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy
- Parent Payment Policy
- Parent Refund Policy

REVIEW CYCLE

This policy was last updated on 13/09/2019 and is scheduled for review September 2022.