



DEBNEY MEADOWS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Excursion Policy

BASIC BELIEFS

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. 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.

AIMS

- To reinforce, complement and extend the learning opportunities beyond the classroom
- To develop an understanding that learning is not limited to school, and that valuable and powerful learning takes place in the real world.
- To provide a safe, secure learning experience for students in a venue external to the school.
- To further develop social skills such as cooperation, tolerance, communication, individual and group interaction.
- To further develop problem solving and life survival skills.
- To extend understanding of their physical and cultural environment.

GUIDELINES FOR ACTION

- All excursions must be approved by the Leadership Group (which includes the Principal or his/her nominee)
- Staff wishing to organise an excursion must complete an excursion proposal form and lodge this with a member of the Leadership team for approval. The Leadership team meets weekly and all excursions must be approved prior to running. Where an excursion proposal has not been submitted, that excursion will not run, unless special circumstances are pending. This decision will be made by the Principal. The committee will consider the educational outcome of the excursion as well as the impact on the school for the proposed date.
- The committee will ensure that all excursions, transport arrangements, emergency procedures and staffing comply with DEECD guidelines. Refer to:
www.education.vic.gov.au/management/schooloperations/edoutdoors/default.htm
- Once the excursion has been approved an "Excursion Pack" must be completed. This is available from the General Office or on the Intranet. All Sections (A, B, C & D) need to be completed and handed to the Office Manager for processing. The Curriculum leader in charge of the learning communities will complete the 'Notification of School Activity' at :
www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/forms/school/sal/enteractivity.asp three weeks prior to the excursion departure date, and ensure relevant details are entered on the daily planner.
- School Council is responsible for the approval of:

Overnight excursions

Camps

Interstate visits

International visits

Excursions requiring sea or air travel, weekends or vacations

Adventure activities

- The Principal is responsible for the approval of all single-day excursions other than those that must be approved by school council as mentioned above.

EXPECTATIONS

The Department's requirements and guidelines relating to preparation and safety will be observed in the conduct of all excursions.

The principal or their nominee will ensure that full records are maintained regarding the camp/excursion.

The principal or their nominee will ensure that adequate pre-excursion planning and preparation, including the preparation of students, takes place.

Satisfactory arrangements will be made to provide continuous instruction for the students remaining at the school during the absence of staff accompanying an excursion.

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) will not be involved in any expense associated with the conduct of excursions. The school may choose to subsidise some excursions or some student's expenses.

Prior to conducting a camp or excursion, the approval of the School Council or the principal will be obtained. Council must approve overnight or adventure activities. The Principal must approve these and other activities.

Only children who have displayed sensible, reliable behaviour at school will be invited to participate in camps or excursions. Students and their parents/carers need to be made aware that acceptable standards of behaviour will be expected during a camp or an excursion.

The emergency management process of the school will extend to and incorporate all camps and excursions.

All DEECD requirements and guidelines that apply to the conduct of excursions are also applicable to all overseas and interstate (domestic) camps/excursions.

PROGRAM

Prior to conducting a camp or excursion, the Department's requirements and guidelines relating to camps or excursions, will be rigorously observed.

Consideration in planning may include:

- Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors website
- Risk management website
- Emergency management website
- Student preparation website
- Student medical information website
- Bushfire website

The principal or their nominee will ensure that full records are submitted to School Council regarding the camp/excursion well in advance of the starting date of the event and that no camp/excursion occurs unless all the formal record keeping has been completed and approved.

Prior to conducting any camp or excursion, the formal approval of the School Council and principal will be obtained. In approving a camp or excursion, consideration will include:

- the contribution of the activity to the school curriculum
- the adequacy of the planning, preparation and organisation in relation to the school policy and the guidelines and advice provided by DEECD
- information provided by community groups and organisations that specialise in the activity proposed
- appropriateness of the venue
- the provisions made for the safety and welfare of students and staff
- the experience and competence of staff relevant to the activities being undertaken
- the adequacy of the student supervision
- the high risk nature of some activities
- emergency procedures and safety measures
- staff-student ratios
- student experience

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

Prior to the camp or excursion parent/carers are to be made aware that DEECD does not provide student accident cover and that they need to make their own arrangements for cover.

Arrangements for payments

- All efforts will be made not to exclude students simply for financial reasons. Parents experiencing financial difficulty, who wish for their children to attend an excursion, are invited to discuss alternative arrangements with the Business Manager. Decisions relating to alternative payment arrangements will be made by the Business Manager in consultation with the appropriate staff, on an individual basis.
- All families will be given sufficient time to make payments for excursions. Parents will be provided with permission forms and excursion information clearly stating payment finalization dates. Children whose payment have not been finalized at least 24 hours prior to the departure date will not be allowed to attend unless alternative payment arrangements have been organised with the Business Manager.
- Office staff will be responsible for managing and monitoring the payments made by parents and will provide organising teachers with detailed records on a regular basis.

Teacher Responsibilities:

- A designated “Teacher in Charge” will coordinate each excursion.
- The Teacher in Charge must provide the General Office with a final student list as well as posting a copy on Compass and daily bulletin.
- In the case where an excursion involves a particular class or year level group, the organizing teacher will ensure that there is an alternative program available for those students not attending the excursion.
- All students must have returned a signed permission note and payment to be able to attend the excursion. Copies of completed permission notes and medical information must be carried by excursion staff at all times.
- The school will provide a mobile phone and first aid kit for each excursion. The teacher in charge is responsible for collecting these prior to leaving.
- The teacher in charge will communicate the anticipated return time with the Debney Meadows School office in the case where excursions are returning out of school hours. Parents will be informed prior to students leaving for the excursion, that they can phone the office to receive an updated anticipated return time.
- Parents may be invited to assist in the delivery of excursions.
- Only students that have displayed sensible, reliable behaviour at school will be permitted to participate in school excursions. Parents will be notified if their child is in danger of losing the privilege to participate in an excursion due to poor behaviour at school. The decision to exclude a student will be made by the Principal, Leader of Well being, in consultation with the organising teacher. Both the parent and the student will be informed of this decision prior to the excursion.
- Disciplinary measures apply to students on camps and excursions consistent with the School’s Well Being and Restorative Practices policy. In extreme cases the camp or excursion staff, following consultation with, and the approval of, the principal or their nominee, may determine that a student should return home during a camp or 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 camp or excursion
- of the anticipated time that the student will arrive home
- of any costs associated with the student's return which will be the responsibility of the parents/carers

The school's emergency procedures do include the effects of an emergency on student supervision in the event of excursion staff being required to assist injured students or to go for help.

All excursion staff and, where appropriate, the students will be familiar with the specific procedures for dealing with emergencies on each excursion.

On days of extreme fire danger or total fire ban, the principal or their nominee may need to cancel an excursion at short notice. Where an excursion is not cancelled, special fire safety precautions will be implemented.

Excursion groups will be equipped with mobile telephones and first aid kits to be used in emergency situations.

LINKS AND APPENDICES (including processes related to this policy)

Links which are connected with this policy are:

- http://www.education.vic.gov.au/management/governance/referenceguide/enviro/4_4.htm
- <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/management/schooloperations/edoutdoors/links.htm>
- <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/management/schooloperations/edoutdoors/environment.htm>
- <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/management/schooloperations/edoutdoors/activities/default.htm>
- <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/management/schooloperations/edoutdoors/people/default.htm>
- http://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/incidents/incident_summary.htm
- **Victorian Bushfire Information Line (24 hours) 1800 240 667**

Appendices which are connected with this policy are:

- Appendix A: Teacher/Pupil Ratios
- Appendix B: Excursions Approval Pro-forma
- Appendix C: Camps and Excursions Application Pro-forma (3 pages)
- Appendix D: Notification of School Activity (camps and excursions)

EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed annually or more often if necessary due to changes in regulations or circumstance.