



## PARK ORCHARDS PRIMARY SCHOOL Camps and Excursion (incl. Local Excursions) Policy

This template was updated in May 2022 to change all hyperlinks to Department policy to reflect the new Policy and Advisory Library (PAL) hyperlink.

### PURPOSE

To explain to our school community the processes and procedures Park Orchards Primary School (P.O.P.S) will use when planning and conducting camps, excursions and adventure activities for students.

### SCOPE

This policy applies to all camps and excursions organised by P.O.P.S. This policy also applies to adventure activities organised by P.O.P.S, 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. P.O.P.S. 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 here 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 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://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/excursions/guidance/adventure-activities>

## POLICY

Camps and excursions 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.

For all camps and excursions, including adventure activities, our school will follow the Department's School Policy and Advisory Guide: [Excursions](#).

### 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. P.O.P.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.

P.O.P.S 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:** P.O.P.S 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 and adhere to the Roles and Responsibilities for Camp and Excursion Volunteers (**Appendix 1**).

When deciding which parents/carers will attend, the Organising Teacher will ensure that:

- Parents are informed in the curriculum newsletter of an upcoming excursion/incursion
- Parents communicate to the teacher that they are available and would like to be a helper on the excursion by a due date
- Teachers compile a list of available helpers and depending on level of interest, if number of parents exceed the numbers required a ballot will be conducted (lucky dip)
- Central storage of data of parents who have been on excursions in Google Drive

- Consideration of any valuable skills the parents/carers have to offer (e.g. bus licence, first aid etc.) and the special needs of particular students
- Parents of Special Needs (SN) students may be an additional person on the excursion and a regular attendee
- If a parent (other than parents of SN students) has been on a previous excursion in a year level, the Organising Teacher will consider another parent on the list
- Inform parents who are accompanying the excursion a week before the date of the excursion

**Volunteer and external provider checks:** P.O.P.S requires all 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, P.O.P.S will provide parents/carers with a specific consent form outlining the details of the proposed activity. P.O.P.S uses Compass to inform parents about camps and excursions and to seek their consent. 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,** P.O.P.S 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. P.O.P.S will also provide advance notice to parents/carers of an upcoming local excursion through Compass (Approximately 2 weeks). For local excursions that occur on a recurring basis (for example weekly outings to the local oval for sports lessons), P.O.P.S will notify parents once only prior to the commencement of the recurring event.

**Parent Payments for camps and excursions:** Most camps and excursions provided by P.O.P.S 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.

Compass events will have clearly stated payment amounts and finalisations dates, and families will be given sufficient time to make payments.

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:** P.O.P.S will make all efforts to ensure that students are not excluded for financial reasons. Families experiencing financial difficulty are invited to discuss alternative payment arrangements with the Business Manager and Principal. The Business Manager and 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](#).

**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 refunds 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. 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:** Students participating in camps 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 Wellbeing and Engagement*, *Student Code of Conduct* and *Bullying Prevention Policies*. The decision to exclude a student will be made by the Principal or Assistant Principal, in consultation with the Organising Teacher. Both the parent/carer and the student will be informed of this decision prior to the camp 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 Wellbeing and Engagement*, *Student Code of Conduct* and *Bullying Prevention Policies*.

**Electronic Devices:** Students will be permitted to bring electronic devices (such as iPads, iPods, mobile phones) during camps that involve travelling to long distances, but these may only be used during times set by the Teacher in Charge. Students are responsible for the care of any personal electronic device brought to a camp or excursions and the school will not be responsible for lost or damaged devices.

**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, P.O.P.S 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.

## COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following way:

- Included in staff induction processes and staff training
- Available publicly on our school's website [www.pops.vic.edu.au](http://www.pops.vic.edu.au)
- Included in staff handbook

- Discussed at staff briefings/meetings as required
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- Reminders in our school newsletter
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request

#### **FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES**

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

- [Excursions](#)
- [Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund](#)
- [Parent Payments Policy](#)

**The following school policies are also relevant to the Camps and Excursions Policy and Procedures:**

- Behaviour Management
- Statement of Values and School Philosophy
- Student Wellbeing and Engagement
- Volunteer
- Duty of Care
- Inclusion and Diversity

#### **REVIEW CYCLE AND EVALUATION**

This policy will be reviewed annually at the conclusion of the school's camps program, and as part of the school's three-year review cycle.

This policy was last reviewed in **Oct 2022** and is scheduled for review in **Oct 2025**



## PARK ORCHARDS PRIMARY SCHOOL

### ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### CAMP AND EXCURSION VOLUNTEERS

**Park Orchards Primary School is committed to ensuring that all students are safe in all school environments. We have zero tolerance to any form of child abuse.**

These guidelines are provided to ensure that parents and staff have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities when attending school excursions and/or assisting with school activities eg. sport, cooking and gardening. The guidelines are to be read in conjunction with the POPS Child Safety Policy and Procedures, Child Safety Statement of Commitment and Camps and Excursion Policy and Procedures.

The primary aim of these guidelines is to ensure student safety and wellbeing

#### **GUIDELINES:**

1. Assist with supervision of children throughout the duration of the excursion/school activities as follows:
  - Supervise groups
  - Assist teachers with activities
  - Assist with individual students
2. Be willing to assist where deemed appropriate by the **Organising Teacher**
3. Abide by school rules and the **Child Safety Code of Conduct** when volunteering
4. Report any issues/concerns regarding student safety and wellbeing to the Organising Teacher as soon as possible
5. Be aware that some information about students could be sensitive and confidential and should be used only to protect the welfare of students **in accordance with Duty of Care**
6. Uphold **privacy regulations** and ensure photos and videos are not shared without prior permission from the child's parent or the teacher in charge (as per the School's Digital Technology User Agreement)
7. The **Organising Teacher** of the camp is solely responsible for any communication to students' parents if deemed necessary. Parent volunteers are not to communicate with other parents.

#### **Please Note:**

- That smokers are required to refrain from smoking in the vicinity of students at all times.
- It is a DET (Department of Education and Training) regulation that parents who attend school excursions are required to have a Working with Children Check.
- All DET employees are required to follow a **Code of Conduct when using social media** in an educational setting. **This also includes all** contractors and parent volunteers engaged by the Department, school councils, schools, regional offices or district offices.