



Camps and Excursions Policy

RATIONALE

Camps and excursions are seen as an integral part of the Toorak Primary School (TPS) curriculum as they enable students to explore, extend and enrich their learning and their social skills development, in a non-school setting. All staff and volunteers consider the safety of all children, including the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children with disabilities and vulnerable children. Camps may have a cultural, environmental or outdoor emphasis and are an important aspect of the educational programs offered at our school.

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 leadership, cooperation, tolerance, communication, individual and group interaction.
- To extend understanding of their physical and cultural environment.
- To provide shared class and year level experiences, team building and a sense of group cohesiveness.

Purpose

To explain to our school community the processes and procedures Toorak 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 Toorak Primary School. This policy also applies to adventure activities organised by Toorak 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. Toorak 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.

DEFINITION

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>

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

GUIDELINES FOR ACTION

Excursions	Camps
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All excursions must be approved by the Principal or his/her nominee(s) • The Principal or his/her nominee(s) will consider the educational outcome of the excursion as well as the impact on the school for the proposed date. • The Principal and teacher in charge will ensure that all excursions, transport arrangements, emergency procedures and staffing comply with DET guidelines. Refer to: DET Excursion Policy • Once the excursion has been approved all relevant documentation must be completed. The level leader will complete the ‘Notification of School Activity’ at: https://partner.eduweb.vic.gov.au/sites/sal#/ three weeks prior to the excursion departure date. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Council is responsible for the approval of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Overnight excursions - Camps - Domestic and International visits/tours - Adventure activities • The principal or their nominee will ensure that the council is informed about the camp well in advance of the starting date. Ideally all camps should be submitted to Council for in principle approval in the November/December Council meeting in the preceding year. • All camps must be approved prior to running. This decision will be made by the Principal or Assistant Principal. The Principal in consultation with appropriate staff will consider the educational outcomes of the camp as well as the impact on the school program for the proposed dates. • The Principal and Assistant Principal in consultation with organising teachers will ensure that all camps, transport arrangements, emergency procedures and student/staff ratios comply with DET guidelines. The teachers will complete the “Notification of School Activity” online at https://partner.eduweb.vic.gov.au/sites/sal#/ 4 weeks prior to the camp departure date.
<p>Off-site activities: The safety of students and staff is paramount and off-site activities may be cancelled, postponed or relocated if faced with the threat of bushfire or a code red classification. Off-site activities include any activity undertaken by staff and children away from their normal school activity. This could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Camps • Excursions • Sporting activities 	

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. TPSs 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.

TPS 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

TPS 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.), gender balance and the special needs of particular students. All parent, who attend, must sign the Child Safe Standards Code of Conduct agreement.

Volunteer and external provider checks

TPS 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, TPS will provide parents/carers with a specific consent form outlining the details of the proposed activity. TPS uses Compass to inform parents about camps and excursions and to seek their consent and/or informs parents about school camps and excursions by placing a note in student bags and asking parents/carers to return the part of the note that asks for parents/carers signature confirming they consent to their child's participation. 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, TPS 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. TPS will also provide advance notice to parents/carers of an upcoming local excursion through either: email/online parent communication tool, a note home in the student's bag or via a blog post. For local excursions that occur on a recurring basis (for example weekly outings to the local oval for sports lessons), TPS will notify parents once only prior to the commencement of the recurring event.

All parental consent and medical forms must be completed, signed and returned and all money must be paid prior to leaving. Copies of completed permission notes and medical information must be accessible at the camp location by staff at all times.

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 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.

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

TPS 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 Principal, Assistant Principal or Business Manager. The Principal, Assistant Principal or Business Manager 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 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.

Students who exhibit safe and respectful behaviour in line with the TPS Code of Conduct will be permitted to participate in school camps and excursions. 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 Policy, Student Code of Conduct and Bullying and Harassment Policy. 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 Policy*, *Student Code of Conduct* and *Bullying and Harassment 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.

Organisation and Site Safety

Staff members attending camps will have Level 2 First Aid training. Staff members will be designated the responsibility for administering student medication if required (following consultation with parents and/or appropriate medical practitioners).

All safety requirements must be considered and adequately resolved prior to the camp.

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

A designated "Teacher in Charge" will coordinate each camp and excursion. The Teacher in Charge will ensure all students and adults attending the camp or excursion are aware of evacuation and emergency procedures.

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, TPS 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:

- Statement of Values and School Philosophy
- Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy
- Volunteer Policy
- Duty of Care Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy
- Parent Payment Policy
- TPS Child Safe Standards
- Administration of Medication

REVIEW CYCLE

This policy will be reviewed annually or more often if necessary due to changes in regulations or circumstances. This policy was last ratified by School Council in July 2019.