



CAMPS & EXCURSIONS POLICY

Edgars Creek Primary School 5310

PURPOSE

To explain to our school community the processes and procedures Edgars Creek 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 Edgars Creek Primary School regardless of whether or not they take place on or off school grounds, and to any 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. Edgars Creek 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.
- 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 (1 km radius) and do not involve 'Adventure Activities'.

Adventure activities are activities that involve a greater than normal risk. These usually occur as part of a school camp. 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 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. These experiences support students to develop their independence, experience new and sometimes challenging opportunities and to widen their exposure to different environments.

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. Edgars Creek Primary School 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.

Edgars Creek 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.

Supporting Students with Additional Needs

Edgars Creek 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 preparation for excursions and camps students with additional needs will have a student support group meeting to consider the child's needs and develop strategies to manage risk as required.

- In developing risk assessment, consideration will be given to the appropriate supervision needs, staffing levels, and activity for students with additional needs.
- If applicable, parents or carers will be invited to attend the school camp or excursion to support the student.
- Student's individual learning plans and if applicable, student behaviour plans, will be provided to the Teacher in Charge for the duration of the school camp.
- Student's health care plans will be reviewed prior to school camps and excursions.

Supervision

Edgars Creek Primary School follows the Department's guidelines in relation to supervision of students during excursions and camps.

All excursion staff 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.

Volunteer and external provider checks

Edgars Creek 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, Edgars Creek Primary School will provide parents/carers with a specific consent form outlining the details of the proposed activity. Edgars Creek Primary School uses Compass to inform parents about camps and excursions and to seek their consent. Parents/carers are encouraged to contact their child's teacher or the School Office to discuss any questions or concerns that they or their child may have with a proposed camp or excursion.

For local excursions, Edgars Creek 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. Edgars Creek Primary School will also provide advance notice to parents/carers of an upcoming local excursion through the school newsletter or Compass announcements. For local excursions that occur on a recurring basis (for example weekly outings to the local oval for sports lessons), Edgars Creek Primary School will notify parents once only prior to the commencement of the recurring event.

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.

Edgars Creek Primary School 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 or Principal. The 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 have 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.

During a pandemic, such as the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic, government schools are required to comply with the Department's Operations Guides applicable to that specific pandemic.

The Department updates the Operations Guides as required during a pandemic based on advice from the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). These Operations Guides cover procedures for management of camps and excursions.

The current COVID-19 Operations Guide includes a COVID Safe Plan for Schools that ensures schools remain safe environments. Please contact the principal to view the operations guide.

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 are expected to adhere to the Edgars Creek Primary School values and behaviour expectations in all learning environments including those external to the school premises.

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* or *Bullying Prevention Policy*). The decision to exclude a student will be made by the Principal Class Team, 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 Prevention 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, Edgars Creek 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.

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](#).

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:

- *Edgars Creek Primary School Camps and Excursions Policy.*
- *Edgars Creek Primary School Child Safe Standards*
- *Edgars Creek Primary School Volunteers Policy.*
- *Edgars Creek Primary School Visitors Policy*
- *Edgars Creek Primary School Health Care Needs Policy.*
- *Edgars Creek Primary School First Aid Policy.*
- *Edgars Creek Primary School Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy*
- *Edgars Creek Primary School Administration of Medication Policy*
- *Edgars Creek Primary School Emergency Management Plan*
- *Edgars Creek Primary School Statement of Values and School Philosophy*
- *Edgars Creek Primary School Duty of Care Policy*
- *Edgars Creek Primary School Inclusion and Diversity Policy*
- *Edgars Creek Primary School Parent Payment Policy*

REVIEW CYCLE

This policy will be noted by School Council in February, 2021 and is scheduled for review in October, 2024.