

## CAMPS AND EXCURSIONS

### PURPOSE

To explain to our school community the processes and procedures Berwick Chase 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 Berwick Chase Primary School. This policy also applies to adventure activities organised by Berwick Chase Primary School, regardless of whether or not they take place on or off school grounds, and to school sleepovers.

This policy is intended to complement the Department's policy and guidelines on excursions, camps and adventure activities, which all Victorian government schools must follow. Berwick Chase Primary School will follow both this policy and 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, or 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 sleepovers).

**Local excursions** are excursions to locations within walking distance of the school and do not involve 'Adventure Activities'.

- **Adventure activities** involve a greater than average risk (including less than average contact by a person or by telephone, with medical and other public services available in everyday life). 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>  
Note: workplace learning activities (such as work experience) are not considered school excursions.

### 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; at Berwick Chase Primary School, we aim to provide different themes of the camp from Grade 3 – 6 including a Bush Camp, Urban Camp, Rural Camp and a Beach Camp. This enables students to experience different terrains and experiences on each 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 tours requiring school council approval, our school will also follow the Department's School Policy and Advisory Guide: [Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors](#).

### The 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. Berwick Chase Primary School's risk assessment will include consideration of arrangements for the supervision of students and the risk of bushfire activity in the excursion location. If a Code Red Day is announced, excursions or camp activities in affected areas will be cancelled or rescheduled. Planning will also cover arrangements for cancelling, recalling or altering the camp or tour for other reasons.

Berwick Chase Primary School is committed to ensuring students with additional needs are provided with an inclusive camps and excursions program. As needed, they will work with families during the planning stage 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 an alternative educational program is available and appropriate supervision for those students not attending the camp or excursion.

All staff participating in and organising camps or excursions must register the centre or water-based activity with the department. Staff supervising or managing a camp or water-based tour or activity must visit <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/excursions/policy> and complete the registration and relevant e-modules.

### Supervision

Berwick Chase Primary School follows the Department's guidelines about supervising 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.

**Before the camp, the Organising Teacher will meet with all camp staff (including parent helpers) to discuss expectations on camp and specific student medical and dietary concerns. If any team cannot attend the meeting, this information must be shared before leaving camp.**

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 tours, and parent/carer volunteers are expected to follow teachers' instructions. When deciding which parents/carers will attend, the Organising Teacher will consider any valuable skills the parents/carers have to offer (e.g. bus licence, first aid etc.) and the unique needs of particular students.

## Volunteer and external provider checks

Berwick Chase 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. This accreditation must be presented to the Berwick Chase Primary School front office before the camp or registered as having a current Working with Children Check.

## Parent/carer consent

For all camps and excursions, other than local excursions, Berwick Chase Primary School will provide parents/carers with a specific consent form outlining the details of the proposed activity. Berwick Chase Primary School 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 requests 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 they or their child may have with a proposed camp or excursion.

For local excursions, Berwick Chase 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. Berwick Chase Primary School will also provide advance notice to parents/carers of an upcoming local excursion through a note home in the student's bag and reminders through the online system Sentral. For local tours that occur regularly (for example, weekly outings to the local oval for sports lessons), Berwick Chase Primary School will notify parents once only before the commencement of the recurring event.

## Parent Payments for camps and excursions

Most camps and excursions provided by Berwick Chase Primary School enhance and broaden the schooling experience of our students but are not a mandatory component of our curriculum. The Department's Parent Payments Policy provides these activities on a user-pays basis.

Consent forms will clearly state payment amounts and finalisation dates, and families will be given sufficient time to make payments.



Students who have yet to finalise payment by the required date for camps and excursions provided on a user pays basis will only be able to attend if the Principal determines exceptional circumstances apply.

Parents may be invited to contribute voluntarily when a camp or excursion is provided as part of the standard curriculum requirements. Still, all students can attend regardless of whether their parents contribute.

### Financial Help for Families

Berwick Chase 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/Principal. 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 with valid means-tested concession cards 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

Suppose a camp or excursion is cancelled or altered by the school, or a student can no longer attend part or all of the camp or excursion. In that case, our school will consider requests for partial or full refunds of payments made by parents/carers on a case-by-case basis, considering the individual circumstances. Generally, we will not be able to refund charges 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. We will provide information about refunds to parents/carers at the time of payment.

### Student health

Parents and carers must ensure the school has up-to-date student health information before camps and excursions. A staff member 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 phones will be taken by teachers on all camps and excursions. For camps other than the city camp, a car must be taken by at least one teacher in case of emergencies.

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 cannot 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, the parent/carer's responsibility is to transport them to the camp.



## 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 conduct set out in the school's *Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy*.

The decision to exclude a student will be made by the Principal or Assistant Principal in consultation with the Organising Teacher. The parent/carer and the student will be informed of this decision before the camp or excursion.

This will occur by; students and parents signing a Student Behaviour Form to ensure they know that if they lose the privilege of being on camp due to unsafe behaviour, they can be asked to be taken home. This is the parent's responsibility and at their expense.

Suppose the Teacher in Charge considers an individual student's behaviour does not meet the required standards on a camp or excursion. In that case, 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 collecting the student and any associated costs.

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 student's best interests and may place conditions on its location and use during the camp or excursion.

## Food

Students are only permitted to bring their supply of food items to camps and excursions if 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 for negligence (liability is not automatic).

Unless otherwise indicated, Berwick Chase Primary School and the Department do not provide student accident or ambulance cover. Parents/carers may want student accident insurance and ambulance coverage, depending on their health insurance arrangements and 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](#)
- [Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund](#).
- <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/excursions/policy>

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

## POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	Jan 2023
Consultation	Business Manager Principal
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	June 2026