

Camp Policy

Policy Statement

It is an expectation that all children attend school camps. Camps assist with the development of resilience, co-operative skills and self-esteem.

Rationale

Camps provide students with the opportunity of experiencing a sense of achievement through participating in a variety of challenging situations. The program is structured to support the development of social skills, leadership, resourcefulness and independence. The program also aims to provide shared experiences and opportunities for classes to develop a sense of group cohesiveness, co-operation and tolerance. The school's camping program enables students to further their learning and social skills development in a non-school setting.

Implementation

To prepare students for the camp programs offered in Years 3 - 6 we have some cohort based activities. Prep students are engaged with a range of camp activities during a school day. Year 1 students are involved in a special games afternoon after school hours

Year 2 Sleepover is an overnight experience at school in a familiar environment, which gives the children some independence and develops resilience skills when they are away from home. Years 3 – 5 camp promotes an appreciation of the natural environment. The Year 6 tour is to Canberra. This gives students the skills and opportunities to understand and practise what it means to be a citizen in a democracy. Students experience political and legal systems and processes and the history that underpins them in order to achieve civic understanding.

The Principal is consulted regarding the procedures outlined in the School Policy Advisory Guide (Dec 2015). Camps must be accredited by the Camping Association of Victoria in conjunction with DET under their Australian Campsite Accreditation Program and meeting requirements on the School Compliance Checklist.

It is essential the leader of the Camp consults Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors (Feb, 2014) regarding ratios, staff qualifications, first aid procedures, weather conditions and voluntary workers. The school's Sunsmart policy will be adhered to.

The staff at camp are required to complete an evaluation form following the camp. Students will also have the opportunity to complete an evaluation form relevant to the camp.

Comprehensive FIRST AID KITS together with a MOBILE PHONE must be taken on the camp. The camp coordinator will liaise with campsite personnel to ensure adequate precautions and safety measures will be implemented. All attending adults will be informed of students with health issues and understand treatments if necessary.

Staffing will include at least one staff member with current Level 2 First Aid qualifications. An Asthma Action Plan and Anaphylaxis Plan are to be filled out by parents prior to the camp. This may involve:

- The parent or trusted adult may be asked to attend the camp with the student if the condition is life threatening
- Prior to the camp, the camp coordinator will liaise with campsite personnel to ensure adequate precautions and safety measures will be implemented
- All attending adults will have knowledge of students with health issues and understand treatments if necessary
- Specific food requirements may need to be supplied by parents.

Two appointed staff members are responsible for First Aid and for managing individual children's medical requirements. When administering medication two staff members will check that required dosages are correct.

Where feasible a private vehicle is to accompany the camp. Parents must provide medical forms and written consent for their child to participate in the school camp and to travel in a private vehicle in the case of emergency situations.

The Croydon Hills Primary School Activities Approval Form, through Compass and Notification of School Activity Form (sent to the Emergency and Security Management Branch), MUST be completed online for approval at least ONE MONTH prior to the camp, having been presented firstly to the Principal and then to the School Council including a list of suitable Parent Helpers where needed. Parents will be notified once approved by the School Council.

All documentation including communications proformas should be submitted to the whole school camp coordinator and to be filed electronically on the admin school server.

The camp budget must be drafted and approved by the Camp Coordinator in conjunction with the Principal/Assistant Principal prior to any notices going home to parents. The camp budget must adequately cover all expenses.

Camp Payments may be paid in instalments. The school will support families with financial difficulties. This is to be discussed with the Principal/Assistant Principal.

All families will be given sufficient time to make payments for individual camps. Students whose parents have not paid deposits by the due date, who do not make full payment by the due date, or who have not made alternative arrangements with the Principal/Assistant Principal, will not be eligible to attend. Any family who has not met the required payments for a previous camp will be unable to participate in the camping program until the outstanding payment is finalised.

Educational Support Staff will be used to support special needs students. Their primary responsibility will be for the special needs students only.

Camp volunteers may include parents, student teachers or community members with relevant expertise. All volunteers require a Working with Children Check (WWC). Those wishing to be considered to help on camps will be required to complete the "Selection of Parents to Assist on Camp" form.

Parents may be invited to assist in the supervision of school camps. When deciding which parents will attend, the Teacher in Charge will take into account –

- The special needs of particular students.
- Any valuable skills the parents have to offer. e.g. bus licence, first aid
- The preference to include both male and female helpers.

Information Evenings may be held to outline the proposed camp to the parents.

Correspondence to parents must contain sufficient information about the nature of proposed activities to enable them to make an informed decision before signing the consent form. Parents will be briefed by staff with regards to protocols.

Staff will organise the camp and prepare students for the camp. Students will find out which room they are in when they arrive at camp. If there are issues, the child with the concern may be asked to move to a more appropriate room.

Students and their parents are made aware that acceptable standards of behaviour are expected during camp. Children and parents must sign a Camp Behaviour Agreement Form and meet costs of any damage caused as a result of their child's unacceptable behaviour. Parents must provide written consent for their child to be collected from camp at the parent's expense in the event of serious misbehaviour. At the time of the misbehaviour, the Principal is to be consulted and will make the final decision. The Camp Leader must take into consideration the DET guidelines.

A senior staff member will be in attendance at school whilst the children are returning from camp. The Teacher in Charge will communicate with this person in regards to the anticipated return time.

While school camps are a team activity requiring the cooperation and common-sense of all participants, it is the Teacher in Charge who oversees the operations of the camp, takes charge of events, makes key decisions and accepts ultimate responsibility for the camp.

Correspondence to parents must contain sufficient information about the nature of proposed activities to enable them to make an informed decision before signing the consent form.

Parents must provide medical forms and written consent for their child to participate in the school camp and to travel in a private vehicle in the case of emergency situations.

References

The primary references that must be consulted when considering all camping activities (including adventure activities) is the School Policy Advisory Guide. The link is to the Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors.

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/health/Pages/outdoor.aspx> -

The Policy will be reviewed as part of the School Review cycle.