



Herne Hill Primary School

Policy Title: CAMPS & EXCURSION POLICY

Date Approved:

June 2023

Review Date:

June 2026

Approved by

- School Council
 Principal



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact
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PURPOSE:

To explain to our school community the processes and procedures Herne Hill 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 Herne Hill Primary School. This policy also applies to adventure activities organised by Herne Hill 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. Herne Hill Primary School will follow both this policy, as well as the Department's policy and guidelines when planning for and conducting camps and excursions.

- 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 cooperation, tolerance, communication, individual and group interaction.
- To extend understanding of their physical and cultural environment.

DEFINITION:

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 Policy and Advisory Library, at the following link:

- The camps & excursions program is designed to enhance classroom learning and must have clearly identifiable links to planned learning opportunities.
- All planning and documentation must be approved by the Principal/Assistant Principal.
- Camps & Excursions proposals require completed DET forms: Notification of School Activity, Risk Register, Planning Summary and Emergency Management Plan.
- All safety requirements must be considered and adequately resolved prior to the camp or excursion.
- On days of extreme weather conditions, the Principal/Assistant Principal may need to cancel an excursion at short notice.
- All transport arrangements, emergency procedures and student/staff ratios must comply with DET guidelines.
- Proposals should be submitted in advance. All camps require School Council Approval. This approval is sought at a scheduled meeting at least three weeks prior to departure date.

- Unit leaders will liaise with the Business Manager and Principal/Assistant Principal regarding the planned camp/excursion prior to any bookings being made.
- Once approved, the planned camp or excursion can be booked and organised which will include costings, including GST obligations, activity schedule and purpose, parent notification and permission form.
- All aspects of the camp or excursion will be outlined to the parents/carers in writing including dates, venue, transport arrangements, costs, itinerary, required clothing, contact phone numbers and clearly stated payment finalisation dates.
- All parent/carer consent, and medical forms must be completed, signed and returned prior to the camp/excursion departure, and all monies paid by the due date. Copies of completed permission notes and medical forms must accompany staff on the excursion.
- Parents/carers will be notified if their child is in danger of losing the privilege to participate in a camp or excursion due to poor behaviour at school. The decision to exclude a student will be made by the Principal/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.
- Parents/carers will be requested to collect their child from a camp or excursion if their child exhibits behaviour that is considered unacceptable or a danger to others. The teacher in charge, in consultation with a member of the leadership team will make this decision. Costs incurred will be the responsibility of the parent/carer.
- An alternative education program will be provided for students not attending the camp or excursion.
- All School Staff participating in the excursion are clear about their roles and responsibilities.
- One staff member will be designated to take responsibility for administering student medication if required. (Consultation will be made with parents and/or appropriate medical practitioners).
- All staff attending the excursion must be fully conversant with procedures as outlined in the school's First Aid and Anaphylaxis Management Policies.
- Staff attending the excursion must have access to a mobile phone and first aid kits for emergency situations.
- 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.
- For local excursions, Herne Hill 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. Herne Hill PS will also provide advance notice to parents/carers of an upcoming local excursion through Compass and a note home in the student's bag. For local excursions that occur on a recurring basis eg: weekly outings to the local oval for sports lessons, Herne Hill PS will notify parents once only prior to the commencement of the recurring event.
- 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 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](#)
- **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 Policy and Advisory Library, at the following link:
- <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/excursions/guidance/adventure-activities>

POLICY:

- Camps & Excursions are seen as an integral part of Herne Hill's school curriculum as they enable students to explore, extend and enrich their learning and their social skills development, in a non-school setting. Camps & excursions complement, and are an important aspect of the educational programs offered at the school. (*An excursion is defined as any activity beyond the school grounds.*)
- 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. Herne Hill Primary School will follow both this policy, as well as the Department's policy and guidelines when planning for and conducting camps and 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. Herne Hill Primary School's risk assessment will include consideration of arrangements for supervision of students and consideration of the risk of bushfire or other natural disaster activity in the excursion location. In the event the Bureau of Meteorology forecasts a Catastrophic fire danger rating (FDR) day, excursions or camp activities in affected locations will be cancelled or rescheduled. Planning will also cover arrangements for cancelling, recalling or altering the camp or excursion for any other reason.

Herne Hill 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.

Supervision

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

All excursion staff (including parent volunteers also making sure they have an up to date WWCC) 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/carer consent

For all camps and excursions, other than local excursions, Herne Hill Primary School will provide parents/carers with a specific consent form outlining the details of the proposed activity. Herne Hill Primary School uses Compass to inform parents about camps and excursions and to seek their consent **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, Herne Hill 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. Herne Hill Primary School will also provide advance notice to parents/carers of an upcoming local excursion through Compass and in the school's newsletter. For local excursions that occur on a recurring basis (for example weekly outings to the local oval for sports lessons), Herne Hill Primary School 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 Herne Hill Primary School 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.

Consent forms 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

Herne Hill 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 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 Policy* [INSERT other policies relevant to behaviour such as the *Student Code of Conduct* or *Bullying Prevention 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 Prevention Policy*.

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, Herne Hill PS 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

Under the VRQA's Guidelines to the Minimum Standards for School Registration, schools are required to have *evidence* of how they communicate this policy to staff, students, parents, guardians and the school community. One way of producing this evidence is to include this Communication section in the policy. An alternative or additional method is to list all your school's policies in a spreadsheet and outline the communication method your school uses next to each policy. You can adapt our consolidated spreadsheet of all policies for this purpose – refer to [Communicating our Policies](#).

It is important to give careful consideration as to the most effective method of ensuring your school community are aware of and understand the requirements under this policy.]

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
- Included in staff handbook/manual
- 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 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

EVALUATION:

- This policy is required to be reviewed triennially by Principal, or at any time that DET policy changes influence practices in schools.