

1. Rationale:

To explain to our school community the processes and procedures Greenvale Primary School will use when planning and conducting camps, excursions and adventure activities for students.

2. Aims:

The school's camping/excursions program is intended to provide a challenging real-life opportunity for students. Camps/excursions 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.

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. Greenvale Primary School will follow both this policy, as well as the Department's policy and guidelines when planning for and conducting camps and excursions.

3. Implementation:

3.1 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

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>

3.2 Planning process for camps and excursions

Planning will

- comply with DET planning requirements.
- include conducting risk assessments, to ensure that reasonable steps are taken to minimise the risks associated with each proposed camp/excursion.
- 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, camp/excursion activities in effected locations will be cancelled or rescheduled.
- ensure accurate information is available for emergency services, notify DET of any approved school camp/excursion, at least three weeks beforehand using the Student Activity Locator (SAL) .
- cover arrangements for cancelling, recalling or altering the camp/excursion for any other reason.
- be committed to ensuring students with additional needs are provided with an inclusive camps/excursions program and will work with families during the planning stage, as needed, to support all students' attendance and participation in camp activities.
- ensure that there is an alternative educational program available and appropriate supervision for those students not attending the camp/excursion.

3.3 Supervision

- Greenvale Primary School follows the Department's guidelines in relation to supervision of students during excursions and camps.
- To ensure appropriate and effective levels of supervision, the risk assessment will take into account:
 - the experience, qualifications and skills of staff (including volunteers, instructors, etc)
 - the age, maturity, physical characteristics and gender of students
 - the ability and experience of the students
 - the size of the group
 - the nature and location of the excursion
 - the activities to be undertaken
 - known or anticipated weather conditions
 - requirements outlined in the information for specific adventure activities (see Adventure Activity Guidelines section)
 - emergency response planning
 - adequate student and staff medical information
 - any other relevant factors
- Department policy provides minimum requirements for staff-student ratios. Schools may need to enhance these measures with additional staff or volunteers to ensure student and staff safety. Except where otherwise indicated, all excursions and camps must have a minimum of two staff members.
 - **Day excursions**
1 to 20 staff-student ratio with a minimum of 2 staff
 - **Overnight camps**
1 to 10 staff-student ratio with a minimum of 2 staff
 - **Adventure activities**
Specific ratios for each activity as prescribed by DET
- All excursion staff (including parent volunteers) will be familiar with supervision requirements and the specific procedures for dealing with emergencies on each camp/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.

3.4 Volunteer and External Providers

- Greenvale Primary School requires all parent / carer camp or excursion volunteers and all external providers working directly with our students to have a current Working with Children Check.
- Greenvale Primary School requires all parent / carer camp or excursion volunteers to have undertaken the school Parent Helper training delivered by the school.
- School staff are in charge of camps and excursions and parent/carers are expected to follow teachers' instructions.

3.5 A camping program will be provided at Greenvale Primary School with a specific focus and location for each year level as follows:

Camps organised by the school:-

- **Year 4** Two nights and three day camp
Focus: *Outdoor Adventure, Social Challenge and Independent Living Skills*
- **Year 5** Two nights and three day camp
Focus: *Bush Education, Team Building and Environmental Studies*
- **Year 6** Two nights and three day camp
Focus: *Ocean Based Adventure, Beach Safety and Environmental Studies*

Department of Education and Training (DET) Camps: Somers / Woorabinda

- Where possible, selected students will be encouraged to attend the Somers and / or Woorabinda camps
- Greenvale PS camps take priority over DET camps, therefore if these camps occur at the same time, students will not attend DET Camps. This will maximise student numbers at Greenvale PS Camps.
- Student selection for the DET Camps is based on individual student needs including social support and development of leadership skills. Student's academic performance should also be considered as well as the families' financial circumstances.

3.4 Parent/carer consent

- The school will communicate camp/excursions details with parent/carers either through Compass or by notes given to students to take home.
- For all camps/excursions, the school will provide parents/carers with a specific consent form outlining the details of the proposed activity and request parent's/carer's 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, the school will
 - provide parents and carers with an annual Local Excursions consent form upon enrolment.
 - provide advance notice to parents/carers of an upcoming local excursion through Compass

3.5 Cost of camps and excursions, refunds and support

- The cost of all camps/excursions are to be paid by parents/carers unless alternative arrangements have been agreed to by the Principal prior.
- 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.
- The 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.
- If a family is eligible for the DET's Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund (CSEF), they may use this funding to make payment for the camp /excursion. 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.
- 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. Initial deposits for all camps are non-refundable. Where possible, we will provide information about refunds to parents/carers at the time of payment.

3.6 Student health

- Parents/carers need to ensure the school has up-to-date student health information prior to camps/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 /excursion and is not able to continue 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.

3.7 Behaviour expectations

- Students participating in camps/excursions are required to cooperate and demonstrate our school values, displaying appropriate behaviour to ensure the camp/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 a camp/excursion due to behaviour that does not meet the standards of behaviour set out in the school's policies.
- 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/excursion.
- If on a camp/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/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/excursions consistent with our school's *Student Inclusion and Engagement Policy* and *Bullying Prevention Policy*.

3.8 Electronic Devices

- Electronic devices will not be taken to excursions by students
- For each camp, students and parents/carers will be informed as to whether electronic devices will be permitted to be brought to camp.

3.9 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.

3.10 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, the school and the DET 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.

4. Evaluation:

- At the conclusion of each camping experience, feedback will be sought if considered necessary.

References and Related Documents:

- DET School Policy Template Portal
- <https://edugate.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edrms/keyprocess/cp/SitePages/SchoolPoliciesDetail.aspx?CId=65>
- DET School Policy Advisory Library
- <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/excursions/policy>
- [Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund](#).
- Greenvale Primary School policies
 - Student Inclusion and Engagement
 - Bullying Prevention
 - Values and School Philosophy
 - Duty of care
 - Greenvale Primary School's '*Organisation of Camp*' processes

Policy Review and Approval:

Policy last reviewed	October 2024
Approved by	Principal / School Council
Next scheduled review date	October 2027 (every 3/4 years)