

CAMPS AND EXCURSIONS POLICY



PURPOSE

To explain to our school community the processes and procedures Frankston Heights 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 Frankston Heights Primary School. It also applies to adventure activities organised by Frankston Heights Primary School, regardless of whether or not they take place on or off 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. Frankston Heights 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.

Camps are excursions involving at least one night's accommodation.

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 (including student/teacher ratio, equipment, qualification and supervision requirements) 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 and excursions provide valuable educational experiences for our students that complement their learning, through access to resources, environments and expertise that may not be available in the classroom. Camps and excursions are an integral part of the school curriculum. They provide students with opportunities to explore, extend and enrich their learning and their social skills development, beyond the classroom.

For all camps and excursions, including adventure activities, our school will follow the Department's Policy and Advisory Library: [Excursions](#).

Planning process for camps and excursions

All camps and excursions must be approved by the Principal.

The Organising Teacher of a planned activity must complete a camp/excursion proposal form and lodge this with the Assistant Principal for reference to the Principal for approval. The Principal in consultation with appropriate staff will consider the educational outcomes of the planned activity as well as the impact on the school program for the proposed dates. All camps and excursions must be approved prior to running. This decision will be made by the Principal or Assistant Principal.

Upon approval all relevant documentation must be completed. The Principal and Assistant Principal in consultation with the Organising Teacher will ensure that all camps and excursions comply with Department planning requirements as listed in the Excursion Guidelines, on the [Guidance tab](#). Refer to Appendices 1 and 2 for Camps and Excursions Planning Checklist.

Part of the planning process includes conducting risk assessments, to ensure that reasonable steps are taken to minimise the risks associated with each proposed camp or excursion. Frankston Heights Primary School's risk assessment will include consideration of arrangements for supervision of students and consideration of risks associated with the planned activity. 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.

Camp and excursion details are to be entered into the [Student Activity Locator](#) by the Organising Teacher at least 3 weeks prior to the event date.

Students with additional needs will be provided with an inclusive camps and excursions program. Frankston Heights Primary School will work with families to develop a plan to support 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

Frankston Heights Primary School follows the Department's guidelines in relation to supervision of 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.

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 are in charge of camps and excursions and parent/carer volunteers are expected to follow teachers' instructions. When deciding which parents will attend, the school will take into account any valuable skills offered (e.g., bus licence, first aid, etc.), gender balance and the special needs of particular students.

Volunteer and external provider checks

Frankston Heights 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 clearance and uphold the Child Safety Code of Conduct. Please refer to the school's Child Safety Policy and Volunteers Policy for information on Working with Children Check Clearance and Child Safety.

Parent/carers consent

For all camps and excursions, other than local excursions, Frankston Heights Primary School will provide parents/carers with a specific consent form outlining the details of the proposed activity. Frankston Heights Primary School will inform parents about school camps and excursions via the school's communication platform – Sentral, and by distributing a hard or digital copy permission form requesting parents/carers signature to confirm 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, Frankston Heights Primary School will provide parents and carers with a Local Excursions consent form upon enrolment. Frankston Heights Primary School will also provide advance notice to parents/carers of an upcoming local excursion on Sentral. For local excursions that occur on a recurring basis (for example weekly outings to the local oval for sports lessons), the school will notify parents once only prior to the commencement of the recurring event.

Parent Payments for camps and excursions

Camps and excursions provided by Frankston Heights Primary School enhance and broaden the schooling experience of our students. These activities are provided on a user-pays basis in accordance with the Department's Parent Payments Policy.

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

Office staff will be responsible for managing and monitoring parent payments and will provide organising teachers with detailed records on a regular basis.

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.

Financial Help for Families

Frankston Heights 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 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.

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 responsible 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*, *Behaviour Management Policy and Procedures*, *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. All students participating in a school camp will be asked to sign a contract agreeing to abide by the camp rules.

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 the 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 associated costs.

Disciplinary measures apply to students on camps and excursions consistent with our school's *Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy*, *Behaviour Management Policy and Procedures*, 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).

Frankston Heights 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.

COMMUNICATION

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
- Discussed at staff briefings/meetings as required
- Discussed at parent information nights/sessions
- Reminders in our school newsletter.

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
- Behaviour Management Policy and Procedures
- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Volunteers Policy
- Duty of Care Policy
- Parent Payments Policy.

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	September 2023
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	September 2024

APPENDIX 1

Summary of documentation requirements for all excursions

	Local Excursion	Day Excursion	Overnight Excursion	Interstate	Overseas	Adventure Activities
Local Excursions Annual Consent Form	X					
Notification of Local Excursions	X					
Reminder to update medical information	X	X				
Consent Form		X	X	X	X	X
Medical Information Form - Day Excursions involving Adventure Activities				If a day excursion involving adventure activities		X
Medical Information Form - Camps and Overseas Excursions			X	If a camp/overnight excursion	X	
Evidence of Risk Assessment Template	X					
Risk Register		X	X	X	X	X
Log Excursion on SAL	X	X	X	X	X	X
Staff Travel Application				X	X	
Excursions – Principal Approval Form			X	X	X	X
Emergency Management Plan			X	X	X	X
Pre-Activity Check for Adventure Activities						X
Documentation of participant preparation, prerequisite skills/ knowledge						X
Documentation of staff qualifications and experience						X
Communications Plan			Depending on location	Depending on location	X	Depending on location

APPENDIX 2

CAMPS AND EXCURSIONS CHECKLIST

This checklist addresses the Department's requirements for conducting day and overnight excursions. This is not a comprehensive list as each excursion is unique; rather this document is intended to assist schools in meeting the key requirements for conducting an excursion. This checklist does not cover the additional requirements for Overseas Excursions (please see the [Excursions Guidance: Overseas Travel](#) for additional requirements).

This does not replace the [Excursions Policy](#) and [Guidelines](#) on the Policy and Advisory Library or risk management processes. It is the principal's responsibility to ensure that all relevant policy and guideline requirements are met.

Teacher in charge – (TIC)

Principal – (P)

Requirement	Person(s) Responsible	Completed ✓	
PLANNING			
1.	Establish the educational purpose of the program and relevance to the school's curriculum. Also take into consideration the location and environment, activities, people and equipment needed.	TIC	
2.	Read the Excursions Policy and Guidelines on the Policy and Advisory Library.	P	
APPROVAL			
3.	<p><u>For local and day excursions (not involving adventure activities):</u> Principal approval must be sought via the process determined by the school.</p> <p><u>For excursions with an overnight component or involving adventure activities:</u> Complete the Principal Approval form and any attachments (including risk register and, if required, emergency management plan, communication plan etc.). Provide this to the principal with sufficient time to allow the principal to review the documentation. See: Excursions Guidelines – Approvals.</p>	TIC/P	
4.	Activities conducted on public lands, such as State Forest or National Parks, comply with current permit and access requirements. If planning an activity on Parks Victoria Land, schools must register their excursion with ParkConnect . See: Excursions Guidelines – Venue Selection .	TIC	
5.	<p><u>For interstate excursions:</u> Confirm teachers or principals attending the excursion have received appropriate approval. See: Excursions Guidelines – Approvals and Travel for School Staff.</p>	TIC/P	
STAFFING			
6.	<p>Determine the number of excursion staff required (and how many must be registered teachers).</p> <p>Staff must ensure that supervision ratios are correct for ALL aspects of excursion. If the excursion includes adventure activities, activity specific ratios apply. See: Excursion Guidelines – Supervision.</p>	TIC/P	

Requirement	Person(s) Responsible	Completed ✓
7. Excursion staff comply with Department or the school's own policy in relation to the Child Safe Standards and having a Working with Children Check .	TIC	
8. Record the names of volunteer workers for the purposes of volunteer workers insurance.	TIC	
9. Designate a member of staff as being responsible for first aid, ensuring they have appropriate qualifications, and source relevant first aid kit. See: Excursions Guidelines – First Aid .	TIC	
10. Clarify the specific roles and responsibilities of each staff member (teachers, instructors, campsite staff, volunteers, etc) so they are understood by all staff and (where appropriate) students prior to the commencement of the excursion.	TIC	
11. <u>For excursions with an overnight component:</u> Ensure there is a dedicated school contact person in the event of an emergency, both during and outside of school hours.	P	
12. <u>For excursions with an overnight component:</u> If the overnight stay involves mixed gender groups, ensure there are excursions staff of each sex.	TIC	
TRANSPORTATION		
13. An appropriate mode of transport is selected and the use of private vehicles should be avoided unless necessary.	TIC	
14. Confirm that any bus or private vehicle has appropriate registration and the driver has an appropriate license and comprehensive insurance for the vehicle. See: Excursions Guidelines – Transport .	P	
EMERGENCY AND RISK MANAGEMENT		
15. <u>For local and day excursions (not involving adventure activities):</u> Complete the Risk assessment for Local and Day Excursions as evidence of consideration of the risks that may be encountered while on the excursion. See: Excursions Guidelines – Risk Management Planning . <u>For excursions with an overnight component or involving adventure activities:</u> Complete a Risk Register to identify, analyse, evaluate and address all student and staff health and safety risks during an excursion (including transportation, activities undertaken, excursion venues and staff or student illness) and any significant financial risks to the school and/or parents/carers (for example if an excursion needs to be cancelled). See: Excursions Guidelines – Risk Management Planning .	TIC	
16. <u>For excursions with an overnight component or involving adventure activities:</u> Develop an emergency management plan that covers responses to likely emergency situations (identified in the risk register) and arrangements if the excursion needs to be cancelled, recalled or altered. See: Excursions Guidelines – Emergency or Critical Incident Management .	TIC	

Requirement	Person(s) Responsible	Completed ✓
17. Emergency management procedures must include the effects of an emergency on student supervision in the event of excursion staff being required to assist injured students or to go for help.	TIC	
18. <u>For excursions involving adventure activities:</u> Ensure any requirements listed under the Adventure Activities Guidelines have been met. See Excursions Guidelines – Adventure Activities .	TIC/P	
19. <u>For excursions with an overnight component or involving adventure activities:</u> If conducting an activity in a remote location with limited access to technology and emergency services, a documented communication plan must be developed prior to the activity. See: Excursions Guidelines – Communication .	TIC	
USE OF EXTERNAL PROVIDERS		
20. Confirm that any residential campsite is accredited by a provider recognised by the Department. See: Excursions Guidelines – Venue Selection .	TIC	
21. Assess the safety and suitability of the venue (including the environment) for the activities proposed. It is recommended that venues are selected based on the recent and first-hand knowledge. See: Excursions Guidelines – Venue Selection and External Providers .	TIC	
22. Seek prior approval from the principal if planning to conduct an inspection either within or outside of normal school hours (if required/appropriate).	TIC/P	
23. Consult venue managers and activity providers about their risk management plans and processes. This can inform the school's own risk management assessment.	TIC	
24. Negotiate terms and conditions with third party providers. This includes refusing to sign any Waivers of liability on behalf of students. Students cannot be asked to sign waivers of liability. See: Insurance for Schools .	P	
25. Confirm that external providers (including specialist instructors) hold appropriate public liability insurance, and have the necessary skills or qualifications for the activity and appropriate experience for the age and skill level of the students. See: Insurance for Schools .	TIC	
COMMUNICATIONS WITH STUDENTS AND PARENTS/CARERS		
26. Obtain written or electronic consent from parents/carers for school excursions (including adventure activities). Parents/carers must be provided with sufficient information about each aspect of the excursion. See: Excursions Guidelines – Consent .	TIC	
27. If relevant, obtain specific authorisation from parents for any financial costs associated with the excursion (see the Parent Payments Policy for more information).	TIC	
28. If relevant, parents/carers receive information about costs stemming from cancellations or alterations, including sending a student home and cancellation fees imposed by third parties	TIC	

Requirement	Person(s) Responsible	Completed ✓
where applicable (see the Parent Payments Policy for more information).		
29. Inform staff and students about appropriate clothing and personal equipment.	TIC	
<p>30. <u>For local and day excursions (not involving adventure activities):</u> Seek updated medical information. This can be a reminder to parents/carers to update the school with any new/relevant medical information. See: Excursions Guidelines – Student Medical Information.</p> <p><u>For excursions with an overnight component or involving adventure activities:</u> Provide Medical Information forms to parents/carers for completion. These forms must be accessible during the activity, whilst copies of the forms must be kept at the school. See: Excursions Guidelines – Student Medical Information.</p>	TIC	
32. Give students clear information about organisational and relevant safety arrangements, supervision roles, emergency procedures and expected standards of behaviour.	TIC	
33. For overnight excursions, provide parents/carers the telephone numbers for the designated school contact person in the event of an emergency.	TIC	
FINAL PREPARATIONS		
34. Complete the Student Activity Locator (SAL) online form at least three weeks prior to the excursion.	TIC	
35. Inform the regional director if an excursion leaves the school unoccupied.	P	
<p>36. <u>For excursions with an overnight component:</u> Ensure that both the teacher-in-charge, principal and 24-hour contact person each have a copy of all the approval documentation. This includes detailed information that may be needed in an emergency such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the itinerary and supervision strategy, including the exact location of the excursion participants at all times, including during travel • the relevant telephone number/s through which excursion staff may be contacted in an emergency (for principals), or the school contact person (for the teacher-in-charge) • the names and family contacts for all students and staff • copies of the consent and medical advice forms of students • a copy of the program's emergency response plan (including contacts for police, ambulance, doctor, hospital, fire brigade, 24 hour school contact number to be held by staff on the excursion and by the nominated school contact person) • a copy of the completed approval proforma (including all attachments) submitted to the principal. 	TIC/P	
37. Review weather conditions ahead of planned excursions. This includes extreme weather (smoke, lightning, rain, wind, etc.) and significant fire risk or total fire ban days. Liaise with the region	TIC	

Requirement	Person(s) Responsible	Completed ✓
38.	TIC	
39.	TIC	
40.	TIC	
41.	TIC/P	
DURING ACTIVITY		
42.	TIC	
43.	TIC	
44.	TIC	
45.	TIC	
46.	TIC	
47.	TIC/P	
48.	TIC	
AFTER THE EXCURSION		
49.	TIC	
50.	TIC	
51.	TIC	

