



## LAKES ENTRANCE PRIMARY SCHOOL

### Camping, Excursion and Activity Policy

#### **PURPOSE:**

Camping, Excursions and Outdoor Activity is considered to be an integral component of the Lakes Entrance Primary School education program. Students need to be taken outside the immediate school environment so that they may experience, develop and expand skills in a wide range of outdoor activities. The activities will be mentally and physically stimulating and challenging. The camping program will focus on the basics of enhancing human relationships by promoting co-operation, consideration, understanding, respect and tolerance of others. In addition, the program will strongly foster the development of the whole child and growth of the individual: physically, mentally, socially and emotionally.

The Lakes Entrance Primary School camping program has the following aims:

#### **Development of positive teacher / student relationship:**

- To establish bonding between students and between teachers and students
- To establish rapport and trust with one another

#### **Facilitation of social interaction:**

- To enhance feeling of belonging
- To promote acceptance of all members of a group – develop greater level of understanding
- To encourage students to mix with other students outside their normal peer group

#### **Development of Social skills:**

- To promote independence
- To develop decision making skills
- To foster team building
- To help students to learn to co-operate and work together
- To promote tolerance of others

#### **Acquisition of new skills:**

- To develop skills in outdoor education – canoeing, sailing, sporting activities etc.
- To try new and challenging activities
- To encourage risk taking in a supportive environment
- To provide a variety of activities that cannot be catered for in the normal school environment and which may never be experienced otherwise

#### **Provision of opportunities for success:**

- To foster appreciation of non-academic qualities, in themselves and in others

#### **Aims of Sleepover:**

- To introduce students to being away from family/carers overnight and to provide an introduction to Camping program.
- The aims listed above are also relevant.

## BROAD GUIDELINES:

- The LEPS camping program is sequential, moving from an overnight sleepover for grade 2's at LEPS, 2 nights for grade 3 & 4's Adventure camps, 3 nights for grade 5's in Urban setting and 4 nights for grade 6's at Corringale sailing and canoeing

Department of Education requirements and guidelines relating to preparation and safety will be followed at all times.

## Overnight Camping

Overnight camping refers to the outdoor adventure activity of camping in a temporary or residential campsite, usually in a bush or remote setting. A range of other outdoor adventure activities are usually included in the excursion. Water environments are subject to a wide range of environmental conditions. Sailing activities may be affected by conditions such as size and turbidity of the body of water, the strength of tides and currents, the presence and power of waves, and the temperature of the water.

- When the school organises an excursion involving overnight camping as an outdoor adventure activity, organising staff **must** refer to these guidelines. These guidelines must be followed when planning and conducting those adventure activities.
- Due to the unique nature of each location, the teacher responsible for the activity should specifically assess the suitability of the location before the occasion. The choice of location should be based on the recent and first-hand knowledge of at least one member of the planning and supervising staff and should have consulted with people who can supply recent and first-hand knowledge of the locations being considered e.g Parks Victoria, CFA, Local Police.
- Canoeing, Kayaking and Sailing: the level of access to communications and external assistance in the event of an emergency or extreme weather conditions – the more remote the more self-contained and self-reliant the group must be and this must be taken into account in the planning of the activity. A suitable launching and recovery point should be identified along with other potential recovery sites.
- Weather: Check weather forecasts for the location in the days leading up to the activity and on the day of the activity commences accessing warnings and forecasts daily and assessing conditions on a daily basis. Weather forecasts should be obtained from the Bureau of Meteorology. Weather conditions can change throughout the activity, monitor and assess the weather throughout the activity and be prepared to cancel, modify or relocate at any time.
- Transportation: The transportation of groups to and from activity locations must be carefully considered and planned. Vehicles used to transport students must comply with VicRoads registration requirements. Drivers must comply with all licensing requirements. Equipment carried must be securely stowed. Students must be supervised by a minimum of one adult, in addition to the bus driver, during travel.
- Communication: The communication strategy should enable staff to receive weather forecasts and warnings, communicate with the school, and engage support in the case of an incident or emergency. Choose communication equipment based on current communication technology and the location of the activity. Develop a communication strategy for the group during the activity which enables communication with outside parties, including school and emergency services. Be aware of the communications strategy limitations.

## Staff and Staff skills

Staff members are those adults who provide the supervisory, instructional and educational elements of the activity. All staff members must be approved by school council.

- All staff members must comply with current Departmental police checks requirements or the Working with Children Check. The Child Safety Standards policy and guidelines must be followed.
- A teacher with the Victorian Institute of Teaching and either employed by the Department or the school council, must be present and have overall responsibility for the activity.
- Where not directly responsible for the instruction of the activity or assisting the instructor, the teacher responsible for the activity must understand the activity and the environment in which it will be conducted. This teacher must confer with the designated instructor about the supervisory role and establish areas of responsibility. If this teacher is not the designated instructor, then he or she is to act on the advice of the instructor on technical safety issues.
- Any staff member with a known medical condition that might compromise the group's risk management plan should make accompanying staff aware of this condition. Issues of confidentiality and privacy will arise in any such disclosure.
- Staff involved in the planning and conduct of the activity should have sufficient knowledge and experience of the activity and its environment to operate of foreseeable conditions.
- Documentation of staff qualifications and experience must be used by the designated instructor to document staff qualifications/experience in lieu of qualifications.
- The designated instructor should have the following skills and experience:
  - Regular and recent experience in managing students in a comparable camping environment
  - Experience in planning a camp that is appropriate for student groups
  - Experience in selection of camp sites
  - Skills in interpreting and responding to weather conditions.
  - Where outdoor adventure activities e.g. sailing, canoeing, are to be combined with an overnight camp, staff must also refer to the relevant activity safety guidelines.
- At least one other accompanying staff member should have sufficient camping experience. That person must be able to assume a supervisory role during that activity, be competent in emergency response procedures, and have conferred with the instructor to establish the emergency response and supervision responsibilities.
- Where an external contractor is chosen to run all or part of this activity, the guidelines for the use of "External Providers" should be followed.
- At least one member of staff responsible for each group of students must hold, as a minimum, a current (within 3 years) level two first aid qualification, a current (within 12 months) Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) qualification and have a first aid kit applicable to the level of training.
- Staff should carefully consider the nature and location of the excursion, as well as the medical history of the students, to determine the level of first aid training required by staff, e.g if there is a student with a history of anaphylaxis and may require an epi-pen appropriately trained staff must be present.

### Students Skills

Core skills and knowledge for overnight camping include the following:

- group hygiene – water collection, safe food preparation, dining and cleaning
- personal hygiene
- cooperation and teamwork during camp activities
- individual responsibility for personal and group safety
- technical camping skills, including cooking and safe shelter construction
- awareness of wild life and potential for bites and stings
- ability to react immediately and responsibly to emergencies.

Sailing should begin with an assessment of students' current knowledge, skills and experience and an activity briefing given by the instructional staff.

Beginner groups in sailing should be introduced to sailing in sheltered waters with clearly defined boundaries and in weather conditions appropriate to their levels of sailing skills.

### Equipment and clothing

- Equipment whether hired, borrowed or owned by the school or students, must be in a safe condition and suitable for the activity. Students must have equipment that is in good repair and matches the level of experience, remoteness, altitude, local environmental conditions and season and activity.
- First aid kits must be appropriate to the location and level of training must be carried.
- Clothing is the individual's primary protection against severe and variable weather conditions. Clothing lists need to be appropriate for the range of activities in the excursion, the environment and the season. This needs to cater for sudden changes in conditions, appropriate sun protection and personal safety items for the planned activities.
- When planning appropriateness of the clothing materials, principals of layering and a need for wind and waterproof outer layer need to be considered.
- Identification; Staff and students must be easily identified. Staff must determine the most suitable identification system based on an assessment of the environment, students' skills, the type of activities to be undertaken, and the age and number of students.
- Sailing in accordance with Victorian Maritime safety regulations, students and staff must wear, as a minimum, a securely fitted Australian Standard Type 2 personal flotation device if sailing within two nautical miles of the coast, and an Australian Standard Type 1 personal flotation device if sailing more than two nautical miles from the coast.
- Rescue craft appropriate to the location and in good working condition must be readily available during any sailing activity for rescue and towing purposes. Individuals in rescue craft must wear Australia Standard Type 2 personal flotation device as a minimum.

### Supervision

Effective supervision is a critical factor in managing risk in the outdoors. A minimum of two staff members must be present for each activity.

- One staff member is to have responsibility for instruction in the activity and the other is to assist the instructor.
- The following staff to student ratios must be used for overnight camping.
  - Camping 2 staff members required for 1 to 20 students
  - Camping 3 staff members required for 21-30 students
- Each staff member should not be responsible for supervising more than three craft. It may be necessary to increase the staff allocated based on age, maturity, ability and experience of the students, individual needs, group dynamics, experience and qualifications of staff and local conditions. Reasons for increasing staff allocations must be documented.
- The teacher in charge is responsible for the supervision strategy, which must be endorsed by the school council as part of the excursion approval process. Staff members will supervise students according to that strategy.
- Department guidelines must be followed

### Informed Consent and Medical and Emergency details

The school must receive consent from parents or guardians before their child may participate in adventure activities. Informed consent should be based on an understanding of:

- Educational purpose of the activity
- The nature and details of the activity
- The supervision strategy

- Other information deemed relevant by the school, parents or guardians.

Informed consent must be received in writing and signed by the parents or guardian.

When parent / guardians sign the approval for their child to attend the camp, they should also consent to their child being sent home on the event of the child's serious misbehavior. Parents will also be advised that any cost associated with the student's return will be the responsibility of the parents / guardians

### IMPLEMENTATION:

- A risk and safety management plan and an emergency plan will be developed (*see DET Safety guidelines: Camping & Adventure Activities*)
- All camps, overnight excursions, interstate and overseas visits, excursions requiring sea or air travel, excursions involving weekends or vacations, and adventure activities must be approved by School Council. As part of the approval process the School Council should understand the purpose of the program and its connection to student learning and ensure staff members attending have the competence to provide the necessary supervision of students throughout the program. The appropriate paperwork e.g. Risk management, finance approval, School Council approval form must be presented to school council at least one term prior to the camp.
- Once approved by School Council, camp details must be entered on the online Student activity identifier least three weeks prior to the camp
- Copies of all paperwork must be given to the school office.
- The camp coordinator is responsible for booking the venue for specific camps at least a year in advance
- Camp details must be documented and must be held by a designated school contact person
- Parents / guardians should be advised of the telephone numbers (both during and outside school hours) of the designated school contact person
- Consent forms must be held by the teacher in charge of the camp and a copy must be left at the school, with the designated school contact person
- Risk and safety management processes will be conveyed to students and staff prior to the camp  
This must be understood by all camp staff and students.

### **Web links, Telephone services**

#### **Weather: Bureau Meteorology BOM**

**Coastal, Land Weather Warning and Floods 1300 659 217**

**Victorian Bushfire Info line 1800 240 667**

**Victorian Emergency and Incident App.**

### EVALUATION:

Evaluation of this policy will be carried out by the School Council as part of the three yearly cyclic review process, or beforehand, if a significant issue arises.

Ratified by School Council	Date: 2017	Signed:
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**Success**

**Belonging**

**Mutual Respect**

**Persistence**

**All Children Can and Will Achieve**