

# Tyers Primary School – Camps & Excursions Policy (including local excursions)

## Purpose of this policy

Excursions and camps are seen as an integral part of the curriculum as they enable students to explore, extend and enrich their learning and their social skills development, in a non-school setting. Excursions and camps complement, and are an important aspect of the educational programs offered at the school.

This policy applies to all camps and excursions organised by Tyers Primary School. This policy also applies to adventure activities organised by Tyers 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. Tyers Primary School will follow both this policy, as well as the Department's policy and guidelines when planning for and conducting camps and excursions.

This policy does not apply to student workplace learning or intercampus travel.

## 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;
- 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 website under Adventure Activities, at the following link: <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/pages/adventure.aspx>

## Planning process for camps & excursions

The principal is responsible for the conduct of all excursions and must comply with the Department of Education and Training (DET) policy on the Schools Policy Advisory Guide (<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/pages/excursions.aspx>)

including ensuring that :

- an online [Notification of School Activity](#) form is completed prior to the activity – (link requires log in) 6 weeks prior to the activity date, and ensure details are entered on daily planner,
- a planning and approvals process is undertaken.

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. Tyers Primary School's risk assessment will 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, 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.

Tyers 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.

## Duty of Care & Supervision

Tyers Primary School follows the Department of Education & Training'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.

All school staff attending the camp or excursion owe a duty of care to the students. This means that they must ensure that reasonable steps are taken to prevent any reasonably foreseeable harm to students. This duty is non-delegable, which means that it cannot be delegated to external camp or education providers, parents or volunteers. The designated teacher in charge has ultimate responsibility for all students in their care.

The principal must ensure that students participating in excursions and camps are appropriately supervised.

Supervision can be provided by teachers, education support officers, trainee teachers, volunteer parents and carers, campsite staff and specialist instructors.

The [Schools Policy and Advisory Guide](#) provide minimum requirements for staff-student ratios. However, Principals should determine the appropriate and effective level of supervision for each individual excursion or camp, taking into account the following:

- the experience, qualifications and skills of staff,
- the age, maturity, physical characteristics and gender of the students,
- the size of the group,
- the nature and location of the excursion/camp,
- the activities to be undertaken.

Most excursions and camps must:

- be under the direct control of a teacher with at least one other excursion staff member present,
- have enough teachers to maintain appropriate control of the excursion and each activity,
- have teachers comprising at least half of the excursion staff.

Prior to the commencement of the excursion or camp, the Principal must ensure that the specific roles and responsibilities of each supervisor are clarified and understood by all supervisors and students.

The supervision of students on a camp or excursion will include the following:

- Retaining copies of all confidential medical forms and permissions slips for each student who is participating in the excursion or camp.
- Regularly marking off the attendance of students – this may include at the beginning of the excursion, on the transport, and at each location and activity.
- Ensuring that the venue, transport and activities conducted adhere to DET guidelines.
- Monitoring student behaviour, enforcing behaviour standards, and implementing logical consequences for a failure to comply with the behaviour and safety standards.
- Ensure that students who require first aid assistance receive it as soon as practicable.
- Ensure that risk management plans and emergency management plans are implemented as necessary.

Prior to the camp or excursion parent/carers should be made aware that DET does not provide student accident cover and that they need to make their own arrangements for cover.

## Parent volunteers

Parents may be invited to assist with camps and excursions. School staff will notify parents/carers of any costs associated with attending. School staff are in charge of camps and excursions and parent/carer volunteers are expected to follow teachers' instructions. When deciding which parents/carers will attend, the Organising Teacher will take into account: any valuable skills the parents/carers have to offer (e.g. bus licence, first aid etc.) and the special needs of particular students.

## Volunteer and external provider checks

Tyers 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 card.

## Parent/carer consent

For all camps and excursions, other than local excursions, Tyers Primary School will provide parents/carers with a specific consent form outlining the details of the proposed activity. Tyers Primary School uEducateUs Student Management System to inform parents about camps and excursions and to seek their consent and informs parents about school camps 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, Tyers 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. Tyers Primary School will also provide advance notice to parents/carers of an upcoming local excursion through School uEducateUs Student Management System. For local excursions that occur on a recurring basis (for example weekly outings to the local oval for sports lessons), Tyers Primary School will notify parents once only prior to the commencement of the recurring event.

## Cost of camps and excursions, refunds and support

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.

Students who have not finalised payment by the required date will not be allowed to attend unless the Principal determines exceptional circumstances apply.

Tyers 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.

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 and Bullying Prevention Policy. The decision to exclude a student will be made by the 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 and Bullying Prevention Policy.

## Electronic Devices

Students will be permitted to bring electronic devices (such as iPads, iPods, mobile phones) but these may only be used during times set by the Teacher in Charge. Students are responsible for the care of any personal electronic device brought to a camp or excursions and the school will not be responsible for lost or damaged devices.

## 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).

Unless otherwise indicated, Tyers Primary School and the Department of Education and Training 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.

## First Aid

At least one member of staff responsible for each group of students will hold an appropriate first aid qualification. For adventure activities, the minimum acceptable level of first aid training is the senior first aid certificate (often referred to as a level 2 first aid qualification) or its competency based equivalent HLTAID003 Apply First Aid.

For remote activities, a higher level of first aid training is required appropriate to the setting, such as Wilderness First Aid or its competency based equivalent THHGHS11A Manage casualty in a remote area.

Staff must also have a first aid kit appropriate to the excursion location and activities undertaken.

## Students with Disabilities

Students should not be denied attendance to any excursion or camp because of disability or medical condition. Parents and carers will be consulted about reasonable adjustments that may be implemented by the school to enable the student to safely attend the excursion or camp.

Principals will ensure that appropriate emergency and risk management planning is undertaken for students with disabilities attending excursions and camps.

## Overseas Travel

The Smartraveller website is the Australian Government, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), travel advisory and consular assistance service. This site also provides useful travel information and tips.

Tyers Primary School will ensure that they:

- comply with any DFAT travel advice current for the proposed location,
- subscribe to receive automatic travel advice updates from the Smartraveller website both prior to the excursion and when overseas, and
- review their risk assessment if there are any changes to the DFAT travel advice.

The cost of medical and hospital treatment is high in some countries; therefore Tyers Primary school recommends that all students and staff take out travel and medical insurance for the entire overseas trip.

## Emergency Notifications and Communications

In the event of an emergency, to ensure information is provided to emergency services, Tyers Primary School will notify the:

- DET of any approved school camp or excursion at least three weeks beforehand using the [Student Activity Locator online form](#). A user guide has been developed to help schools complete the online form, see: [Student Activity Locator - User Guide](#)
- [Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade](#) (DFAT) of overseas travel plans so that DFAT can help staff and students remain safe and secure while overseas.

Parents or carers will be advised of the telephone numbers (both during and outside school hours) for the designated school contact person in the event of an emergency.

Arrangements for communicating with parents in the event of an emergency, cancellation or recall of the excursion will be made.

Consent forms will remain at the school with the designated school contact person and copies of each form will be taken on the excursion by the teacher in charge.

In the event of an emergency, accident or injury:

- staff on the excursion will:
  - take emergency action as documented in the excursion and camp's emergency and risk management plan,
  - immediately notify the school principal.
- the principal will make arrangements for DET Security Services Unit to be telephoned on (03) 9589 6266.

## Fire Danger or Ban

The Principal may need to cancel excursions and camps at short notice on days of extreme fire danger or total fire ban. On such days, the Security Services Unit liaises with fire authorities to obtain up to date information for communication to schools that may be affected by wildfire, including schools with students attending camps in areas affected by wildfire. If an excursion is not cancelled, special fire safety precautions will be required.

When required, Tyers Primary school will follow DET's emergency management (bushfires) procedures for off-site activities.

## Risk Management

An assessment of excursion risks will be undertaken in accordance with DET guidelines – [Emergency and Risk Management](#)

For excursions requiring school council approval, an excursion risk assessment plan will be completed which includes consideration of risks across the entire excursion (including transportation, activities undertaken and excursion venues). Venue managers and activity providers should be consulted in the preparation of the school's risk management plan and where appropriate, the risk management plans of venues or activity providers should be used to inform the school risk assessment process.

## Teacher Responsibilities

Teachers participating in an excursion and/or camps will:

- understand the purpose of the program and its connection to student learning,
- be aware of their supervisory responsibilities throughout the program, see: [Staffing and supervision](#)
- know who is the nominated member of staff who will provide first aid if required,
- know the exact location of students they are responsible for at all times including during travel.

In addition the nominated teacher-in-charge will:

- know the exact location of students at all times including during travel,
- maintain a record of telephone contacts for the supervising staff accompanying the excursion,
- know who the school contact person is and their phone number,
- have a copy of the names of family contacts for all students and staff on the excursion,
- have copies of the parental approval and medical advice forms for those students on the excursion,
- maintain a copy of the completed approval form (including all attachments) submitted to the school council, see: [Approval pro forma](#), at the following link, <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/school/principals/safety/approvalform.docx>, and
- have submitted a notification of school activity using the Student Activity Locator online form three weeks prior to the excursion, see: [Student Activity Locator online form](#) (EduMail password required).

## Links and Appendices

The Key Links which are connected with this policy are sourced through: [DET School Policy & Advisory Guide - Excursions and Adventure Activities](#)

## Related School Policies

This policy should be read and understood in conjunction with the following (but not limited to) school policies:

- Volunteers Check (WWCC) Policy
- Duty of Care Policy
- Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy

## Review

The Tyers Primary School School Council and staff will regularly monitor and review the effectiveness of the Excursions and Camp Policy and revise the policy tri-annually or as required by completing a policy review.

Excursions and Camp Policy updates and requirements will be made available to staff, families and visitors.

This policy was reviewed and updated January 2020.