CAMPING POLICY

PURPOSE

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

AIMS

- To reinforce, enrich and extend 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 support the development of our values of *respect, care, honesty, trust, a fair go for all* and *personal achievement.*
- To support the development of the *You Can Do It* capabilities of confidence, persistence, organisation, resilience and getting along.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all camps organised by Plenty Parklands Primary School. This policy also applies to adventure activities organised by Plenty Parklands 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 camps and adventure activities which all Victorian government schools are required to follow. Plenty Parklands Primary School will follow both this policy, as well as the Department's policy and guidelines when planning for and conducting camps.

DEFINITIONS

Camps are excursions involving at least one night's accommodation (including school sleep-overs).
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

POLICY

Camps can 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. Camps are an important aspect of the educational programs offered at our school.

For all camps, including adventure activities, our school will follow the Department's School Policy and Advisory Guide: Excursions and Activities. For camps requiring school council approval, our school will also follow the Department's School Policy and Advisory Guide: Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors.

Planning process for camps
School camps are an outdoor education activity and as such, are subject to specific planning and approval guidelines. All camps will comply with Department planning requirements. The year 6 Canberra tour is also subject to specific planning and approval guidleines due to the interstate travel component.

The PPPS Camp process and supporting documentation must be used.

Each camp will be coordinated by a designated camp coordinator.

Camps are to be advertised well in advance, including in each year level's list of important dates.

Camps, excursions and special events to be spread as evenly as possible throughout the year to help families budget.

In line with the process, it is essential that one of the Assistant Principals has seen all documentation before it is copied and/or distributed.

Notify DET of camp using Proforma: *Notification of School Activity form* (must be submitted to the Emergency and Security Management Branch of the Department three weeks prior to the camp).

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. Plenty Parklands Primary School's risk assessment will include consideration of arrangements for supervision of students and consideration of the risk of bushfire activity in the camp location. In the event of a Code Red Day being announced, camp activities in effected locations will be cancelled or rescheduled. Planning will also cover arrangements for cancelling, recalling or altering the camp for any other reason.

Emergency Management Plans are to be developed when adventure activities are being undertaken.

Plenty Parklands Primary School is committed to ensuring students with additional needs are provided with an inclusive camping program and will work with families during the planning stage, as needed, to support all students' attendance and participation in camp activities.

In cases where a camp involves a particular class or year level group, the camp coordinator will ensure that there is an alternative educational program available and appropriate supervision for those students not attending the camp.

The school only uses camp sites accredited by the 'Australian Camps Association'.

All camps require School Council approval. Venues to be approved in the year prior to attendance. If the principal's approval is granted, detailed planning must include a risk assessment from the venue.

Further information is to be detailed at a scheduled School Council meeting and will include: -

- The educational aims and objectives of the camp.
- The names of all adults attending and their expertise and experience.
- Travel arrangements and costs.
- Venue details and an itinerary of events.
- Procedures followed to ensure the safety of the children.

The information will be provided to the Principal at least a week before the School Council meeting date.

The office is to be notified of all staff mobile phone numbers as part of the Camp booklet.

Supervision

Plenty Parklands Primary School follows the Department's guidelines in relation to supervision of students during camps.

All camp staff (including parent volunteers) will be familiar with supervision requirements and the specific procedures for dealing with emergencies on each camp.

All school staff will be aware that they retain overall responsibility for the supervision and care of students throughout all camps (including adventure activities), regardless of whether or not external providers are managing the activity.

Returning from camp

A senior staff member will be in attendance at school when the children are returning from any camp.

The camp coordinator will communicate with this person with regard to the anticipated return time. The school will make every effort to update the ETA on Compass.

Parent volunteers
Parents of students involved in camps may be invited to assist in the delivery of the camp. When deciding on which parents will attend, the camp coordinator will follow the process as detailed in the Process folder of the Staff Manual and complete all related forms as detailed in the Supporting Documents folder of the Staff Manual.

School staff will notify parents/carers of any costs associated with attending.
School staff are in charge of camps and parent/carer volunteers are expected to follow teachers' instructions and the school values.

Parents attending camp will be asked to sign the *school camp confidenality agreement* agreeing that they will not take phone calls from, or phone, text or send photos to other Plenty Parklands families whilst at camp.

Parent volunteers will be required to attend a pre camp meeting, which includes a camp information training session.

Volunteer and external provider checks
Plenty Parklands Primary School requires all parent or carer camp 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, Plenty Parklands Primary School will provide parents/carers with a specific consent form outlining the details of the proposed activity. Plenty Parklands Primary School uses Compass to inform parents about camps 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.

All requirements or expectations set for each camp must be adhered to by students and families, including exclusion or restriction of mobile phones and/or any electronic devices.

Cost of camps, refunds and support
The cost of all camps are to be paid by parents/carers unless alternative arrangements have been agreed to by the Assistant Principal or the Business Manager prior to the camp. 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.
All deposits are non refundable/non transferable as the final cost is determined by the number of students attending.

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

Plenty Parklands Primary School will make all efforts to ensure that students are not excluded for financial reasons. Families experiencing financial difficulty who wish for their children to attend a camp will be required to discuss their individual situation with either the Assistant Principal or Business Manager. Decisions relating to alternative payment arrangements will be made by either the Assistant Principal or Business Manager on a case- by-case basis, however any payment plan must be fully paid prior to participation.

The Assistant Principal or 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.

If a camp is cancelled or altered by the school, or a student is no longer able to attend part or all of the camp, 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. Any consideration for part refund of remaining amount due to late withdrawal of students due to illness, holiday, etc., can only be considered after all invoices associated with the camp have been finalised.

Student health
Parents and carers need to ensure the school has up-to-date student health information prior to camps. A member of staff will be appointed with responsibility for the health needs of the students for each camp. Teachers will administer any medication provided according to our *Medication* policy and the student's signed *Camp Medical Form* and *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.

It is the responsibility of parents and carers to ensure their child/children are in good health when attending 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 are required to cooperate and display appropriate behaviour to ensure the camp is a safe, positive and educational experience for all students involved.

Only children who have displayed behaviour in line with our values will be invited to participate in school camps. Parents/carers will be notified if their child is in danger of losing the privilege to participate in a camp due to behaviour that does not meet the standards of behaviour set out in the school's Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy, Student Code of Conduct or Bullying Prevention Policy. Consideration of a decision to exclude a student will be made by the Principal class in consultation with the classroom teacher, welfare staff, parents of the child and the camp coordinator. Both the parent/carer and the student will be informed of this decision prior to the camp.

If on a camp the camp coordinator considers an individual student's behaviour does not meet required standards, the camp coordinator in consultation with the senior staff member and Principal may determine that a student should return home during the camp. In these circumstances the parent/carer is responsible for the collection of the student and any costs associated with this.

NOTE: Sometimes a student's disability may manifest in challenging behaviour. Examples of disabilities that can present with challenging behaviour includes Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, Oppositional Defiant Disorder and Autism Spectrum Disorder. In these cases, excluding a student from a camp or excursion may raise disability discrimination law issues. Please contact Legal Division for advice if you are considering excluding a student for failing to comply with behavioural standards, if their disability presents with challenging behaviour.

Disciplinary measures apply to students on camps consistent with our school's *Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy, Student Code of Conduct* and *Bullying Prevention Policy*.

Electronic Devices
Students will not be permitted to bring electronic devices to camps except with prior approval from the Principal. The Principal will only approve students bringing electronic devices to a camp 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.

Food
Students are not permitted to bring their own supply of food items to camps 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.

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, Plenty Parklands 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.

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following Department polices and guidelines:

- School Policy and Advisory Guide:
  - Excursions and Activities
  - Emergency and Risk Management
- Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors
- Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund
- Code Red Days

The following school policies are also relevant to this Camping Policy

- Statement of Values and School Philosophy
- Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy
- Volunteer Policy
- Duty of Care Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy

EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed in line with best practice and DET guidelines.

REVIEW CYCLE

This policy was last updated in **June 2019** and is scheduled for review on **June 2022**.

Endorsed by School Council in June 2019.

STAFFING FOR CAMPING PROGRAM

We acknowledge that parent volunteers are a wonderful asset on camps and we need the very best volunteers for the safety and care for all children attending. Attendance by parents is not a right; it is by invitation, to fulfil legal rights and to help make our school vision a reality.

Considerations:

In making staffing decisions the following factors need to be considered:

- The Principal has final approval of staffing profile.
- One adult to ten students (legal requirement) at no charge to the adults.
- School staff members are well briefed and approved to administer medicines, etc. as prescribed by parents.
- At least one staff member is to be level 2 First Aid trained.
- All staff have CPR, Anaphylaxis and Asthma training.
- All volunteers to have a Working with Children Check, at no cost to individual
- Minimum of 50% of the adults to be qualified teachers to fulfil ratio.
- Minimum of one senior teacher (Leading Teacher, Assistant Principal, Principal) employed by the school to attend.
- Aim for gender balance where possible.
- In line with other considerations, as School Council has to approve school camps and is legally responsible, priority will be given to one non DET school councillor who has not previously attended a camp.
- As part of pre-service training, priority given to pre-service teachers to attend.
- Remaining free places given to parents –
    - Priority to trained nurse, doctor or first aid personnel.
    - Priority to parents who are known to the school through their interaction with the school at parent/teacher/student interviews, school occasions and volunteer work. These occasions provide opportunities for parents to display the attributes we look for when seeking help with particular responsibilities such as a camp.
    - Priority to parents who will take on a "de facto" staff role, where it is judged there will be no possible conflict of interest between de facto staff role with focus on all children and parent role with focus on own child.
    - If a parent has decided that their child (who has a serious medical problem) can only go on the tour if the parent attends, then the parent is deemed as being out of the adult ratio and would be required to pay their way. The school will negotiate to get transport and accommodation at a reduced rate, where possible.
    - Where there are more volunteers than places after all criteria have been looked at, names will be drawn out of a hat.

School camp confidentiality agreement (to be signed by all volunteers prior to attendance at camp)

In line with my volunteer training undertaken at Plenty Parklands I understand and agree to follow the school *values* while on camp.

To support the aim of developing student independence and to ensure *a fair go for all,* I understand that this includes adhering to our practice of not sending photos to family members while I am on camp.

I also agree that I will not take phone calls from, or phone, text, or send photos to other Plenty Parklands families while on camp.

I agree to wait until after the camp before posting photos of my child on any form of social media. I understand that I do not have permission from the school or other families to post photos of other children.

Name ……..

Signed ……. Date ……..……