

## **MONTAGUE CONTINUING EDUCATION CENTRE**

100 Montague Street  
South Melbourne 3205  
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# **CAMPING POLICY**

### **Rationale:**

The school's camping program enables students to further their learning and social skills development in a non-school setting. Camps may have a cultural, environmental or outdoor emphasis and are an important aspect of the educational programs offered at our school.

### **Aims:**

- To provide all children with the opportunity to participate in a camping program
- To provide shared experiences and a sense of group cohesiveness
- To reinforce and extend classroom learning
- To provide a program that delivers skills and knowledge that may lead to a lifelong involvement in worthwhile leisure pursuits
- To provide a program that promotes self-esteem, resourcefulness, independence, leadership, judgement, cooperation and tolerance

### **Statement of Commitment to Child Safety:**

As part of our commitment to the safety and wellbeing of young people we recognise the importance of, and a responsibility for, ensuring our school is a safe, supportive and enriching environment which respects and fosters the dignity and self-esteem of young people, and enables them to thrive in their learning and development.

Montague staff are committed to protecting students from abuse or harm in the school environment, in accordance with their legal obligations including child safe standards. The school's Child Safety Code of Conduct is available on the school's website.

### **Implementation:**

- A camp is defined as any activity involving at least one night's accommodation, including sleep overs at school.
- The program will be developed throughout the school.
- School Council will ensure that all school camps are maintained at a reasonable and affordable cost, and comply with all Department of Education requirements.
- Parents will be notified of the exact costs and other relevant details of individual camps as soon as practicable.
- Students will not be excluded from camps simply for financial reasons. Parents experiencing financial difficulty, who wish for their children to attend camp, will be required to discuss their individual situation with the Principal. Decisions relating to alternative payment arrangements will be made by the Principal on a case-by-case basis.

- All families will be given sufficient time during the school year to make payments for individual camps. Children whose parents have not paid deposits by the due date, who do not make full payment by the due date, or who have not made alternative arrangements with the Principal will not be eligible to attend.
- Any family who has not met the required alternative payment for a previous camp will be unable to participate in the camping program until the outstanding payment is finalised.
- Request for refunds will be considered and be mindful of deposits and administrative costs already incurred by the school.
- School Council may set aside a budget each year that will cover the cost of replacing teachers who are involved in camps, or the costs for staff replacement can be borne by the participants.
- School camps are an outdoor education activity and as such, are subject to specific planning and approval guidelines.
- School Council is responsible for approval of all overnight excursions; camps; interstate and overseas visits; excursions requiring sea or air travel; excursions involving weekends or vacations; and adventure activities.
- Prior to the commencement of any detailed planning relating to a proposed school camp, the Teacher in Charge must familiarise themselves with the Department's [Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors](#) website. They must meet formally with the principal, to present the principal with a [planning summary](#), to discuss the proposed camp, and to seek 'in principle' support for the event.
- If the principal's approval is granted, detailed planning should commence using the [planning questions](#) proforma as a guide. This must include a site visit and [risk assessment](#).
- The school only uses residential campsites accredited by the 'Australian Camps Association' or the 'National Accommodation, Recreation & Tourism Accreditation Program (NARTA)' for overnight camps.
- Prior to seeking School Council approval for the camp, organising staff are required to meet again with the principal and present him/her with all documentation, including the completed School Council [approval](#) proforma and all attachments, ensuring that time permits for the matter to be placed on a School Council agenda and, if approved, that the online [Student Activity Locator online form \(SAL\)](#) form then be submitted three weeks prior to the activity.
- When presenting information to School Council, the Teacher in Charge must be aware that Council will consider the following:-
  - What is the purpose of the camp and its connection to student learning?
  - Do staff members attending have the competence to provide the necessary supervision of students throughout the camp?
  - Is an appropriately trained member of staff able to provide [first aid](#) ?
  - Have staff members who are not registered teachers completed a Working with Children Check?
  - Is the location of staff and students throughout the camp including during travel known?
  - Presentation to School Council of a Risk Matrix assessment and Emergency Management Plan to be considered when approving a Camp or Excursion
  - Is a record of telephone contacts for supervising staff accompanying the camp available?
  - Is a record of the names and family contacts for all students and staff available?
  - Are copies of the [parental consent](#) and [confidential medical advice](#) forms for those students on the camp available at the school?
  - Has a copy of the completed School Council [approval](#) proforma (including all attachments) been submitted and approved?

- Will the online [Student Activity Locator online form \(SAL\)](#) be submitted three weeks prior to the excursion?
- Adventure activities are those that involve greater than normal risk such as base camping, bush walking, canoeing, snow activities, orienteering, cycling, horse riding, rock climbing and abseiling, challenge ropes courses, swimming (other than school swimming programs), surf activities, sailboarding, and similar activities. School Councillors may not have detailed knowledge of adventure activities. In such instances organising staff should consult the [adventure activities](#) website, or seek advice from peak bodies or skilled and experienced staff with recent experience instructing the activity, to satisfy School Council's requirements. [Emergency management plans](#) are to be developed.
- School Council requires that students only travel on buses fitted with seatbelts.
- School Council requires that a report be tabled after each school camp, detailing feedback regarding the event, in particular any mishaps or areas for future improvement.
- Classroom teachers will be given the first option to attend camps.
- The school will provide a mobile phone for all camps.
- A senior staff member will be in attendance at school whilst the children are returning from camp. The Teacher in Charge will communicate with this person in regards the anticipated return time.
- Parents will be invited to assist in the supervision of school camps. When deciding which parents will attend, the Teacher in Charge will take into account –
  - Any valuable skills the parents have to offer. e.g. bus licence, first aid etc
  - The preference to include both male and female parents.
  - The special needs of particular students.
- Parents selected to assist with the camps program will be required to undertake a Working with Children Check. The school will pay for any associated costs. Parent volunteers may be required to pay the accommodation and meals cost of the camp.
- While school camps are a team activity requiring the cooperation and common-sense of all participants, it is the Teacher in Charge who oversees the operations of the camp, takes charge of events, makes key decisions and accepts ultimate responsibility for the camp.
- Only children who have displayed sensible, reliable behaviour at school will be invited to participate in the camping program. Parents will be notified if a child is in danger of losing their invitation to participate in a camping experience due to poor behaviour at school. If the unsatisfactory behaviour continues, the child will then be excluded from camp. The decision to exclude a student will be made by the Principal, in consultation with the Teacher in Charge.
- Parents will be requested to collect their child from camp if their child exhibits behaviour that is considered unacceptable or they become unwell. The Teacher in Charge will make this decision. Costs incurred will be the responsibility of the parent.
- The primary references that must be consulted when considering all camps is the Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/health/Pages/outdoor.aspx> as well as the Victorian Government School Policy and Advisory Guide – [Student Safety](#), [Risk Management](#), [Excursions and Activities](#) policies.
- To be read in conjunction with the Montague Excursions policy.

### **Policy evaluation and review:**

To ensure ongoing relevance and continuous improvement, this policy will be reviewed in the context of school self-evaluation undertaken as part of the school accountability framework. The review will include input from students, parents/carers and the school community.

This policy was last ratified by School Council

**September  
2016**