

# Camps and Excursions Policy - February 2024

**(including local excursions)**

(Child Safe Standard 9)



## Help for non-English speakers

*If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact the school.*

## Purpose

This policy will explain to our school community the processes and procedures that Lalor East 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 Lalor East Primary School. This policy also applies to adventure activities organised by Lalor East 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. Lalor East 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;

**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 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 and excursions are seen as an integral part of the School curriculum as they enable students to explore, extend and enrich 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.

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

All camps and excursions will comply with Department planning requirements.

Staff wishing to organize a camp or excursion must complete the camp or excursion event template via Compass and submit this to the Business Manager, Assistant Principal and the Principal for approval. The Principal, in consultation with appropriate staff, will consider the educational outcomes of the camp or excursion as well as the costings and impact on the school program for the proposed dates.

The Principal and Assistant Principal in consultation with organizing teachers will ensure that all camps, transport arrangements, emergency procedures and student/staff ratios comply with DET guidelines.

The Event Co-ordinator will complete the "Notification of School Activity" online through the School Activity Locator at [www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/forms/school/sal/enteractivity.asp](http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/forms/school/sal/enteractivity.asp) at a minimum of 4 weeks prior to the event date.

All approved camps will then be presented to the School Council for their approval.

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. Lalor East Primary School's risk assessment will include consideration of arrangements for supervision of students and consideration of the risk of bushfire or other natural disaster activity in the excursion location. In the event the Bureau of Meteorology forecasts a Catastrophic fire danger rating (FDR) day, excursions or camp activities in affected locations will be cancelled or rescheduled. Planning will also cover arrangements for cancelling, recalling or altering the camp or excursion for any other reason.

Lalor East Primary School is committed to ensuring students with additional needs are provided with an inclusive camps and excursions program and will work with families 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.

### Supervision

Lalor East 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.

### **Volunteers**

Parents and/or volunteers 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**

Lalor East 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, Lalor East Primary School will provide parents/carers with a specific consent form outlining the details of the proposed activity. Lalor East Primary School seeks consent and informs parents about school camps and excursions through a printed excursion notice generated by Compass that is taken home by students asking parents/carers to return the part of the note that asks for parents/carers signature confirming they consent to their child's participation. For events and excursions that do not attract a charge, Lalor East Primary School may also utilise Compass to obtain parent\guardian consent. 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, Lalor East Primary School will provide parents and carers with an Local Excursions consent form upon enrolment. Lalor East Primary School will also provide advance notice to parents/carers of an upcoming local excursion through a newsfeed post\email via Compass. For local excursions that occur on a recurring basis (for example weekly outings to the local oval for sports lessons), Lalor East Primary School will notify parents once only prior to the commencement of the recurring event.

### **Parent Payments for camps and excursions**

Most camps and excursions provided by Lalor East Primary School enhance and broaden the schooling experience of our students but are not a mandatory component of our curriculum. These activities are provided on a user-pays basis in accordance with the Department's Parent Payments Policy.

Consent forms will have clearly stated payment amounts and finalisation dates, and families will be given sufficient time to make payments. The deadline for consent and payment for excursions is by 4pm the day prior to event\activity.

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.

Where a camp or excursion is provided as part of the standard curriculum requirements, parents may be invited to make a voluntary contribution but all students will be able to attend regardless of whether their parents contribute.



## **Financial Help for Families**

Lalor East 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 or Assistant Principal. The Business Manager, Principal or Assistant Principal or Organising Teacher 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. 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*, our *Bullying Prevention Policy* and our *Statement of Values*.

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.



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, Student Code of Conduct and Bullying Prevention Policy*.

The Principal or their nominee will ensure that full records are submitted to Council regarding the camp well in advance of the starting date of the event and that no camp occurs unless all the formal record keeping has been completed and approved. Ideally all camps should be submitted to Council for in principle approval in the November/December Council meeting in the preceding year.

### **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.

OR

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).

Unless otherwise indicated, Lalor East 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 ways:

- Available publicly on our school's website
- Included in induction processes for relevant staff
- Included in our staff handbook/manual
- Discussed in an annual staff briefing/meeting
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request



## Related Policies 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*
- *Volunteer Policy*
- *Duty of Care Policy*
- *Child Safety Policy*
- *Child Safety Code of Conduct*

## Policy Status and Review

This policy supports and demonstrates our commitment to *Child Safety Standard 9: Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed*

This policy is also a requirement under the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority [VRQA] Minimum Standards.

This policy will be reviewed every three years as part of the school policy review cycle, following changes to Departmental legislation and guidelines or at times that the Principal forms the opinion that the policy warrants a review.

## Approval

<b>Updated</b>	February 2023
<b>Consultation</b>	School Staff, School Council
<b>Endorsed by</b>	School Council Linda Richards, Principal
<b>Endorsed on</b>	13 February 2024
<b>Next review date</b>	February 2027

