SECTION ONE: FOUR

4.3 Camps and Excursions Policy

Agreed Understandings:

- To provide all children with the opportunity to participate in a sequential camping program.
- To provide shared class 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 student capabilities and endeavours to instil values that are vital for sound interpersonal relationships and healthy psychological development.
- To provide first-hand experiences, stimulate observation and inquiry and increase opportunities for social interaction.
- To provide an opportunity to develop positive teacher-student relationships.
- To communicate high expectations for achievement and behaviour.
- That our policy reflects the dual focus of our school, which is the academic, social and emotional development of students; by providing opportunities, and experiences outside the classroom and school environment.
- Camps and tours are an integral part of the school’s curriculum.
- Camps and tours provide students with valuable educational and social experiences not readily provided in the school environment.
- All students should have the opportunity to participate in camps and tours.
- Successful camps and tours depend on sound organisation, financial planning and advance scheduling, notice.
Guidelines:

Implementation:

The camp program will provide a progression of skills through a range of experiences appropriate to the age and previous experiences of students.

Safety

- All camps require School Council approval. Where possible approval in principle of dates and venues will be sought in the preceding December.
- At a scheduled school council meeting at least six weeks prior to the departure date, where possible, the following information will be presented:
  - Purpose, environment, location, communication weather, transport, activities, students,
  - equipment group and technical, clothing and personal equipment, staffing, experience and 
  - qualifications, supervision, overnight excursions, informed consent and first aid.
- The above information will be provided to the Principal at least 3 weeks before the School Council meeting date.
- A First Aid trained person must attend each camp.
- Communication will be a priority. A mobile phone and/or distress beacon will be available at all times. In rural or remote areas a back-up vehicle will be available.
- The “Notification of School Activity” form will be completed and forwarded to the DEECD two weeks prior to the camp departure date.
- All staff and volunteers engaged in camps and excursions should ensure they understand the DEECD and Duty of Care Policy and adhere to these at all times.
- If the return time from an excursion or camp is delayed, the teacher in charge will contact the school to inform the Principal of the new arrival time so that parents can be contacted. A teacher will remain at school until all students have been collected.

Staff / Volunteers

- Nominated member of staff will coordinate the program and assist staff with planning
- A nominated member, or members, of staff will be responsible for the camp, encompassing all safety, catering, programming, discipline and staffing/supervision decisions pertaining to the camp.
- The designated “Teacher in Charge” of each camp will ensure that all camps, bus arrangements and camp activities comply with Department of Education and Early Childhood Development guidelines.
- Parents may be invited to assist in the delivery of school camps. When deciding which parents will attend, appropriate staff will take into account –
  a. Any valuable skills the parents have to offer. e.g. bus licence, first aid etc
  b. The need to include both male and female supervisors.
  c. The special needs of particular students.
- Parents selected to assist with the camps program will be required to have a Working With Children’s Check.

Finance

- The School Council will ensure that all school camps are provided at an affordable cost and comply with all DEECD requirements.
- All camps will be budgeted for with detailed and accurate costing presented in advance to the Principal and Business Manager.
- Teachers in charge must ensure all students have paid and alert the participants if a significant number have not paid.
• Parents will be notified of approximate dates and costs associated with the camps at least one term prior to the camp.
• Any family who has not met the payment obligations for a camp will not be able to attend unless other arrangements are made with the campus principal. Office staff will be responsible for accepting and recording the payments made by parents and the teacher in charge of the excursion will ensure there is a payment plan developed and all payments are finalised prior to the excursion with the aim of 100% participation.
• Time in lieu may be considered and resourced if possible, for staff participating in the camps and tours program.

Parental Permission

• All parents/ carers will be required to provide a completed permission form, “Confidential Medical Information for School Council Approved Excursions” form and an “Appropriate Behaviour Agreement” in order for their children to attend a camp.

Student Conduct

• Only children who have consistently 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. The decision to exclude a student will be made by the Principal, in consultation with the classroom teacher.
• Parents will be required to collect their child from camp if their child exhibits behaviour that is considered unacceptable. The Teacher in Charge, in consultation with the Principal, will make this decision. Costs incurred will be the responsibility of the parent.

Evaluation

Each camp will be evaluated in consultation with the assisting adults as to the program, venue, financial viability, facilities and the overall success of the camp.

• A coordinator of camps and tours will be appointed to implement this policy and to manage the school program.
• A business plan will be developed for the maintenance and development of the facilities, equipment and grounds at the Benalla P-12 College Camp.
• Professional development will be made available to staff participating in the camps and tours program.

Basis for Discretion:

The basis for discretion lies with the Principal as an operational matter.

Date of ratification by council: 25 November, 2013
Recommended date for review: November, 2015