



Outdoor Education Policy

(Ratified by School Council: June 2026)

PURPOSE:

The Outdoor Education program aims to provide students with the opportunity to further develop their personal and interpersonal skills through interacting with others and responsible interaction with the environment, in new and challenging contexts.

Quality outdoor education can:

- enhance enquiry, critical thinking and reflection skills
- make significant contributions to literacy and numeracy
- increase students' sense of confidence and efficacy
- improve mental health and wellbeing and increase physical health in young people
- improve environmental knowledge and an understanding of culture, heritage and place history
- teach students to assess risk and make judgements about risk management.

The benefits of outdoor education also extend to teachers and include improved relationships with students and personal development in their teaching practice.

Research shows the benefits are compounded by residential outdoor education, which brings an intensity of experience, different and varied opportunities to experience success, a new context for relationships, and new ways of learning.

GUIDELINES:

- Outdoor education programs will enhance classroom programs and be a further extension of both the Integrated and Inquiry learning approaches to curriculum.

At Glen Waverley Primary School a sequential camping program will be undertaken from Years Prep to 6:

Year 3	Day Camp
Year 4-6	3 day camp

IMPLEMENTATION:

Planning

Outdoor activities will be planned and conducted in accordance with DE regulations and in line with the school's Incursion/Excursion or Camp Protocols and Procedures list. There will be particular consideration toward;

- the educational purpose of the excursion or camp, and its contribution to the curriculum
- maintenance of full records, including documentation of the planning process

- venue selection, i.e. the suitability of the environment and/or venue for the excursion
- safety, emergency and risk management:
 - assessment of excursion risks
 - adherence to Child Safe Standards
 - adherence to Duty of Care obligations
 - procedures in the event of an emergency
 - arrangements if the excursion needs to be cancelled or recalled (for example, due to forecast severe weather conditions)
 - completion of an online notification of school activity form three weeks prior to the activity
 - first aid requirements
 - any other measures necessary for student and staff safety and welfare.
- staffing and supervision:
 - there are sufficient staff to provide appropriate and effective supervision. For reference refer to; DE Policy and Advisory Library: School Operations Excursions (including camps and adventure activities):
<https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/excursions/guidance/supervision>
 - the experience, qualifications and skills of each staff member (including volunteers, instructors, etc.) will allow them to provide effective supervision in general and for planned activities (as applicable)
 - there are appropriate levels of supervision in view of the activities undertaken and students involved.
- informed consent from parents or carers
 - A parent meeting will be held prior to school camps away from school, to provide a forum for a two-way discussion between organisers and parents.
 - Consent forms to be signed by a legal parent or guardian.
- Confidential, student and staff medical information forms which provide parents or carers with the opportunity to vary any information previously given to the school. These must be completed before each School Council approved excursion. Schools must:
 - ensure that the teacher-in-charge takes the medical information forms on the excursion
 - ensure these forms are available to other excursion staff in emergency situations
 - keep copies of the forms at the school.
- student preparation and behavioural expectations
- requirements for any adventure activities
- transportation requirements
- communication requirements

- that staff and students have appropriate clothing and personal equipment
- that group or technical equipment is in good condition and suitable for the activities undertaken
- that continuous instruction is provided for students remaining at the school during the absence of staff accompanying the excursion
- any information which has been provided by specialists in the activities proposed
- requirements for interstate or overseas excursions
- that the excursion meets the requirements of any school-level policy or procedures

Approval

Outdoor Educational Activities must be approved by both the principal and School Council.

Student Preparation

In preparation for excursions, the school will advise:

- students of:
 - the organisational arrangements
 - relevant safety arrangements or emergency procedures
- students and parents or carers:
 - of expected standards of behaviour
 - that in extreme cases students may be sent home from an excursion at the cost of the parents.

In extreme cases the excursion staff, following consultation with and the approval of the school principal, may decide to return a student to their home from an excursion. Excursion staff should:

- advise the student's parent or carer of the:
 - circumstance associated with the decision to send the student home
 - time when the parent or carer may collect their child from the excursion or the anticipated time that the student will arrive home.
- consider the age and maturity of the student when making travelling arrangements.

The Excursion

- Teachers will ensure that students participate in a safe and engaging series of learning tasks in line with the planning that has gone into the excursion.
- All staff and students will abide by the rules, guidelines and agreements outlined by the Department, the venue and the school's planned procedures for the excursion.

- All members of staff will, to the best of their ability, remain flexible and support other staff throughout the duration of the excursion, to ensure a smooth and harmonious time for all personnel involved in the excursion.

Ongoing

- Evaluation of the Outdoor Education program will be coordinated by relevant teachers in conjunction with the principal to monitor the effectiveness and appropriateness of the outdoor education programs offered.

RELATED LEGISLATION:

Child Safe Standards

<https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/child-safe-standards/policy>

Risk Management Policy

<https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/risk-management-schools/policy>

Duty of Care Policy

<https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/duty-of-care/policy>

Privacy and Information Sharing Policy

<https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/privacy-information-sharing/policy>

DE Policy and Advisory Library: School Operations Excursions (including camps and adventure activities): <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/excursions/guidance/supervision>

Student Medical Information Policy

<https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/medication/policy>

Student Preparation and Behaviour Policy

<https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/excursions/guidance/student-preparation-and-behaviour>

Venue Selection Policy

<https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/excursions/guidance/venue-selection>

RELATED POLICIES:

Incursions and Excursions Policy

Camp Protocols and Procedures Checklist

Curriculum Policy

PE and Sports Policy

Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy

First Aid Policy

Anaphylaxis Policy

Medical Authority Policy

Parent Payment Policy

Refund Policy

POLICY EVALUATION:

Evaluation will be conducted every two years by the Policy Review (Education) Sub Committee of the School Council.

DUE DATE FOR REVIEW:

Due for review in June 2028.