

Camp Policy



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand this policy, please contact Osborne Primary School, phone: 5975 1792, email: Osborne.ps@edumail.vic.gov.au or come into our school office.

OSBORNE PRIMARY SCHOOL CAMP POLICY

This camp policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it meets the needs of our students and the standards of our school community.

INTRODUCTION

Osborne Primary School is committed to providing a safe, supportive and inclusive environment for all students during school camps. Our camp program aims to foster independence, resilience, social skills and a sense of adventure. This policy outlines the expectations, guidelines and procedures to ensure a positive camp experience for all participants.

PURPOSE OF OSBORNE SCHOOL CAMPS

The primary goal of Osborne school camps is to promote independence, resilience and social development among students. Camps provide opportunities for students to step outside their comfort zones, develop new skills, form stronger relationships with peers and teachers and build confidence in a supportive environment away from home.

The primary objectives of Osborne school camps are to:

- Promote independence and self-reliance by encouraging students to manage personal responsibilities away from home.
- Develop social skills through collaborative activities that build teamwork, trust and communication.
- Enhance resilience by challenging students to step out of their comfort zones and face new experiences.
- Provide learning opportunities that connect with the school curriculum, offering hands-on experiences that enrich classroom learning.

CAMP PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

All students are encouraged to participate in school camps. However, to ensure a safe and positive experience for everyone, the following requirements must be met:

- **Consent:** Parents or guardians must provide written consent for their child to attend camp. This includes completing and returning all necessary forms and medical information by the specified deadline.
- **Behaviour Expectations:** Students are expected to adhere to the school's behaviour policy during camp. Respectful behaviour towards peers, staff and the camp environment is mandatory.
- **Health and Safety:** Parents must disclose any medical conditions, allergies or dietary needs in advance so that appropriate arrangements can be made. Students must bring all necessary medications, clearly labelled and with instructions for teachers to administer safely and in a timely manner.

- **No phones or technology devices:** To ensure a fully immersive and engaging camp experience, Osborne Primary School enforces a strict "no phones or technology devices". This will allow students to connect more deeply with the camp environment and activities.

PREPARATION AND COMMUNICATION

To ensure a successful camp experience, the school will:

- **Provide Pre-Camp Information:** Detailed information about the camp, including location, activities, what to bring and camp rules.
- **Pack Sensibly:** A packing list will be provided to ensure students bring necessary items without overpacking. Essential items include clothing suitable for the camp environment, personal hygiene items and any specific equipment related to camp activities.

PARENT PAYMENTS FOR EXCURSIONS

- Most camps provided by Osborne 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.
- Students who have not finalised payment by the required date for camp provided on a user pays basis will not be able to attend unless the Principal determines exceptional circumstances apply.

FINANCIAL HELP FOR FAMILIES

Osborne 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. The Business Manager/Principal 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 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. 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. 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 *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 camp. If a student becomes ill during a camp and is not able to continue with the 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.

SUPERVISION AND SAFETY

The safety and well-being of students are our highest priorities. To ensure a safe camp experience:

- **Staff Supervision:** Experienced staff will be present throughout the camp to supervise all activities and ensure student safety. The staff-to-student ratio will comply with or exceed recommended guidelines.

- **Emergency Procedures:** Staff are trained in first aid and emergency response procedures. A first aid kit and any necessary medical supplies will be available at all times. Emergency contact numbers and procedures will be clearly communicated to parents and staff.
- **Risk Assessment:** A thorough risk assessment will be conducted for all camp activities to identify potential hazards and implement appropriate risk management strategies.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

During camp, students are expected to:

- **Follow Instructions:** Listen to and follow all instructions given by staff (school and camp).
- **Respect Others:** Treat peers, staff and camp facilities with respect. This includes being considerate of others' needs and space.
- **Participate Fully:** Engage in all activities to the best of their ability, contributing positively to the camp experience for themselves and others.

PARENT AND GUARDIAN RESPONSIBILITIES

Parents and guardians are expected to:

- **Prepare Their Child:** Ensure that their child understands camp expectations and is adequately prepared with the required items.
- **Stay Informed:** Review all provided materials to understand camp logistics and expectations.
- **Maintain Communication:** Provide up-to-date emergency contact information and be available to communicate with school staff if needed during camp.
- **Be Available for Pick-Up:** In the event of significant misbehaviour, parents or guardians must be available to collect their child from the camp if requested by school staff.

STUDENTS REQUIRING ADDITIONAL SUPPORT OR STUDENTS WITH ADDITIONAL NEEDS

Osborne Primary School is dedicated to accommodating the diverse needs of all students, including students with additional needs, through evidence-based practices and reasonable adjustments that align with the Department of Education and Training (DET) guidelines.

While we understand that some parents may wish to attend camp to support their child, the school believes that this is not the most appropriate or effective way to provide support. Allowing parents to attend can disrupt the goal of fostering independence and create inconsistencies in how students are treated hindering their experience.

Our experienced staff are skilled in supporting all students and have successfully managed students with many needs in previous camps without requiring parental presence.

PARENT ATTENDANCE AT CAMP

Osborne Primary School encourages parents to volunteer as supervisors during school camps. This helps ensure adequate supervision and provides additional support for camp activities. However, parents attending camp as volunteers are expected to supervise a group of students, not just their own child.

Parents are respectfully discouraged from requesting to attend camp unless their child's needs fall within the outlined exceptional circumstances (see below). The school has robust support systems in place to ensure that all students, including those with additional needs, can fully participate and thrive in the camp environment

In certain exceptional circumstances, parental attendance focused on their individual child may be considered necessary, such as:

1. **Life-Threatening Medical Issues:** If a student has a life-threatening medical condition that requires immediate and specialised care that cannot be provided by camp staff, a parent may be allowed to attend to ensure the student's safety.

2. Severe Functional Dependence: For students who cannot function independently day-to-day without the presence of an adult due to severe physical or cognitive impairments, parental attendance may be necessary to provide the necessary care and support.

3. Behavioural Challenges: If a student's behaviour poses a significant risk to themselves or others, and cannot be managed by school staff alone, a parent may be considered to attend to help manage and mitigate these challenges.

PRE-CAMP PREPARATION

Prior to the camp, a meeting with parents of students with additional needs may be required to gather more information about the student's specific needs and triggers. This allows the school to tailor planning and provide necessary support. The following supports and strategies may be discussed and implemented:

- **Quiet Spaces and Sensory Breaks:** Designated quiet areas for sensory breaks will be available, and the schedule may be adjusted to prevent overwhelm. Comfort items such as noise-cancelling headphones, fidget toys, or weighted blankets will be allowed.
- **Visual Aids and Social Stories:** Visual timetables, social stories, and cue cards will be used to help students understand the camp schedule and activities, reducing anxiety and promoting engagement. Teachers are able to show past photos of the camp to help with familiarity.
- **Peer Support:** Students may be paired with peers who can provide social support and model positive behaviours, fostering a supportive and inclusive environment.
- **Pre-Camp Visit:** It might be beneficial for parents to call the camp and make an appointment to visit before the camp begins. This visit can help the student become familiar with the environment, reducing anxiety and helping them feel more comfortable during the camp.
- **Positive Reinforcement:** Teachers will use positive reinforcement to encourage desired behaviours and participation in activities.

REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS

Reasonable adjustments are modifications made to accommodate students' needs without fundamentally altering the nature of the school activity or compromising the experience for others. Having a parent attend the camp is not considered a standard reasonable adjustment, as it does not align with the DET guidelines or the school's goal of promoting student independence. Instead, necessary adjustments will be made within the existing framework, supported by professional staff and individualised plans.

STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

Teachers and support staff are responsible for ensuring all students, including those with additional needs, are safe, comfortable, and included in all camp activities. This includes:

- **Daily Monitoring:** Staff will monitor students' well-being and address any issues that arise promptly.
- **Implementation of Support Strategies:** Staff will implement the agreed-upon strategies and reasonable adjustments to support neurodivergent students.
- **Communication with Parents:** Staff may need to communicate with parents about their child's progress and any concerns that may arise during camp.

CONCLUSION

Osborne Primary School is committed to providing an inclusive and supportive camp experience that promotes independence, resilience and social development for all students. By preparing staff and implementing appropriate strategies, we aim to create a positive and enriching environment that meets the needs of every student while fostering a sense of community and mutual respect.

FURTHER INFORMATION 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 Excursions Policy:

- Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy
- Volunteer Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	10/09/2024
Consultation	School Council
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	10/09/2024