

Spensley Street Primary School

CAMPING POLICY

DEFINITION

The camping program involves social and environmental education, both at the Glen Forbes campsite owned by the school, and other sites for Grade 6 children. The camping program has, as its main focus, the School Camp at Glen Forbes. This venue is seen as an integral part of the educational program offered at Spensley Street.

RATIONALE

It is desirable that each child be given the opportunity to gain knowledge, experience, and a sense of achievement through a variety of learning situations involving contact with both the natural and developed environment. At the same time, children develop social skills, group responsibilities and independence in a different context, away from daily home and school routines.

PRINCIPLES

Where practicable, all children from Years One to Six are given the opportunity and encouraged to attend a camp with their home group teacher at Glen Forbes at least once a year. However, in some instances this will require discussion between parents and homegroup teachers to meet students' individual needs and may result in some students not attending all or part of the camp.

Year Six students will be given the opportunity to attend a longer camp in another location, in recognition that in the final year at primary school they will benefit from a more challenging activity program.

Parent assistance and involvement on camps is essential to support the whole class camping program.

Professional development and ongoing support for teachers in organising and running camps is essential for the success of the camping program.

When desirable, other camps will be held for specific purposes, for example, the Writers camp for the School Musical.

The campsite is a facility open to other users on a commercial basis as a source of revenue for the school.

The Environment Committee of School Council will ensure that the Glen Forbes Camp site will meet the standards and procedures set down through the accreditation process of the Camps Association of Victoria.

The staff member designated as camps coordinator and the Principal will ensure that the camps program will adhere to and maintain the standards and procedures set out for excursions and other out of school activities set down by DET in the School Operations Manual.

Wherever reasonably practicable, buses with seatbelts will be used for transport to, from and during school camps.

All private vehicles transporting children to and from and during the camp will be covered by comprehensive insurance in accordance with DET guidelines.

Before each camp the staff member designated as camps coordinator for that year will regularly inform teachers of the aforementioned standards and procedures. Each camp program will adhere to these standards.

Home Group teachers will direct parent assistants who attend the camp in accordance with these procedures.

Financial difficulty shall not preclude a child's attendance at the camp. At the discretion of the Principal, the School will assist those families who have been identified as needing some financial assistance to attend a camp.

The camp program will adhere to the Spensley St Equal Opportunity Policy.

GOALS

To enhance the development of the social cohesion of home groups, and the confidence building and social skills of individual children through the camping experience.

The Grade 6 camp is to support children in the transition to high school through a longer more challenging program, involving team building and specialist education activities.

The camping program should be based on social, environmental and outdoor education, as well as studies of the social, economic and historical aspects of the rural Glen Forbes area relevant to the school curriculum.

The program should provide knowledge of the basic skills needed for safe self management in the outdoor environment, which will serve as a basis for recreational pursuits in later years.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

1. A Camps Working Group will be established to oversee the implementation of the Camping Policy. This working group will be composed of staff representatives, members of the Education Policy Committee, the Environment Committee, and any other co-opted members.

2. The Working Group will

a) Develop information and procedures materials for parents and teachers

To establish these resources, the Camps Working Group will draw together existing documentation and initiate the preparation and compilation of

- a Glen Forbes Parent Information Booklet
- Parent Assistant Job Description
- Staff Procedures Guide
- Camps Curriculum Resource for teachers to use on homegroup camps

b) Organise an annual Parent Information evening in Term 4 which will have a particular focus for parents new to the camp.

3. Following the completion of these tasks, a Camps Curriculum Working Group will be established to oversee ongoing support and development of the camping program, including recommendations for appropriate professional development. The Working Group will report to the Education Policy Committee and, where appropriate, to the Environment Committee.

4. Maintenance of the camp site's physical resources in accordance with relevant DET and Camping Association of Victoria standards will remain the responsibility of the School Council's Environment Committee.

References

Victorian Camping Association accreditation manual
DET Excursion Guidelines (School Operations Manual)
Spensley St Curriculum Policy Manual
Environmental Education Policy
Equal Opportunity Policy
Nutrition Policy
Sunsmart Policy

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