

Montmorency Secondary College

CAMPS

POLICY

Rationale:

- The school's camping program enables students to further their learning and social skills development in a non-school setting. Camps may have a cultural, environmental or outdoor emphasis and are an important extension of the educational programs offered at our school.

Aims:

- To provide students with the opportunity to participate in high-quality camping experiences.
- To provide shared class experiences and a sense of group cohesiveness.
- To reinforce and extend classroom learnings.
- To provide a program that promotes self-esteem, resourcefulness, independence, leadership, judgement, cooperation and tolerance.
- To provide a program that delivers skills and knowledge that may lead to a lifelong involvement in worthwhile leisure pursuits.

Implementation:

School Council

- A camp is defined as any school activity involving students in at least one night's accommodation supervised by school staff. It includes local, interstate and overseas destinations and high-risk adventure activities.⁽¹⁾
- All camps require School Council approval.
 - In-principal approval⁽²⁾ must be obtained from School Council prior to:
 1. Any financial commitment being made of behalf of the school or parents
 2. Parents being given formal notification of the camp
 3. Any money/deposits being collected from parents
 - Final approval must be sought at a scheduled meeting of School Council at least three weeks prior to the departure date of the camp. Information presented to the Council must include: -
 1. The educational aims and objectives of the camp.
 2. Venue details, an itinerary of events and travel arrangements.
 3. The names of all adults attending and their expertise and experience.
 4. First aid arrangements and qualifications of accompanying staff.
 5. The procedures followed to ensure student safety and risk analysis report/s (as required).
 6. Alternative program for students not attending camp (if applicable).

The above information must be provided to the Principal at least a week before the School Council meeting date.
- The School Council will also ensure that all school camps are maintained at a reasonable and affordable cost, and comply with all Department of Education (DoE) requirements.
- The School Council will ensure that the overall school camp program has coherence, is sustainable and is educationally justifiable. A list of camps planned for the following year should be tabled at its November meeting each year to allow for this fact.⁽³⁾

Financial Considerations

- All camps must develop a budget that includes detailed and accurate costing and present it to the Finance Committee of School Council for deliberation. Parents will be notified of the exact costs and other relevant details of individual camps as soon as practicable.
- Students will not automatically be excluded from camps simply for financial reasons. Parents experiencing financial difficulty, who wish for their children to attend camp, will be required to discuss their individual situation with the Business Manager or the Student Wellbeing Coordinator (SWC). Decisions relating to alternative payment arrangements will be made on a case-by-case basis.

- All families will be given sufficient time to make payments for individual camps. Parents will be sent reminder notices a fortnight before the final payment date reminding them of the need to finalise payment. Children whose payments have not been finalised at least two weeks before the departure date will not be allowed to attend unless alternative payment arrangements have been organised with the Business Manager.
- Any family who has not met the required payment for a previous camp will be unable to participate in the camping program until this payment is finalised.
- Office staff will be responsible for managing and monitoring the payments made by parents and will provide classroom teachers with detailed records on a regular basis.

Student Safety and Administration

- The December edition of the school newsletter will provide parents with approximate dates and costs associated with the following year's camps.
- All school camps must be visited prior to the event and a risk analysis report completed.
- The designated "Teacher in Charge" of each camp will ensure that all camps, bus arrangements and camp activities comply with DoE guidelines.
- Only Camping Association of Victoria accredited camp sites will be used for camps in Victoria.
- The online DoE 'Notification of School Activity' information will be completed at least three weeks prior to the camp as required at:
www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/forms/school/sal/enteractivity.asp
- All students must provide written permission from their parents to attend the camp, as well as a completed "Confidential Medical Information for School Council Approved Excursions" form.
- Students with special medical or other needs will be encouraged to participate in camps whenever appropriate arrangements to ensure their well-being and safety can be made.
- Classroom teachers will be given the first option to attend year level camps.
- A senior staff member will be in attendance at school whilst the children are returning from camp. The Teacher in Charge will communicate with this person in regards the anticipated return time.
- The school will provide an appropriate form of mobile communication for all camps.
- The school will continue to provide the opportunity for teachers to update their first aid skills.

Parent/Other Community Involvement

- Parents/guardians and/or other community members may be invited to assist in the delivery of school camps as appropriate. When deciding who will attend, School Council will take into account –
 - Any specialised skills these people may have to offer. e.g. bus licence, first aid etc
 - The need to ensure gender balance.
 - The special needs of particular students.
- Persons selected to assist with the camps program will be required to undertake a police records check. The school will pay for the associated costs if required.
- Volunteers may be required to pay the accommodation and meals cost of the camp.

Student Behaviour

- Only students who have 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 due to poor behaviour at school. If the unsatisfactory behaviour continues, the child will then be excluded from camp. The decision to exclude a student will be made by the Principal, in consultation with the Teacher in Charge.
- Parents will be requested to collect their child from camp if their child exhibits behaviour that is considered unacceptable or dangerous. The Teacher in Charge, in consultation with the Principal, will make this decision. Costs incurred will be the responsibility of the parent.

Evaluation:

- This policy will be reviewed annually at the conclusion of the school's camps program, and as part of the school's three-year review cycle. Footnotes refer to "MSC Camps Implementation Proforma".

This policy was last ratified by School Council in....

August 2007