NATHALIA PRIMARY SCHOOL
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 aspect of the educational programs offered at our school.

Aims:
- To provide a program that promotes self-esteem, resourcefulness, independence, leadership, judgement, cooperation and tolerance.
- To provide all children with the opportunity to participate in a camping program that builds on learning experiences from year to year.
- To provide shared class experiences and a sense of group relationships with students and staff.
- To reinforce and extend classroom learnings.
- To provide a program that delivers skills and knowledge that may lead to a lifelong involvement in worthwhile leisure pursuits.

Implementation:
- A camp is defined as any activity involving at least one night’s accommodation, including sleepovers at school.
- The program will be developed throughout the school.
- School Council will ensure that all school camps are maintained at a reasonable and affordable cost, and comply with all Department of Education requirements.
- Parents will be given six months advance notice with dates and costs associated with the following year’s camps.
- Students will not 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 Principal. Decisions relating to alternative payment arrangements will be made by the Principal on a case-by-case basis.
- All families will be given sufficient time to make payments for individual camps. Children whose parents have not paid deposits by the due date, who do not make full payment by the due date, or who have not made alternative arrangements with the Principal will not be eligible to attend.
- Any family who has not met the required alternative payment for a previous camp will be unable to participate in the camping program until the outstanding payment is finalised.
- School Council is responsible for approval of all overnight excursions and camps.
- Prior to the commencement of any detailed planning relating to a proposed school camp, the Teacher in Charge must familiarise themselves with the Department’s Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors website. They must meet formally with the principal, to present the principal with a planning summary, to discuss the proposed camp, and to seek ‘in principle’ support for the event.
- If the Principal’s approval is granted, detailed planning should commence using the planning questions proforma as a guide. This must include a site visit and risk assessment.
- The school will use residential campsites accredited by the ‘Australian Camps Association’ or the ‘National Accommodation, Recreation & Tourism Accreditation Program (NARTA)’ for overnight camps, with exception to infant sleepover, which may be conducted at school or the Nathalia Recreation Reserve, follow appropriate risk management assessment.
- Prior to seeking School Council approval for the camp, organising staff are required to meet again with the principal and present him/her with all documentation, including the completed School Council approval proforma and all attachments, ensuring that time permits for the matter
to be placed on a School Council agenda and, if approved, that the online Notification of School Activity form then be submitted three weeks prior to the activity.

- When presenting information to School Council, the Teacher in Charge must be aware that Council will consider the following:-
  - What is the purpose of the camp and its connection to student learning?
  - Do staff members attending have the competence to provide the necessary supervision of students throughout the camp?
  - Is an appropriately trained member of staff able to provide first aid?
  - Have staff members who are not registered teachers completed a Working with Children Check?
  - Location of staff and students (itinerary) throughout the camp, including during travel known?
  - Is a record of telephone contacts for supervising staff accompanying the camp available?
  - Is a record of the names and family contacts for all students and staff available?
  - Are copies of the parental consent and confidential medical advice forms for those students on the camp available at the school?
  - Has a copy of the completed School Council approval proforma (including all attachments) been submitted and approved?
  - Will the online Notification of School Activity form be submitted three weeks prior to the excursion?

- School Council requires that students only travel on buses fitted with seatbelts where possible

- School Council requires that a report be tabled after each school camp, detailing feedback regarding the event, in particular any mishaps or areas for future improvement.

- Classroom teachers will be given the first option to attend camps.

- The Teacher In Charge must provide a mobile phone number.

- Parents may be invited to assist in the supervision of school camps. When deciding which parents will attend, the Teacher in Charge will take into account –
  - Any valuable skills the parents have to offer. e.g. bus licence, first aid etc
  - The preference to include both male and female parents.
  - The special needs of particular students.

- Parents selected to assist with the camps program will be required to undertake a Working with Children Check. The school will pay for any associated costs.

- Parent volunteers may be required to pay the accommodation and meals cost of the camp.

- While school camps are a team activity requiring the cooperation and common-sense of all participants, it is the Teacher in Charge who oversees the operations of the camp, takes charge of events, makes key decisions and accepts ultimate responsibility for the camp.

- Only children 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 they become unwell. The Teacher in Charge will make this decision. Costs incurred will be the responsibility of the parent.

- All Nathalia Primary School camps will begin at end in Nathalia.

- The primary references that must be consulted when considering all camps is the Safety Guidelines for Outdoor Education Activities website:  
  as well as the Vic Govt Schools Reference Guide 4.4.2.2 – Student Safety & Risk Management.
To be read in conjunction with the “Excursions” policy.

**Evaluation:**
- This policy will be annually at the conclusion of the school’s camps program, and as part of the school’s three-year review cycle.

This policy was last ratified by School Council in... November 2012