1. **Rationale:**
   1.1 The school’s camping and outdoor education 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.
   1.2 Camps are regarded as an essential part of the learning program for all children.

2. **Aims:**
   2.1 To provide all children with the opportunity to participate in a sequential camping program.
   2.2 To provide shared class experiences and a sense of group cohesiveness.
   2.3 To reinforce and extend classroom learnings.
   2.4 To provide a program that delivers skills and knowledge that may lead to a lifelong involvement in worthwhile leisure pursuits.
   2.5 To provide a program that promotes the “You Can Do It” Keys to Success of Persistence, Resilience, Confidence, Getting Along and Organisation.
   2.6 To provide a variety of learning experiences linked to learning units.
   2.7 To enhance children’s learning through the provision of direct experience.
   2.8 To help children learn to live and work with others.
   2.9 To increase knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the:
      - local area
      - areas that are different in nature to our own.

3. **Implementation:**
   3.1 A camp is defined as any activity involving at least one night’s accommodation.
   3.2 The program will be developed sequentially throughout the school.
   3.3 The School Council will ensure that all school camps are maintained at a reasonable and affordable cost and comply with all DEECD requirements.
   3.4 Parents will be provided with adequate (at least three months) notice of the approximate dates and costs associated with camps.
   3.5 For issues in regard to payments for camps, refer to the Camps Payment Policy.
   3.6 Classroom teachers are expected to attend camps involving their own grade level.
   3.7 The school will continue to provide the opportunity for teachers to update their first aid skills and will provide a Level 2 First Aid person on each camp.
   3.8 Parents will be invited to assist in the delivery of school camps. When deciding which parents will attend, the camps committee will take into account:
      - Any valuable skills the parents have to offer. e.g. bus licence, first aid
      - Previous experience in a camp environment.
      - The need to include both male and female parents.
      - The special needs of particular students.
   3.9 Parents selected to assist with the camps program will be required to hold a Working with Children Card.
   3.10 Selected parent volunteers will not be required to pay the accommodation and meals cost of the camp.
3.11 Each child will be provided with an equipment list which will include specific instructions regarding items expressly prohibited. At all camps, prohibited items will include: dangerous items, aerosol sprays, electronic and other expensive items.

3.12 Only children who have displayed sensible, reliable behaviour at school will be invited to participate in the camping and outdoor education program. Parents will be notified if a child is in danger of losing their invitation to participate in a camping or outdoor education experience due to poor behaviour at school. If the unsatisfactory behaviour continues, the child will then be excluded from camp or outdoor education experience.

3.13 The decision to exclude a student will be made by the Principal, in consultation with the classroom teacher and the Teacher in Charge of the activity.

3.14 Parents will be requested to collect their child from camp if their child exhibits behaviour that is considered unacceptable. The Teacher in Charge, in consultation with the Principal, will make this decision. Costs incurred will be the responsibility of the parent.

3.15 School camps are an outdoor education activity and, as such, are subject to specific planning and approval guidelines.

3.16 School Council is responsible for approval of all overnight excursions; camps; interstate and overseas visits; excursions requiring sea or air travel; excursions involving weekends or vacations; and adventure activities.

3.17 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 with a planning summary, to discuss the proposed camp and to seek ‘in principle’ support for the event.

3.18 If the principal’s approval is granted, detailed planning should commence using the planning questions proforma as a guide. This should include a site visit and risk assessment.

3.19 The school only uses residential campsites accredited by the “Australian Camps Association” or the “National Accommodation, Recreation & Tourism Accreditation Program (NARTA)” for overnight camps.

3.20 Prior to seeking School Council approval for the camp, organising staff are required to meet again with the principal and present 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 can then be submitted three weeks prior to the activity.

3.21 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?
- Is the location of staff and students known throughout the camp including during travel?
- Is a record of telephone contacts for supervising staff accompanying the camp available?
- Have reasonable measure been taken in planning to ensure that contact with camp staff is available at all times.
- 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?

3.22 Adventure activities are those that involve greater than normal risk such as base camping, bush walking, canoeing, snow activities, orienteering, cycling, horse riding, rock climbing and abseiling, challenge ropes courses, swimming (other than school swimming programs), surf activities, sailboarding, and similar activities. School Councillors may not have detailed knowledge of adventure activities. In such instances, organising staff should consult the adventure activities website or seek advice from peak bodies or skilled and experienced staff with recent experience instructing the activity to satisfy Council’s requirements. Emergency management plans are to be developed when adventure activities are being undertaken.

3.23 School Council requires that students only travel to camps on buses fitted with seatbelts.
3.24 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.
3.25 The school will ensure a mobile phone is available at all camps.
3.26 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 to the anticipated return time.
3.27 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.
3.28 This policy is to be read in conjunction with the “Excursions” policy and the “Camps Payment” policy.

4. Evaluation:
4.1 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.

References:
Vic Govt Schools Reference Guide
Circular 246/2007 – Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors -