



Department of
Education

APPENDIX G: CAMPING

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CAMPING

This document contains specific requirements related to camping activities and must be read in conjunction with *Appendix A: General Requirements in the Recreation and Outdoor Education Activities for Public Schools Procedures*.

1. BACKGROUND

Camping refers to the outdoor activity of staying overnight in a temporary or residential campsite, usually in a bush or remote setting for one or more nights.

Camping is often a component of associated activities. The Department teacher-in-charge should refer to separate advice provided in the relevant activity specific documents.

DEFINITIONS

ASSISTANT SUPERVISOR

Assists the Qualified Supervisor and or the Department teacher-in-charge. May or may not have relevant qualification or experience.

NON-RESIDENTIAL CAMPING

Sleeping in temporary accommodations including bush huts, tents, tarpaulin shelters, bush shelters or arrangements with no shelters, either at places with no facilities or at campsites where limited facilities are provided.

QUALIFIED SUPERVISOR

Has the required qualifications, skill, experience and technical knowledge to instruct the activity.

REMOTE OR ISOLATED AREAS

Includes any location where medical emergency assistance is more than one hour away by road and/or air.

RESIDENTIAL CAMPING

Sleeping at establishments that have permanent facilities such as dormitory accommodation, kitchen facilities, recreation options, showers and toilets (e.g. Broome Camp School).

SUPERVISORY TEAM

A pair or group of people who have a supervisory role at the activity.

TEACHER-IN-CHARGE

The member of the teaching staff who is authorised by the Department of Education to manage a school activity.

2. ENVIRONMENT

The suitability of the venue is determined after considering each student's capacity, skills, experience, the planned activities and the supervision required.

Students are only exposed to environments or locations (e.g. bushland, walk-trails, and roads) that have been assessed and deemed appropriate by the teacher-in-charge for the students' capacity, skills and experience.

Some camp sites have a recommended maximum number of participants. Research should be conducted around desired locations well in advance to ensure camp sites are suitable for group size and competency levels.

School groups using the Munda Bididi, Bibbulmun or Cape to Cape tracks (or other such areas) should consult the *Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions* regarding total fire bans, smoke, park closure alerts and updates that may affect their proposed activity.

River crossings can be extremely hazardous. Groups must not attempt a river crossing if the location or other elements are considered to be dangerous (e.g. during periods of flooding; where the depth, speed, bottom load or ability of the group is unknown; or in an estuarine crocodile habitat; see *Bushwalking* for further information).

Many sites have access restrictions. Written permission must be gained from the relevant authority (*Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions* regional office, local land management body, lease holders or private property owner). These organisations/owners can also be consulted for information about:

- route planning (including evacuation);
- alternative routes in the event of restricted access;
- shelter, toilets, drinking water etc. availability at the location/venue; and
- procedures to follow when there is a risk of bad weather, storms, bushfires and/or other changes to the environment.

WEATHER CONSIDERATIONS

Camping is not to be undertaken in any area where high alert weather conditions are forecast and/or any area where the fire danger rating is very high or above. Refer to *Department of Fire and Emergency Services* for fire alerts or fire danger ratings or contact the local shire as part of an environmental check.

If bushwalking or camping during the fire restriction season, plan a route that allows for evacuation and confirm that the group has access to up-to-date fire information via radio, mobile or satellite phones providing bulletins from a manned base. Avoid commencing camping activities on a total fire ban day.

Weather conditions need to be assessed and monitored in the days leading up to the activity, on the day of the activity and throughout the activity, to assess conditions and comply with fire ban regulations. The supervisory team may need to modify, relocate or cancel the activity at any time. Check the *Bureau of Meteorology* for up-to-date conditions and weather warnings.

Guidance

The qualified supervisor should have first-hand knowledge of the venue. Other key sources of information might include:

- the venue manager;
- a site manager;
- a local external provider;
- people with specialist knowledge of the area or activity;
- specialist activity organisations and clubs;
- Outdoors WA;
- the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions;
- the local ranger, land manager or property owner/lease holder; or
- other schools that have conducted similar activities in that location.

Selecting a campsite

Consideration is given to:

- locating the group in an area near a fresh water supply;
- selecting well-drained level ground;
- sheltering from prevailing conditions;
- avoiding rivers, creek beds, swamps and flats that are subject to flooding;
- avoiding fire dangers; and
- having enough open area to enable tents to be placed well out of any tree fall area during a severe weather warning period or having access to a suitable site nearby.

Erecting tents

Consideration is given to:

- erecting tents sufficiently apart to prevent rapid spread of fire in the campsite;
- keeping tents a minimum of four (4) metres from the campfire; and
- visibility of guy ropes (e.g. conspicuous objects can be tied around guy ropes to highlight the position of tents).

3. CAPACITY OF STUDENTS

Prior to commencing the camping program, the Department teacher-in-charge must confirm that each student has the capacity to participate safely.

Alternative, modified or adjusted activities should be provided for students who have limited capacity to participate.

Students with an impairment may participate in desired activities provided adequate safety and control measures are implemented. Specific consideration is given to:

- the type and level of impairment;
- location and access; and
- curriculum adjustments so that the student can access the curriculum activity on the same basis as their peers.

Students who have a medical condition that may impact on their safety must be cleared by a medical practitioner before they can participate.

Students may require additional skills if they are to participate safely in navigating, hiking, bushwalking, and/or swimming activities. See the relevant activity specific document for further information, qualifications and supervision requirements that may apply.

4. STUDENT HEALTH CARE

Refer to *Appendix A: General Requirements in the Recreation and Outdoor Education Activities for Public Schools Procedures* for further requirements.

5. ACTIVITIES

The full scope of the camping program must be assessed before determining the activities and areas to be used.

Before departure, and if practicable, students should be provided with opportunities to pitch and strike tents, test all equipment to confirm that everything operates safely, and demonstrate that they have the appropriate clothing for the anticipated conditions.

Sanitary practices

The Department teacher-in-charge should encourage and promote the following environmentally sound sanitation practices and these include:

- all students are instructed on the importance of good personal hygiene (e.g. hand washing);
- sterilising hand gel is made available for hand washing purposes. If students are allergic to gel, an alternative may need to be provided;
- soap and/or detergents are not used in lakes or streams, including dishwashing;
- toilets and washing with detergent locations are located at least 100 metres away from the water supply and a discrete distance from campsites and defined tracks;
- excreta and toilet paper are disposed of using a method that suits the area, size of the group, soil type, climate and time of year;
- a toilet pit is constructed for large groups in areas of higher visitation;
- sanitary products are carried out of the camping area; and
- wet sullage pits are dug well away from the campsite and 100m from water sources.

Food preparation

Participants must always wash their hands before handling and cooking food.

All cooking and eating utensils are thoroughly cleaned immediately after each meal, dried, and packed away.

Washing up water that contains detergent or soap is carried out away from the campsite and disposed of in a wet sullage pit, 100m away from water sources.

All rubbish, including tins, aluminium foil, food scraps and plastics are carried out.

Guidance**Minimal impact strategies**

For basic camping, a minimal approach should be adopted, (as per Leave No Trace principles), including:

- following the guidelines for camp fire and stove safety (below);
- appropriate disposal of human waste;
- camping and travelling on durable surfaces;
- leaving 'found artefacts' behind;
- respecting all flora and fauna;
- being considerate of other visitors; and
- not exceeding the group size specified by land managers.

Camp fire and stove safety practices

Fire safety practices are determined and communicated to all participants.

Naked lights (e.g. matches, candles and cooking stoves) must not be used as lighting inside tents.

Stoves must never be used in tents, due to the potential danger of asphyxiation or an explosion.

Fires can be dangerous to participants and the environment. Fires should only be lit in approved areas or existing fireplaces. Preferably fuel stoves should be used instead.

Flammable liquids are never poured onto a fire.

A fire or lit stove must never be left unattended. Stoves must be totally extinguished and cold to touch before going to bed.

Guidance**Camp fires**

If a fire is deemed necessary, it is recommended that:

- the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions policy and alerts on fire lighting/bans are observed. In some campgrounds, fires are not permitted at any time; at others, campfires are permitted with seasonal restrictions and in provided fire pits only;
- a minimum of a four (4) metre radius around a fire site be cleared (as specified by Department of Fire and Emergency Services);
- fire rings or fire buckets are utilised, if provided;
- minimum impact fire techniques are used (as per Leave No Trace principles);
- conditions are deemed safe by the Department teacher-in-charge before lighting a fire;
- the size of the fire is appropriate to the needs of the group for cooking and warmth;
- the fire is built downwind and away from tents;
- if possible, the fire is built in a previously-used fireplace;
- flammable liquids are never poured onto a fire
- rocks are not used around a fire set on the ground; and
- all signs of the fire are removed by burying or scattering the ashes.

Stoves

Fuel for stoves is highly flammable and can explode if not handled correctly. Methylated spirit stoves are recommended, as they are easier to operate, less flammable and less dangerous.

Students should be instructed in the proper use of stoves to ensure that:

- *fuel bottles are clearly marked, and if possible, a distinctive colour is used to distinguish from drinking water bottles;*
- *the cap of the fuel bottle is replaced and secured before lighting the stove;*
- *fuel bottles are removed from the cooking area before lighting the stove;*
- *the stove is stable when in use;*
- *the stove strap is completely removed prior to use;*
- *the stove is positioned at least four (4) metres away from an identified cooking area, removed from foot traffic, flammable objects, particularly plastic ground sheets, backpacks, tents and sleeping bags;*
- *a lit stove is never left unattended;*
- *the stove is filled away from the cooking area; and*
- *all stove parts are checked and accounted for when packing the stove away.*

6. EQUIPMENT

All equipment must be checked to confirm that it is appropriate to the activity, safe and in working order.

Prior to the camping trip, the Department teacher-in-charge will confirm with students an equipment list that includes details about:

- sleeping gear (e.g. sleeping bags, pillows, blankets, sheets);
- eating and drinking utensils;
- footwear suitable (usually enclosed) for wet weather, walking or sporting activities and recreational use;
- protective clothing or equipment appropriate to the requirements of the route and potential weather conditions (e.g. a wide brimmed hat, waterproof jacket, sun protection, broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen applied as per manufacturer's instructions, insect repellent, warm or (synthetic) thermal clothing, sunglasses etc.);
- specialist camping equipment (e.g. tents, stoves) as required; and
- suitable and sufficient water carrying capacity.

Guidance

For further information, refer to [Australian Adventure Activity Good Practice Guide: Camping.](#)

Emergency equipment (for the group)

Prior to commencing the activity, the Department teacher-in-charge confirms that all supervisors have access to:

- a waterproofed or laminated copy of the route, or a composite plan;
- the *Risk Management Plan* and the *Emergency Response Plan* (see *Appendix B and C: General Requirements in the Recreation and Outdoor Education Activities for Public Schools Procedures*);
- emergency communication equipment (as appropriate to the location), such as a mobile or satellite phone, details of the nearest landline, radio, Emergency Position-Indicating Radio Beacon (EPIRB) and/or Personal Location Beacon (PLB);
- accessible emergency equipment;
- appropriate and readily available first aid equipment. The first aid kit must contain items appropriate for the activity, location, size and needs of the group and duration of the activity;
- tools for waste disposal (e.g. a trowel);
- emergency equipment (e.g. a whistle, torch, firelighters); and
- a compass, waterproofed map or GPS.

7. THE SUPERVISORY TEAM

Refer to *Appendix A: General Requirements in the Recreation and Outdoor Education Activities for Public Schools Procedures* for further requirements.

8. EXTERNAL PROVIDERS

Refer to *Appendix A: General Requirements in the Recreation and Outdoor Education Activities for Public Schools Procedures* for further requirements.

9. MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS AND COMPETENCIES

The Department teacher-in-charge must confirm that the supervisory team members possess appropriate skills in camping, navigation and bushcraft, and have the appropriate experience, knowledge and skills to identify and manage potential risks at any stage during camping activities.

Refer to *Appendix A: General Requirements* for mandated general requirements that apply to all recreation and outdoor education activities:

- first aid qualifications; and
- evidence requirements for all qualifications and competencies.

Minimum qualifications and/or competencies can include, but are not limited to:

A qualified supervisor must hold a relevant current first aid certificate including current cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR) accreditation. In the case where the group is in an isolated or remote area, a member of the supervisory team must have appropriate first aid qualifications. Remote or isolated areas may include any location where medical emergency assistance might be more than one hour away, by road and or air.

Guidance

Refer to the Bushwalking supporting document for qualifications and supervision requirements that apply if bushwalking is a component of the camping activity.

Refer to the Swimming and Water Based Activities document for qualifications and supervision requirements that apply if students are likely to enter water, or if water may be an inherent risk.

Skills and experience

The Department teacher-in-charge must confirm that the supervisory team:

- has regular and recent experience in the activity at the level being offered to students;
- has skills in interpreting and responding to weather conditions;
- first aid and CPR qualifications appropriate for overnight expeditions; and
- has competency in and understands the emergency responses and supervision responsibilities.

It is recommended that supervisors maintain evidence of their currency and experience in the use of maps, compasses and relevant camping activities through the use of a logbook, or similar.

10. MINIMUM LEVELS OF SUPERVISION

Group sizes and supervision levels are determined after considering the:

- purpose of the activity;
- age, capacity, experience and skills of each student;
- gender of participating students;
- qualifications, capacity and experience of the supervisor(s);
- type of activities being undertaken;
- students' medical conditions or disabilities;
- land manager restrictions;
- weather conditions; and
- nature of the environment.

For all camping activities regardless of age of participants or group size, the minimum level of supervision is:

- two supervisors at all times; and
- one of these supervisors must have the required qualifications.

NON-RESIDENTIAL CAMPING

Kindergarten - Year 3

Must have at least two supervisors at all times:

- At least one qualified supervisor for every 22 students or part thereof; and
- At least one supervisor for every 5 students or part thereof (inclusive of the qualified supervisor).

Year 4 - 6

Must have at least two supervisors at all times:

- At least one qualified supervisor for every 22 students or part thereof; and
- At least one supervisor for every 8 students or part thereof (inclusive of the qualified supervisor).

Year 7 - 12

Must have at least two supervisors at all times:

- At least one qualified supervisor for every 22 students or part thereof; and
- At least one supervisor for every 11 students or part thereof (inclusive of the qualified supervisor).

RESIDENTIAL CAMPING:

Kindergarten - Year 3

Must have at least two supervisors at all times:

- At least one qualified supervisor for every 22 students or part thereof; and
- At least one supervisor for every 6 students or part thereof (inclusive of the qualified supervisor).

Year 4 - 6

Must have at least two supervisors at all times:

- At least one qualified supervisor for every 22 students or part thereof; and
- At least one supervisor for every 9 students or part thereof (inclusive of the qualified supervisor).

Year 7 - 12

Must have at least two supervisors at all times:

- At least one qualified supervisor for every 22 students or part thereof; and
- At least one supervisor for every 11 students or part thereof (inclusive of the qualified supervisor).

The table below illustrates the supervision requirements for common group sizes. Groups may be larger than those indicated here but must remain within the prescribed supervision ratios and any limits set out earlier in this document.

Camping type	Year level	Number of students	Qualified supervisor	Experienced assistant supervisor	Total supervisory team
Non-residential camping	K - 3	1 - 10	1	1	2
		11 - 15	1	2	3
		16 - 20	1	3	4
		21 - 22	1	4	5
		23 - 25	2	3	5
	4 - 6	1 - 16	1	1	2
		17 - 22	1	2	3
		23 - 24	2	1	3
		25 - 32	2	2	4
	7 - 12	1 - 22	1	1	2
		23 - 33	2	1	3
Residential camping	K - 3	1 - 12	1	1	2
		13 - 18	1	2	3
		19 - 22	1	2	3
		23 - 24	2	2	4
		25 - 30	2	3	5
	4 - 6	1 - 18	1	1	2
		19 - 22	1	2	3
		23 - 27	2	1	3
		28 - 36	2	2	4
	7 - 12	1 - 22	1	1	2
		23 - 33	2	1	3
34 - 44		2	2	4	

All overnight camping trips:

When considering an overnight stay, must take into account the:

- supervisory and accommodation arrangements, especially for sleeping and ablutions;
- needs of all students, including transgender and intersex students, when planning the excursion (see the Western Australian Equal Opportunity Commission's *Guidelines for supporting sexual and gender diversity in schools*;
- selection of supervisors must endeavour to reflect the demographics of the group;
- supervisors must not be placed in a position where there is potential for allegations of improper conduct, or where the propriety of their behaviour could be questioned;
- duty of care responsibilities of supervisors. Supervisors must be made aware when they are supervising students overnight, that they remain on call at all times even when sleeping; and
- supervisors that may be required to take responsibility for students at short notice in the event of an emergency.

Guidance**Transgender and intersex students**

The Western Australian Equal Opportunity Commission's Guidelines for supporting sexuality and gender diversity in schools includes information that can inform the planning of excursions, overnight excursions, and use of facilities.

11. SUPERVISION STRATEGIES

Supervision strategies must be established to confirm that the safety and wellbeing of students is maintained at all times.

Once at the site, supervisors must check the campsite regularly to confirm that it is kept clean of rubbish and free from hazards such as cooking activities in high traffic areas.

12. IDENTIFICATION OF PARTICIPANTS

In bushland settings, students should always be clearly visible.

Supervisors should carry bright coloured equipment and/or wear coloured clothing that allows them to be seen easily.

Refer to *Appendix A: General Requirements in the Recreation and Outdoor Education Activities for Public Schools Procedures* for further requirements.

13. COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

Refer to *Appendix A: General Requirements in the Recreation and Outdoor Education Activities for Public Schools Procedures* for further requirements.

14. RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN

Refer to *Appendix A: General Requirements in the Recreation and Outdoor Education Activities for Public Schools Procedures* for further requirements.

15. EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN

Refer to *Appendix A: General Requirements in the Recreation and Outdoor Education Activities for Public Schools Procedures* for further requirements.

16. BRIEFING STUDENTS AND SUPERVISORS

All participants are briefed about:

- the educational purpose and the cooperative nature of the activity;
- the activity itinerary;
- the required skills appropriate to the activity;
- participants' roles and responsibilities, including standards of acceptable behaviour and activity rules;
- the role and location of supervisors;
- the system for identifying students and supervisors;
- food and water requirements;
- procedures that will be followed if members of the party are overdue, or become lost or separated from the group (refer to *Appendix 1: Bushwalking for advice when lost* in the *Bushwalking* document).
- potential hazards and safety procedures appropriate to the activity and venue;
- buddy practices and lost buddy procedures;
- health and hygiene protocols;
- areas demarcated and identified specifically for student groups;
- communication strategies that will be used throughout the activity, including a signal to gain the attention of the whole group; and a signal to be used if assistance is required;
- emergency and evacuation procedures, signals and location of emergency equipment;
- appropriate clothing for the activity and weather conditions, including thermal and sun protection;
- minimal impact principles for that location (see *Leave No Trace* principles);
- aspects of the environment and expected weather conditions (if appropriate); and
- the route to be followed including pre-determined stops and/or meeting points along the way (if applicable).

Special briefing sessions must be arranged for students who were absent from preparatory briefings.

17. INFORMED CONSENT

Refer to *Appendix A: General Requirements in the Recreation and Outdoor Education Activities for Public Schools Procedures* for further requirements.

Site managers at the Department Camp School must adhere to all Department policies and procedures.

BROOME CAMP SCHOOL

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