

Outdoor Education at King's School

Why Outdoor Education?

Outdoor education provides a unique experience that few other activities can rival. It gives children an opportunity to develop initiative, resourcefulness and a better awareness of self. It stimulates an appreciation of the environment and broadens the horizons of our children.

It is difficult to overstate the benefits of a well planned Outdoor Education Programme on the health, happiness, character and growth of the boys. Outdoor education not only promotes self-reliance and team work, but also affords a sense of community that embraces the whole school. From past experiences we have observed improved group relationships, with the boys becoming more caring and thoughtful of others. The boys demonstrate a sense of their own achievement, and are supportive and appreciative of their classmates' achievements.

Outdoor education challenges the students in many different ways and gives staff the opportunity to gain a valuable insight into the personality and potential of the boys in a more informal learning environment.

The Outdoor Education Programme provides an opportunity for each boy to:

- Develop self-awareness and confidence in his own abilities
- Increase his personal fitness level
- Develop and practise a diverse range of skills
- Increase his awareness of the environment
- Enjoy the social and personal benefits of interaction with others
- Share in planning, organisation and administration
- Experience a wide range of outdoor activities
- Experience challenge and adventure

Carl Gooding
Director of Sport

Where Do We Take The Boys?

The Outdoor Education Programme camps take place at the following locations:

Years 1 and 2	Sleep over at King's School	End of November
Year 3	Motutapu Island	End of November – 2 days
Year 4	Finlay Park	Week 1- November - 4 days
Year 5	Lake Karapiro	Week 6 -March - 5 days
Year 6	Kawau Island	Week 6 -March - 5
Year 7	Motutapu Island	Week 6 -March - 5 days
Year 8	Northland Venture	Week 6 -March - 5 days

What Happens At Each Camp?

Year 1 and 2 Sleep Over (King's School)

The sleep over begins with a barbeque dinner on the top lawn. The boys then sleep overnight in their classrooms. Occasionally the Year 2 group may camp out overnight in tents on the Major's field. The camp continues the next day with a swim and breakfast, followed by activities either at the School or off site.

Year 3 Camp (Motutapu Island)

This is a two-day trip to Motutapu Island. The boys travel by bus from the School to Half Moon Bay. From here they board a barge to take them across to Islington Bay on Rangitoto Island. The boys then walk the 5km across to Home Bay on Motutapu, where they will camp overnight. While on Motutapu the boys take part in a range of activities including kayaking, beach games, beach-combing, fishing and sliding down hills. The following day the boys walk back to Islington bay for the return journey to Auckland. They should arrive back at the School at approximately 2.00pm.

Year 4 Camp (Finlay Park, Lake Karapiro)

This four-day trip is the first longer stay camp that the boys will experience. The boys leave Auckland on a Tuesday and return the following Friday. The boys will stay at Finlay Park, a purpose built camp at the eastern end of Lake Karapiro, where they will have the opportunity to take part in activities such as kayaking, orienteering, go-carting, crafts and a top team competition. In addition, this camp offers a confidence course and an adventure trail. The boys will be accommodated in bunk rooms, and have all meals provided. Parents attending this camp should be confident around water, and prepared to take part in all activities.

Year 5 Camp (Camp Karapiro)

This is the first five-day camp that the boys will experience, and takes place at Camp Karapiro, which is located at the western end of the lake. This is a purpose-built camp where the boys are housed in bunk rooms and catered for by a professional cook. During the camp the boys take part in a number of activities including archery, kayaking, sailing, team building, high and low ropes courses and art. The boys will spend one night camping in tents off-site, where they will have the opportunity to cook their own meal.

Year 6 Camp (Kauwau Island)

This is a five-day camp that takes place on Kauwau Island. The boys leave school on a Monday, and travel to the base camp on Kauwau Island where they will spend the majority of their stay. While on the island the boys will take part in a number of activities including hiking, kayaking, snorkelling, orienteering, sailing, ropes course, confidence

course and team building. Each class will spend one night in tents at different locations away from the base camp, where they will have the opportunity to pitch a tent and cook their own meal. The boys return to School on the Friday afternoon. Parents attending this camp should be confident around water, and have a reasonable level of fitness.

Year 7 Camp (Motutapu Island)

This is a five-day camp at Home Bay on Motutapu Island. The boys depart from the School on a Monday, and travel by barge from Half Moon Bay to Islington Bay, on Rangitoto Island. From here they tramp the 5km to the campsite at Home Bay, on Motutapu. The boys and adults will stay in tents for the duration of the camp, and prepare all their own food. During the week the boys, staff and parents will be involved in a number of activities including tramping, mountain biking, abseiling, kayaking, orienteering, raft making, go-karting and a daily aquathon. Each activity has a time allocation of approximately three hours. Parents attending this camp must be able to participate in all of these activities, and will be expected to supervise small groups of boys. On the Friday, at the completion of the camp, the boys will walk back to the barge for the return journey to school.

Year 8 Camp (Northland Venture)

This is a five-day trip down the west coast of the North Island, from Opononi to the Kaiwi Lakes. The boys depart from school on a Monday and travel by bus up to the Hokianga Harbour. They spend the first night at the Kokohuia Marae, in Omapere. On the Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday the boys make their way down the coastline following the Waipoua coastal track, camping at Kawerua and Waikara Beach, before climbing over the Maunganui Bluff to the Kaiwi Lakes. The boys spend the last night at the Kaiwi Lakes before returning to school on the Friday. The three-day tramp covers a distance of approximately 60km. Boys, staff and parents each carry a full pack during the entire tramp. The average weight of the boys' packs is around 8kg. The tramp is challenging but achievable, and promotes a degree of self-reliance, physical fitness and co-operation. Adults who attend this camp should be confident around water and have a good level of fitness.

What Risks Are Involved And How Do We Manage These Risks?

The Outdoor Education Programme does involve some risks, however we would like to assure you that we will do our utmost to minimise these. To do this we undertake to identify and assess all potential risks, and put systems in place to manage risks as safely as possible.

A meeting is held, prior to any group leaving the School, to discuss all the details of the camp with the camp coordinator. During this meeting each activity is scrutinised and both the perceived and real risks identified. A risk management plan is then established for the activity. If the risks for any given activity are considered to be too great, it will not be included in the programme.

The responsibility for managing risks lies with the camp coordinator and the teaching staff on the camp. It is their collective responsibility to assess all risks and develop a plan to manage those risks. The safety of the boys is paramount. Therefore if the staff or parents are in any doubt about the safety of any given activity, that activity will not take place.

What Is The Value Of Perceived Risk In A Child's Discovery Of Self?

Children grow through taking risks, whether it is climbing a tree or walking home from school alone for the first time. It is through taking perceived risks that children grow in confidence and develop a sense of self. Too often today society is removing all risk from our lives and children grow up fearful of the unknown.

Children need to be able to test their limits in a relatively 'safe' environment. Our boys need to be able to challenge themselves through taking perceived risks and to grow in confidence because of this experience. Our Outdoor Education Programme offers the boys a chance to do this in a controlled way.

What Are The Supervision Requirements?

Ensuring adequate supervision of the boys during the Outdoor Education Programme promotes safety and helps to minimise risks. The level of supervision required depends upon the type of activity being engaged in. The following adult to pupil ratios are the minimum required:

- Water-based activities require a ratio of 1:4
- Land-based activities require a ratio of 1:8
- Activities taking place in the bush require a ratio of 1:6

What Is The Parent Selection Policy?

The Policy is appended to this Information Booklet.

What About Medical Problems?

Parents are required to complete a permission form prior to the boys going on camp, and as part of the information required, they are asked to provide details of any existing medical problems affecting their child. This information is discussed with the doctor attending the camp, so that they can be made aware of any problems that may arise and arrange the necessary equipment to deal with these. On arrival at the camp the doctor will meet with any boys who have specific problems or who are taking medication.

Camp Doctor

We are very fortunate to have the services of our parent doctors. These parents give freely of their time in order to assist us with the provision of medical support for the boys while on camp. The presence of a doctor ensures that help is available should any of the boys have any concerns about their condition. Teaching staff will work in conjunction with the doctor to manage the provision of medical support.

Medical Kits

We have extensive medical kits which are reviewed annually by a team of doctors. Most of the problems that arise tend to be relatively minor, such as blisters, headaches etc.

What Do Parent Helpers Do?

We are extremely fortunate that so many of our parents wish to attend school camps as parent helpers. Parents play an important role in guiding, encouraging and supporting the boys taking part in the Outdoor Education Programme.

The role of parent helper at camp is very rewarding but also requires a degree of responsibility. Parent helpers are required to assist the teaching staff with all aspects of camp life, and are invited to join in all activities. The two main roles that parent helpers are assigned are Activity Leader, and Group Leader.

The Activity Leaders will be trained to lead a specific activity with all groups of boys. They are required to:

- Instruct and direct the activity
- Outline the relevant safety procedures and ensure that they are followed
- Encourage and support the boys
- Identify and support hesitant or frightened children
- Report any difficulties to the Camp Director or teaching staff.

The Group Leaders take responsibility for a group of boys, usually not including his or her own son. They are required to:

- Brief the boys about the activities that they will be taking part in
- Ensure that the boys are suitably dressed and prepared for activities
- Ensure that the boys wear their hats and sun block
- Encourage the boys to be self reliant
- Provide regular feedback about the group to the group's teacher
- Check the group's dormitory each morning and insist on a high standard of tidiness
- Join in each activity

The harmony of the camp is very important. It is essential that parents helping on camp are there for the right reasons. It is difficult not to focus solely on your own child, however parents who are not attending the camp need to know that their children are being just as well supported and encouraged as those children whose parents are at camp. To facilitate this we usually place parents with a different group to the one their child is in.

All parent helpers can expect the boys to demonstrate cooperation and good manners, and staff will always be available for support. Parent helpers that participate fully and have fun with the boys will find the camp a very enjoyable experience.

OUTDOOR EDUCATION

Parent selection policy

We are extremely fortunate that so many of our parents wish to attend school camps as parent helpers. Parents play an important role in guiding, encouraging and supporting the boys taking part in the Outdoor Education Programme.

Parents can be assured that the School will select parents by consistently applying criteria that are widely regarded as being fair. Subject to not compromising the fundamental purpose of the outdoor education programme, the School seeks to involve as many parents as possible.

Criteria:

Supervision of outdoor education must ensure that:

- All participants are safe
- The staff and voluntary leaders are qualified to teach the skills we want to develop
- Adult/child ratios are appropriate for the activity
- The harmony of the total group is encouraged and supported.

Guidelines:

With these criteria in mind we select the parents to achieve the following:

- A number of medically trained parents appropriate to the nature of camp
- All specific responsibilities can be competently managed
- A balance in the number from each class is achieved where possible.

Process:

1. School selects staff, parents and other leaders for each camp.
2. The selection of parents will be a cooperative effort involving all staff attending that camp and a staff member from the previous year group. The Director of Sport will supervise these selections. All selections will be shown and confirmed by Headmaster.
3. The School will try and involve as many parents as possible throughout the camps. As stated in the guidelines, the breakdown of parents selected for camps will be based on medical experience and previous experience on school camps.
4. Parents who prove to have a very good skill set on a camp may be accepted for additional camps.
5. A number of places will, on the Year 7 camp in particular, be allocated to new parents.
6. The process will make every endeavour to create the best management team for that particular camp.
7. In all selections the boys needs and safety will come first!

