



Camperdown College

Camps and Excursions Policy

PURPOSE

To explain to our school community the processes and procedures Camperdown College will use when planning and conducting camps, excursions and adventure activities for students.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all camps and excursions organised by Camperdown College. This policy also applies to adventure activities organised by Camperdown College, regardless of whether or not they take place on or off school grounds, and to school sleep-overs and excursions or camps at the school's Naroghid site.

This policy is intended to complement the Department's policy and guidelines on excursions, camps and adventure activities which all Victorian government schools are required to follow. Camperdown College will follow both this policy, as well as the Department's policy and guidelines when planning for and conducting camps and excursions.

This policy does not apply to student workplace learning or intercampus travel.

AIMS OF CAMPS AND EXCURSIONS PROGRAM

- To reinforce, complement and extend the learning opportunities beyond the classroom.
- To develop an understanding that learning is not limited to school, and that valuable and powerful learning takes place in the real world.
- To provide a safe, secure learning experience for students in venues external to the school.
- To provide experiences that promote self-esteem, resourcefulness, problem solving, independence and leadership.
- To further develop social skills such as cooperation, tolerance, communication, individual and group interaction.
- To provide shared class and year level experiences, team building and a sense of group cohesiveness.
- To provide experiences that deliver skills and knowledge that may lead to a lifelong involvement in worthwhile leisure pursuits.
- To extend students' understanding of their physical and cultural environment

DEFINITIONS

Excursions:

For the purpose of this policy, excursions are activities organised by the school where the students:

- are taken out of the school grounds (for example, a camp, day excursion, school sports);
- undertake adventure activities, regardless of whether or not they occur outside the school grounds;

Note: workplace learning activities (such as work experience) and intercampus travel are not considered school excursions.

Camps are excursions involving at least one night's accommodation (including school sleep-overs).

Local excursions are excursions to locations within walking distance of the school and do not involve 'Adventure Activities'.

Adventure activities are activities that involve a greater than normal risk. Further information and examples of adventure activities are available on the Department's Policy and Advisory Library, at the following link: <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/excursions/guidance/adventure-activities>

APPROVALS

All excursions and camps must be approved by the Principal prior to information being distributed to students and parents/carers.

Local and day excursions will be approved by the Assistant Principal on behalf of the Principal, through Compass.

Overnight camps, adventure activities, interstate, overseas or travel by air or water will be approved by the Principal and minuted at School Council. A completed Principal Approval Template (on staff drive) and the completed risk register (on staff drive) must be submitted to the Assistant Principal for checking prior to obtaining Principal approval.

The costing component is to be approved by the **Business Manager**, regardless of whether there is a direct cost to students.

School Council will approve the camp budget (subsequent to it being approved by the Business Manager) and the entering into a contract or other such agreement with a third party, for example a camp provider.

IMPLEMENTATION

The organising teacher must:

- Plan well in advance and give parents as much notice as possible, particularly if there is a cost involved.
- Check the calendar and liaise with Assistant Principal and other staff to ensure suitability of intended dates. Once approved, update Compass calendar and admin diary.
- Use the 'event' component of Compass for camp/excursion planning and approvals, as well as submitting a completed Principal Approval Template for all camps and also for day excursions involving adventure activities.
- Identify risks and develop a plan to manage these by completing a risk assessment on school template for all camps and also for day excursions involving adventure activities.
- Complete the online DET Student Activity Locator linked to Compass event and provide an electronic copy to the Business Manager to be retained with the camp/excursion documentation.
- Use the summary of excursion documentation to ensure minimum documentation requirements are met.
- Follow expected timelines.

Refer to Appendix A for detailed planning requirements.

Fire safety

The risk assessment will include consideration of the risk of bushfire activity in the excursion location. In the event of a Code Red Day being announced, excursions or camp activities in affected locations will be cancelled or rescheduled.

Inclusion

Camperdown College is committed to ensuring students with additional needs are provided with an inclusive camps and excursions program and will work with families during the planning stage, as needed, to support all students' attendance and participation in camp and excursion activities.

Supervision

Camperdown College follows the Department's guidelines in relation to supervision of students during excursions and camps: <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/excursions/guidance/supervision>

Except where otherwise indicated, all excursions and camps must have a minimum of two staff members.

- **Local excursions**
Regular class teacher-student ratios with an additional accompanying staff member (as required)
- **Day excursions**
1 to 20 staff-student ratio with a minimum of 2 staff
- **Overnight base camps**
1 to 10 staff-student ratio with a minimum of 2 staff
- **Overnight study camps**
1 to 15 staff-student ratio with a minimum of 2 staff
- **Interstate travel**
1 to 10 staff-student ratio with a minimum of 2 staff
- **Overseas travel**
1 to 10 staff-student ratio with a minimum of 2 staff
- **Adventure activities**
Specific ratios for each activity, see
<https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/excursions/guidance/adventure-activities>

All excursion staff (including parent volunteers) will be familiar with supervision requirements and the specific procedures for dealing with emergencies on each camp and excursion. All school staff will be aware that they retain overall responsibility for the supervision and care of students throughout all camps and excursions (including adventure activities), regardless of whether or not external providers are managing the activity.

Agreements with external providers

- ensure the external provider has a current public liability insurance certificate (minimum \$10 million) provided by an Australian Prudential Regulation Authority (APRA) approved insurer
- ensure Working with Children Checks are completed for all adults employed by the external provider who will be in direct contact with students. Note: Working With Children Checks are available in all Australian states. For overseas countries, schools should enquire about what kinds of checks their country does and ask for information to show that staff of the external provider are appropriately vetted

- ensure the provider is aware of and will comply with the department's [Excursions policy](#) and relevant sections of the department's [Adventure activity guidelines](#) (if relevant)
- agree to destroy all personal and health information provided by the school at the end of the contract.
- Schools must refuse to sign any waivers of liability where the provider seeks to absolve itself and its personnel from liability for negligence on behalf of students and they must not encourage students or their parents/carers to sign. Refer to [Excursions: Liability, waivers and indemnities](#).
- For overseas travel, schools must arrange travel insurance through the Victorian Managed Insurance Authority (VMIA) to cover financial loss from cancellation of school-affiliated international excursions offered by the external providers. Schools must not rely on insurance offered by external providers. Refer to [Overseas travel](#).

Parent volunteers

Parents may be invited to assist with camps and excursions. School staff are in charge of camps and excursions and parent/carer volunteers are expected to follow teachers' instructions. When deciding which parents/carers will attend, the Organising Teacher will take into account any valuable skills the parents/carers have to offer (e.g. bus licence, first aid etc.) and the special needs of particular students. Camperdown College requires all parent or carer camp or excursion volunteers and all external providers working directly with our students to have a current Working with Children Check card.

Parent/carer consent

For all camps and excursions, other than local excursions, Camperdown College will provide parents/carers with a specific consent form outlining the details of the proposed activity. Camperdown College uses notes generated from Compass to inform parents about camps and excursions, asking parents/carers to sign and return the part of the note confirming they consent to their child's participation. Parents/carers are encouraged to contact the school to discuss any questions or concerns that they or their child may have with a proposed camp or excursion.

For local excursions, Camperdown College will provide parents and carers with an annual Local Excursions consent form in the student planner to be completed at the start of the year and will also provide advance notice to parents/carers of an upcoming or recurring local excursion through Compass notifications and/or a note home.

Cost of camps and excursions, refunds and support

The cost of all camps and excursions is to be paid by parents/carers unless alternative arrangements have been agreed to by the Principal prior to the excursion. All families will be given sufficient time to make payments for all activities. Consent forms will have clearly stated payment amounts and payment finalisation dates.

Camperdown College will make all efforts to ensure that students are not excluded for financial reasons. Families experiencing financial difficulty are invited to discuss alternative payment arrangements with the Business Manager or Organising Teacher. The Department's Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund (CSEF) provides payments for eligible students to attend school activities, including camps and excursions. Applications for the CSEF are open to families holding a valid means-tested concession card or temporary foster parents and are facilitated by the school. Further information can be obtained by contacting the Business Manager or via <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/Pages/csef.aspx>

If a camp or excursion is cancelled or altered by the school, or a student is no longer able to attend part or all of the camp or excursion, our school will consider requests for partial or full refunds of payments made by parents/carers on a case-by-case basis taking into account the individual circumstances. Generally the school will not be able to refund payments made for costs that have already been paid where those funds have already been transferred or committed to a third party and no refund is available to the school. Where possible, we will provide information about refunds to parents/carers at the time of payment.

Student health

Parents and carers must ensure the school has up-to-date student health information prior to camps and excursions. The Organising Teacher or their delegate will be appointed with responsibility for the health needs of the students for each camp/excursion and will identify specific health needs from the medical information provided by parents/carers as part of the signed consent to participate. Teachers will administer any medication provided according to our *Administering Medication at School* policy and the student's signed *Medication Authority Form*. To meet the school's obligations relating to safety, a first aid kit and staff mobile phones will be taken by teachers on all camps and excursions.

Students with anaphylaxis, epilepsy or asthma management plans: the Organising Teacher will liaise with parents/carers and the camp staff prior to the camp commencement date to ensure appropriate prevention and management strategies are in place.

It is the responsibility of parents and carers to ensure their child/children are in good health when attending excursions and camps. If a student becomes ill during a camp and is not able to continue at camp it is the parent/carer's responsibility to collect them and cover any associated costs.

At least one trained first aid staff member will attend each camp or excursion.

Behaviour expectations

Students participating in camps and excursions are required to cooperate and display appropriate behaviour to ensure the camp or excursion is a safe, positive and educational experience for all students involved.

Parents/carers will be notified if their child is in danger of losing the privilege to participate in an excursion or camp due to behaviour that does not meet the standards of behaviour set out in the school's *Student Mental Health, Engagement and Inclusion Policy and Bullying and Harassment Policy*. The decision to exclude a student will be made by the Principal or Assistant Principal, in consultation with the Organising Teacher. Both the parent/carer and the student will be informed of this decision prior to the camp or excursion.

If on a camp or excursion the Teacher in Charge considers an individual student's behaviour does not meet required standards, then the Principal or Assistant Principal may determine that a student should return home during the camp or excursion. In these circumstances the parent/carer is responsible for the collection of the student and any costs associated with this.

Disciplinary measures apply to students on camps and excursions consistent with our school's *Student Code of Conduct*.

Electronic Devices

Students will not be permitted to bring electronic devices to camps or excursions except with prior approval from the Principal. The Principal will only approve students bringing electronic devices to a camp or excursion in exceptional circumstances and when it is in the best interests of the student, and may place conditions on its location and use during the camp or excursion.

Food

Students are not permitted to bring their own supply of food items to camps and excursions unless the item is medically indicated and discussed with the Organising Teacher, or included as an item on the clothing and equipment list for that camp or excursion.

Uniform

Students will be required to wear full school uniform on excursions except with prior approval from the Principal. For excursions involving adventure activities, and camps, a clothing list will be provided.

Accident and Ambulance Cover

Any costs associated with student injury rest with parents/carers unless the Department is liable in negligence (liability is not automatic).

Camperdown College and the Department do not provide student accident or ambulance cover. Parents/carers may wish to obtain student accident insurance cover and/or ambulance cover, depending on their health insurance arrangements and any other personal considerations. Camperdown College will arrange travel insurance at a cost to participants for any interstate or overseas trips.

Arrangements for students at school

- Unless by prior arrangement, students not attending a camp or excursion are expected to attend school where they will be placed in another class and have an appropriate learning program provided by the class teacher.
- Satisfactory arrangements will be made to provide continuous instruction for the students remaining at the school during the absence of staff accompanying a camp or excursion.

COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following way:

- Included in staff induction processes and staff training
- Available publicly on our school's website
- Discussed at staff briefings/meetings as required
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- Discussed at parent information nights/sessions
- Reminders in our school newsletter
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request

EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed every three years or more often if necessary due to changes in circumstances.

Appendices:

- Appendix A: Organising teacher planning requirements (*currently under review*)
- Appendix B: Principal Approval Template, Camperdown College (*on staff drive – Camps and Excursions*)
- Appendix C: Risk Assessment Template for all overnight and adventure camps/excursions (*on staff drive – Camps and Excursions*)

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	18/8/2025
Approved by	Principal <i>Nick Angus</i>
Next scheduled review date	August 2028