



CAMPS & EXCURSIONS POLICY

PURPOSE

To explain to our school community the processes and procedures Mount Waverley Secondary 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 Mount Waverley Secondary College. This policy also applies to adventure activities organised by the college, regardless of whether or not they take place on or off school grounds.

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. Mount Waverley Secondary 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.

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.

Camps are excursions involving at least one night's accommodation.

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>

For all camps and excursions, including adventure activities, our college will follow the Department's Policy and Advisory Library: [Excursions](#).

POLICY

Camps are seen as an integral part of the school curriculum as they enable students to explore, extend and enrich their learning and their 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. A camp is defined as any activity that involves at least one night's accommodation.

They provide students with;



- The opportunity to participate in a camping program that is linked to social, cultural and educational outcomes for students.
- An opportunity for shared class and year level experiences, team building and a sense of group cohesiveness.
- A chance to reinforce and extend classroom learning.
- Access to programs that delivers skills and knowledge that may lead to a lifelong involvement in worthwhile leisure pursuits.
- Programs that promote self-esteem, resourcefulness, independence, leadership, judgement, cooperation and tolerance.
- The opportunity to further develop their problem solving and life survival skills
- The chance to their extend understanding of their physical and cultural environment

Camps and excursions can provide a valuable educational experience for our students which are complementary to their learning, as they provide access to resources, environments and expertise that may not be available in the classroom

The college offers the following camping programs annually:

- Year 7 Phillip Island Camp
- Year 8 Kinglake Adventure Park
- Year 10 Coonawarra Camp
- Year 11 Flying Start Program
- Year 11 Central Australia Trip
- Year 12 Surf Camp

Please note that other programs offered, whilst not overnight camps, meet the aims of the Camps Policy above. These include:

- Year 9 Humanities Interconnections
- Year 9 Explore Program
- End of Year YEP Program
- Year 11 & 12 Environmental Science fieldtrips
- Year 11 & 12 Geography fieldtrips

Proposals for Overseas Travel should be considered separately and managed according to the DET Travel Policy Guidelines.

For all camps and excursions, including adventure activities, our school will follow the Department's Policy and Advisory Library: [Excursions](#).



Planning process for camps and excursions

- All camps must be approved by the Head of Sub-school, Campus Principal, School Operations Committee (SOC), Education Sub-committee and College Council.
- The Campus Principal or their nominee will ensure that full records are submitted to council regarding the camp well in advance of the starting date of the event and that no camp occurs unless all the formal record keeping has been completed and approved. Ideally all camps should be submitted to College Council for in principle approval in the November Council meeting in the preceding year. All camps must be submitted for final approval by College Council at least six months prior to the date of the camp where possible.
- Staff wishing to organise a camp must adhere to the Excursion/Inursion process which are outlined in the MWSC Staff Handbook and reviewed annually. All camps must be approved prior to running. This decision will be made by the SOC in consultation with the Education Committee of School Council. The College Principal in consultation with appropriate staff will consider the educational outcomes of the camp as well as the impact on the school program for the proposed dates.
- The Campus Principal, Head of Sub-school or nominee/s, in consultation with organizing teachers will ensure that all camps, transport arrangements, emergency procedures and student/staff ratios comply with DET guidelines.
- The Marketing and Events Manager will complete the “Notification of School Activity” online at www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/forms/school/sal/enteractivity.asp 4 - 8 weeks prior to the camp departure date, and pass on to the Campus Principal to ensure relevant details are recorded in the Daily Organisational Diary and are entered on the daily absence/planning sheets.
- All approved camps will then be presented to College Council for their approval.

All camps and excursions will comply with Department planning requirements.

Part of this planning process includes conducting risk assessments, to ensure that reasonable steps are taken to minimise the risks associated with each proposed camp or excursion. Mount Waverley Secondary College’s risk assessment will include consideration of arrangements for supervision of students and 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 effected locations will be cancelled or rescheduled. Planning will also cover arrangements for cancelling, recalling or altering the camp or excursion for any other reason.

The 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.

In cases where a camp or excursion involves a particular class or year level group, the Organising Teacher will ensure that there is an alternative educational program available and appropriate supervision for those students not attending the camp.

A full risk assessment must be completed as part of the proposal to the Education Sub Committee.



All food, equipment, staffing, organisation of activities and student management procedures must be addressed prior to the camp. Consideration needs to be given to students with special dietary and medical requirements. Parents should notify the staff in writing regarding special dietary and medical requirements. Event Handbook (printed from Compass prior to camp) provides full student medical information and emergency contact numbers which must be carried by staff at all times.

The Teacher in Charge must ensure that the camp Compass roll is marked on Compass prior to departing from the school. The Compass event will provide full details of the camp including the students and staff attending and location of the camp.

- The school will provide a mobile phone and first aid kit for each camp as well as any specific medications for students where applicable. The teacher in charge is responsible for collecting these prior to leaving.
- For high-risk outdoor education activities, the staff member organising must have suitable training and current qualifications. All staff members must be aware of the increased duty of care.
- The teacher in charge will also ensure that student medical forms are available at the site and all camp staff are aware of special medical issues or medication requirements of any student.
- Staff to student ratios are in accordance with DET requirements
- One staff member will be designated to take responsibility for administering student medication if required (following consultation with parents and/or appropriate medical practitioners). In some cases, and where possible, one of the school nurses will attend the camp.

Supervision

Mount Waverley Secondary College follows the Department's guidelines in relation to supervision of students during excursions and camps.

All excursion staff will be familiar with supervision requirements and the specific procedures for dealing with emergencies on each camp and excursion.

All college 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.

Volunteer and external provider checks

The college requires all 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, the college will provide parents/carers with a specific consent form outlining the details of the proposed activity. Mount Waverley Secondary College uses Compass to inform parents about camps and excursions and to seek their consent. 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, the college will provide parents and carers with an excursion form prior to any excursion or activity.

The college will also provide advance notice to parents/carers of an upcoming local excursion through Compass and the college newsletter and emails to parents and students. For local excursions that occur on a recurring basis the college will notify parents once only prior to the commencement of the recurring event.

Cost of camps and excursions, refunds and support

The cost of all college camps are 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.

Students who have not finalised payment by the required date will not be allowed to attend unless the Principal determines exceptional circumstances apply.

Mount Waverley Secondary 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. The Business Manager can also discuss family eligibility for the Department's Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund (CSEF), which 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 about the CSEF and the application form are available at [Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund](#).

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 college will consider requests for partial or full refunds of payments made by parents/carers on a case-by-case basis taking into account the parent payment policy. We 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

Student health

Parents and carers need to ensure the school has up-to-date student health information prior to camps and excursions. A member of staff will be appointed with responsibility for the health needs of the students for each camp/excursion. Teachers will administer any medication provided according to our *Medication* policy and the student's signed *Medication Authority Form*. To meet the school's obligations relating to safety, a first aid kit and mobile phone will be taken by teachers on all camps and excursions.

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. If the College Principal approves a student joining a camp late, transport to the camp is the parent/carer's responsibility.

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 Wellbeing*



and Engagement Policy, the Student Code of Conduct and the Bullying Prevention Policy). The decision to exclude a student will be made by the College Principal or relevant Campus 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 College Principal or their nominee 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 Wellbeing and Engagement Policy, Student Code of Conduct and Bullying Prevention Policy*.

Electronic Devices

Students will not be permitted to bring electronic devices to camps or excursions except with prior approval from the relevant subschool and teacher in charge. The approval to bring will be given electronic devices to a camp or excursion in exceptional circumstances and when it is in the best interests of the student, and there may be 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.

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).

Unless otherwise indicated Mount Waverley Secondary 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. In the case of interstate and overseas trips travel insurance will be included as part of the cost of the activity.

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

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following Department policies and guidelines:

- [Excursions](#)



- [Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund](#)

The following school policies are also relevant to this Camps and Excursions Policy:

- Statement of Values and School Philosophy
- Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy
- Volunteer Policy
- Duty of Care Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy
- Parent Payment Policy

REVIEW CYCLE

This policy was last updated in May 2022 and is scheduled for review in May 2025.