



CAMPS AND EXCURSIONS

PURPOSE AND MISSION

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 (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>

Note: workplace learning activities (such as work experience) and intercampus travel are not considered school 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 extend their 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 9 Duke of Edinburgh Camp
- Year 11 and 12 Outdoor and Environmental Studies camps
- Year 10 Coonawarra Camp
- Year 11 Central Australia Trip
- Year 12 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 Flying Start Program
- Year 11 & 12 Environmental Science fieldtrips
- Year 11 & 12 Geography fieldtrips



Proposals for Overseas Travel are considered separately and managed according to the DE 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 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 or other natural disaster activity in the excursion location. In the event the Bureau of Meteorology forecasts a Catastrophic fire danger rating (FDR) day, excursions or camp activities in affected locations will be cancelled or rescheduled. Planning will also cover arrangements for cancelling, recalling or altering the camp or excursion for any other reason.

Mount Waverley Secondary 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 or excursion.

Supervision

The college follows the Department's guidelines in relation to supervision of students during excursions and camps.

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 external providers are managing the activity.

It is not mandatory for camps to include staff of at least one person of each sex for excursions involving an overnight stay for mixed-gender groups. When planning for overnight stays on an excursion, where possible, schools are encouraged to select supervision staff who reflect the genders of students attending. If Mount Waverley Secondary College combines with another school minimum supervision requirements can be based on the total number of staff present from each school.

Volunteer and external provider checks



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

Parents/carers are encouraged to contact the college 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 also provide advance notice to parents/carers of an upcoming local excursion through a notification on Compass. For local excursions that occur on a recurring basis (for example weekly outings to the local oval for sports lessons), Mount Waverley Secondary College will notify parents once only prior to the commencement of the recurring event.

Parent Payments for camps and excursions

Most camps and excursions provided by Mount Waverley Secondary College enhance and broaden the schooling experience of our students but are not a mandatory component of our curriculum. These activities are provided on a user-pays basis in accordance with the Department's Parent Payments Policy.

Consent forms will have clearly stated payment amounts and finalisations dates, and families will be given sufficient time to make payments.

Students who have not finalised payment by the required date for camps and excursions provided on a user pays basis will not be able to attend unless the College Principal determines exceptional circumstances apply.

Financial Help for Families

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 Managers. The Business Managers 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](#).

Refunds

If a camp or excursion is cancelled or altered by the college, or a student is no longer able to attend part or all of the camp or excursion, the 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 individual circumstances. Generally, the college 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 college. Where possible, we will provide information about refunds to parents/carers at the time of payment.

Student health

Parents and carers need to ensure the college 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 college'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* and the signed *Student Code of Conduct and the Bullying Prevention Policy*). The decision to exclude a student will be made by the Principal or 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 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 on some camps may be permitted to bring electronic devices (such as iPads, iPods, mobile phones) but these may only be used during times set by the Teacher in Charge. Students are responsible for the care of any personal electronic device brought to a camp or excursions and the school will not be responsible for lost or damaged devices.

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. For most interstate and overseas trips travel insurance must be obtained.

COMMUNICATION

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

- Included in staff induction processes and staff training
- Available publicly on our college's website
- Included in staff handbook/manual
- Discussed at staff briefings/meetings as required
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- Discussed at parent information nights/sessions
- Reminders in our college 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](#)
- [Parent Payments Policy](#)

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

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	October 2023
Consultation	College Council and Education Sub Committee October 2023



Approved by	College Principal
Next scheduled review date	October 2026