



Camps and Excursions Policy

Rationale

Whittlesea Secondary College is committed to providing enriching learning experiences beyond the classroom that support student engagement, wellbeing and achievement. Camps, excursions and adventure activities enhance curriculum delivery and provide opportunities for personal growth, independence and social development. The College has a duty of care to take reasonable steps to minimise foreseeable risks of injury and harm. This policy establishes a consistent, school-wide framework to ensure all camps and excursions are planned, approved and conducted safely, inclusively and in compliance with Department requirements.

Purpose

To explain to our College community the processes and procedures Whittlesea Secondary College will use when planning and conducting camps, excursions and adventure activities for students, in accordance with the Department of Education's Excursions Policy and Advisory Library (PAL). Whittlesea Secondary College will comply with all Department planning, approval and risk management requirements.

Overview

This policy applies to all camps, excursions and adventure activities organised by Whittlesea Secondary College, whether conducted on or off College grounds. This policy complements, and must be read alongside, the Department of Education's Excursions Policy (PAL), which all Victorian government schools are required to follow. This policy **does not** apply to:

- Structured workplace learning
- School-based apprenticeships/traineeships
- Intercampus travel

Definitions

Excursions

Activities organised by the College where students:

- Are taken out of College grounds (e.g. camps, day excursions, sports events), or
- Participate in adventure activities (regardless of location)



Camps

Excursions involving at least one overnight stay.

Local Excursions

Excursions within walking distance of the College and not involving adventure activities.

Adventure Activities

Activities involving greater than normal risk and requiring specific risk management and supervision measures, as defined in the Department's PAL guidance.

Policy

Camps and excursions provide valuable educational experiences that complement classroom learning by providing access to environments, expertise and activities not otherwise available at the College.

PLANNING AND APPROVAL

All camps and excursions must:

- Be curriculum-linked or educationally justified
- Be approved by the Principal (or delegate) prior to proceeding
- Follow Department planning requirements
- Include a documented risk assessment

Risk Assessment

Risk assessments will include consideration of:

- Student supervision arrangements
- Student medical and additional needs
- Transport arrangements
- Emergency management planning
- Bushfire risk and natural disasters
- External provider safety compliance

Where a **Catastrophic Fire Danger Rating (FDR)** is forecast for the excursion location, camps and excursions in affected areas will be cancelled or rescheduled in accordance with Department requirements.

The planning process must also include contingency arrangements for cancelling, recalling or modifying the activity if required.



INCLUSION AND STUDENT SUPPORT

Whittlesea Secondary College is committed to ensuring camps and excursions are inclusive.

The College will:

- Consult with families of students with additional needs during planning
- Make reasonable adjustments to support participation
- Ensure appropriate supervision and alternative programs are available for students not attending

No student will be excluded from curriculum-based activities due to financial hardship.

SUPERVISION

Whittlesea Secondary College will comply with Department supervision requirements, including:

- Ensuring appropriate staff-to-student ratios
- Ensuring staff are aware of their duty of care responsibilities
- Ensuring trained staff are present where required (e.g. first aid, adventure activity qualifications)

College staff always retain overall responsibility for supervision, including when external providers are engaged.

All staff will be briefed on:

- Emergency procedures
- Supervision expectations
- Student medical and behavioural needs

PARENT VOLUNTEERS AND EXTERNAL PROVIDERS

Parent volunteers may be invited to assist. Currently Whittlesea College **do not currently engage volunteers.**

All volunteers and external providers working directly with students must hold a current **Working with Children Check.**

External Providers:

- Assist under teacher direction
- Must follow College instructions
- Do not replace the supervisory responsibilities of teaching staff



PARENT/CARER CONSENT

For all camps and non-local excursions:

- Written informed consent will be obtained via COMPASS.
- Parents/carers will receive full details of the activity, including cost, supervision, transport and risk considerations.

For local excursions:

- Annual consent will be obtained at enrolment or at the start of each year.
- Advance notice will be provided via COMPASS.

PAYMENTS

Camps and excursions will comply with the Department's **Parent Payments Policy**.

Where activities are:

- **Curriculum-based:** Students will not be excluded if parents/carers do not make a voluntary contribution.
- **User-pays optional activities:** Participation may depend on payment, unless exceptional circumstances apply.

Families experiencing financial hardship are encouraged to contact the Principal or Business Manager to discuss payment arrangements.

CAMPS, SPORTS AND EXCURSIONS FUND (CSEF)

Eligible families may apply for the Department's **Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund (CSEF)** to assist with costs. Information and application forms are available through the College General Office or via the Department: [Camps, Sports and Excursion Fund](#)

REFUNDS

Refund requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Refunds may not be available where payments have already been committed to third-party providers and are non-refundable.

Refunds may not be provided with non-refundable deposits if families change their minds.

Refunds may be given in the event of cancellations due to unforeseeable circumstances.



STUDENT HEALTH AND MEDICAL NEEDS

Parents/carers **must ensure** the College has up-to-date medical information prior to camps and excursions.

The College will:

- Appoint a staff member responsible for student health on each activity
- Ensure first aid kits are taken
- Ensure access to communication devices
- Administer medication in accordance with the College's Medication Policy

If a student becomes unwell during a camp, parents/carers may be required to collect them and meet associated costs.

STUDENT BEHAVIOUR EXPECTATIONS

Students must comply with:

- [Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy](#)
- [Student Code of Conduct](#)
- [Bullying Prevention Policy](#)

The Principal (or delegate) may exclude a student from attending a camp or excursion where behaviour presents a safety risk.

If serious misconduct occurs during a camp, parents/carers may be required to collect their child at their own expense.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Students are not permitted to bring electronic devices unless approved by the Principal in exceptional circumstances. Conditions may be placed on use.

FOOD

Students must not bring additional food unless:

- Medically required
- Included on the official equipment list



ACCIDENT AND AMBULANCE COVER

The Department does not provide automatic student accident or ambulance cover.

Parents/carers are responsible for associated costs unless negligence is established.

Families may wish to obtain private accident or ambulance insurance.

COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated through:

- School website
- Staff induction and training
- Staff handbook
- Parent information sessions
- Enrolment packs
- COMPASS communications
- Hard copy upon request

Further Information and Resources

Department (PAL):

- [Excursions](#)
- [Parent Payments](#)
- [Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund](#)
- [Duty of Care](#)

School Policies:

- [Statement of Values and School Philosophy](#)
- [Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy](#)
- [Duty of Care Policy](#)
- [Inclusion and Diversity Policy](#)
- [First Aid Policy](#)

Compliance Statement

This policy aligns with all relevant Department of Education policies, including the Excursions Policy and Advisory Library (PAL), the Parent Payments Policy, the Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund (CSEF) guidelines, and the Department's Duty of Care obligations, and is reviewed regularly to ensure continued alignment with current legislation, regulatory requirements and Department updates.



Evaluation Period

Policy last reviewed	February 2026
Consultation Group	Camps and Excursion Coordinator, Principal Executive.
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	February 2030