



Williamstown High School

Camps and Excursions (Including Local Excursions) Policy

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Review cycle	3 to 4 years
Department of Education and Training DET requirement for local policy	Mandatory
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Consultation requirement	Recommended with School Council
Approval requirements	Principal
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1. Rationale

This policy applies to all camps and excursions organised by Williamstown High School. This policy also applies to adventure activities organised by Williamstown High School, regardless of whether or not they take place on or off school grounds, and to school sleep-overs.

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. Williamstown High School 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.

2. Purpose

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

3. Implementation

Excursions and camps 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 school is committed to running school camps and excursions that have clear links to the curriculum and extra-curricular programs.

In addition to curriculum, school events such as incursions, excursions and camps can further support students to become 'happy, healthy, and resilient, successful lifelong learners and active, informed members of just and sustainable communities'.¹ The realisation of 'goals of excellence and equity through developing the learning and wellbeing'² of our students will be more likely when our school events have a clear scope and sequence and are thoroughly planned and resourced.

Williamstown High School believes that:

1. Camps are a valid part of the school curriculum; they allow for valid and valuable teaching and learning strategies.
2. Camps enable students to explore, extend and enrich their learning and their social skills development, in a non-school setting.
3. Camps provide a valuable opportunity for enhancing the social and academic development of students, participating in a range of outdoor and adventure activities not normally available within the classroom based curriculum. They enrich the sense of belonging of both teachers and students to the school community.

¹ <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/fiso/policy> Framework for Improving Student Outcomes

² <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/fiso/policy> Framework for Improving Student Outcomes

4. Camps should be organised to ensure proper duty of care to students and to be no cost to the school budget.
5. When planning camps and excursions consideration must be given to the total school program. Minimum disruption should be aimed for.
6. All camps/excursions/incursions must be conducted within guidelines issued by the Department of Education and Training.

Camps should satisfy the following criteria:

1. Allow students to participate in activities, both recreational and educational, often in an outdoor environment. These activities are intended to foster within students an understanding and appreciation of the environment and to develop the ability to operate successfully and responsibly in varied surroundings.
2. Encourage development of independence, self-esteem, co-operation and communication. The activities should also provide an opportunity to foster relationships between all students and other members of the school community.
3. Function as part of the curriculum or as an extension of the curriculum providing students with an enjoyable learning experience that cannot be gained within the immediate school environment.

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

4. Specific procedures

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. Williamstown High School'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.

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

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

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.

Parent volunteers

Parent/carers may be invited to assist with excursions and camps. School staff will notify parents/carers of any costs associated with attending. 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. For further information please refer to our Volunteers Policy.

Volunteer and external provider checks

The school values the many volunteers that assist with excursions/camps and programs. To ensure that we are meeting our legal obligations under the Worker Screening Act and the Child Safe Standards, Williamstown High School is required to undertake suitability checks which in most cases will involve asking for evidence of a Working with Children WWC Clearance.

Additional suitability checks may also be required depending on the volunteer role, such as reference, proof of identity, qualification and work history involving children checks. Considering our legal obligations, and our commitment to ensuring that school is a child safe environment, we will require volunteers to obtain a WWC Clearance and produce their valid card to the front office for verification.

Williamstown High School requires all external providers working directly with our students to have a current Working with Children Check card.

Parent/carer consent

For all excursions and camps, other than local excursions, the school provides parents/carers with a specific consent form outlining the details of the proposed activity.

The school uses Compass to inform parents about excursions and camps 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 school will provide parents and carers with an annual *Local Excursions Consent Form*³ at the start of each school year or upon enrolment if students enrol during the school year.

The school will also provide advance notice (one week) to parents/carers of an upcoming local excursion through Compass. For local excursions that occur on a recurring basis (for example weekly outings to the local oval for sports lessons), the school will notify parents once only prior to the commencement of the recurring event.

Parent Payments for camps and excursions

Excursions and camps provided by the school 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 excursions and camps provided on a user pays basis will not be able to attend unless the Principal determines exceptional circumstances apply. Consent and payment must be received at the latest three working days prior to the excursion (unless otherwise specified) and five working days prior for camps (unless otherwise specified).

Where a camp or excursion is provided as part of the standard curriculum requirements, parent/carers may be invited to make a voluntary contribution but all students will be able to attend regardless of whether their parent/carers contribute.

Financial Help for Families

The school 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 Student Engagement and Wellbeing team/Business Manager or Principal Class. 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 can also be discussed. 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.

³ Appendix 1 - page 10

Further information about the CSEF and the application form are available at [Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund](#).

Refunds

If an excursion or camp is cancelled or altered by the school, or a student is no longer able to attend part or all, the 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 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. 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 school has up-to-date student health information prior to camps and excursions. Students with the following conditions will not be able to attend any excursion/excursion/camp if the school does not have the following up-to-date documentation:

- Anaphylactic (action plan and individual management plan)
- Allergies (action plan and school support plan)
- Asthma (action plan and school support plan)
- Diabetes (action plan, school support plan and specific camp plan)
- Epilepsy (management plan and school support plan)
- Cystic Fibrosis, Cancer, Acquired Brain Injury & Other Conditions (medical advice form and school support plan)

A member of staff will be appointed with responsibility for the health needs of the students for each excursion/camp. 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 excursions/camps.

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

Behaviour Expectations

Students participating in excursions/camps are required to cooperate and behave appropriately to ensure the excursion/camp is a safe, positive and educational experience for all students involved.

Parents/carers will be notified if their child is at risk of no longer being able 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 decision to exclude a student will be made by a member of the Principal Class, in consultation with the Organising Teacher. Both the parent/carer and the student will be informed of this decision prior to the excursion/camp.

If on a excursion/camp, the Teacher in Charge considers an individual student's behaviour does not meet required standards, then a member of Principal Class 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 Engagement and Wellbeing Policy and Bullying Prevention Policy.

Electronic Devices

Students will not be permitted to bring electronic devices to camps or excursions except with prior approval from Principal Class. Principal Class 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 excursion/camp.

Food

Students are to refer to advice from the Organising Teacher about the provision of food and drink, generally noting that eating provided meals together forms an important part of camps. Dietary requirements documented on camp consent forms will be addressed by camp providers, in conjunction with teachers/staff.

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, the school 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.

5. Evaluation and Review

Each 3-4 years

6. Definitions and References

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;
- attend school 'sleep-overs' on 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.

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:

- Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy
- Volunteer Policy
- Duty of Care Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy

7. Consultative process

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

- Included in staff induction processes and staff training
- Available on the school's website



Local Excursion Consent Form 2024

Schools are able to seek consent annually for local excursions that are within walking distance of the school. The purpose of the excursions will be to engage in educational activities within the local area (excluding Adventure Activities).

This includes the use of reserves, ovals, transition between campuses, Jawbone Marine Sanctuary, Williamstown Town Hall, the swimming pool and Port Phillip Bay for experienced swimmers on calm days.

Parents/carers will be informed about the local excursions prior to the event.

Students will be under the supervision of their teacher at all times and students will be expected to represent themselves appropriately and in accordance with the school's expectations whilst out in the community.

First aid and medical attention

Where necessary, school staff will administer first aid. School staff will seek emergency medical attention for your child if it is considered reasonably necessary. Any costs associated with the student injury rest with parents/carers unless the Department of Education and Training is liable in negligence (liability is not automatic).

Accident and ambulance cover

The Department of Education and Training does not provide student accident insurance or ambulance cover. Parents/carers may wish to obtain this cover, depending on their health insurance arrangements and any other personal considerations.

Please indicate your consent, which will remain current for the 2024 school year, with emergency contact details as per CASES 21/Compass.

Please contact Reception at the respective campus for further information:

Bayview: 9399 9228

Pasco: 9397 1899