



CAMPS AND ACTIVITIES POLICY

PURPOSE

The Melba College's Camps and Activities programs 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. Camps and Excursions enable students to further their learning and social skills development in a non-school setting. Incursions organised in addition to the normal College Curriculum program also provide enriched learning experiences for our students, beyond what is available in the everyday curriculum. It is imperative that excursions, incursions, camps and activities are planned and staffed appropriately for the benefit and safety of all students and staff in attendance.

This policy explains to our school community the processes and procedures Melba College will use when planning and conducting camps, excursions and adventure activities for students.

For all camps and excursions, including adventure activities, Melba College will follow the Department's School Policy and Advisory Guide: [Excursions and Activities](#). For camps and excursions requiring school council approval, our school will also follow the Department's School Policy and Advisory Guide: [Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors](#).

SCOPE

This policy applies to all camps and excursions organised by Melba College. This policy also applies to adventure activities organised by Melba 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. Melba 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

Activities

Any activity undertaken by students supplementary to their normal school day, whether undertaken on or off College grounds. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Activities mentioned under Excursions
- Incursions
- Part day trips
- Whole day trips
- Overnight trips
- Interschool Sport
- Camps
- Subject-based field trips
- Unsupervised excursions for senior students

Adventure Activities

Adventure activities are activities that involve a greater than normal risk.

Camps

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

Excursions

Any activity undertaken by students off the College grounds. This includes but is not limited to:

Incursions

Incursions are supplementary Activities provided on the College grounds that are designed to enhance the College Curriculum and to further engage students. These may include presentations by speakers from outside the college.

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

OBJECTIVES

- To ensure that excursions and activities are planned and approved appropriately
- To ensure that excursions and activities are appropriately staffed in alignment with Duty of Care and Child Safe requirements
- To ensure that excursions and activities (including adventure activities) are conducted safely
- To ensure that, in planning events and activities, the Child Safe standards and other relevant College policies pertaining to student safety and wellbeing are adhered to
- To ensure that informed consent is obtained from parents or carers for their child to participate in an excursion or activity
- To ensure that students are adequately prepared for excursions or activities

Important

Principals are responsible for the conduct of all excursions and must ensure:

- excursions must be planned, approved and conducted in accordance with Department policy and requirements.
- an online notification of school activity form is completed at least three weeks prior to the activity using the Student Activity Locator (SAL).
- see the SAL user guide for further information
- compliance with the Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors, which are mandatory for excursions involving adventure activities.

Principals, teachers, and others involved in school excursions, must anticipate the possibility of litigation following an incident or injury. They must be prepared for a detailed examination of their planning, (including risk management planning), actions and the curriculum role of any activity.

IMPLEMENTATION

Planning & Approval

While the degree of planning involved will depend on the risks involved, the conduct of any excursion or activity should take into account the following:

- Educational purpose of the excursion and its contribution to the curriculum
- Department approval requirements for excursions and staff travel
- Maintenance of full records, including documentation of the planning process

- Suitability of the environment and/or venue for the excursion
- Informed consent from parents or carers
- Adequate student and staff medical information
- Student preparation and behaviour
- Requirements for any adventure activities (these involve greater than normal risk - there are additional considerations associated with these activities)

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. Melba 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.

Melba 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.

Parent or Carer Consent

The College must obtain **written** or **electronic** consent from parents or carers for excursions, for the College to:

- take the student out of the school environment for a day excursion
- have the student in its care after normal school hours on an overnight excursion
- obtain parent or carer authorisation:
 - for the financial costs of the excursion
 - for any adventure activities that may be undertaken during the excursion
 - for students to be sent home from an excursion in the event of serious misbehaviour and for the costs of the student's return to be the parent or carer's responsibility
 - that if needed the school can consent to emergency medical treatment
- enable the parent or carer to alert the school to any medical conditions or allergies.

Requirements for Informed Consent

The College must:

- obtain **written** or **electronic** signatures
- give parents or carers, who are to provide consent, sufficient information about the excursion to enable them to make an informed decision
- tell the parent or carer the:
 - nature of the proposed activity
 - degree of supervision
 - risks involved
- keep records of the consent documentation at the school as per the ['Schools Record Retention Guide'](#)
- ensure that the teacher in charge of the excursion has a hard or electronic copy of the consent documentation for each student on the excursion, for excursions requiring school council approval

- for College Council approved excursions:
 - ensure parents are aware that the principal may need to cancel or alter excursions arrangements at short notice, which may lead to inconvenience or financial losses to parents. This would be required to ensure the safety of students and/or due to circumstances beyond the control of the school.

The College must ensure timelines for sufficient notification to parents are outlined in Appendix B.

The cut-off time for permission and payment (where payment is required) of general excursions is SEVEN DAYS PRIOR TO THE EVENT without exception.

Where consent and payment (where payment is required) is not received by the cut-off date, the student will not be able to attend the event.

Under no circumstances will verbal permission be accepted for a student to attend a College event or activity where written consent is required.

Student Medical Information

While we retain student medical information at the College, it is required that a confidential medical information form be completed by parents or carers before each school-council approved excursion (e.g. adventure activities or camps). In addition to providing staff with the information they require to ensure student safety, this provides parents and carers with the opportunity to vary any information previously provided to the College.

The College will:

- ensure that the teacher-in-charge takes the medical information forms on the excursion
- ensure the Student Medical information is available to other excursion staff in emergency situations
- keep copies of the Student Medical Information at the school as per the [‘Schools Record Retention Guide’](#).

Note: Students should not be denied attendance at any excursion because a parent/guardian refuses permission for a blood transfusion.

Information: Transfusions or other courses of medical treatment are matters for legally qualified medical practitioners. Teachers cannot be held liable for medical treatment given against the wishes of a parent or carer.

Cost of Camps and Excursions, Payments, Refunds and Support

The cost of all camps and excursions are to be paid by parents/carers unless alternative arrangements have been agreed to by the Principal prior to the excursion.

All efforts will be made not to exclude students simply for financial reasons. Parents experiencing financial difficulty, who wish for their children to attend an excursion, are invited to discuss alternative arrangements with the Principal or Business Manager. Decisions relating to alternative payment arrangements will be made by the Principal or Business Manager in consultation with the appropriate staff, on an individual basis.

All families will be given sufficient time to make payments for excursions. Parents will be provided with permission requirements and excursion information via COMPASS (and other communication means), clearly stating payment finalisation dates. Payment and consent may be made electronically via COMPASS; alternatively, the submission of a signed permission form and payment (cash / credit card) may be made via the College front office, or Primary Reception. Students whose payments

have not been finalised within by published timeline will not be allowed to attend unless alternative payment arrangements have been previously organised with the Principal or Business Manager or other nominated representative.

The Business Manager, Principal or Organising Teacher 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](#).

Office staff will be responsible for managing and monitoring the payments made by parents and will provide organizing teachers with detailed records on a regular basis.

The Department of Education and Training (DET) will not be involved in any expense associated with the conduct of excursions. The school may choose to subsidize some excursions or some student's expenses.

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 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. All student that have been identified as having a medical condition that requires an Action Plan, Individual Management Plan, Medical Plan or Student Health Support Plan MUST have a complete and current form before they can attend any excursion/camp.

A member of staff with will be appointed with responsibility for the health needs of the students for each camp/excursion. Teachers will provide first aid according to their scope of practice and 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, asthma emergency kit, general adrenaline auto injector, mobile phone, first aid IPAD and confidential medical information form (appendix I) 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 Principal approves a student joining a camp late, transport to the camp is the parent/carer's responsibility.

Student 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* or *Bullying Prevention 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 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.

On occasion a student's disability may manifest in challenging behaviour. Examples of disabilities that can present with challenging behaviour includes Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, Oppositional Defiant Disorder and Autism Spectrum Disorder. In these cases, excluding a student from a camp or excursion may raise disability discrimination law issues. Melba College will contact Legal Division for advice if considering the exclusion of a student for failing to comply with behavioural standards or if their disability presents with challenging behaviours that could impact the safety and welfare of other students or staff.

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 and Harassment Prevention Policy*.

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.

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, Melba College and the Department do not provide student accident or ambulance cover. Depending on student's previous health insurance arrangements and other personal considerations, parents/guardians may wish to obtain accident insurance cover. All parents/guardians are encouraged to obtain the minimum of ambulance cover.

In the event that Melba College wishes to consider obtaining travel insurance for excursions that they consider involve a greater than normal risk, (eg. interstate or overseas trips) information about travel insurance is available [here](#).

Risk Management

An assessment of excursion risks must be undertaken as part of the planning process. This includes carefully considered venue selection (Refer to Appendix C) in addition to an assessment of the risks of the event. International trips must be logged on the Smart Traveller website as part of the risk management process.

The Student Activity Locator will be completed by the Events Coordinator once the event has been approved.

For excursions requiring school council approval, an excursion risk assessment plan must be provided which includes consideration of risks across the entire excursion (including transportation, activities undertaken, excursion venues and staff or student illness) and any significant financial risks to the school and/or parents (for example if an excursion needs to be cancelled).

Venue managers and activity providers should be consulted in the preparation of the school's risk management plan and where appropriate, the risk management plans of venues or activity providers should be used to inform the school risk assessment process.

Risk assessment templates **and emergency and risk management procedures or plans** for a number of activities can be found on Compass in the Camps and Activities section of the Policies folder.

In the event of an emergency during an on-campus event, the College Emergency Management Procedures will be followed.

In the event of an emergency during an off-campus event, staff will:

- Take emergency action as documented in the excursion and camp's emergency and risk management plan (found on Compass in the Camps and Activities section of the Policies folder).
- Immediately notify the College principal.
- The principal will make arrangements for the Department's Security Services Unit to be telephoned on **1800 126 126**

Fire Danger and Extreme Weather Notifications

Prior to the excursion (including prior to departure on the day), the Principal and excursion leader must take into account all DET notifications and updates (or independently sourced information) surrounding all weather conditions pertinent to the area travelling to and from. (For example, information relating to fires, storms, winds or any extreme weather).

Fire Danger - The Principal may need to cancel excursions and camps at short notice on days of extreme fire danger or total fire ban. On such days, the Security Services Unit liaises with fire authorities to obtain up to date information for communication to schools that may be affected by wildfire, including schools with students attending camps in areas affected by wildfire. If an excursion is not cancelled, special fire safety precautions will be required.

When required, the College will follow the Department's emergency management (bushfires) procedures for off-site activities.

- Teachers must carry mobile phones and will be equipped with first aid kits to be used in emergency situations.

Child Safe Standards

To fulfil the requirements of the Child Safety Standards, the College will ensure the following occurs in relation to excursions, activities and camps:

1. In accordance with any applicable legal requirement or school policy, the school must make reasonable efforts to gather, verify and record the following information about a person whom it proposes to engage to perform child connected work:
 - a. Working with Children Check status, or similar check;
 - b. Proof of personal identity and any professional or other qualifications;
 - c. The person's history of work involving children; and
 - d. References that address the person's suitability for the job and working with children.
2. The College need not comply with the requirements in step (1) above if it has already made reasonable efforts to gather, verify and record the information set out in steps **(1)(a)** to **(1)(d)**, above about a particular individual within the previous 12 months.
3. The College will ensure that appropriate supervision or support arrangements are in place in relation to:
 - a. The induction of new school staff into the school's policies, codes, practices, and procedures governing child safety and child connected work; and
 - b. Monitoring and assessing a job occupant's continuing suitability for child connected work.
4. The school will implement practices that enable the school governing authority to be satisfied that people engaged in child-connected work perform appropriately in relation to child safety

SUPERVISION AND TEACHER RESPONSIBILITIES

Melba 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 or not external providers are managing the activity.

Duty of Care

All school staff attending a camp or excursion owe a duty of care to the students. This means that they must ensure that reasonable steps are taken to prevent any reasonably foreseeable harm to students. Duty of Care cannot be delegable, which means that it cannot be delegated to external camp or education providers, parents or volunteers. The designated teacher in charge has ultimate responsibility for all students in their care.

External education providers and para-professionals must have appropriate certification (e.g. Working with Children's Registration) and ensure that supervision guidelines are followed.

Prior to the camp or excursion parent/carers should be made aware that DET does not provide student accident cover and that they need to make their own arrangements for cover.

Teacher In-Charge Responsibilities

A designated "Teacher in Charge" will co-ordinate each excursion.

The Teacher in Charge must complete all relevant aspects of the event documentation.

The Teacher in Charge must work with the supervising teacher to complete the relevant risk assessment and submit to the relevant person at the time of making the application.

During the excursion / camp; the teacher-in-charge will:

- Know the exact location of students at all times including during travel.
- Maintain a record of telephone contacts for the supervising staff accompanying the excursion.
- Know who the school contact person is and their phone number.
- Have a copy of the names of family contacts for all students and staff on the excursion.
- Have copies of the parental approval and medical advice (Confidential Medical Form for Excursions Appendix I) forms for those students on the excursion.
- Maintain a copy of the completed approval form (Appendix G) including all attachments submitted to the school council.
- The teacher in charge or the designated First Aid Officer must carry a mobile phone, first aid kit, emergency asthma kit, adrenaline auto-injector and any other required medical supply identified by the school First Aid Nurse for each excursion.
- The teacher in charge or the designated First Aid Officer is responsible for collecting the first aid kit prior to leaving.
- The teacher or the designated First Aid Officer in charge will communicate the anticipated return time with the College office in the event that excursions are returning out of school hours. Parents will be informed prior to students leaving for the excursion, that they can phone the office to receive an updated anticipated return time.

Teachers participating in an excursion and/or camps will:

- Understand the purpose of the program and its connection to student learning.
- Be aware of their supervisory responsibilities throughout the program.
- Know who the nominated member of staff is who will provide first aid if required.
- Know the exact location of students they are responsible for at all times including during travel.

Parent volunteers

Parents may be invited to assist with camps and excursions. 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.

Volunteer and external provider checks

Melba 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.

General Responsibilities

- In the case where an excursion involves a particular class or year level group, the organizing teacher will ensure that there is an alternative program available for those students not attending the excursion.
- For students in Years 11 and 12 it is expected that the teacher in charge will consult with other staff before planning to minimise the impact on other classes.
- Parents may be invited to assist in the delivery of excursions, as deemed necessary.
- Only students that have displayed sensible, reliable behaviour at school will be permitted to participate in school excursions. Parents will be notified if their child is in danger of losing the privilege to participate in an excursion due to poor behaviour at

school. The decision to exclude a student will be made by the Principal, Assistant Principal, Student Wellbeing Coordinator or Sub School Leader, in consultation with the organizing teacher. Both the parent and the student will be informed of this decision prior to the excursion.

- Disciplinary measures apply to students on camps and excursions consistent with the College's policies. In extreme cases the camp or excursion staff, following consultation with, and the approval of, the principal or their nominee, may determine that a student should return home during a camp or excursion. In such circumstances, the parent/carer will be advised; o Of the circumstance associated with the decision to send the student home
 - o Of the time when the parents/carers may collect their child from the camp or excursion of the anticipated time that the student will arrive home
 - o Of any costs associated with the student's return which will be the responsibility of the parents/carers
- All excursion staff and, where appropriate, the students will be familiar with the specific procedures for dealing with emergencies on each excursion. Visit the DET Safety, Emergency and Risk Management site at:
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/excursionsafety.aspx> for information to assist schools to plan for and manage emergencies and security related incidents.

FURTHER DET INFORMATION

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

- School Policy and Advisory Guide:
 - o [Excursions and Activities](#)
 - o [Emergency and Risk Management](#)
- [Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors](#)
- [Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund](#)
- [Code Red Days](#)
- [Adventure Activities](#)
- [Approvals](#)
- [Emergency and Risk Management](#)
- [Excursion and Events Policy](#)
- [Parent or Carer Consent](#)
- [Staffing and Supervision](#)
- [Student Medical Information](#)
- [Student Preparation and Behaviour](#)
- [Venue Selection](#)

The following Melba College policies are also relevant to this Camps and Activities Policy:

- Philosophy and Values Statement with Implementation
- Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy
- Visitors and Volunteers Policy
- Duty of Care Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy
- Parent Payment Policy and Implementation

APPENDICES

- Appendix A:** Camps and Activities Planning and Approvals Process
- Appendix B:** Camps and Activities Planning Matrix
- Appendix C:** Camps and Activities Venue Selection
- Appendix D:** Camps and Activities Protocols
- Appendix E:** Camps and Activities First Aid Checklist
- Appendix F:** Camps and Activities Safety Guidelines and Risk Register
- Appendix G:** Camps and Activities Principal Approval Form
- Appendix H:** Camps and Activities Medication Administration Log
- Appendix I:** Camps and Activities Confidential Medical Information

EVALUATION

Policy Reviewed by School Council	Person Responsible for Policy	Next School Council Review
2020	Assistant Principal - Accountabilities	2023