

## CAMPS AND EXCURSIONS



### Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact the College Office on 9561 5811

### PURPOSE

To explain to our school community the processes and procedures Wheelers Hill 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 Wheelers Hill Secondary College. This policy also applies to adventure activities organised by Wheelers Hill Secondary 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. Wheelers Hill 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 website under Adventure Activities, at the following link:

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/pages/adventure.aspx>

Note: workplace learning activities (such as work experience) and intercampus travel are not considered school excursions.

## POLICY

Excursions, camps and other activities can enhance our program, enrich our offerings and improve student engagement by building links to the world outside of the classroom. It is essential that all such activities are carefully and effectively planned, and that their value to the curriculum is evident. We value the contribution made by staff in providing supervision and support for camps. We cannot, within the confines of our classrooms and within the limits of our own expertise, expose students to all of the experiences we believe to be of importance to their learning.

Wheeler's Hill Secondary College aims to ensure that:

- The activity supports or enhances the curriculum program.
- The activity supports or relates directly to the College Strategic Plan.
- The activity is of enough value to warrant the disruption to the regular program.
- The cost of the activity has been kept to the lowest possible charge.
- The activity is equally accessible to all students at the year level or within the particular curriculum program.
- The activity will provide students with an experience that cannot be provided within the regular program.
- The activity has been planned in advance and all members of the school community who will be affected have been informed well in advance.
- All stages of the planning process have been followed and that appropriate measures have been implemented to maximise the safety of the staff and students involved.

For all camps and excursions, including adventure activities, our school 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](#).

### **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. Wheeler's Hill 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.

Wheeler's Hill 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**

Wheeler's Hill Secondary 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. See Appendix 1:

### **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**

Wheeler's Hill Secondary 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

### **Parent/carer consent**

For all camps and excursions,, Wheeler's Hill Secondary College will provide parents/carers with a specific consent form outlining the details of the proposed activity. Wheeler's Hill Secondary College uses Compass to inform parents about camps and excursions and to seek their 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.

### **Cost of camps and excursions, 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 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.

Wheeler's Hill 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/Principal/Organising Teacher. The Business Manager/Principal/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](#).

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. 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 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* [INSERT other policies relevant to behaviour such as 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.

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 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, Wheelers Hill 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.

## **FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES**

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

- School Policy and Advisory Guide:
  - [Excursions and Activities](#)
  - [Emergency and Risk Management](#)
- [Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors](#)
- [Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund](#).
- [Code Red Days](#)

The following school policies are also relevant to this Camps and Excursions Policy: [insert details of your related school policies. A sample list is provided as follows]

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

## COMMUNICATION

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

- Available publicly on our school's website
- Made available in hard copy from School Administration upon request

## POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	2020
Approved by	School Council
Next scheduled review date	2023

## APPENDIX !: IMPLEMENTATION

### Camps & Tours

- Camps and tours must be planned months in advance to allow for the approval process and for families to prepare for the expense.
- Camps and tours require extensive planning, must be approved at least 4 weeks in advance by College Council and also must be registered with the Emergency Management section of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DET). Staff considering organising a camp should start by consulting with the relevant Assistant Principal and obtaining a copy of *"NOTIFICATION OF SCHOOL ACTIVITY: Camps, Adventure Activities and Non-Metropolitan Excursions."* Details are to be entered on Compass 'Events' to complete the approval process.
- International Tours must also be approved by the DET Regional Director.
- Some camps and tours involve activities considered to be 'Adventure Activities.' Common examples include skiing, horse-riding, bushwalking, canoeing etc. Teachers responsible for the organisation and/or conduct of any excursion should consult the *"School Policy and Advisory Guide"* and *"Student Safety and Risk Management"* to determine whether an activity is an 'Adventure Activity' and also to understand the arrangements and ratios that are required.

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/management/governance/spaq/safety/excursions/default.htm>

### Excursions and Activities

- Excursions and activities should generally be planned a full term ahead and therefore will be included in the Term Calendar. Excursions or activities not planned well in advance may not be approved.
- Staff must begin planning a minimum of four weeks prior to any excursion by consulting with the Assistant Principal *and by completing the "APPLICATION: METROPOLITAN & DAY EXCURSIONS"*. Details are to be entered on Compass 'Events' to complete the approval process.
- Teachers responsible for the organisation and/or conduct of any excursion

should consult the “*School Policy and Advisory Guide*” and if necessary “*Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors*” to understand the arrangements and ratios that are required.

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/management/governance/spag/safety/excursions/default.htm>

- Domain Areas should plan major excursions across the whole year level or group of subjects so that all students have equal access to the benefits of such activities whilst minimising disruption and being cost effective.
- Some excursions involve activities considered to be ‘Adventure Activities.’ Common examples include skiing, horse-riding, bushwalking, canoeing etc. Teachers responsible for the organisation and/or conduct of any excursion should consult the “*School Policy and Advisory Guide*” and “*Student Safety and Risk Management*” to determine whether an activity is an ‘Adventure Activity’ and also to understand the arrangements and ratios that are required.
- DET also require schools to report non-adventure activities which, by their nature, location or timing, may be hazardous and excursions beyond the greater metropolitan area

### **Unsupervised Excursions**

- Unsupervised Excursions should be infrequent. However, with VCE and VCAL students having no scheduled classes at some times, such activities should be conducted by students on those times and/or outside of school hours.
- If an Unsupervised Excursion is necessary, the standard excursion planning and approval process applies. The only variation is that the individually generated CASES 21 Permission Form will state in the staffing section that the excursion is “Unsupervised.”

### **In-School Activities**

- In-school activities such as guest speakers and performance can be arranged in order to supplement and broaden the standard educational program. All such events must be organised and approved well in advance.
- Staff must begin planning at least four weeks prior to the activity by consulting with the relevant Assistant Principal and by submitting an Events request on Compass. Such activities are approved at the school level.

### **Excursions within Class Time**

- Excursions within class time can be arranged in order to broaden the standard educational program. All such events must be organised and approved two weeks in advance.

### **All Camps, Excursions and Tours**

- All camps and excursions require parental permission. This must be based on the concept of ‘informed consent’ with the clear implication that parents must be informed of all relevant details prior to giving their consent.

- All camps, tours, excursions and in-school activities must be approved through Domain Leaders, Assistant Principal, Curriculum Implementation Leader, Daily Organiser, Sub-School Leaders and the Business Manager.
- Camp organizers must develop an itemized budget for their camp prior to notifying parents and students of the details of the camp. It must indicate the GST component of each item and ensure a financial loss is not incurred. When developing the budget for camps, organizers must also make provision for the cost of additional staff. The budget must be approved by the Business Manager.
- All camps and excursions requiring payment will have a due date for final payments. Late payments will not be accepted.
- If, when the date for payment has passed, the number of students exceeds the places available, effort should be made to alter arrangements to include the additional students or, if this is not possible, a ballot should be conducted to determine the final participants
- The use of private cars to transport students is strongly discouraged. The Principal must approve such use and the vehicle must be well maintained and comprehensively insured with public liability of \$20,000,000 including coverage for the employer (DET). Written parental consent must be obtained.
- If any activity requires payment and/or is likely to be controversial or cause offence, parents must be informed in writing and have the option to exclude their child.
- All members of staff are eligible to apply to attend camps and extended excursions. Staff should be made aware of their opportunities to participate on and be selected for camps and extended excursions.
- Staffing decisions will be made by the Camp/Trip Organiser and the Curriculum Implementation Leader /Daily Organiser, assisted by a Principal Class representative
- Work must be set and left for all classes to be covered during the camp/ tour/ excursion/activity.