

**Camps and Excursions Policy**

Murrabit Group School’s camping program enables students to further their learning and social skills development in a non-school setting. Camps and excursions may have a cultural, environmental or outdoor emphasis and are an important aspect of the educational programs offered at our school. School camps and excursions are subject to specific Department policy and guidelines.

**AIMS**

* To provide all children with the opportunity to participate in excursions and a sequential camping program.
* To provide shared class experiences and a sense of group cohesiveness.
* To reinforce and extend classroom learnings.
* To provide a program that delivers skills and knowledge that may lead to a lifelong involvement in worthwhile leisure pursuits.
* To provide a program that promotes self-esteem, resourcefulness, independence, leadership, judgement, cooperation and tolerance.

**Policy**

* The Principal is responsible for the conduct of all excursions and camps and must ensure:
  + excursions are planned, approved and conducted in accordance with the Department’s [Excursion Policy and Guidelines](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/excursions/policy).
  + an online notification of school activity form is completed at least three weeks prior to the activity using the Student Activity Locator
  + the school planning staff have considered and appropriately planned for the risk of bushfire activity in the excursion location noting that in the event of a Code Red Day being announced, excursions or camp activities in effected location will be cancelled or rescheduled.
  + Planning also covers arrangements for cancelling, recalling or altering the camp or excursion.
  + **Important:** Principals, teachers, school councillors 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, actions and the curriculum role of any activity.

# A camp is defined as any activity involving at least one night’s accommodation, including sleep overs at school.

* School Council will ensure that all school camps and excursions are maintained at a reasonable and affordable cost, and comply with all Department of Education requirements.
* Students will not be excluded from camps or excursions simply for financial reasons. Decisions relating to alternative payment arrangements will be made by the Principal on a case-by-case basis.
* All families will be given sufficient time to make payments for individual camps.
* Children whose payments have not been finalised at least two weeks before the departure date will not be allowed to attend unless alternative payment arrangements have been organised
* Parents will be requested to collect their child from an excursion or camp if their child exhibits behaviour that is considered unacceptable. The Teacher in Charge, in consultation with the Principal, will make this decision. Costs incurred will be the responsibility of the parent.
* Only children who have displayed sensible, reliable behaviour at school will be invited to participate in the camping program.
* The principal is responsible for the approval of the operational requirements, including the risk register, for all excursions. School council approves the excursion in so far as it relates to the school’s budget, parent payments or entering into any contract or other such agreement with a third party.
* Mobile phone communication must be available for all excursions and camps and emergency transport be available.
* Prior to the commencement of any detailed planning relating to a proposed school camp, the organising teacher and other key members must meet formally with the Principal, to present the Principal with a plan, to discuss the proposed camp, and to seek ‘in principle’ support
* If the Principal’s approval is granted, detailed planning should commence using the Department’s Excursions Policy. This must include a site visit and [risk assessment](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/excursions/guidance/risk-management-planning).
* The school only uses residential campsites accredited by the *‘Australian Camps Association’,* the *Australian Tourism Accreditation Program (ATAP)* or the *‘National Accommodation, Recreation & Tourism Accreditation Program (NARTA)*’

**Adventure Activities:**

* Adventure activities are those that involve greater than normal risk such as base camping, bush walking, canoeing, snow activities, orienteering, cycling, horse riding, rock climbing and abseiling, challenge ropes courses, swimming (other than school swimming programs), surf activities, sailboarding, and similar activities.
* Organising staff should consult the [Adventure activities](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/excursions/guidance/adventure-activities) chapter of the Excursion Guidelines, or seek advice from peak bodies or skilled and experienced staff with recent experience instructing the activity to satisfy Council’s requirements.

**Supervision**

* Murrabit GS 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

**Parent Volunteers**

* Parents may be invited to assist in the supervision of school excursions and camps. When deciding which parents will attend, the Principal or camps committee will take into account –
* Any valuable skills the parents have to offer. e.g. bus licence, first

aid etc

* The need to include both male and female parents.
* The special needs of particular students.
* Parent volunteers may be required to pay the accommodation and meals cost of the camp.

**Volunteer and external provider checks**

* Murrabit GP will require parents to have a Working with Children clearance when volunteering at a camp when their child is not attending the camp with them
* Murrabit GP may also require parents to have a Working with Children clearance when volunteering at a camp when their child is attending
* Murrabit GP will require all external providers working directly with our students to have a current Working with Children clearance.

**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, Murrabit GS 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**

*Student Well Being and Engagement Policy*

*Volunteers Policy.*

*The Department’s Policy and Advisory Library* [*Excursions Policy*](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/excursions/policy)

**Policy Review and approval**

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| Policy last reviewed | 23 March 2021 |
| Approved by | Principal |
| Next scheduled review date | March 2024 |