



Springside West Secondary College

CAMPS AND EXCURSIONS POLICY



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact Springside West Secondary College, 8357 7100.

PURPOSE

To explain to our school community the processes and procedures Springside West 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 Springside West Secondary College. This policy also applies to adventure activities organised by Springside West Secondary College, regardless of whether 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. Springside West 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 interstate travel.

DEFINITIONS

Excursions: For 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 they occur outside the school grounds.

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

There are two different classifications of camps:

- Base camps are camps that are undertaken at accredited residential camp sites or camping under shelters such as tents. Camping as an adventure activity has its own specific guidelines.
- Study camps are camps that often involve senior secondary students. There is a focus on study skills, team building, communication, time management and wellbeing.

Local excursions are excursions to locations within walking distance of the school and do not involve 'Adventure Activities'. **Note: workplace learning and inter campus travel are not considered school excursions.**

Adventure activities are activities that involve a greater than normal risk – there are additional mandatory guidelines associated with these activities.

POLICY

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

Planning process for camps and excursions

All camps/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/excursion. Springside West Secondary College's risk assessment will include consideration of arrangements for supervision of students and consideration of the risk of bush fire 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/camp activities in affected locations will be canceled or rescheduled. Planning will also cover arrangements for cancelling, recalling or altering the camp/excursion for any other reason. Springside West Secondary College is committed to ensuring students with additional needs are provided with an inclusive camp/excursion program and will work with families during the planning stage, as needed, to support all students' attendance and participation in camp/excursion activities. In cases where a camp/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/excursion.

Supervision

Springside West Secondary College follows the Department's guidelines in relation to supervision of students during camps/excursions. All excursion staff (including parent volunteers) will be familiar with supervision requirements and the specific procedures for dealing with emergencies on each camp/excursion. All school staff will be aware that they retain overall responsibility for the supervision and care of students throughout all camps/excursions (including adventure activities), regardless of whether external providers are managing the activity. Any adjustments to supervision ratios must be approved by the principal before the camp/excursion.

Parent volunteers

Parents may be invited to assist with camp/excursions. School staff will notify parent/carer of any costs associated with attending. School staff oversee camps/excursions and parent/carer volunteers are expected to follow teachers' instructions. When deciding which parent/carer will attend, the organising Teacher will consider: any valuable skills the parent/carer have to offer (e.g. bus licence, first aid etc.) and the special needs of students.

Volunteer and external provider checks

Springside West Secondary College requires all parent/carer, camp/excursion volunteers and all external providers working directly with our students to have a current Working with Children Check card. For all camp/excursions, other than local excursions, Springside West Secondary College will provide parent/carer with a specific consent form outlining the details of the proposed activity. Springside West Secondary College uses Compass to inform parents about camps/excursions and to seek their consent and inform parent/carer about school camps/excursions and request a signature confirming consent to their child's participation. Parent/carer are encouraged to contact the school to discuss any questions/concerns that they or their child may have with a proposed camp/excursion. For local excursions, Springside West Secondary College will provide parents and carers with an annual Local Excursions consent form at the start of each school year or upon enrolment if students enrol during the school year. Springside West Secondary College will also provide advance notice to parent/carer 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), Springside West Secondary College will notify parents once only prior to the commencement of the recurring event.

Parent Payments for camps and excursions

Most camps/excursions provided by Springside West Secondary College 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 finalisation dates, and families will be given sufficient time to make payments. Students who have not finalised payment by the required date for camps and excursions provided on a user pays basis will not be able to attend unless the principal determines exceptional circumstances apply. Where a camp/excursion is provided as part of the standard curriculum requirements, parents may be invited to make a voluntary contribution, but all students will be able to attend regardless of whether their parents contribute.

Financial Help for Families

Springside West 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/organising Teacher. The Business Manager/ 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/excursions. Applications for the CSEF are open to families holding a valid 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](#).

Refunds

If a camp/excursion is canceled or altered by the school, or a student is no longer able to attend part or all the camp/excursion, our school will consider requests for partial or full refunds of payments made by parent/carer on a case-by-case basis considering 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 parent/carers at the time of payment.

Student health

Parent/carer need to ensure the school has up-to-date student health information prior to camps/ 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/ excursions. It is the responsibility of parent/carers to ensure their child/children are in good health when attending an excursion/camp. If a student becomes ill during a camp and cannot 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 camp/excursion are required to cooperate and display appropriate behaviour to ensure the camp/excursion is a safe, positive and educational experience for all students involved. Parent/carer will be notified if their child is in danger of losing the privilege to participate in a camp/ excursion due to behaviour that does not meet the standards set out in the school's Student Wellbeing and Engagement 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/excursion. If on a camp/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/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 camp/excursion consistent with our school's Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy, Student Code of Conduct and Bullying Prevention Policy.

Electronic Devices

Students will not be permitted to bring electronic devices to camp/excursion except with prior approval from the principal. The principal will only approve students bringing electronic devices to a camp/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 camp/excursion 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 parent/carer unless the Department is liable in negligence (liability is not automatic). Unless otherwise indicated, Springside West Secondary College and the Department do not provide student accident or ambulance cover. Parent/carer may wish to obtain student accident insurance cover and/or ambulance cover, depending on their health insurance arrangements and any other personal considerations.

COMMUNICATION

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

- Discussed at staff briefings/meetings as required
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request
- Published on school website

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

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

- [Excursions](#)
- [Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund](#)
- [Parent Payments Policy](#)

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	May 2026
Approved by	Principal, John Goodman
Next scheduled review date	May 2030