CAMPS AND EXCURSIONS POLICY

Help for non-English speakers
If you need help understanding this policy, please contact Watsonia North Primary School at 9435 1285 or email the school: http://www.wats-north.edu.au.

Purpose

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

Scope

This policy applies to all camps and excursions organised by Watsonia North School. This policy also applies to adventure activities organised by Watsonia North School, 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. Watsonia North 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.

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 sleepovers).

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

Policy

Camps and excursions are an integral part of the school curriculum as they enable students to explore, extend and enrich their learning and social skills development in a non-school setting. Camps and excursions complement and are an important aspect of the educational programs offered at the school.

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

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. Watsonia North School's risk assessment will include consideration of arrangements for the 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 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.

Watsonia North 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

Watsonia North School follows the Department's guidelines in relation to the 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 with 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 consider 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

Watsonia North School 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, other than local excursions, Watsonia North School will provide parents/carers with a specific consent form outlining the details of the proposed activity. Watsonia North School uses Compass to inform parents about camps and excursions 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, Watsonia North School 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. Watsonia North School will also provide advance notice to parents/carers of an upcoming local excursion through Compass News Feed and email. For local excursions that occur on a recurring basis (for example weekly outings to the local oval for sports lessons), Watsonia North School will notify parents once only prior to the commencement of the recurring event.

Parent Payments for Camps and Excursions

Most camps and excursions provided by Watsonia North 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 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 or 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

Watsonia North 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 Business Manager/Principal/Organising Teacher.

The Business Manager or Principal 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.

Refunds

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 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 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 and Anti-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 Positive Relationships and Anti-Bullying 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, Watsonia North 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.

Communication of School Policies

All Watsonia North Primary School Policies are communicated to the general public and school community via the school website.

Policies - Watsonia North Primary School (wats-north.vic.edu.au)

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

School Operational and Curriculum Policies are available in classrooms, office spaces and communal areas for convenient access.

Provided to the staff at induction and included in staff handbook/manual

Discussed at staff meetings/briefings as required

Hard copy available from school administration upon request

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

The following school policies are also relevant to this Camps and Excursions Policy:

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

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Evaluation and Review

Evaluation of the *Camp and Excursion Policy* will occur every three years as stipulated in the *Watsonia North PS Policy Review Cycle* document.

This policy was updated and approved by Watsonia North Primary School's Acting Principal in October 2022, and is scheduled for review in 2026.

Related Policies

All Department policies relating to the care, health, safety and wellbeing of students, including:

- Bullying Prevention and Response
- Child Safe Standards
- Child Protection and Child Safe Standards (PROTECT)
- Excursions
- International Student Program (ISP)
- Legal Claims, Subpoenas, Summonses and Other Legal Documents
- Risk Management — Schools
- Supervision of Students
- Volunteers in Schools

Related Legislation

- Wrongs Act 1958 (Vic)

Policy Review and Approval

Policy last reviewed	**10 October 2022**
Consultation	**In consultation with the School Leadership Team**
Approved by	**Acting Principal**
Next scheduled review date	**10 October 2026**