



Blackburn HIGH SCHOOL

Camps and Excursions Policy

PURPOSE

Camps and excursions provide valuable educational experiences 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 and enhances the learning experience available to students.

This policy explains to our school community the processes and procedures Blackburn High 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 Blackburn High School. This policy also applies to adventure activities organised by Blackburn High School, 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. Blackburn High School will follow both this policy, as well as the Department's policy and guidelines when planning for and conducting camps and excursions.

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](#).

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.

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 are not considered school 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 risks associated with a proposed camp or excursion are identified and understood, and reasonable steps are taken to minimise the risks as far as reasonably practicable. Blackburn High School'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 affected locations will be cancelled or rescheduled. Planning will also cover arrangements for cancelling, recalling or altering the camp or excursion for any reason.

Blackburn High 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

Blackburn High School follows the Department's guidelines in relation to supervision of students during excursions and camps.

All excursion staff 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.

Mixed-gender groups on overnight stays

We have removed the mandatory requirement to include staff of at least one person of each sex for excursions involving an overnight stay for mixed-gender groups.

When planning for overnight stays on an excursion, where possible, schools are now encouraged to select supervision staff who reflect the genders of students attending.

Excursions organised by one school for students from more than one school

Minimum supervision requirements can now be assessed based on the total number of staff present from each school if approved by all relevant principals.

School Sport Victoria events

Schools may consider allowing parents and carers to be responsible for supervision to and from School Sport Victoria events, and during the event when supervision is not managed by the event staff.

Individual students independently registered with State Schools Spectacular events

Schools may consider allowing parents and carers to be responsible for supervision of individual students independently registered with State Schools Spectacular (not attending as part of a school group).

External Provider Checks

Blackburn High School requires all external providers working directly with our students to have a current Working with Children Check card. The Teacher-in-charge of the camp is responsible for obtaining a copy of the WWC for external providers and must ensure the details are recorded on the school's WWC Register.

Parent/carer consent
For all camps and excursions, other than local excursions, Blackburn High School will provide parents/carers with a specific consent and medical information form outlining the details of the proposed activity via the school portal. 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. No student can attend a camp or excursion without the specific consent and medical information form completed.

For local excursions, Blackburn High School will provide parents/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. Blackburn High School will also provide advance notice to parents/carers of an upcoming local excursion through the school portal. For local excursions that occur on a recurring basis such as sport activities, Blackburn High School will notify parents once only prior to the commencement of the recurring event to seek consent and then place events on the school portal schedule as a reminder.

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 had parental/carer's consent or payment finalised by the required date will not be allowed to attend unless the Principal determines exceptional circumstances apply.

Blackburn High 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. The Business Manager 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 and the costs incurred to the school.

Generally we will not be able to refund payments that have already been paid 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, first aid kit/s and mobile phone will be taken by teachers on all camps and excursions and relevant contact numbers will be made available to parents. For camps undertaken in isolated areas such as the Splendours of the Outback Tour and Duke of Edinburgh Camps, a satellite phone will be taken by the group.

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 and other associated costs are the parent/carer's responsibility.

The teacher-in-charge of first aid must meet with the school nurse prior to the camp to be briefed on the health needs of the students going on camp.

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. Students and parents will be made aware of the behavioural expectations prior to each camp.

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*. 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*.

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, or as soon as practicable 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.

Electronic Devices

Students are not permitted to bring electronic devices on camp with the exception of mobile phones which may only be used as per the school's Digital Technologies policy. Students are responsible for the care of mobile phones 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).

Blackburn High School will include Department insurance as a part of the overall cost of all camps. However, for excursions, Blackburn High 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.

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

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

- School Policy and Advisory Guide:
 - [Policy and Advisory Library](#)
 - [Excursions](#).
 - [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:

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

REVIEW CYCLE

This policy was last updated in February 2024.