

Camps and Excursions Policy

Barwon Valley School is committed to safety and wellbeing of all children and young people and has zero tolerance for child abuse.
(Child Safe Standards)



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact Barwon Valley School.

PURPOSE

To explain to our school community the processes and procedures Barwon Valley 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 Barwon Valley School. This policy also applies to adventure activities organised by Barwon Valley 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. Barwon Valley 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 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 Policy and Advisory Library, at the following link:

<https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/excursions/guidance/adventure-activities>

School-Based Apprenticeships and Training (SBAT) are not considered school excursions.

POLICY

Camps and excursions can provide a valuable educational experience for our students which are complementary to their learning, as they focus on building student independence, opportunity to interact and be apart of the community, trying something new in a new and unfamiliar environment whilst consolidating and celebrating learning.

BVS VALUES: TEAMWORK RESPECT FUN DIGNITY SUPPORT

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. Barwon Valley School's risk assessment will include consideration of arrangements for supervision of students, individual requirements including medical and behavioural strategies to support the student and consideration of the risk of bushfire 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 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.

Barwon Valley School is committed to providing inclusive camps and excursions program and will work with families, leadership team and school nurse during the planning stage, 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

Barwon Valley School 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 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 and the needs of the students.

Volunteer and external provider checks

Barwon Valley School requires all carers, parents (not working with their child's class) and external providers working directly with our students to have a current Working with Children Check card. Parents are exempt from the WWCC, if they are supporting their child. [For more information about when a WWC Clearance is required, see [Volunteers page](#) on the School Policy Templates Portal.]

Parent/carer consent

For all camps and excursions, other than local excursions, Barwon Valley School will provide parents/carers with a specific consent form outlining the details of the proposed activity. Barwon Valley School informs parents about school camps and excursions by placing a note in student diary and asking parents/carers to return the part of the note that asks for parents/carers signature confirming they consent to their child's participation. 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, Barwon Valley 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. Barwon Valley School will also provide advance notice to parents/carers of an upcoming local excursion through notification on Seesaw and notes in the school diary. For local excursions that occur on a recurring basis, Barwon Valley 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 Barwon Valley 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 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 or if an alternate payment arrangement has been made with the Business Manager/ Principal.

Financial Help for Families

Barwon Valley 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/. The Business Manager/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 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. If the teacher/staff have any questions or concerns prior to camp, they can discuss these with the school nurse during the planning phase of the excursion. Teachers will administer any medication provided according to our *Medication* policy and the student's signed *Medication Authority Form, with medication that has a pharmacy label or webster pack*. 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.

BVS VALUES: TEAMWORK RESPECT FUN DIGNITY SUPPORT

Behaviour expectations

Students participating in camps and excursions are required to cooperate and follow the school rules 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 becomes unsafe and displaying behaviours of concern that are a danger to themselves or others. Parents/carers will be notified and may be asked to collect their child to ensure the safety and success of the camp for all students. If a student displays behaviours of concern during an excursion and the behaviour is a safety risk to all students, staff and participants the student will be transported back to Barwon Valley School on the school bus by the leadership team. When planning excursions and camps, the school bus is available onsite of the excursion/camp to transport students back to school as safely and efficiently as possible to reduce the risk to themselves and others.

When planning for an excursion/camp when writing the risk assessment, the staff and leadership team will assess the risk and determine if the strategies and procedures put in place reduce the risk to a satisfactory level for the student to attend. The standards of behaviour is set out in the school's *Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy*. The decision to exclude a student due to the risk being too high, 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.

The school rules and behaviour expectations apply to students on camps and excursions consistent with our school's *Student Wellbeing and Engagement 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. A student's communication device is always permitted and doesn't fall under the same conditions as other electronic devices outlined.

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, Barwon Valley 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

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

- Included in staff induction processes and staff training
- Available publicly on our school's website
- Included in staff operational guide
- Discussed at staff briefings/meetings as required
- Discussed at parent information nights/sessions as required
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request

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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

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	May 2025
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	May 2029