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## CAMPS AND EXCURSIONS POLICY

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### Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact North Geelong Secondary College on 03 5240 5800 or [north.geelong.sc@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:north.geelong.sc@education.vic.gov.au).

### PURPOSE

To explain to our college community the processes and procedures North Geelong 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 North Geelong Secondary College. This policy also applies to adventure activities organised by North Geelong Secondary College, regardless of whether or not they take place on or off college grounds, and college sleep-overs.

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. North Geelong 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 intercampus travel.

### DEFINITIONS

#### Excursions:

For the purpose of this policy, excursions are activities organised by the college where the students:

- are taken out of the college grounds (for example, a camp, day excursion, college sports);
- undertake adventure activities, regardless of whether or not they occur outside the college grounds;
- Attend college 'sleep-overs' on college grounds

**Camps** are excursions involving at least one night's accommodation (including college sleep-overs).

**Local excursions** are excursions to locations within walking distance of the college 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: [Adventure Activities](#).

Note: workplace learning activities (such as work experience) and intercampus travel are not considered excursions.

Camps and 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 camps and excursions, including adventure activities, our college will follow the Department's Policy and Advisory Library: [Excursions](#).

## **PROCESSES FOR CAMPS AND EXCURSIONS**

### **Planning**

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. North Geelong Secondary College's risk assessment will include consideration of arrangements for supervision of students and consideration of the risk of 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.

North Geelong Secondary College is committed to ensuring students with additional needs are provided with an inclusive camp and excursion 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**

North Geelong Secondary College follows the Department's guidelines in relation to supervision of students during camps and excursions.

All excursion staff (including parent/carer volunteers) will be familiar with supervision requirements and the specific procedures for dealing with emergencies on each camp and excursion.

All college 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/carer volunteers**

Parents/carers may be invited to assist with camps and excursions. College staff will notify parents/carers of any costs associated with attending. College staff are in charge of camps and excursions and parent/carer volunteers are expected to follow staff instructions. When deciding which parents/carers will attend, the organising teacher will take into account 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**

North Geelong Secondary College requires all parent/carer camp or excursion volunteers and all external providers working directly with our students to have a current Working with Children clearance.

### **Parent/carer consent**

For all camps and excursions, other than local excursions, North Geelong Secondary College will provide parents/carers with a specific consent form outlining the details of the proposed activity. North Geelong Secondary College uses Compass to inform parents/carers about camps and excursions and to seek their consent.

Parents/carers are encouraged to contact the college to discuss any questions or concerns that they or their child may have with a proposed camp or excursion.

North Geelong Secondary College will provide advance notice to parents/carers 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), North Geelong Secondary College will notify parents/carers once only

prior to the commencement of the recurring event.

### **Payments for camps and excursions**

Most camps and excursions provided by North Geelong 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 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/carers may be invited to make a voluntary contribution but all students will be able to attend regardless of whether their parents/carers contribute.

### **Financial Help for Families**

North Geelong 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 organising teacher or relevant Year Level Manager. The administration staff can also discuss family eligibility for the Department's Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund (CSEF), which provides payments for eligible students to attend college 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 college. 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 college, or a student is no longer able to attend part or all of the camp or excursion, our college 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 college. Where possible, we will provide information about refunds to parents/carers at the time of payment.

### **Student health**

Parents/carers need to ensure the college 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. Staff will administer any medication provided according to our *Medication* policy and the student's signed *Medication Authority Form*. To meet the college obligations relating to safety, a first aid kit and mobile phone will be taken by staff on all camps and excursions.

It is the responsibility of parents/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, or leaving early, transport to/from the camp is the parent/carer 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 college *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 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 college *Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy* and *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 (for example medical considerations) 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, North Geelong Secondary College 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.

Overseas and/or Interstate Camps may require travel insurance. Parents/carers will be notified if this is required.

## **COMMUNICATION**

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

- Included in staff induction processes and staff training
- Available publicly on our college website
- Discussed at staff briefings/meetings as required
- Reminders in our college newsletter
- Hard copy available from college administration upon request

## **FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES**

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies on the Department's Policy and Advisory Library (PAL):

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

The following college 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	26/02/2024
Consultation	School Council on 19/3/2024
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	Before 02/2028