



EMERALD SECONDARY COLLEGE

CAMPS & EXCURSIONS POLICY

RATIONALE

Excursions and camps are seen as an integral part of the school curriculum as they enable students to explore, extend and enrich their learning and their social skills development, in a non-school setting. Excursions complement and are an important aspect of the educational programs offered at the school. This policy is underpinned by Ministerial Order 870 Child Safe Standards.

The principal is responsible for the conduct of all excursions and must comply with the Department policy on the *Schools Policy Advisory Guide*-
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/pages/excursions.aspx>

AIM

- That learning is not limited to school, and that valuable and powerful learning takes place in the real world.
- To provide a safe, secure learning experience for students in a venue external to the school.
- To further develop social skills such as cooperation, tolerance, communication, individual and group interaction. To further develop problem solving and life survival skills.
- To extend understanding of their physical and cultural environment

GUIDELINES FOR ACTION

- Day excursions are defined for the purpose of this policy as any organised and supervised College activities that require children to venture beyond the College boundary.
- The Principal (or their representative) is responsible for the approval of all non-adventure single-day excursions other than those that must be approved by the School Council.
- School Council is responsible for approval of all overnight excursions; camps; interstate and overseas visits; excursions requiring sea or air travel; excursions involving weekends or vacations; and adventure activities or any other activity deemed high risk.
- If the excursion involves inter-state travel, then Regional Director approval must be sought.
- All excursions and camps must be approved by the **Operations Committee** and respective Guidelines and must be entered into Compass for approval no later than 28 days before the event.
- Once approved by the Operations Committee, all camps and high-risk excursions require School Council approval. The organising staff member must liaise with, and submit all necessary approval paperwork to School Council, via the Camps Coordinator.

- The Operations Committee will ensure that all excursions, transport arrangements, emergency procedures and staffing comply with DET guidelines. Refer To <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/health/Pages/outdoor.aspx>
- Once the excursion has been approved, the Excursions Co-ordinator will complete the DET Student Activity Locator at: <https://partner.eduweb.vic.gov.au/sites/sal#/> three weeks prior to the excursion departure date. (Required if metropolitan schools travelling beyond the greater metropolitan area).
- Prior to conducting the camp or excursion, the Department's requirements and guidelines relating to camps or excursions, will be observed.
- Consideration in planning may include information from the following DET and related site: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/pages/excursions.aspx>
- School Council is responsible for the approval of:
 - Overnight excursions
 - Camps
 - Interstate visits
 - Excursions requiring sea or air travel, weekends or vacations
 - Adventure activities

All DET requirements and guidelines that apply to the conduct of excursions are also applicable to all overseas and interstate (domestic) camps/excursions.

The Operations Committee is responsible for the approval of all single-day excursions other than those that must be approved by school council as mentioned above. A range of factors are taken into consideration by the Operations Committee and or School Council, including:

- The contribution of the activity to the school curriculum
- The adequacy of the planning, preparation and organisation in relation to the school policy and the guidelines and advice provided by DET
- Information provided by community groups/organisations that specialise in the activity proposed
- Appropriateness of the venue
- The provisions made for the safety and welfare of students and staff
- The experience and competence of staff relevant to the activities being undertaken
- The adequacy of the student supervision
- The high-risk nature of some activities
- Emergency procedures and safety measures
- Staff-student ratios
- Student experience

RISK MANAGEMENT

An assessment of excursion risks will be undertaken in accordance with Department guidelines - [Planning – Managing Risk](#).

For excursions requiring school council approval, an excursion risk assessment plan will be completed which includes consideration of risks across the entire excursion (including transportation, activities undertaken and excursion venues). Venue managers and activity providers should be consulted in the preparation of the school's risk management plan and where appropriate, the risk management plans of venues or activity providers should be used to inform the school risk assessment process.

- Students not attending a camp or excursion will have an appropriate learning program provided during the absence of staff accompanying an excursion.
- Prior to the camp or excursion parent/carers are to be made aware that DET does not provide student accident cover and that they need to make their own arrangements for cover.

EXPECTATIONS

- The Department's requirements and guidelines relating to preparation and safety will be observed in the conduct of all excursions.
- The Principal or their nominee will ensure that full records are maintained regarding the camp/excursion.
- The Principal or their nominee will ensure that adequate pre-excursion planning and preparation, including the preparation of students, takes place.
- Prior to conducting a camp or excursion, the approval of the School Council or the Operations Committee will be obtained. Council must approve overnight or adventure activities. The Principal must approve these and other activities. Only children who have displayed sensible, reliable behaviour at school will be invited to participate in camps or excursions. Student's and their parents/carers need to be made aware that acceptable standards of behaviour will be expected during a camp or excursion. The emergency management process of the school will incorporate all camps and excursions.
- When presenting information for application, organising staff must be aware that School Council will consider the following:
 - What is the purpose of the excursion and its connection to student learning?
 - Do staff members attending have the competence to provide the necessary supervision of students throughout the excursion?
 - Is the location of staff and students throughout the excursion including during travel known?
 - Is a record of telephone contacts for supervising excursion staff available?
 - Is a record of the names and family contacts for all students and staff available?
 - How will copies of the [parental consent](#) and [confidential medical advice](#) forms for those students on the excursion available?
- If day excursions include adventure activities organising staff should consult the [adventure activities](#) website, or seek advice from peak bodies or skilled and experienced staff with recent experience instructing the activity to satisfy the Principal's requirements / risk assessment requirements.
- To assist in payments of excursions and camps, parents have an opportunity to utilise their *Camps Sports and Excursions Fund (CSEF)*, if applicable.
- Office staff will be responsible for managing and monitoring the payments made by parents and will provide the teacher in charge of the excursion / classroom teachers with detailed records on a regular basis.
- Information will be provided to all parents of non-English speaking families in a manner that allows them to provide an informed consent to their children attending excursions.
- The primary references that must be consulted when considering all day excursions is the Vic Govt School's Reference Guide *Safety (Excursions and Activities)*.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students should not be denied attendance to any excursion or camp because of disability or medical condition. Parents and carers will be consulted about reasonable adjustments that may be implemented by the school to enable the student to safely attend the excursion or camp.

Principals will ensure that appropriate emergency and risk management planning is undertaken for students with disabilities attending excursions and camps.

OVERSEAS TRAVEL

The [Smartraveller](#) website is the Australian Government, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), travel advisory and consular assistance service. This site also provides useful travel information and tips.

Emerald Secondary College will ensure that they:

- Comply with any DFAT travel advice current for the proposed location;
- Subscribe to receive automatic travel advice updates from the Smartraveller website both prior to the excursion and when overseas;
- Review their risk assessment if there are any changes to the DFAT travel advice.

The cost of medical and hospital treatment is high in some countries; therefore, Emerald Secondary College recommends that all students and staff take out travel and medical insurance for the entire overseas trip.

EMERGENCY NOTIFICATIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

In the event of an emergency, to ensure information is provided to emergency services, Emerald Secondary College will notify and communicate with the following agencies:

- DET of any approved school camp or excursion at least three weeks beforehand using the [Student Activity Locator online form](#). A user guide has been developed to help schools complete the online form.
- [Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade](#) (DFAT) of overseas travel plans so that DFAT can help staff and students remain safe and secure while overseas.
 - Parents or carers will be advised of the telephone numbers (both during and outside school hours) for the designated school contact person in the event of an emergency.
 - Arrangements for communicating with parents in the event of an emergency, cancellation or recall of the excursion will be made.
 - Consent forms will remain at the school with the designated school contact person and copies of each form will be taken on the excursion by the teacher in charge.

In the event of an emergency, accident or injury:

- Staff on the excursion will:
 - Take emergency action as documented in the excursion and camp's emergency and risk management plan.
 - Immediately notify the school principal.

- The principal will make arrangements for the Department's Security Services Unit to be telephoned on 9589 6266.

Fire Danger and Extreme Weather Notifications

Prior to the excursion (including prior to departure on the day), the Principal and excursion leader must take into account all DET notifications and updates (or independently sourced information) surrounding all weather conditions pertinent to the area travelling to and from. (For example, information relating to fires, storms, winds or any extreme weather).

Fire Danger- The Principal may need to cancel excursions and camps at short notice on days of extreme fire danger or total fire ban. On such days, the Security Services Unit liaises with fire authorities to obtain up to date information for communication to schools that may be affected by wildfire, including schools with students attending camps in areas affected by wildfire. If an excursion is not cancelled, special fire safety precautions will be required.

When required, Emerald Secondary College will follow the Department's emergency management (bushfires) procedures for off-site activities.

- Teachers must carry mobile phones and will be equipped with first aid kits to be used in emergency situations.

CHILD SAFETY STANDARDS

To cater for Child Safety Standards, Emerald Secondary College will ensure the following occurs in relation to excursions, activities and camps:

1. In accordance with any applicable legal requirement or school policy, the school must make reasonable efforts to gather, verify and record the following information about a person whom it proposes to engage to perform child connected work:
 - a) Working with Children Check status, or similar check;
 - b) Proof of personal identity and any professional or other qualifications;
 - c) The person's history of work involving children; and
 - d) References that address the person's suitability for the job and working with children.
2. The school need not comply with the requirements in step (3) above if it has already made reasonable efforts to gather, verify and record the information set out in steps (3)(a) to (3)(d), above about a particular individual within the previous 12 months.
3. The school will ensure that appropriate supervision or support arrangements are in place in relation to:
 - The induction of new school staff into the school's policies, codes, practices, and procedures governing child safety and child connected work; and
 - Monitoring and assessing a job occupant's continuing suitability for child connected work.
4. The school will implement practices that enable the school governing authority to be satisfied that people engaged in child-connected work perform appropriately in relation to child safety.

ARRANGEMENTS FOR PAYMENTS

- All efforts will be made not to exclude students simply for financial reasons. Parents experiencing financial difficulty, who wish for their children to attend an excursion, are invited to discuss alternative arrangements with the Principal, Business Manager or nominated representative.

Decisions relating to alternative payment arrangements will be made by the Principal or Business Manager in consultation with the appropriate staff, on an individual basis.

- All families will be given sufficient time to make payments for excursions. Parents will be provided with permission requirements and excursion information via Compass (and other communication means), clearly stating payment finalisation dates. Payment and consent may be made electronically via Compass; alternatively, the submission of a signed permission form and payment (cash / credit card) may be made via the College front office. Children whose payment have not been finalised within by published timeline will not be allowed to attend unless alternative payment arrangements have been previously organised with the Principal or Business Manager or other nominated representative.
- Office staff will be responsible for managing and monitoring the payments made by parents and will provide organizing teachers with detailed records on a regular basis.
- The Department of Education and Training (DET) will not be involved in any expense associated with the conduct of excursions. The school may choose to subsidize some excursions or some student's expenses.

TEACHER RESPONSIBILITIES

Duty of Care

All school staff attending the camp or excursion owe a duty of care to the students. This means that they must ensure that reasonable steps are taken to prevent any reasonably foreseeable harm to students. This duty is non-delegable, which means that it cannot be delegated to external camp or education providers, parents or volunteers. The designated teacher in charge has ultimate responsibility for all students in their care.

External education providers and para-professionals must have appropriate certification (e.g. Working with Children's Registration) and ensure that supervision guidelines are followed.

Prior to the camp or excursion parent/carers should be made aware that DET does not provide student accident cover and that they need to make their own arrangements for cover.

Teacher in-charge responsibilities

- A designated "Teacher in Charge" will co-ordinate each excursion.
- The Teacher in Charge must complete all relevant aspects of the Operations Committee submission.
- The teacher submitting the Operations Committee application must work with the supervising teacher to complete the relevant risk assessment and submit to the Operations Committee at the time of making the application.

During the excursion / camp; the teacher-in-charge will:

- Know the exact location of students at all times including during travel.
- Maintain a record of telephone contacts for the supervising staff accompanying the excursion.
- Know who the school contact person is and their phone number.
- Have a copy of the names of family contacts for all students and staff on the excursion.
- Have copies of the parental approval and medical advice forms for those students on the excursion.

- Maintain a copy of the completed approval form (including all attachments) submitted to the school council.
- The teacher in charge must carry a mobile phone and first aid kit for each excursion. The teacher in charge is responsible for collecting the first aid kit prior to leaving.
- The teacher in charge will communicate the anticipated return time with the Emerald Secondary College office in the case where excursions are returning out of school hours. Parents will be informed prior to students leaving for the excursion, that they can phone the office to receive an updated anticipated return time.

Teachers participating in an excursion and/or camps will:

- Understand the purpose of the program and its connection to student learning.
- Be aware of their supervisory responsibilities throughout the program.
- Know who the nominated member of staff is who will provide first aid if required.
- Know the exact location of students they are responsible for at all times including during travel.

General responsibilities

- In the case where an excursion involves a particular class or year level group, the organizing teacher will ensure that there is an alternative program available for those students not attending the excursion.
- For students in Years 11 and 12 it is expected that the teacher in charge will consult with other staff before planning to minimise the impact on other classes.
- Parents may be invited to assist in the delivery of excursions, as deemed necessary.
- Only students that have displayed sensible, reliable behaviour at school will be permitted to participate in school excursions. Parents will be notified if their child is in danger of losing the privilege to participate in an excursion due to poor behaviour at school. The decision to exclude a student will be made by the Principal, Assistant Principal, Student Wellbeing Coordinator or Sub School Leader, in consultation with the organizing teacher. Both the parent and the student will be informed of this decision prior to the excursion.
- Disciplinary measures apply to students on camps and excursions consistent with the College's policies. In extreme cases the camp or excursion staff, following consultation with, and the approval of, the principal or their nominee, may determine that a student should return home during a camp or excursion.
- In such circumstances, the parent/carer will be advised;
 - Of the circumstance associated with the decision to send the student home
 - Of the time when the parents/carers may collect their child from the camp or excursion of the anticipated time that the student will arrive home
 - Of any costs associated with the student's return which will be the responsibility of the parents/carers
- In most circumstances, students will not be allowed to bring their mobile phones on overnight school camps or excursions. Emerald Secondary College will provide students and their parents and carers with information about items that can be brought to special activities and events, including mobile phones
- All excursion staff and, where appropriate, the students will be familiar with the specific procedures for dealing with emergencies on each excursion. Visit the DET Safety, Emergency and Risk Management site at <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/excursionsafety.aspx> for

information to assist schools to plan for and manage emergencies and security related incidents.

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/pages/excursions.aspx>

<https://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/forms/school/sal/EnterActivity.aspx>

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/health/Pages/outdoor.aspx>

Appendices which relate to this policy are:

- Appendix A: Pupil/Teacher Ratios
- Appendix B: Risk Assessment
- Appendix C: Excursion Protocol

REVIEW PERIOD

This policy was last updated on May 2019 and is scheduled for review on May 2022.

Appendix A: Pupil / Teacher Ratios

<p><i>Abseiling and Rock Climbing</i></p> <p>1:1 Rock Face 1:10 Others 2 Experienced Staff</p>	<p><i>Ropes Course</i></p> <p>1:12 3 students to any one element, 1 participating, 2 spotting NOTE: No student on any element unless supervised</p>
<p><i>Base Camping</i></p> <p>1:10 Residential; canvas 1:15 Study: residential</p>	<p><i>Scuba Diving</i></p> <p>1:8 Pool training 1:4 Diving, 2 buddy systems NOTE: 2 qualified staff</p>
<p><i>Board Sailing</i></p> <p>1:3 Beginners 1:5 Novice; intermediate; advanced 2 Experienced sailors</p>	<p><i>Shooting</i></p> <p>1:1 New or inexperienced 1:5 On the track or mound 1:15 Observers or waiting</p>
<p><i>Boats, Small Sailing - (Dinghies, Catamarans)</i></p> <p>1:8 Enclosed Waters 1:6 Open Waters 1:4 Open Waters, Adverse</p>	<p><i>Snorkeling</i></p> <p>1:8 Closed water: pool 1:4 Open water NOTE: 2 qualified staff</p>
<p><i>Bushwalking</i></p> <p>1:5 Overnight 1:10 Day</p>	<p><i>Snow Activities</i></p> <p>1:8 Alpine, Nordic – overnight 1:10 Alpine, Nordic – day 1:10 Non-skiing</p>
<p><i>Canoeing</i></p> <p>1:6 2 Staff members</p>	<p><i>Surf Activities</i></p> <p>1:10 Beach 1:8 Surf NOTE: 1 teacher/instructor in water and NOTE 1 teacher/ instructor on beach</p>
<p><i>Cycling</i></p> <p>1:10</p>	<p><i>Swimming</i></p> <p>1:20 Enclosed pools 1:10 Open water</p>
<p><i>Horse Riding</i></p> <p>1:1 Basics 1:5 Beginners 1:8 Semi-experienced</p> <p><i>Riding School:</i></p> <p>1 Experienced teacher with instructor 2 Experienced teachers if no instructor or group exceeds 10</p>	<p><i>Water Skiing</i></p> <p>1:20 Shore 1 Student on two at any one time; if highly experienced two may be taken together 2 People in boat – driver and observer; one must be staff member</p>
<p><i>Orienteering</i></p> <p>1:10 Bush</p>	
<p><i>General Excursions</i></p> <p>1:20 except for senior students where Principal discretion applies</p>	

Appendix B:

Excursion Risk Management Assessment Form

Section 1 – Environment Emergency Management Assessment

Venue Assessed _____ for month of _____

Assess each of the following hazards and any others you think relevant and complete charts below:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bushfires • Severe storms and flooding • Earthquake • School Bus Accident/Vehicle Accident 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Missing Student • Medical Emergencies • Incidents • Aggressive student behaviour 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intruders • Internal fires and smoke • Snakes and other wildlife • Other relevant to camp area
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Likelihood	Very High				
	High				
	Moderate				
	Low				
		Low	Moderate	High	Very High
Impact					

Environmental Emergency	Event	Risk Management Strategies
Very high or high likelihood / very high or high impact		
Very high, High and moderate likelihood / Very high, high or moderate impact		
Very high, High, Moderate or Low likelihood / High and Very High Impact		

Appendix C:

Emerald Secondary College Excursion Protocol

Your duty of care on an excursion is ABOVE AND BEYOND WHAT A PARENT WOULD REASONABLY PROVIDE.

During an excursion you are on duty all day. Lunch breaks etc. should be taken with the students to ensure maximum student supervision at all times.

Emerald Secondary College Contact Details-

Call in the case of any emergency or if you are in doubt about anything at all:

(During office hours) 5968 5388

Program this number into your mobile phone. Ask students to program this number into their mobile phones in case they become separated from the group.

In the case of a medical emergency always call: 000

In the event of an emergency outside of school hours, or if you are in doubt of anything at all, please call the following Principal Class members: Jodie Doble, Jonathon Rogers, Janine McMahon

Student Absences must be called through to the college

Remember to turn on your mobile phone so that you are contactable during the excursion!

Victorian Bushfire Information Line (24 hours) 1800 240 667

Excursion Process: Staff information prior to leaving the College

- Completed the necessary Operations Committee Processes.
- Organise electronic or hardcopies of work and put it up on Compass, for students not attending the excursion.
- Collected completed permission forms with emergency contact details for students to be taken with staff on excursion.
- Hardcopy roll prepared to be taken with staff on excursion.
- Mobile telephone (with College number programmed in), batteries full charged.
- Notified the College First Aid Co-ordinator of excursion to ensure the preparation of first aid kit and kit collected and signed out first aid kit as required.
- Copy of the excursion risk assessment taken with staff on excursion.

If a student does not return the permission note PRIOR to the excursion:

- PRIOR to the day of excursion call the parent** to advise that the student is unable to attend the excursion. Verbal permission may be granted so consent can be entered into Compass.
- If the student is absent prior to the excursion and you do not have their permission note, as above call the parent prior to the excursion (not on the day of the excursion).
- If the parent informs you that they will bring the note on the day, please seek advice from administration staff. There is a high likelihood that the student will not be able to attend regardless of securing the appropriate permissions due to timelines, booking constraints and/or excursion fee payment.**
- If administration says that the student can still attend if the appropriate permission is secured you will be asked to call the parent and inform them that it is preferable to deliver permission to the teacher personally (to ensure that the student is not dropped off without the note) at the point of departure.

Excursion Process: On the day of the excursion

- Mark the roll accurately on Compass prior to leaving the College (if students leaving after Home Group).
- Any student not meeting the uniform requirements of the day must be sent to the Assistant Principal or Sub School Leader for direction.
- Students not attending should be sent to the designated place for school supervision.
- Get students to save the school number into their mobile phones (to be used in the event of an emergency/if they are separated from the group/need assistance).
- The hardcopy roll **MUST** be kept with you at all times during the excursion. It should be marked:
 - Before students get on the bus/train
 - When you reach your destination
 - At lunch time
 - Before the students get on the bus to return to school
 - At end of day.
- No eating or drinking on the bus/train.
- Seat belt must be worn if available.
- Make sure students are aware; under no circumstances are they allowed to change buses.

- Make sure you check with the bus driver about the pickup location and time. Ask him if he will be your driver on your return trip (it makes it easier to locate your bus).
- Remember/write down your bus number for the return trip.
- It is advisable to ‘buddy’ up your students to keep an eye on one another.
- Advise students that they are representing the College and accordingly they are expected to act appropriately at all times during the excursion.
- Reinforce to all students that they are not allowed to leave designated areas for any reason.
- Advise students of details relating to activities, time of lunch etc.
- Strictly adhere to departure times. Always ensure that you have done a head count prior to assembling for the bus/train and before departure.

What do I do if:

A student comes to the train station without permission to attend the excursion?

- Call the college on 5968 5388 to inform them. Under no circumstances can a student participate in an excursion without written consent. In some cases, even if written consent is obtained on site the student may still not be able to participate due to booking constraints (Venue) or non-payment of fees.
- You may be advised by the college to call the parent and get them to return to the station to secure written permission. There is a chance that they are still in the vicinity and that they can come back to the station to sign a permission form.
- Do not leave the student unattended at the station without the permission of the college. The college will advise the course of action for managing a student’s duty of care in this instance.
- You may be asked to delay your departure to ensure that the duty of care is met for all students.
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A student becomes separated from the group?

- Call the College to notify them.
- Call the parent. There is a likelihood that the student will call their parent and they can then advise the student to return to the meeting point.
- Try and contact the student via mobile phone- ask the parent for the student number or one of the student’s friends.
- Return to the pre-designated meeting point and wait for the student.
- Always keep the College informed of your whereabouts and progress.
- Seek further direction from the Principal or his representative as required.

A student disembarks the train without the group?

- Call the College immediately and inform a principal or SSL. If the student calls the College they will be advised to stay where they are.
- Call the parent and inform them. There is a chance that the student will contact their parent. The parent can then advise them to wait where they are.
- Get off at the next station (with the rest of the group) and return to the station that the student disembarked from.
- Always keep the College informed of your whereabouts and progress.

- Seek further direction from the Principal or his representative as required.

A student becomes ill or is injured?

- In the case of a medical emergency, dial 000. After doing so, contact the College to inform them.
- Always keep the College informed of your whereabouts and progress.
- Seek further direction from the Principal or his representative as required.

Your transport is delayed, rerouted or has broken down:

- Contact the college and seek advice.
- The college may in turn seek advice from police or transit authorities and will advise you accordingly.
- In the event that a student's parent attends the location to collect the student, you must advise the college.
- In the event that you are unsure of any aspect of the advice from the college or in the event that you feel your duty of care is potentially being compromised by either the students themselves (trying to leave the location without your consent) or a parent (asking you to allow a student to leave the location independently or with a third party) you must seek further clarification or advice from the College Leaders.*