



# Princes Hill Secondary College

## Camps and Excursions Policy

### Purpose

To explain to our school community the processes and procedures Princes Hill 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 Princes Hill Secondary College. This policy also applies to adventure activities organised by Princes Hill Secondary College, 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. Princes Hill 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 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). There are 2 different classifications of camps:

- Base camps are camps that are undertaken at accredited residential camp sites or camping under shelters such as tents. Camping as an adventure activity has its own specific guidelines.
- Study camps are camps that often involve VCE students. There is a focus on study skills, team building, communication, time management and wellbeing.

**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>

Migrated to new format: 12 November 2025

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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. Princes Hill 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 (VET, work experience).

The school's excursion/incursion program enables students to further their learning by complementing classroom lessons with experts and resources from outside the immediate school community. Incursions complement, and are an important aspect of the educational programs offered at our school.

Camps and excursions are intended to enhance and enrich the curriculum, improve student connectedness with the school, expose students to new ideas, cultures, activities and experiences and provide opportunities to develop leadership qualities.

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, excursions and incursions will comply with Department planning requirements.

When organising camps, excursions or incursions, staff need to refer to the [Camps and Excursions Procedure](#) (staff access only).

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. Princes Hill Secondary College's risk assessment will include consideration of arrangements for:

- The [supervision](#) of students.
- The risk of [bushfire, grass fire and extreme weather](#) activity at the excursion location (see Department [Bushfire and Grassfire Preparedness Policy](#)).

In the event of a **Code Red Day** being announced, excursions or camp activities in affected locations will be cancelled or rescheduled. Schools identified for alternate arrangements on **Severe or Extreme Days** must prioritise relocation in preference to closure wherever practicable.

Category	Severe	Extreme	Code Red
1	Alternate arrangements (Relocate/close)	Alternate arrangements (Relocate/close)	Close
2		Alternate arrangements (Relocate/close)	Close
3			Close

Migrated to new format: 12 November 2025

Planning will also cover arrangements for cancelling, recalling or altering the camp or excursion for any other reason including **extreme weather**.

Princes Hill Secondary College 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.

When planning and conducting excursions, staff must follow the mandatory Excursion Guidelines.

## Supervision

Princes Hill Secondary College follows the Department's Supervision 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.

## Approvals

All excursions, incursions and camps must be approved by the principal in accordance with the Department's Excursions Approvals Guidelines.

The approval process varies based on the type of excursion as follows:

1. **For local and day excursions** the process for obtaining principal approval is via a Compass event approval process. All local and day excursions require parent/carer consent.
2. **For excursions that include an overnight component, adventure activities, interstate, overseas or travel by air or water**, a completed Excursions - Principal Approval Request Form must be submitted to Assistant Principal – Positive Climate for Learning. This approval form includes detailed information that may be needed in an emergency.
3. **Interstate or International trips/tours**, as per point 2 above, but Interstate and International camps **MUST** also be approved by the Regional Director.

To support planning and to ensure all staff have met their responsibilities, the Teacher in Charge along with the Assistant Principal – Positive Climate for Learning need to complete the Excursions and Camps Planning Checklist.

All excursions and camps documentation must be approved by the principal prior to commencement of the excursion.

The principal is responsible for the approval of the operational requirements, including the risk register, for all excursions.

School council approves the excursions and camps in so far as they relate to the school's budget, the Parent Payments Policy or entering into any contract or other such agreement with a third party, as these aspects of excursions fall within the scope of school council powers and functions. If appropriate, principals can consult with school council on other aspects of excursions.

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## **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 (e.g. bus licence, first aid etc.) and the special needs of particular students.

## **Volunteer and external provider checks**

Princes Hill Secondary College 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 including local excursions (those within walking distance), Princes Hill Secondary College will provide parents/carers with specific information outlining the details of the proposed activity to enable informed consent. Princes Hill Secondary College uses the Compass student management system to inform parents and to seek their consent for their child's participation. For longer excursions, Princes Hill may run an information session for parents/ carers. 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 conducted on a recurring basis (for example weekly outings to the local oval for sports lessons), Princes Hill Secondary College will notify parents once only prior to the commencement of the event via a Compass Event with repeat occurrences.

## **Cost of Camps and Excursions and Support**

The cost of all camps and excursions are to be paid by parents/carers unless alternative arrangements have been agreed to with 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 finalised payment by the required date will not be allowed to attend unless the Principal determines exceptional circumstances apply.

Princes Hill 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 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](#).

## **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

Migrated to new format: 12 November 2025

available to the school. Where possible, we will provide information about refunds to parents/carers at the time of payment. See the Princes Hill Secondary College [Refund Policy](#) for further information regarding refunds.

## **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 the Princes Hill Secondary College [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](#) or [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](#) 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 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).

Migrated to new format: 12 November 2025

Unless otherwise indicated, Princes Hill 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.

Travel insurance for interstate and overseas travel must be taken out and will form part of the costing of those camps.

## 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 handbook/manual
- Discussed at staff briefings/meetings as required
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- Discussed at parent information nights/sessions
- Reminders in our school newsletter

## Related policies and resources

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

- [Bushfire and Grassfire Preparedness](#)
- [Excursions](#)
- [Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund](#)
- [Parent Payments Policy](#)
- [Outdoor Activities and Working Outdoors](#)

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	09 September 2022
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	09 September 2026