



Mount Erin College Camps and Excursions Policy

CHILD SAFE STANDARDS

Mount Erin College is a Child Safe School. Our College is committed to safety and wellbeing of all children and young people. We value all students as individuals and their diversity. This will be the primary focus of our care and decision making.

Mount Erin College is committed to providing a Child Safe environment where children and young people are valued and feel safe, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives.

Our College takes a preventative, proactive and participatory approach to Child Safety to ensure that the safety of children is promoted, child abuse is prevented and allegations of child abuse are properly responded to. Mount Erin College has zero tolerance for child abuse.

PURPOSE

To explain to our College Community the processes and procedures Mount Erin College will use when planning and conducting Camps, Excursions and Adventure Activities for students.

Camps and Excursions and other activities can enhance our program, enrich our offerings and improve student engagement by building links to the world beyond the classroom. It is essential that all such activities are carefully and effectively planned, and that their educational value and relevance to the curriculum is evident. We value the contribution made by staff in providing supervision and support for camps.

SCOPE

This Policy applies to all Camps and Excursions organised by Mount Erin College. This Policy also applies to Adventure Activities organised by Mount Erin College, regardless of whether or not they take place on or off College 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. Mount Erin 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.

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, 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 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 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.

POLICY

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 school will follow the Department's School Policy and Advisory Guide: [Excursions and Activities](#).

For Camps and Excursions requiring College Board approval, our College will also follow the Department's School Policy and Advisory Guide: [Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors](#).

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. Mount Erin College'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 effected locations will be cancelled or rescheduled. Planning will also cover arrangements for cancelling, recalling or altering the Camp or Excursion for any other reason.

Mount Erin 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.

Supervision

Mount Erin College 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. 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 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

Mount Erin 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, other than local excursions, Mount Erin College will provide parents/carers with a specific Consent Form outlining the details of the proposed activity. Mount Erin College uses Compass to inform parents 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.

For Local Excursions, Mount Erin College 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. Mount Erin College will also 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, Mount Erin College will notify parents once only prior to the commencement of the recurring event.

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, as listed on Compass, 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.

Mount Erin 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 or Principal. The Business Manager or 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](#).

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.

Student Health

Parents and carers need to ensure the school has up to date student Health Information prior to Camps and Excursions. Staff have responsibility for the health needs of the students for each Camp or 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, 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, follow all staff instructions and display appropriate behaviour to ensure the camp or excursion is a safe, positive 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*, *Student Code of Conduct* 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*, *Student Code of Conduct* and *Bullying Prevention Policy*.

Electronic Devices

Students will be permitted to bring electronic devices (such as iPads, iPods, mobile phones) but these may only be used during times set by the Teacher in Charge. Students are responsible for the care of any personal electronic device 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 required 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, Mount Erin 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.

Mount Erin College requires that all students participating in overseas trips have purchased Travel Insurance. Parents / carers may consider Accident Insurance for interstate trips.

Student and Staff Safety is of Paramount Importance:

Mount Erin College will make every endeavour to ensure that all factors that might impact on student and staff safety are taken into account. This will include scrutinising all applications to ensure that all Camps and Excursions comply with the relevant Departmental Guidelines and those of the College including checking if there are any Bushfires that might impact, both prior to and during, the proposed Camp or Excursion. If there is any known risk to the safety of students or staff the planned Camp or Excursion will be postponed or cancelled. If the risk arises during the planned Activity then advice will be sought from the local Police/ CFA/ Emergency Services as well as the Department's Emergency Management Services about the best option for the safe evacuation of our students and staff.

Mount Erin College believes:

- Student involvement in Camps and Excursions and other activities such as the provision of guest speakers, performances, etc. can add significant value to their learning and the broader College program.
- That if students are to experience an extensive learning program, we must allow them to participate in activities beyond our classrooms and the limits of our own expertise-

Mount Erin College aims to ensure that:

- Activities have a clear educational value and support or enhance the Curriculum Program.
- Activities support or relates directly to the College's Strategic Plan.
- The Management Committee assesses all Camps, Excursions and other Activities to ensure that they are of enough educational value to warrant the disruption to the regular program.
- The cost of the activities is kept to the lowest possible charge.
- Activities are equally accessible to all students at the year level or within the particular curriculum program.
- Activities are planned in advance and all members of the school community who will be affected have been informed well in advance.
- All stages of the planning process have been followed and appropriate measures have been implemented to maximise the safety of the staff and students involved.

College Board Approval Process:

- Prior to seeking College Board approval for an Excursion organising staff are required to meet again with the College Management Team and present them with all documentation, including the completed College Board [approval](#) proforma and all attachments, ensuring that there is a minimum of 12 school weeks prior to the Excursion to enable the matter to be placed on a College Board Agenda and, if approved.

When presenting information to the College Board, the Teacher in Charge must be aware that the Board will need to be provided with the following information for their consideration:

- What is the purpose of the camp and its connection to student learning
- Do staff members attending have the competence to provide the necessary supervision of students throughout the camp
- Is an appropriately trained member of staff able to provide [first aid](#)
- Have any staff members who are not registered teachers completed a Working with Children Check
- Is the location of staff and students throughout the camp including during travel known

- Is a record of telephone contacts for supervising staff accompanying the camp available
- Is a record of the names and family contacts for all students and staff available
- Are copies of the Parental Consent and Confidential Medical Advice forms for all participating students available to staff on that Camp and at the College
- Will the online [Notification of School Activity \(SAL\)](#) form be submitted six weeks prior to the excursion?

Implementation:

International Tours

International tours require at least 12 months planning and must be approved by the Regional Director and College Board.

Any member of staff considering offering an International Tour will need to see the Principal/Assistant Principal to have an initial discussion regarding the objectives and preliminary details of their proposal.

A member of the Principal class will go on all International Tours.

The list of staff intending to go on any International Tour must be submitted to, and approved by, the Regional Director.

In addition, the Organiser must enter all relevant information, for all students and staff, on the DFAT website.

Camps, Adventure Activities, Overnight Stays, Non-Metro Excursions

- Prior to the commencement of any detailed planning relating to a proposed School Camp, the Teacher in Charge must familiarise themselves with the Department of Education and Early Childhood's [Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors](#) located on the website. They must meet formally with the College Management Team and Business Manager to present a [planning summary](#), to discuss the proposed camp, and to seek 'in principle' support for the event.
- The Management Committee checks all proposed Camps, Excursions, Incursions and other Activities taking into account the educational value and impact on the normal operation of the College Program including: dates, costing, staffing, ratios and staff qualifications, timelines for approval as well as checking the Risk Assessment of any planned event. The Management Committee also approves for details of the event to be forwarded to the Departments Emergency Management Unit for ratification.
- All camps will need to be submitted to the Management Team for approval by November of the year **PRIOR** to the camp occurring to ensure that they appear on the College Calendar for the following year.
- The December edition of the school newsletter will provide parents with approximate dates and costs associated with the following year's camps. Parents will be notified of the exact costs and other relevant details of individual camps as soon as practicable.
- Camps must be presented for approval the year prior to the College Board for in principal approval, and to provide sufficient time for families to prepare for the expense, before they can be advertised
- Camps must also be registered with the Emergency Management section of the Department of Education and Training (DET) at least 3 months in advance of the proposed date
- Staff considering organising a Camp, Adventure Activity or non-metro excursion must refer to the Assistant Principal and the Camps and Excursions information on Compass listed under the School Documentation/Processes and Procedures on Compass.

- The school only uses residential campsites accredited by the 'Australian Camps Association' or the 'National Accommodation, Recreation & Tourism Accreditation Program (NARTA)' for overnight camps.
- Some Camps and Excursions involve activities considered to be 'Adventure Activities.' Common examples include skiing, horse riding, bushwalking, canoeing etc. Teachers responsible for the organisation and/or conduct of any Excursion should consult the "School Policy and Advisory Guide" and "Student Safety and Risk Management" to determine whether an activity is an 'Adventure Activity' and also to understand the arrangements and ratios that are required.

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/management/governance/spag/safety/excursions/default.htm>

Adventure Activities:

Adventure activities are those that involve greater than normal risk such as base camping, bush walking, canoeing, snow activities, orienteering, cycling, horse riding, rock climbing and abseiling, challenge ropes courses, swimming, surf activities, sailboarding, and similar activities. Emergency Management Plans are to be developed when adventure activities are being undertaken.

For further information related to Adventure Activities refer to the following websites:

[Adventure Activities - Department of Education and Training Victoria:
www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/adventure.aspx](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/adventure.aspx)

[Safety guidelines for education outdoors - Department of Education ...
www.education.vic.gov.au › For schools › Excursions and outdoor education](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/For%20schools/Excursions%20and%20outdoor%20education)

Excursions and Incursions

- Domain and Program Area Leaders should plan major excursions across the whole year level or group of subjects so that all students have equal access to the benefits of such activities whilst minimising disruption and being cost effective.
- Excursions and Incursions should generally be planned a full term ahead for inclusion on the Term Calendar.
- The online **Notification of School Activity** form then be submitted six weeks prior to the activity by the person responsible in the General Office.
- Staff must begin planning a minimum of twelve weeks prior to any Excursion by consulting with the Assistant Principal and Daily Organiser and by completing the Event Documentation on Compass
- Teachers responsible for the organisation and/or conduct of any Excursion should consult the "School Policy and Advisory Guide", "Student Safety and Risk Management" and if necessary "Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors" to understand the arrangements and ratios that are required. These are to be found at:
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/pages/excursions.aspx>
- DET require schools to report non adventure activities which, by their nature, location or timing, may be hazardous and excursions beyond the greater metropolitan area
- Unsupervised Excursions should be infrequent but may be appropriate with senior students.
- If an Unsupervised Excursion is necessary, the standard Excursion Planning and Approval Process applies. (i.e.: "Planning Document: Metropolitan Excursions and Incursions" The only variation is that the individually generated CASES 21 Permission Form will state in the staffing section that the excursion is "Unsupervised."
- In school activities such as guest speakers and performance may be planned by consulting with the relevant Assistant Principal and Program / Domain Leader, Daily Organiser and by completing the *Planning Document: Metropolitan Excursions and Incursions*"
- Excursions within class time can also be arranged.

All Camps, Excursions and Tours

- All Camps and Excursions require parental permission. This must be based on the concept of 'informed consent' with the clear implication that parents must be informed of all relevant details prior to giving their consent.
- All Camps and Excursions and in school activities must be approved through Domain Leaders, the Business Manager before going to the Management Team.
- Staff planning to run any Camp, Excursion, Incursion or other Activity must ensure that they follow all of the required processes before entering any details on Compass. Specify
- Camp and Tour organisers must develop an itemised budget for their camp prior to notifying parents and students of the details of the camp. It must indicate the GST component of each item and ensure a financial loss is not incurred. When developing the budget for camps, organisers must also make provision for the cost of additional staff. The budget must be approved by the Assistant Principal and Business Manager before parents are notified.
- All Camps and Excursions requiring payment will have a due date for final payments one week prior to the event.
- All activities must be entered on Compass 'Events' to complete the approval process.
- If the number of students exceeds the places available, effort should be made to alter arrangements to include the additional students or, if this is not possible, a ballot should be conducted to determine the final participants
- Approval for any proposed Camp, Excursion, Incursion or other Activity requires a minimum 80% payment and attendance of the relevant student cohort.
- Students will not be excluded from camps simply for financial reasons. Parents experiencing financial difficulty, who wish for their children to attend camp, will be required to discuss their individual situation with the Principal. Decisions relating to alternative payment arrangements will be made by the Principal on a case-by-case basis.
- The College Board requires that students only travel on buses fitted with seatbelts.
- The use of private cars to transport students is strongly discouraged. The Principal must approve such use and the vehicle must be well maintained and comprehensively insured with public liability of \$20,000,000 including coverage for the employer (DET). Specific parental consent must be obtained.
- If any activity requires payment and/or is likely to be controversial or cause offence, parents must be informed in writing and have the option to exclude their child.
- All members of staff are eligible to apply to attend Camps and Extended Excursions. Relevant experience and any specific requirements / qualifications for that Activity will be taken into account when deciding which staff will be involved.
- Staffing decisions will be made by the Camp/Excursion/ Activity Organiser and the Daily Organiser, assisted by a Principal Class representative. The impact on the normal operation of the School's Program will also be taken into account.
- Work must be set and left, and entered on Compass, for all classes to be covered during the Camp/ Excursion/Activity.
- The Organising Teacher is responsible for setting work for any students in that cohort that remain at school.
- Only children who have displayed sensible, reliable behaviour at school will be invited to participate in the Camps, Interstate or International Tours. Parents will be notified if a child is in danger of losing their invitation to participate in a camping experience due to poor behaviour at school. If the unsatisfactory behaviour continues, the child will then be excluded from camp. The decision to exclude a student will be made by the Principal, in consultation with the Teacher in Charge.
- Parents will be requested to collect their child from camp if their child exhibits behaviour that is considered unacceptable or they become unwell. The Teacher in Charge will make this decision. Costs incurred will be the responsibility of the parent.

Parental Involvement

Parents will be invited to assist in the supervision of school camps. When deciding which parents will attend, the Teacher in Charge will take into account –

- Any valuable skills the parents have to offer. e.g. bus licence, first aid etc
- The preference to include both male and female parents.
- The special needs of particular students.

Parents selected to assist with the camps program will be required to undertake a Working with Children Check. The school will pay for any associated costs.

Parent volunteers may be required to pay the accommodation and meals cost of the camp.

Further Information and Resources

When planning any proposed Camp, Excursion or Activity staff need to refer to the following documents:

- “*School Policy and Advisory Guide*” and “*Student Safety and Risk Management*” to determine whether an activity is an ‘Adventure Activity’ and also to understand the arrangements and ratios that are required.
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/management/governance/spag/safety/excursions/default.htm>
- the “*School Policy and Advisory Guide*”, “*Student Safety and Risk Management*” and if necessary “*Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors*” to understand the arrangements and ratios that are required. These are to be found at:
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/pages/excursions.aspx>
- “*Planning Document: Metropolitan Excursions and Incursions*” which can be obtained from School Documentation/Processes and Procedures on Compass
- If an Unsupervised Excursion is necessary, the standard Excursion Planning and Approval Process applies. (i.e.: “*Planning Document: Metropolitan Excursions and Incursions*” The only variation is that the individually generated CASES 21 Permission Form will state in the staffing section that the excursion is “Unsupervised.”

Related Policies

[Adventure Activities](#)
[Approvals](#)
[Student Preparation and Behaviour](#)
[Emergency and Risk Management](#)
[Venue Selection](#)
[Parent or Carer Consent](#)
[Staffing and Supervision](#)
[Student Medical Information](#)

Department Resources

To use the Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors, see: [Excursions and Outdoor Education](#)

To complete the online notification for school activity form - access the [Student Activity Locator \(SAL\)](#) or visit the [Emergency Management Portal](#)

Review Cycle

This Policy was approved in July 2019 and is scheduled for review in July 2021.