

## WESTERN ENGLISH LANGUAGE SCHOOL CAMPS AND EXCURSIONS POLICY



### Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact the school on 9311 9325

### PURPOSE

To explain to our school community the processes and procedures Western English Language 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 Western English Language School. This policy also applies to adventure activities organised by Western English Language 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. Western English Language 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>

### 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. Camp Doxa, on the land of the Dja Dja Wurrung people, is located in Malmsbury. Young people have a camp experience in a rural setting and get to experience the great outdoors, away from the confines of urban living. The camp offers a range of activities from low ropes, raft building, the giant swing, rock climbing, and many other activities that are designed to build skills of confidence, resilience, and team-building.

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. Western English Language School'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.

Western English Language School 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**

Western English Language 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/carers are expected to follow teachers' instructions.

### **Becoming a volunteer**

Members of our school community who would like to volunteer are encouraged to approach the Principal, Assistant Principals and Senior Teachers of WELS' Campuses and Outposts about how they could make a contribution to the education of newly arrived LBOTE students.

Volunteers can assist teachers in the classroom and with outdoor activities, assist in the canteen and the student vegetable garden and support the Resource Centre at the Braybrook Campus.

### **Suitability checks including working with children clearance**

The Worker Screening Act 2020 (Vic) (WS Act) sets out the minimum requirements for working with children clearances.

The Child Safe Standards are another law relevant to our school and requires that appropriate screening measures/suitability checks be undertaken in relation to volunteers and visitors.

### **Working with students**

Western English Language School values the many volunteers that assist to ensure that we are meeting our legal obligations under the WS Act and the Child Safe Standards, Western English Language School is required to undertake suitability checks which may include a working with children clearance, proof of identity, work history involving children and/or reference checks.

Considering our legal obligations, and our commitment to ensuring that Western English Language School is a child safe environment, we will require volunteers to obtain a working with children clearance and produce evidence of that clearance to the Business Manager of WELS for verification in the following circumstances:

- Volunteers who are not parent/family members of any student at the school are required to have a working with children clearance if they are engaged in child-related work regardless of whether they are being supervised.
- Parent/family volunteers who are assisting with any classroom or school activities involving direct contact with children in circumstances where the volunteer's child is not participating, or does not ordinarily participate in, the activity.
- Parent/family volunteers who assist with excursions (including swimming), camps and similar events, regardless of whether their own child is participating or not.
- Parent/family volunteers who regularly assist in school activities, regardless of whether their own child is participating or not
- Parent/community School Council members sitting on School Council with student School Council members, regardless of whether their own child is a student member or not.

In addition, depending on the nature of the volunteer work, our school may ask the volunteer to provide other suitability checks at its discretion (for example, references, work history involving

### **Management and supervision**

Volunteer workers will be expected to comply with any reasonable direction of the principal (or their nominee). This will include the requirement to follow our school's policies, including, but not limited to our Child Safety Policy / Statement of Commitment to Child Safety, our Child Safety Code of Conduct and our Statement of Values and School Philosophy. Volunteer workers will also be expected to act consistently with Department of Education and Training policies, to the extent that they apply to volunteer workers, including the Department's policies relating to Equal Opportunity and Anti-Discrimination, Sexual Harassment and Workplace Bullying.

The principal has the discretion to make a decision about the ongoing suitability of a volunteer worker and may determine at any time whether or not a person is suitable to volunteer at Western English Language School.

Western English Language School will provide any appropriate induction and/or training for all volunteer workers. The principal (or their nominee) will determine what induction and/or training is necessary depending on what type of work the volunteer will be engaged in.

All volunteers will be provided induction in relation to Western English Language School's child safety practices, including reporting obligations and procedures. Our school has a Child Safety Reporting Obligations Policy which all staff and volunteers should be aware of.

The principal (or their nominee) will determine what supervision, if any, of volunteers is required for the type of work being performed.

### **Volunteer and external provider checks**

Western English Language School 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. See Volunteer Policy

### **Parent/carer consent**

For all camps and excursions, other than local excursions, Western English Language School will provide parents/carers with a specific consent form outlining the details of the proposed activity. Western English Language School informs parents about school camps and excursions by placing a note in student bags 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, Western English Language 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. Western English Language School will also provide advance notice to parents/carers of an upcoming local excursion through a note home in the student's bag. For local excursions that occur on a recurring basis (for example weekly outings to the local oval for sports lessons), Western English Language School 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 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.

Western English Language 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 organising teacher. The organising teacher 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. 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. 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 and display appropriate behaviour to ensure the camp or excursion is a safe, positive and educational experience for all students involved.

Students must demonstrate that they understand why the school's three values of Respect, Responsibility and Caring are important for their progress and the progress of other students at our school.

Students are expected to demonstrate an understanding that:

- caring for other students is their responsibility
- speaking respectfully to students is important
- speaking respectfully to teachers, multicultural aides, canteen staff and volunteers at our school is important
- they will ask a teacher or coordinator to help if they are upset with another student
- they will not hit or fight with other students as fighting with students upsets them and affects their learning
- if they insult, hit or fight with any student at school, there will be consequences for their choice of action.

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 & Engagement](#)
- [Student Code of Conduct](#)
- [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 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 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, Western English Language 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
- available publicly on our school's website

## 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 & School Philosophy](#)
- [Student Wellbeing & Engagement](#)
- [Volunteers Policy](#)
- [Duty of Care Policy](#)
- [Inclusion and Diversity Policy](#)

## POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

<b>Policy last reviewed</b>	15 June 2023
<b>Consultation</b>	School Council
<b>Approved by</b>	Acting Principal
<b>Next scheduled review date</b>	June 2026

This policy has a mandatory review cycle of 3-4 years.