Camperdown College
Camps and Excursions Policy

Background and rationale:
Camps and excursions 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. Camps may have a cultural, environmental or outdoor emphasis and are an important aspect of the educational programs offered at our school. An excursion is defined as any activity beyond the school grounds. A camp is defined as any activity that involves at least one night’s accommodation.

Aims:
 To reinforce, complement and extend the learning opportunities beyond the classroom.
 To develop an understanding 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 venues external to the school.
 To provide experiences that promote self-esteem, resourcefulness, problem solving, independence and leadership.
 To further develop social skills such as cooperation, tolerance, communication, individual and group interaction.
 To provide shared class and year level experiences, team building and a sense of group cohesiveness.
 To provide experiences that deliver skills and knowledge that may lead to a lifelong involvement in worthwhile leisure pursuits.
 To extend students’ understanding of their physical and cultural environment.

Planning requirements:
 All day and non-adventure excursions must be approved by the relevant campus Assistant Principal on behalf of the Principal.
 The approval of School Council is required for all:
  o Overnight excursions
  o Camps
  o Interstate visits
  o International visits
  o Excursions requiring sea or air travel, weekends or vacations
  o Adventure activities
 In approving a camp or excursion, consideration will include:
  o impact on school program
  o the adequacy of the planning, preparation and organisation in relation to the school policy and the guidelines and advice provided by DEECD
  o information provided by community groups and organisations that specialise in the activity proposed
  o appropriateness of the venue
  o the provisions made for the safety and welfare of students and staff
  o the experience and competence of staff relevant to the activities being undertaken
  o the adequacy of the student supervision
  o the high risk nature of some activities
  o emergency procedures and safety measures
  o staff-student ratios
  o student experience
 The Assistant Principal (excursions) or School Council (camps and adventure activities) will ensure that all excursions, transport arrangements, emergency procedures and staffing comply with DEECD guidelines.
The organising teacher is required to plan well in advance, advise the Assistant Principal of intentions and check College calendar for date clashes.

Careful consideration will be given to the impact of VCE staff and/or student absence due to excursions. It is expected that the organising teacher will consult with other staff before planning to minimise the impact on other classes.

For day excursion: organising teacher to complete Approval Proforma and costing sheet and submit to Assistant Principal at least THREE WEEKS prior to excursion.

For camp / adventure activity: organising teacher to complete approval form, risk management form and costing sheet and submit to Assistant Principal at least SIX WEEKS prior to excursion. The Assistant Principal will table the camp for approval at next School Council meeting (held third Wednesday of each month).

Once official approval is granted, organising teacher is to prepare information pack for parents (letter, itinerary and clothing/equipment list, permission/medical form). Letter is to be proofread by Office Manager prior to distribution and a number is to be allocated to correspondence. The Assistant Principal will co-sign any letters relating to camps and excursions.

The organising teacher will update calendar and administration diary with dates of camps and excursions.

The Office Manager (Junior Campus) or Business Manager (Senior Campus) will complete the online Student Activity Locater (SAL) form to comply with DEECD requirements: 
A printed receipt of the SAL notification will be kept with the excursion or camp documentation.

The organising teacher is required to communicate excursion details to staff and display names of students attending

For day and non-adventure excursions the CASES21 permission form prepopulated with student medical details will serve as both the permission and medical form.

For overnight camps and adventure activities a separate medical form must be completed by a parent/guardian for every participating student.

The organising teacher (or designated teacher) is required to read student medical forms prior to departure and brief all attending staff about special requirements. The teacher in charge will ensure that student medical forms are available at the site and all camp staff are aware of special medical issues or medication requirements of any student.

One staff member will be designated to take responsibility for administering student medication if required (following consultation with parents and/or appropriate medical practitioners).

The school will provide a first aid kit for each camp or excursion. The organising teacher is responsible for collecting this prior to leaving.

Full records will be maintained by the Business Manager (both campuses) for the required time following the camp/excursion.

Office staff will be responsible for managing and monitoring the payments made by parents and will provide organising teacher with records.

The organising teacher of a camp or excursion must provide the Office with a final student list on departure.

The teacher in charge will communicate the anticipated return time to the 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.

The organising teacher is required to take a mobile phone on the camp or excursion.

The Assistant Principal will authorise the camp staffing with input from the organising teacher. Education Support staff can attend camps and excursions with the approval of the Assistant Principal. The organising teacher must seek approval prior to arranging for an Education Support staff member to attend a camp or excursion.
• Parents may be invited to assist in the delivery of excursions and will be required to have a Working with Children Check if supervising groups of students not including their own child. When deciding which parents will attend the organizing teacher will take into account any valuable skills offered (e.g. bus licence, first aid, etc), gender balance and special needs of particular students.

• Teachers must ensure that all accompanying camp/excursion staff and parent helpers are aware of student media permissions e.g. no photographs should be taken and/or publicly distributed without appropriate authorisation.

**Student participation:**

• To encourage maximum participation, the school may choose to subsidise some camps and excursions or some students’ expenses.

• All efforts will be made not to exclude students simply for financial reasons. Parents/guardians will be invited to contact the Business Manager to discuss payment plans and options where financial hardship would restrict a student’s participation in a camp or excursion. Decisions relating to alternative payment arrangements will be made by the Business Manager in consultation with the appropriate staff, on an individual basis.

• Camps and excursions will be planned and communicated in advance and all families will be given sufficient time to make payments. Due dates for permission notes and payments will be communicated in writing to parents/guardians. Students who have not returned permission notes, medical forms and payments by the due dates will not be permitted to participate in the camp or excursion unless alternative arrangements have been approved by the organising teacher and Assistant Principal.

• The parent/guardian must give informed written consent prior to their child participating in a camp or excursion.

• All aspects of a camp will be outlined to parents in writing, including cost, sleeping arrangements, itinerary, activities, clothing and equipment lists, contact phone numbers, transport arrangements, student management processes, permission and medical forms and clearly stated payment finalisation dates.

• Only students who have displayed sensible, reliable behaviour at school will be permitted to participate in school camps or excursions. Parents will be notified if their child is in danger of losing the privilege to participate in a camp due to poor behaviour at school. The decision to exclude a student will be made by the Principal or Assistant Principal in consultation with the organising teacher. Both the parent and the student will be informed of this decision prior to the camp. All students participating in a school camp will be asked to sign a contract agreeing to abide by all camp rules.

• Parents will be requested to collect their child from camp if their child exhibits behaviour that is considered unacceptable or a danger to others. The organising teacher, in consultation with the Assistant Principal, will make this decision. Costs incurred will be the responsibility of the parent.

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

**Arrangements for students at school:**

• Students not attending a camp or excursion are expected to attend school and will be placed in another class and have an appropriate learning program provided by the class teacher.

• Satisfactory arrangements will be made to provide continuous instruction for the students remaining at the school during the absence of staff accompanying a camp or excursion.

**Managing risk:**

• A Risk Assessment must be completed and submitted for all camps and adventure excursions.

• All safety requirements must be considered and adequately resolved prior to the camp. If any swimming activities are to occur, there must be sufficient staff attending with appropriate swimming qualifications to enable safe supervision.

• The organising teacher will ensure all students and adults attending the camp are aware of evacuation and emergency procedures.
• On days of extreme fire danger or total fire ban, the Principal or their nominee may need to cancel an excursion at short notice. Where an excursion is not cancelled, special fire safety precautions will be implemented.
• For high risk Outdoor Education activities the organising staff member must have suitable training and current qualifications. All staff members must be aware of the increased duty of care.
• The DEECD requirements and guidelines relating to ratios, preparation of students and safety will be observed in the conduct of all excursions.
• In conducting an Outdoor Education camp or adventure excursion, the DEECD Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors will be observed. It is the responsibility of the organising teacher to familiarize themselves with the relevant guidelines in the planning stage of the excursion.

Evaluation:
This policy will be reviewed every two years or more often if necessary due to changes in circumstances.

This policy was last ratified by School Council in June 2014

Appendices:
• Appendix A: Approval Proforma for Camps and Excursions
• Appendix B: Costing sheet
• Appendix C: Pupil/Teacher Ratios
• Appendix D: Risk Assessment Template for all overnight and adventure camps/excursions