



**Mountain District**  
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

# Mountain District Community College

## *Camps and Excursion Policy*

### **Purpose**

To explain to our college community the processes and procedures Mountain District Community College (MDCC) will use when planning and conducting camps, excursions and adventure activities for students.

### **Scope**

This policy applies to all camps and excursions organised by MDCC. This policy also applies to adventure activities organised by MDCC, regardless of whether or not they take place on or off school grounds.

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 school grounds (for example, school sport or physical activity at offsite facilities, day excursions);
- 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 sleepovers)

**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 Departments Policy and Advisory Library, at the following link:

<https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/excursions/guidance/adventure-activities>

### **Policy**

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. An excursion is defined as any activity beyond the school grounds. This policy is underpinned by [Ministerial Order 1359](#) Child Safe Standards.

### **Aims:**

- 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:**

All excursions and camps must be logged for approval in accordance with the college processes via Compass.

**The Board** is responsible for:

- Overnight excursions and camps
- Interstate visits
- International visits
- Excursions requiring sea or air travel, weekends or holiday periods
- High risk activities

**The Leadership Team** is responsible for the approval of:

- All single- day excursions other than those that must be approved by the Board as above.

A range of factors are taken into consideration by the Leadership Team and/or the Board including:

- The contribution of the activity to the college curriculum
- The adequacy of the planning, preparation, and organisation in relation to the school policy
- Information provided by community groups and organisations that specialise in the activity proposed
- Appropriateness of the activity and 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 to student ratios
- Student experience

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. MDCC'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.

MDCC 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**

All excursion staff (including parent volunteers or other volunteers) will be familiar with the Organising Teachers planning, including the risk management plan, dietary requirements, first aid requirements and other necessary documentation. It is the Organising Teachers responsibility to check the weather conditions of the area/venue they are visiting that day. If in doubt, communication is to be made with the Leadership team and if needed, the local contact of the area/venue the camp or excursion is being held.

All MDCC 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**

MDCC 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, MDCC will provide parents/carers with a specific consent form outlining the details of the proposed activity. MDCC 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.

## **Cost of camps and excursion, 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. Families experiencing financial difficulty are invited to discuss alternative payment arrangements with the Business Manager/Principal. The Business Manager/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 college, or a student is no longer able to attend part or all of the camp or excursion, our college 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 college.

### **Student Health**

Parents and carers need to ensure the college 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 Distribution of Medication policy and the student's signed Medication Authority Form. To meet the college'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 college's Student Behaviour Management and Anti-Bullying and Harassment policies. 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. Failure to comply may result in termination of the student's enrolment.

Disciplinary measures apply to students on camps and excursions consistent with our college's Student Behaviour Management and Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy.

### **Accident and Ambulance Cover**

Any costs associated with student injury rest with parents/carers. MDCC 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.

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Endorsed on:	
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