



CAMPS, PROGRAMS & EXCURSIONS POLICY



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand this policy, please contact Tony Bellette at tony.bellette@education.vic.gov.au.

PURPOSE

To explain to our school community the processes and procedures Blackwood Special Schools Outdoor Education Centre (Blackwood) will use when planning and conducting programs, camps, excursions and adventure activities for students.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all programs, camps and excursions organised by Blackwood. This policy also applies to adventure activities organised by Blackwood, regardless of whether 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. Blackwood 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

Blackwood Program:

For this policy, Blackwood Program is the learning opportunities organised by the Blackwood staff where the students undertake lessons linked to the curriculum and include all excursions, camps, events, expeditions, adventure activities and local excursions.

BLACKWOOD SPECIAL SCHOOLS OUTDOOR EDUCATION CENTRE

1015 Greendale - Trentham Road,
Blackwood, Victoria 3458, Australia

Campus of Frankston Special Development School
Member of Residential Outdoor Schools Association (ROSA)

Post: Post Office, Blackwood, Victoria 3458, Australia

Phone: 03 5368 6768

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Website: blackwoodssoec.vic.edu.au



Excursions:

For this policy, excursions are activities organised by Blackwood where the students:

- are taken out of the school grounds and may involve 'Adventure Activities' (for example, a bushwalk, bike ride, extra-curricular lessons)

Camps/Events/Expeditions are programs involving at least one night's off-site accommodation.

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:

- [Excursions](#)

POLICY

Blackwood programs are 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 Blackwood programs our school will follow the Department's Policy and Advisory Library:

- [Excursions](#)

Planning Process for Programs, Camps and Excursions

All Blackwood programs 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. Blackwood'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, Blackwood programs in affected locations will be cancelled or rescheduled. Planning will also cover arrangements for cancelling, recalling or altering the Program for any other reason.

Blackwood 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 Blackwood programs.

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Supervision

Blackwood follows the Department's guidelines in relation to supervision of students during Blackwood programs.

All staff (including parent volunteers) will be familiar with supervision requirements and the specific procedures for dealing with emergencies on each program.

All Home School Staff will be aware that they retain overall responsibility for the supervision and care of students throughout all Blackwood Programs (including adventure activities), regardless of whether external providers are managing the activity.

Parent Volunteers

Parents may be invited to assist with Blackwood programs. Blackwood will notify parents/carers of any costs associated with attending. Home School Staff oversee Blackwood programs and parent/carer volunteers are expected to follow all staff instructions (Blackwood & Home School Staff). When deciding which parents/carers will attend, the Home School Principal will consider: any valuable skills the parents/carers have to offer (e.g. bus licence, first aid etc.) and the special needs of students.

Volunteer and External Provider Checks

Blackwood requires all parent or carer programs, 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 Blackwood Programs, other than local excursions, Blackwood will provide parents/carers with a specific consent form outlining the details of the proposed activity. Blackwood uses their website to inform parents about Blackwood Programs and to seek their consent. 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.

Cost of Blackwood Programs, Refunds and Support

The cost of all Blackwood Programs are to be paid by parents/carers via their Home School unless alternative arrangements have been agreed to by the Home School Principal. The collection of payments will be the responsibility of the visiting school. The visiting school must meet all deposit and payment deadline dates.

Blackwood 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 directly with their Home School. They 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,

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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 Blackwood Program is cancelled or altered by the Home School, or a student is no longer able to attend part or all aspects of the camp or excursion, Blackwood will consider requests for partial or full refunds of payments made by parents/carers on a case-by-case basis considering 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

The visiting school, parents and carers need to ensure that Blackwood has up-to-date student health information prior to Blackwood Programs. The visiting school is required to appoint a member of staff with responsibility for the health needs of the students for each Program. 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 an appropriate communication strategy will be utilised during all programs, camps and excursions.

It is the responsibility of parents and carers to ensure their child/children are in good health when attending a Blackwood Program. If a student becomes ill during a program and is not able to continue, it is the parent/carer's responsibility to collect them and cover any associated costs. If the Principal approves a student joining a program late, transport to the camp is the parent/carer's responsibility.

Behaviour Expectations

Students participating in Blackwood Programs are required to cooperate and display appropriate behaviour to ensure the program is a safe, positive and educational experience for all students involved.

If during the Blackwood Program, the Blackwood staff or visiting school staff considers an individual student's behaviour does not meet required standards, then the Campus Principal or their nominee may determine that a student should return home. 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 consistent with our school's *Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy*, *Student Code of Conduct* and *Bullying Prevention Policy*.

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Electronic Devices

Students will not be permitted to bring electronic devices to Blackwood except with prior approval from the Blackwood Campus Principal. Approval for students bringing electronic devices to Blackwood 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 program. Blackwood will not be responsible for any personal electronic devices brought onsite.

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, Blackwood 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 and staff training
- Available publicly on our school's website
- Included in staff handbook/manual
- Discussed at staff briefings/meetings as required
- Discussed at parent information nights/sessions if Blackwood Staff involved
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

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](#)

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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	April 2023
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	April 2027

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