



# FRANKSTON HIGH SCHOOL

## CAMPS AND EXCURSIONS

Approved May 2022

### POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

#### PURPOSE

To explain to our school community the processes and procedures Frankston High 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 Frankston High School. This policy also applies to adventure activities organised by Frankston High 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. Frankston High 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.

#### DEFINITION

##### 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. There are 2 different classifications of camps:

- **Base camps** are camps that are undertaken at accredited residential camp sites or camping under shelters such as tents. Camping as an adventure activity has its own specific guidelines.
- **Study camps** are camps that often involve VCE students. There is a focus on study skills, team building, communication, time management and wellbeing.

**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>

## **EXCURSIONS REQUIRING SCHOOL COUNCIL APPROVAL**

These are excursions requiring special precautions and include:

- All overnight excursions
- Camps
- Interstate or international travel
- Excursions involving air or sea travel
- Excursions involving weekends or vacations
- All 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. These activities are considered to be an integral part of the total school program and aim to enhance and broaden the range of educational experiences of all students.

At Frankston High School, camps and excursions should satisfy the following criteria:

- All camps and excursions must have learning objectives consistent with the school's Annual Implementation Plan.
- All subject based camps and excursions must have learning objectives consistent with the subject's curriculum.
- For all camps and excursions, including those requiring special precautions, all DET requirements must be satisfied.
- Every effort will be made to ensure that there are no students who are denied participation in a camp or excursions on the basis of financial or other disadvantage.
- Every effort must be made to organise camps and excursions so as to minimise any disruptions to school-based learning programs.
- Every effort must be made to minimise replacement classes created and the use of CRTs within DET guidelines. Additional staff replacement costs above normal teacher: student ratios of 1:20 will be charged to the faculty involved. Therefore, additional charges for the hire of replacement teachers must be taken into consideration of excursion costs.
- Any additional staff must complete required documentation in regard to qualifications and Working With Children Checks.

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. A set of detailed staff instructions are available on Compass. This outlines instructions about how to create events on Compass. A notification chain will be created using Compass so that Head of Domain, Sub School Teams and the Principal Team can give their approval for the camp and excursion. Approval will be based on:

- The extent to which the camp or excursion satisfies DET requirements and the criteria stated in the Camps Excursions Policy (risk assessments are required for all camps and excursions)
- The need to achieve a balance in the number and cost of camps /excursions between subjects and year levels. There will be a "curfew" as indicated on the meeting schedule.
- Staffing and resourcing constraints.
- Appropriate staff and student ratios

Staff planning camps or excursions must submit the relevant application - 'Principal and School Council Approval Form' (for camps or adventure activities) or Compass event and risk assessment (for excursion) and any other documentation to the relevant Campus Principal in charge of excursions by the following dates:

- Excursions Requiring School Council Approval: Emailed one week before the Education Subcommittee meeting and at least 8 weeks prior to the date of the proposed activity.
  - *Approval will be communicated via email from Campus Principal to organising teacher*
  - *Documentation to be stored in Principal Microsoft Team*
  - *Organising teacher to store a copy in their electronic files*
- Excursions Requiring the Approval of the Campus Principal: At least one month prior to the proposed activity.
  - *Approval will be communicated via Compass event*

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. Frankston High 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.

The organising teacher is to create the camp or excursion event on Compass and enter the activity on Student Activity Locator (SAL) at least three weeks prior to the camp or excursion.

For a camp the organising teacher is required to distribute a 24-hour school emergency contact number which the relevant Campus Principal will have throughout the camp. The 24-hour school emergency number will be distributed to parents/carers via camp permission forms.

Frankston High 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.

Frankston High School staff will take the following items with them on an excursion or camp:

- First aid kits
- Mobile phone (excursion phone)
- Copy of the 'handbook' from the Compass event or a copy of the student's medical forms (and necessary student medical equipment, for example: EpiPen)
- Sunscreen

Prior to any adventure activity, the teacher in charge of the activity must undertake a pre-activity check (template available on Compass). This aims to identify any reasonably foreseeable issues that could possibly affect the planned activity negatively particularly in regards to the safety of the participants and staff. A decision to proceed with the activity, modify it, cancel it or implement contingency plans should be made based on the pre-activity check and any issues that could reasonably be considered to negatively affect the activity and/ or the health and wellbeing of the participants and staff.

## **Supervision**

Frankston High School follows the Department's guidelines in relation to supervision of students during excursions and camps ([Supervision | education.vic.gov.au](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/supervision)).

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.

For small group excursions in the local area, a teacher must be responsible for the excursion. However, with the approval of the principal, a small group can be supervised by one or more excursion staff employed by the Department or school council who are not teachers (for example, education support class officers such as integration aides and teacher assistants).

The decision to alter the supervision ratios for transportation to and from the venue should be documented in the risk assessment and controls enacted accordingly.

## **Volunteer and External Provider Checks**

Frankston High 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. A copy of this is to be provided to Frankston High School's HR Officer.

## **Parent/Carer Consent**

For all camps and excursions, Frankston High School will provide parents/carers with a specific consent form outlining the details of the proposed activity. The information distributed to parents/carers must provide enough detail that will enable the parent/carers to give 'informed consent'. It needs to be specific, include the correct dates, times, location, travel arrangement and required equipment and inform parents of risks and risk mitigation strategies. Frankston High School uses Compass to inform parents/carers about camps and excursions 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.

For some local excursions (walking distance of the school), Frankston High 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. Frankston High School 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), Frankston High School will notify parents once only prior to the commencement of the recurring event.

## **Medical and Consent Documentation**

Any hardcopy camp or excursion student medical or consent documentation that is collected should be stored for seven years. At the conclusion of the camp or excursion the organising teacher should file this in the administration office in a plastic pocket clearly labelled (year level, date and excursion/camp name).

The relevant Campus Principal should receive digital or hardcopy files of student medical or consent documentation before the camp commences.

## **Parent Payments for Camps and Excursions**

Most camps and excursions provided by Frankston High School enhance and broaden the schooling experience of our students but are not a mandatory component of our curriculum. These activities are provided on a user-pays basis in accordance with the Department's Parent Payments Policy.

Consent forms will have clearly stated payment amounts and finalisation dates, and families will be given sufficient time to make payments.

Students who have not finalised payment by the required date for camps and excursions provided on a user pays basis will not be able to attend unless the Principal determines exceptional circumstances apply.

Where a camp or excursion is provided as part of the standard curriculum requirements, parents may be invited to make a voluntary contribution but all students will be able to attend regardless of whether their parents contribute.

## **Financial Help for Families**

Frankston High 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, Wellbeing Team or Sub School. The Wellbeing Team or Sub School Team 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.

## **Refunds**

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.

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*. 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 not be permitted to bring electronic devices to camps or excursions except with prior approval from the Principal. The Principal will only approve students bringing electronic devices to a camp or excursion 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 camp or excursion.

## **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, Frankston High 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 and staff training
- Available publicly on our school's website
- Included in staff handbook/manual
- Discussed at staff briefings/meetings as required
- Hard copy available 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

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	May 2022
Consultation	Education Sub Committee School Council
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	May 2025