

CAMPS AND EXCURSIONS POLICY



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact the General Office.

PURPOSE

To explain to our school community the processes and procedures Brinbeal Secondary College will use when planning and conducting camps, excursions and adventure activities for students.

CONTEXTUAL STATEMENT

Located in the Wyndham growth corridor of Tarneit, Brinbeal Secondary College provides students from the Tarneit community a wide range of diverse and outstanding opportunities in an orderly and inclusive learning environment that promotes and fosters educational attainment and academic excellence for all.

Brinbeal Secondary College is a Supported Inclusion School (SIS). A SIS is a local government school with additional professional capabilities and facilities designed to cater to a higher proportion of students with disability (up to 10%). Students with a disability will be provided with enhanced support to receive high-quality, evidence-based educational provision alongside their peers without disability in a safe, accessible and supportive environment.

Brinbeal Secondary College can enrol 1,300 students, including 100 places for students with disability.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all camps and excursions organised by Brinbeal Secondary College. This policy also applies to adventure activities organised by Brinbeal Secondary College, 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. Brinbeal Secondary College 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.

DETAILS

While the degree of planning involved will depend on the nature and likelihood of the risks involved, the conduct of any excursion or activity must take into account the following:

- the educational purpose of the excursion and its contribution to the curriculum or other educational value
- department approval requirements for excursions and staff travel
- suitability of the venue and/or environment for the excursion
- informed consent from parents or carers
- adequate student and staff medical information
- adequate student preparation and clear behaviour expectations

- the importance of providing an inclusive excursion experience for all students, including students with disabilities and additional needs
- how school staff will meet their responsibilities under the Child Safe Standards
- requirements for any adventure activities
- assessment of excursion risks and appropriate risk minimisation strategies
- maintenance of excursion records, including clear documentation of the planning process, in accordance with the department's policy on management of school records – refer to Records Management — School Records.

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>

Note: workplace learning activities (such as work experience) are not considered school excursions.

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.

Camps and Excursions are an important part of the overall learning experiences of all students. Camps and Excursions can support quality curriculum delivery and can provide important social and emotional development opportunities for students that are often not available in the classroom. These might include teamwork, resilience and confidence-building through challenge, problem-solving, connecting with nature, creative and imaginative play and coordination and strength.

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. Brinbeal Secondary College's risk assessment will include consideration of arrangements for supervision of students and consideration of the risk of bushfire or other natural disaster activity in the excursion location. In the event the Bureau of Meteorology forecasts a Catastrophic fire danger rating (FDR) day, excursions or camp activities in affected locations will be cancelled or rescheduled. Planning will also cover arrangements for cancelling, recalling or altering the camp or excursion for any other reason.

Brinbeal Secondary College 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

Brinbeal Secondary College 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.

Department policy provides minimum requirements for staff-student ratios. As a SIS school, we consider if additional staff or volunteers are required to ensure student and staff safety. We take into account the likelihood of circumstances where a staff member may be unable to actively supervise the group (e.g. staff illness, staff needing to support a particular student because of illness, behaviour etc.), and the time it will take for a replacement staff member to arrive at the excursion destination. Prior to the camp, all staff will have been briefed on any special considerations or modifications that may be required for students with disabilities or additional needs.

The Teacher in Charge should seek expressions of interest from all staff when planning the camp or excursion. The list of interested staff should be provided to the forward planning committee, who will select staff based on minimal impact to daily operations and number of days the staff member/s have already been on camp, sport or excursion.

As per the Department's [Excursion Policy](#), except where otherwise indicated, all excursions and camps must have a minimum of 2 staff members.

- **Local excursions:** Regular class teacher-student ratios with an additional accompanying staff member
- **Day excursions:** 1:20 staff-student ratio with a minimum of 2 staff
- **Overnight base camps:** 1:10 staff-student ratio with a minimum of 2 staff
- **Overnight study camps:** 1:15 staff-student ratio with a minimum of 2 staff
- **Interstate travel:** 1:10 staff-student ratio with a minimum of 2 staff

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/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

Brinbeal Secondary College 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.

External providers, such as camps, will be informed of children's additional needs by the teacher in charge ahead of time to ensure that accessibility of facilities, provision of food and content of presentations and programs is considered and modified where possible to support students with disabilities or additional needs.

External providers will also be required to provide the school with their risk management strategies and emergency procedures so that staff can be familiar with these prior to the camp.

Parent/carer consent

For all camps and excursions, other than local excursions, Brinbeal Secondary College will provide parents/carers with a specific consent form outlining the details of the proposed activity. Brinbeal Secondary College uses Compass to inform parents about camps and excursions and to seek their consent 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, Brinbeal Secondary College 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. Brinbeal Secondary College 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), Brinbeal Secondary College will notify parents once only prior to the commencement of the recurring event.

Parent Payments for camps and excursions

Most camps and excursions provided by Brinbeal Secondary College 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.

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 finalisations 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

Brinbeal Secondary College 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 Business Manager or Organising Teacher. The Business Manager 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 Administration of 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 Student Code of Conduct or 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 iPads, iPods, 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.

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, Brinbeal Secondary College 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.

Adventure Activities & Camps

Adventure activities are activities that involve greater than normal risk — there are additional mandatory guidelines associated with these activities.

Camps need to have a full school council submission with risk management documents and be in two school council meetings (3 months) prior to the camp going out.

Student Activity Locator

The Daily Organiser will enter the excursion details into the [Student Activity Locator](#) (staff login required) at least 3 weeks prior to the excursion date.

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
- reminders in our school newsletter
- hard copy available from the General Office upon request.

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

- The Department's Policy and Advisory Library (PAL):
 - [Excursions](#) (including [Adventure Activities](#) guidance)
 - [Parent Payments: Policy | education.vic.gov.au](http://education.vic.gov.au)
 - <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/excursions/guidanceCamps, Sports and Excursions Fund>
- Related Policies:
 - Statement of Values and School Philosophy
 - Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy
 - Volunteer Policy
 - Duty of Care Policy
 - Inclusion and Diversity Policy
 - Parent Payment Policy
 - Medication Administration Policy
 - Bullying Prevention Policy

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	June 2023
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	October 2025 – to ensure ongoing relevance and continuous improvement, this policy will be reviewed every 3-4 years thereafter.

APPENDIX 1 - CAMPS AND EXCURSION PLANNING PROCESS

1 term prior (at the latest) - School Council Submission (if applicable)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The teacher in charge must submit a Camp/Adventure Activity proposal to the School Council for approval (School council occurs on the third Monday of the month)
6 weeks prior (at the latest) – Forward Planning Application
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the Camps and Excursions Planning Checklist - this checklist along with the associated tasks must be completed and submitted prior to the excursion. Consider any special considerations or modifications that may be required for students with disabilities or additional needs. Submit a Forward Planning Application
5 weeks prior (or once approval is given) - Event created on Compass and permission forms distributed.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete relevant Risk Assessment/Register - adapt template for your excursion and save in drive folder Liaise with the General Office staff to create the event on Compass Provide printed permission forms to all students and medical information forms (overnight camps & adventure activities), ensuring students have at least 2 weeks to make payment, return permission forms. Book buses (if required) [CDC Buses, Bacchus Marsh Coaches, Dyson] Ensure that the teacher in charge is familiar with the Excursion Emergency Management Procedures Complete a Purchase Order (if required) via the e-schools system (see the Business Manager for assistance)
1-2 weeks prior for camps – Permission forms and payment due
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check the number of students who have returned permission forms, made payment and completed the Student Excursion Application form <u>•</u> If the number of students with consent is less than 80% of the class, discussion with the Principal class must occur. The camp is likely to be cancelled Conduct volunteer training Ensure that arrangements are made for students not attending the camp/sport/excursion Work with the Assistant Principal to plan Staff activity roster and TIL Camp Activity/TIL Planner Confirm with the Daily Organiser, 5 business days prior to the camp, that it will/will not go ahead, based on student permission/excursion application/payments
3 business days prior (for all other excursions) - Permission forms and payment due
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the number of students with consent/payment/signed excursion applications is greater than 80% of the class for camps, the event can proceed The teacher in charge will send a DL email notifying all staff of the excursion with a list of students attending If the number of students with consent is less than a full team plus 2 subs (for sporting events) or less than 80% of the class for excursions, the event is to be cancelled Ensure that suitable work is provided on Compass for classes requiring coverage (if required) Ensure that arrangements are made for students not attending the camp/sport/excursion Confirm with the Daily Organiser, 3 business days prior to the sport or excursion, the event will/will not go ahead, based on student permission/excursion application/payments

On the day of the camp, sport or excursion

- Collect the student handbook (emergency contact and medical details), school first aid kit and camera from the front office - allow 15 minutes for a briefing with the First Aid Officer regarding students on the excursion.
- Ensure a participant roll is marked prior to leaving using the Compass event
- On return to school the supervising teachers must:
 - direct students back to class if return time is prior to session 6
 - supervise students in the library if return time is during session 6
 - ensure students leave school if the permission form indicated students would be dismissed on return
- The supervising teachers remain responsible for the students until they have returned to class or have been dismissed at the end of the day. Students are not to be allowed to wander throughout the school.