

CROYDON SDS CAMPS AND EXCURSIONS

PURPOSE

To explain to our school community the processes and procedures Croydon Special Developmental 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 Croydon Special Developmental School. This policy also applies to adventure activities organised by Croydon SDS, regardless of whether or not they take place on or off school grounds, and to school sleepovers.

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. Croydon SDS 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

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
- Attend school 'sleep-overs' on 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>

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. At Croydon Special Developmental School we see camp and excursions as a way to:

- Develop independent living skills, self-awareness, and self-esteem
- Participate in adventure activities and show an appreciation of the environment.
- Build and enhance social skills with peers, staff and the local community.
- Have an enjoyable time with peers and staff and to work as a team member to achieve positive outcomes.

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. Croydon SDS' 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 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.

Croydon SDS 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

Croydon SDS follows the Department's guidelines in relation to supervision of students during excursions and camps.

All excursion staff 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.

Volunteer and external provider checks

Croydon SDS requires all excursion / camp volunteers and all external providers working directly with our students to have a current Working with Children Check card, and follow other requirements as outlined in the Croydon SDS Volunteers policy.

Parent/carers consent

For all camps and excursions, Croydon SDS will provide parents/carers with a specific consent form via Compass outlining the details of the proposed activity. Croydon SDS will inform parents about school camps and excursions through Compass and asking parents/carers to provide consent on Compass for their child to participate in the camp or excursion. Paper copy consent forms can be sent home on request. 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.

Croydon SDS will also provide advance notice to parents/carers of an upcoming local excursion through a Compass Event. For local excursions that occur on a recurring basis (for example weekly outings to the local swimming pool), Croydon SDS 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 Croydon SDS 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 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

Croydon SDS 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 / Principal / Assistant Principal. The Business Manager / Principal / Assistant 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](#).

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. Our school Values of, Care, Share, Do your best and Be Safe, are all expectations for students during all excursions.

Parents/carers will be notified if their child is in danger of not being able to participate in an excursion or camp due to behaviour that does not align with standards of behaviour set out in the school's Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy. The attendance of a student for a specific camp or excursion will be made by the Principal or Assistant Principal, in consultation with the Organising

Teacher. This decision will be made based on a risk management assessment and from a safety perspective. If a camp is deemed too high of risk for the student to attend that specific excursion the parent/carer and the student will be informed of this decision prior to the camp or excursion. An alternate program will be offered that will allow access to similar activities and exercises as their peers.

If staff witness behaviours of concern that effects students safety under the current circumstances, then the Principal or their nominee may determine that a effected 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.

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.

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. Food items supplied from parent for specific medical needs will be given to the Organising Teacher the morning of the excursion or camp.

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, Croydon SDS 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:

- Available on Compass under School Documentation
- Available publicly on our school's website
- Included in staff handbook/manual
- Discussed at staff briefings/meetings as required
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- Discussed at parent information nights/sessions
- Reminders in our school newsletter
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following Department polices and guidelines

- [Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund](#)
- 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	
Christine Pillot	16.5.2025
Approved by	Principal, Christine Pillot
Next scheduled review date	May 2028