



# Nossal High School

## 2024 – 2028 Camps and Excursions Policy



### HELP FOR NON-ENGLISH SPEAKERS

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact Nossal High School on 03 8762 4600 or [nossal.hs@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:nossal.hs@education.vic.gov.au).

### PURPOSE

To explain to our school community the processes and procedures Nossal 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 Nossal High School. This policy also applies to adventure activities organised by Nossal High School, regardless of whether they take place on or off school grounds, inclusive of 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. Nossal High School will follow both this policy, as well as the Department's policy and guidelines when planning for and conducting camps and excursions.

### 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 'sleepovers' on 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 including base camping, bush walking, canoeing, rock climbing, challenge ropes courses, surf activities and similar activities. 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 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. Both camps and excursions, compliment the educational programs offered at the school as they provide access to resources, environments and expertise that may not be available in the classroom.

Excursions are events held off campus during a single day, while camps involve overnight accommodation and may have a cultural, environmental or outdoor emphasis. They further promote and aid the development of self-esteem, resourcefulness, independence, leadership, judgement, cooperation/ teamwork and tolerance.

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.

Prior to the commencement of any detailed planning relating to a proposed camp or adventure activity, the Teacher in Charge and other key members must meet with the principal, and present a planning summary, to discuss the camp, and to seek in principle support for the event. Applications for Principal Approval of Camps and Excursions must be made by completing the Nossal High School Approval Proforma at least six months prior (refer to Forms and Templates in the Camps, Excursions and Incursions Folder in the Operations and Daily Org Channel of Staff of Nossal HS). Staff should also use the appropriate checklists to complete all organisational tasks associated with the planned incursion or excursion or camp.

Part of DE planning process includes detailed risk assessments, to ensure that reasonable steps are taken to minimise the risks associated with each proposed camp or excursion (e.g. travelling only in buses fitted with seatbelts). Nossal High School'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.

At Nossal High School, the Operations Committee are responsible for overseeing the overall management and cost effectiveness of the camps and excursions program. The Operations Committee is required to check all details associated with such events to ensure they meet educational objectives, safety and school operational requirements. The Operations Committee has the authority to approve excursions to operate and therefore be included into the school's calendar of events and make recommendations to the Principal for the approval of camps and any excursions including adventure activities as determined by DE.

In the case of camps and excursions where a staff team is attending, it is the Teacher in Charge who has the responsibility to oversee the operations of the program, take charge of events, make key decisions and accepts ultimate responsibility for the camp or excursion. The Teacher in Charge should enter the event in the the DE's Student Activity Locator (SAL) online at least three weeks prior to the event.

The school will ensure a mobile phone is with school groups on all camps and excursions and the number of the phone is recorded on the event details. It is the responsibility of the Teacher in Charge of the activity to notify the Principal, (or if unavailable, the Assistant Principal – Operations) immediately, if a serious mishap occurs during the program.

Nossal 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.

At Nossal High School the Executive Team will seek feedback regarding events and camps, in particular any mishaps or areas for future improvement.

## **SUPERVISION**

Nossal High School 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.

An attendance roll will be taken for each event and will be recorded in the school's official attendance records via Compass Events.

The Teacher in Charge must carry with them a copy of the Event Handbook containing all relevant student details. In the case of a camp, a second staff member should also have access to a copy of the Event Handbook.

Any first aid treatment carried out on a student at the camp or excursion must be fully recorded (including details of what led to the treatment being administered) and given to the school's First Aid Officer on the group's return to school.

## **PARENT VOLUNTEERS**

Parents/carers 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**

Nossal High School requires all parent/carer camp or excursion volunteers and all external providers working directly with our students to have a current Working with Children Check card. In alignment with the Volunteer Policy, they should be familiar with the Child Safety Policy and must complete an induction prior to the excursion/camp.

## **PARENT/CARER CONSENT**

For all camps and excursions, other than local excursions, Nossal High School will provide parents/carers with a specific consent form outlining the details of the proposed activity. Nossal High School uses Compass Events to inform parents/carers about camps and excursions and to seek their consent to their student's participation. Nossal High School aims to provide adequate notice to parents/carers, particularly if payment is required (approximately six weeks for incursions/excursions). 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, Nossal High School will provide parents/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. Nossal High School will also provide advance notice to parents/carers of an upcoming local excursion through Compass Newsfeed, the newsletter and Compass Events. For local excursions that occur on a recurring basis (for example weekly outings to the local oval for sports lessons), Nossal High School 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 Nossal 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 may not be able to attend, as final numbers and payment is often required by the service provider prior to the event, unless an exceptional circumstance applies.

Any family who has not met the required alternative payment for the previous camp will be unable to participate in the camping program until the outstanding payment is finalised.

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**

Nossal 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 Business Manager, Assistant Principals who 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. The organising teacher or Heads of House can refer families to the Business manager or Assistant Principals. 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/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, an Event Handbook including the risk register and all medical information, a first aid kit and mobile phone will be taken by teachers on all camps and excursions.

It is the responsibility of parents/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* and *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.

## **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 the Wellbeing Team, 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, Nossal 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 ways:

- Included in staff induction processes and staff training (including the Nossal High School Staff Handbook)
- Available to staff on the Policies Channel of the Staff of NossalHS Team (including the Checklists for planning incursions and excursions and required documentation)
- Available publicly on our school's website
- Discussed at staff briefings/meetings as required
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- Discussed at parent information nights/sessions
- Reminders in our school newsletter

## FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies on the Department’s Policy and Advisory Library (PAL):

- [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	June 2024
Consultation	School Council (optional) Operations Team OHS Business Manager
Endorsed by	Acting Principal - Tracey Mackin
Next review date	June 2028 (Staff are reminded to regularly review the DE’s Camps and Excursions updates when planning)