

# Somers School Camp

## Woorabinda Campus

## Somers Campus

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### Placement and Attendance Policy

Somers School Camp has been established to provide Victorian Government primary school students with the opportunity to access affordable foundation level outdoor education programs. Students participate in a residential program that promotes opportunities to develop their personal and social capabilities facilitated by specifically qualified teachers.

There are two campuses of Somers School Camp – Woorabinda and Somers. Students attend the Woorabinda and Somers campuses of Somers School Camp onsite for between 2 to 9 days to participate in educational programs involving activities such as High Ropes, Zip Line, Canoeing/Rowing, Archery, Orienteering, Rock Climbing, Environmental Studies, Teambuilding Initiative activities among others.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- specify the criteria for students to attend Somers School Camp at either campus
- provide clarity on the placement criteria and ensure a smooth transition for students attending the school
- explain to school staff and parents/carers the key practices and procedures Somers School Camp has in place to record, support and monitor student attendance

## PLACEMENT

### 1. Background

Somers School Camp is not a designated neighbourhood school, and programs are available for students state-wide subject to the placement criteria set out in this policy.

### 2. Placement criteria

Students seeking to attend must be of primary school age and enrolled a Victorian government school.

Somers School Camp works with schools and networks of schools to offer places based on the following criteria:

- the capacity of each Somers School Camp campus
- the need to ensure as many students as possible can benefit from the unique programs offered
- the identified education needs of students in the community

### 3. Application and Approval Process

All government primary schools in Victoria can apply for a program at either campus of Somers School Camp. The campuses have different application and approval processes, and different attendance numbers due to accommodation and staffing capacity.

#### 3.1 Woorabinda

The Woorabinda campus operates on a cohort model in which students typically attend from one

school only (usually across one or two entire year levels). Schools apply directly to the Woorabinda campus via email ([somers.camp.woorabinda@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:somers.camp.woorabinda@education.vic.gov.au)) or phone (5167 1458).

Once an application is received, approval will be negotiated based on availability in the Woorabinda timetable, student numbers, and the willingness of the applying school to support the camps' educational and organisational objectives. Once an application is confirmed, medical and consent forms will be sent to the visiting school coordinators who will need to arrange for parents to complete these and return to their school. Completed forms must be returned to Woorabinda at least two weeks prior to the start of camp to allow for adequate preparation.

### 3.2 Somers

The Somers campus operates on a network model where a nominated Network Chair of a network of primary schools is contacted by Somers and invited to nominate a given number of students from the schools in their area. This means that cohorts of students attending the camp will be from multiple schools.

Networks are selected on a rotating basis by Somers Leadership to ensure fairness and equity. Once attendance has been confirmed, medical and consent forms will be sent to the Network Chair who will ensure all forms are completed by parents and returned to the Somers campus at least two weeks prior to the start of camp.

## 4. Appeals Process

Somers School Camp is not responsible for final decisions on attendance. All students who are put forward by visiting schools (for Woorabinda Campus) or the Network Chair (Somers Campus) are accepted.

If a parent/carer has concerns about the decision not to put forward their student for attendance at Somers School Camp, they are encouraged to contact their visiting schools (for Woorabinda Campus) or the Network Chair (Somers Campus).

## 5. Attendance Register and Records

Once attendance is confirmed, parents/carers are required to provide Somers School Camp with a completed Medical Consent form for each student, which contains the medical, dietary and socio-emotional information required for the 24 hour care of students.

Relevant student information will also be recorded in Somers School Camp attendance register.

## ATTENDANCE

### 1. Scope

This policy applies to all students for the duration of their attendance at either campus of Somers School Camp.

Students who choose to attend a program at either campus of Somers School Camp are making a commitment to participate in all scheduled sessions, arriving at each activity on time and prepared to take part. Our students are encouraged to approach a teacher and seek assistance if there are any issues that are affecting their attendance while on-site.

### 2. Recording attendance

Somers School Camp must regularly record attendance to:

- meet legislative requirements

- discharge both Somers School Camp and the visiting school's duty of care for all students

Attendance will be recorded in numerous ways while students are onsite at Somers School Camp:

- Prior to arrival, all parents/guardians of students complete a Medical and Consent form. These forms are used to generate a Group List which is provided to teachers at Somers School Camp for the purpose of recording attendance.
- Upon arrival, all students are greeted by Somers School Camp teachers and staff who records attendance on group lists and informs administration of any non-attendees. This is conducted in conjunction with visiting school staff who will inform the administration at the visiting school of any non-attendees. During the camp program:
  - Student attendance is formally recorded via sign in/out sheets in the administration building for any students leaving or arriving on the school site.
  - At the start, during and at end of each activity Somers School Camp teachers conduct a head count of all students and any deviations followed up immediately.

### 3. Recording absences and managing non-attendance

If an expected student does not arrive at either campus of Somers School Camp at the commencement of their program, their non-attendance is recorded. At the Woorabinda campus, their visiting school is responsible for following up and providing an alternative program for that student at the visiting school. If a student does not arrive at the Somers Campus at the commencement of their program, their non-attendance is recorded and the Network Chair is responsible for following up and students attend their regular school.

If a student is found not present whilst attending Somers School Camp, the school will take appropriate steps including:

- Contacting Visiting Teaching staff, School Leadership and appropriate staff
- Contact parents or guardians if appropriate

### Communication

The Somers School Camp Placement and Attendance policy will be made available to the school community on the school's website.

### Policy Review and Approval

Policy approved by	Mark Warner, Principal, February 2023
Next scheduled review date	February, 2026