



Year 9 Camp

Year 9 camp is being held at Camp Longbeach (just north of Batemans Bay), students will depart from school at 9.30am **March 29** and will return at 2.30pm the 31st. At camp the students will be sleeping in **cabins** with all meals provided. An equipment list is attached.

Whilst at camp they will undertake a **range of activities**, including archery, bush laser tag, bushwalking, canoeing and beach activities. We have tried to choose activities that are new and challenging for the students.

We have extended the date for deposits until Wednesday March 15, \$40 secures a spot on camp. A final payment of **\$250 is due by March 22**. **If the reason for your child not attending this camp is financial please contact Kim Waters to discuss options ph 44551799 or email kim.waters2@det.nsw.edu.au.**

Attending school camps has great benefits for all students. It's not always easy to make the decision to attend a school camp, for many students it is **a big step outside of their comfort zones**. But the decision to attend is important in adolescent development, it is another step towards developing our skills for life. For many students, they will decide to remain in their comfortable home environment. But **parents have the last word on deciding whether their child will attend camp**.

If your child is not attending camp they are expected to be at school, meaningful lessons will be provided. Absences will be marked against your child's attendance record. School attendance is compulsory.

Reasons for attending camp

The following information is provided to support your child's attendance at camp. It is taken from the website <https://www.melbournechildpsychology.com.au/blog/feeling-positive-school-camp/>

School camp is a fantastic opportunity for children to develop new skills, friendships and interests. However, for many kids (and their parents!) just the thought of sleeping away from home can provoke high anxiety.

Some of the common worries about camp include:

- Not being able to sleep properly
- Not liking the food camp will offer
- Who they will be sharing a cabin with
- Not enjoying the activities camp will offer
- Feeling homesick

Although these are understandable concerns, it is important to help kids feel more positive about camp and to overcome the fear of not enjoying camp.

The benefits of school camp are numerous, here are my top five:

1. Development of social skills

School camp is a great opportunity to develop a range of social skills. Most activities at camp involve team work, which is great to strengthen established friendships and also to develop new friendships by connecting with children they don't regularly talk with at school.

Through bonding activities, children develop supportive relationships not only with different children, but also with their teachers. At camp, children have the opportunity to learn about acceptance, caring and understanding.

2. Development of independence skills

Camp is a great opportunity for students to grow up by learning how take care of themselves and to do things on their own. Most students do rise to the challenge and learn to rely on themselves when they spend time away home.

3. Development of decision-making skills

Should I go with my friends or should I do the activity I really want to do? Should I have the third slice of pizza? Should I stay up or go to bed? Supervising teachers are not able to hover over each child all the time, so at camp, children are responsible for making more of their own choices.

4. Increased environmental awareness

During camp, children are exposed to authentic nature-based experiences. Hands-on activities in the outdoors stimulate all senses and facilitate learning. Children become more

aware of the environment, develop outdoor skills and appreciation for nature.

5. Learning new skills

At school camp, children will be exposed to a range of activities that they may not have tried before. When away from their parents, children are often more adventurous and willing to try new things.

OK great... BUT what if your child is feeling anxious about camp?

Here are five tips to help your child feel more confident about going to camp:

- 1. Preparation is the key to feeling less anxious.** Talk with your child about their worries and fears. Talk about your own experiences at camp and how you overcame your own challenges.
- 2. Pack together and make it fun.** Give your child the responsibility of checking that they have all the required equipment and take them on a special shopping trip to buy what they are missing. When packing, give your child a special memento to take with them that will help them feel safe
- 3. Talk to your child's teacher and share the concerns you have.** The teacher will appreciate this extra information and most likely will keep a closer eye on your child.
- 5. Consider counselling.** An experienced child psychologist can help your child to identify the source of their anxiety, learn how to overcome and replace unhelpful thoughts and how to use other practical strategies to minimise their anxiety.

If you think you have done all you can to prepare your child for camp, but they are still feeling anxious, reconsider if it's a good idea for them to go to camp.

Throughout their school years most children go to several school camps, so hopefully they will have another opportunity the following year.

Just don't give up, keep encouraging them and helping them to get ready for what could be a highlight of their childhood!

Equipment List

- Sleeping Bag
- Pillow
- Toiletries (toothbrush, toothpaste, deodorant, soap)
- A bath towel
- A beach towel
- Clothes suitable for water activities including a rash vest.

- Three changes of clothing, including a jumper for night time.
- Pyjamas
- Rain coat (just in case)
- Water bottle
- Covered shoes
- a hat

We look forward to working with all of the students at Camp Longbeach and providing meaningful learning for those back at school.

Denise Lefts

Principal
Wellbeing

Kim Waters

Head Teacher, Student