



EXCURSIONS PROCEDURES

This procedure must be read in conjunction with the *Excursions Policy*

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1. Overview

1.1. These procedures cover the requirements for planning school excursions.

2. Rationale

2.1. The procedures aim to minimise any risks associated with excursions and contribute to an enriching experience for students and accompanying staff and volunteers.

3. Procedures

Principal’s responsibilities

3.1. It is principal’s responsibility to ensure that:

- the excursion is directly related to the curriculum and not predominantly recreational
- the excursion, including planning processes, is fully documented and records are kept and maintained in accordance with the Directorate’s record management policies
- parents are aware an excursion is generally an optional enrichment activity and parents will have to cover the costs incurred
- all participating teaching staff know the requirements of this policy and other relevant Directorate and school policies, supervision requirements and safety procedures
- accompanying adults are advised of their responsibilities, relevant Directorate and school policies and the consequences of non-compliance
- all Directorate requirements for planning and accounting for monies are met

- if the planned excursion is a Category C or D excursion, an *Excursions - Risk Assessment proforma* is undertaken in relation to the safety of the participants. For Category A and B excursions, the completion of an *Excursions - Risk Assessment proforma* is recommended but not mandatory.
- an assessment has been undertaken to determine that a private provider meets the following criteria relevant to the excursion activity and any risks involved:
 - the provider's staff are trained to the industry standards required to supervise the activity and accreditation is sighted
 - the provider meets industry standards and accreditation is sighted
 - the provider has a risk management and/or safety plan relevant to the activity and it is sighted
 - the provider has appropriate insurance including at least a \$20 million Public Liability cover for any one event
 - have appropriate registration under the *Working with Vulnerable People (Background Checking) Act 2011*.
- supervision is adequate in relation to the number and needs of students, their maturity, anticipated behaviour and the activities planned
- arrangements are made for any student unable to participate in an excursion by having alternative activities and/or strategies available
- students with a disability have an equal opportunity to participate in excursions and reasonable adjustments are made to facilitate participation
- staff are aware of their obligations under *Section 9 of the Public Sector Management Act 1994* and (non-Directorate) accompanying adults are aware of their obligations under the *Working with Children and Young People – Volunteers and Visitors (Interim) Policy* and have appropriate registration under the *Working with Vulnerable People (Background Checking) Act 2011*
- accompanying adults are aware that they must not drink alcohol during hours of duty or when they have a continuing responsibility for students
- copies of emergency contacts and procedures and contingency plans are kept in the school and by the teacher in charge of the excursion.

Teacher in charge responsibilities

3.2. It is the responsibility of the teacher in charge:

- to know and comply with the requirements of related and relevant policies
- to ensure that students and parents are aware of supervision and transport arrangements
- to advise the owner and/or driver to have appropriate insurance cover where private or hire vehicles are used
- to determine when it is desirable for a participating staff member to have a current first aid certificate and an appropriately stocked and maintained first aid kit to be carried
- to ensure that all accompanying adults are appropriately screened, qualified and/or experienced and are advised of their responsibilities and relevant Directorate and school policies and safety procedures (refer to the *Working with Children and Young People – Volunteers and Visitors (Interim) policy* and the *Working With Vulnerable People Act 2011*)
- to gain informed consent by ensuring that parental information, medical and consent forms are issued where appropriate and completed and returned prior to the excursion
- to ensure Excursion Medical Information and Consent Forms (refer to *First Aid Policy*) are provided to parents for Category B, C and D excursions
- to ensure Excursion Medical Information and Consent Forms and General Management and Emergency Treatment Plans (refer to *First Aid Policy*) are carried on Category C and D excursions and to be aware of relevant medical conditions for Category A and B excursions

- to develop emergency contacts and procedures for all excursions. Copies of these contacts and procedures must be taken on Category C and D excursions
- where students are to be accommodated in billets, to ensure that the procedures are followed
- to ensure the cultural and religious needs of all students are considered and met in both the preparation stage of the excursion and whilst on the excursion
- for overnight excursions, to ensure that girls and boys are not accommodated in the same rooms
- to ensure that students over 18 years of age are asked to indicate in writing their preparedness to accept the recommended procedures and supervision necessary for the safety and comfort of the group.
- for students over the age of 18, the teacher in charge should obtain parental agreement to their participation in the excursion.

Supervision

- 3.3. Accompanying adults may be used to meet the supervision requirement provided the principal is satisfied there are sufficient teachers to maintain adequate control of the excursion and to control each activity. Additional adults should accompany excursions when extra care is considered necessary for the safety and welfare of students.
- 3.4. Excursions generally fall into the following categories. Supervision requirements for each category are included:

Category	Description	Gender balance	Minimum supervision ratios
A	Movement, generally on foot or by bicycle in the vicinity of the school or a variation to normal activity	Not required	One teacher per class group
B	Other than Category A within the ACT	To be considered by principal	One teacher per class group
C	Day travel beyond the ACT	To be considered by principal	Two adults per class group including one teacher
D	Overnight accommodation regardless of the distance from the school	Single gender – not required Mixed gender - required	One adult per 20 students with a minimum of two adults per excursion. At least one teacher of the same gender as the students Teachers must comprise at least half the number of accompanying adults.

Outdoor Adventure Activities

- 3.5. When outdoor adventure activities or sporting fixtures are included in excursions, the procedures in the *Outdoor Adventure Activities Policy and Mandatory Procedures* and/or the *Physical Education and Sport Policy and Guidelines* and/or *Swimming Pool and Water Park Based Aquatic Activities Policy* must be followed as appropriate.
- 3.6. The relevant requirements set out in the *Outdoor Adventure Activities Policy and Mandatory Procedures* and/or the *Physical Education and Sport Policy and Guidelines* and/or the

Swimming Pool and Water Park Based Aquatic Activities Policy must be followed for all occasions when students are engaged in swimming/water activities, irrespective of the duration of the activities.

Parent consent and medical forms

- 3.7. Notification of **Category A** excursions must be sent to parents.
- 3.8. **Category B** excursions. Full details of each excursion, together with the *Excursion Medical Information and Consent Form*, must be sent to parents to complete and return to the school prior to the excursion (see attachments for sample form/s).
- 3.9. On sequential excursions of a similar nature multiple parent consent forms are not required for Category A and B excursions. Parents must advise of any changed medical requirements and/or other needs prior to each excursion.
- 3.10. **Category C and D** excursions. Full details of each excursion or series of related excursions, together with the *Excursion Medical Information and Consent Form*, must be sent to parents to complete and return to the school prior to the excursion (see attachments).
- 3.11. While the use of *the Excursion Medical Information and Consent Form* does not absolve schools and teachers from liability as a result of an act of negligence, it is evidence of care and parent awareness to have forms completed, returned to the school and retained on file. In the event of an accident/incident these forms should be attached to the *Student Accident/Incident Report Form* and forwarded to the Governance and Legal Liaison Section (refer to *Student Accidents* policy).

Students only excursions

- 3.12. Where it is proposed that an individual or small group of students participate in this type of activity, such as when a student is a representative on an external committee and is required to attend meetings during school hours), it may be necessary for part or all of the activity to take place without the direct supervision of a staff member.
- 3.13. In such circumstances, parents must be fully informed of, and agree to, the arrangements and the principal and teacher in charge of the activity must take steps to ensure the safety and welfare of the unaccompanied students.

Billeting

- 3.14. Billeting is a means of providing low cost accommodation for students attending interstate excursions and relies on the goodwill of host families.
- 3.15. The information collected on the Nomination to Billet a Student form may only be used to administer the placement of billeted students. Only the contact details of the host family may be provided to the parents of billeted students and the home or host school. All information contained on this form is personal information and must be stored, used and disclosed in accordance with the requirements of the *Information Privacy Act 2014* and the *Freedom of Information Act 1989*.
- 3.16. The Nomination to Billet a Student form must be completed before an excursion commences.
- 3.17. It is the responsibility of the teacher in charge to ensure that:
 - the principal has approved the excursion and signed the Nomination to Billet a Student form (Attachment 7) prior to the excursion.
 - students and their parents are briefed beforehand in writing that there may be different social behaviours and cultural expectations with some families. While students should be encouraged to adapt to these differences, they should be made aware that the teacher in charge will support them.
 - the host school attempts to match students by age, sex and cultural factors and that the billeting parents are aware of certain minimum expectations for accommodation. These should include at least single gender bedrooms and privacy in washing and toilet facilities.

Billeting parents should also be aware of any student's special needs/medical requirements.

- reasonable steps are taken to anticipate risk situations for students and to plan and, if necessary, implement strategies to address them, including ensuring there is accommodation in reserve for students who need to be relocated.
- billets are monitored on a regular basis to ensure that students are successfully placed. This may be done by one of the following:
 - visiting students at their billet
 - telephoning students at their billet
 - having students telephone the teacher in charge
 - other daily contact.
- if a problem arises, students are given the opportunity to indicate this in a discreet manner. When the contact is by telephone, the teacher in charge should ask questions requiring a 'yes' or 'no' answer so that the student is able to reply without embarrassment.
- they have a list of all students, with the address and telephone numbers of their billeting families
- students and billeting parents are provided with the address and telephone number at which a staff member can be contacted in the event of unforeseen problems with the billeting arrangements.

3.18. It is the responsibility of the principal to:

- assess billet placements for suitability (under the *Working With Vulnerable People (Background Checking) Act 2011*, billeting parents must be registered with the Office of Regulatory Services) and sign *the Nomination to Billet a Student form*.
- ensure that appropriate arrangements, including contingency plans, have been made for students in billeted accommodation before giving final approval for the excursion.

3.19. The Nomination to Billet a Student form should be completed for excursions in which an ACT Government school acts as a host school and the home school does not have a comparable form.

3.20. The principal of an ACT host school should undertake a pre-assessment before passing on contact details to home school principals. Disclosure of declared incidents/offences must not be passed on without the express permission of the person to whom the disclosure relates. The responsibility of assessing the suitability and final approval of a billet placement remains that of the home school in all instances.

3.21. It is preferable that the Nomination to Billet a Student form is completed and returned in all instances specified above. However, the Directorate recognises that there may be exceptional circumstances which do not permit the form to be completed and returned prior to the excursion. In such circumstances, principals may contact the relevant host school principal or host family to obtain a verbal disclosure and/or reference. Principals must note steps taken and outcome on the Nomination to Billet a Student Form.

Accidents

3.22. The teacher in charge should follow the Student Accidents policy and the procedures.

3.23. In serious cases where medical attention is necessary and a parent is not available, the teacher in charge should send for an ambulance or a doctor, whichever is appropriate, or arrange transport to the nearest or most convenient medical facility.

3.24. The choices stipulated by the parent on the Excursion Medical Information and Consent Form should be respected where possible.

3.25. Parents must be advised as soon as practicable of action taken in an emergency.

Use of Transport

- 3.26. On each occasion informed parental consent must be given in writing for their children to travel by public transport, government plated and private plated buses, or by private car driven by a staff member, parent, other adult or student.
- 3.27. Where private or hire vehicles are used, each owner and/or driver must:
- carry the required licence
 - have valid insurance which is appropriate to the excursion
 - ensure that the vehicle is registered and roadworthy
 - ensure that the seatbelt provision of the vehicle is not exceeded.
- 3.28. A student's vehicle should only be used if the driver has a current driver's licence. If a student driver has not attained the age of 18 years parents must consent in writing to the vehicle being used to transport other students. Student passengers (under the age of 18 years) also require written permission to travel in another student's car.
- 3.29. For bus transport the registered carrying capacity must not be exceeded. Wherever possible, students should be transported in buses with seatbelts. Seatbelts are essential for all excursions involving interstate travel.
- 3.30. Schools must ensure that coach operators who are contracted for excursions are accredited to operate a bus service in the ACT. Students and staff on buses without appropriate accreditation are not covered by third party insurance. Moreover, schools may be abetting an offence where, knowingly or ignorantly, an unlicensed operator is contracted.
- 3.31. Companies are issued with a specific accreditation certificate. A list of accredited operators is located on the ACT Government's, Road Transport Authority's website on the [Accredited Bus Operators](#) page.
- 3.32. The ACT Road Transport Authority advises that:
- the person in charge of the vehicle must ensure that every child travelling in a private vehicle is using a suitable restraining device
 - children under eight years of age should be restrained in the rear seating positions first
 - a front seat should only be used by a child when all of the rear seating positions are already occupied by children. In these circumstances the largest child should be seated in the front.

Insurance

- 3.33. ACT public schools do not meet all claims for injury, disease or illness to students resulting from school activities or school-organised excursions. The ACT Government (the Territory) meets claims (including claims resulting from school activities and excursions) against it where there is a liability to do so.
- 3.34. Parents should obtain their own advice about insurance protection which may assist in meeting expenses if their child is injured in circumstances where there is no liability on the part of the Territory.
- 3.35. Under the principle of vicarious liability, ACT Government employees, in the course of their employment, are protected in law should legal action be initiated, provided they have acted responsibly, within their level of competence, and followed established policies and guidelines and with proper motive.
- 3.36. Contractors and consultants such as leaders and resource persons are not covered for insurance purposes. The school should advise contractors to ensure that they have workers' compensation, public liability, personal accident and professional liability cover sufficient for the nature of the work they are undertaking.
- 3.37. The ACT Government has limited public liability and personal accident insurance cover for volunteers in the service of the Territory. This does not include personal property insurance.

- 3.38. Persons at a school organised activity who are not participants in the activity (for example, siblings, friends, grandparents) are not afforded insurance cover by the Directorate for public liability or personal accident.
- 3.39. The Directorate does not provide insurance cover in respect of the use of public transport or private vehicles. Where private or hire vehicles are used, the owner and/or driver must ensure that they carry the required licence and that the vehicle is registered and roadworthy. Owners/drivers need to ensure the insurance cover is valid and appropriate for the excursion and that loading does not exceed the seat belt provision of the vehicle.

Ambulance

- 3.40. Ambulance transport. The ACT Ambulance Service provides free ambulance transport for students who are injured or suddenly become ill at school or during school-approved activities within the ACT. There are no reciprocal arrangements with other state or territory ambulance services. Jervis Bay Primary School students do not receive free ambulance cover.

4. Contact

- 4.1. Weetangera School is responsible for these procedures.

5. Complaints

- 5.1. Any concerns about the application of this procedure or the procedure itself, should be raised with:
- the school principal in the first instance;
 - contact the Directorate's Liaison Unit on (02) 6205 5429;
 - online at http://www.education.act.gov.au/contact_us;
 - see also the *Complaints Policy* on the Directorate's website.

6. References

6.1. Definitions

The definition of an excursion and informed consent is contained in the Excursions Policy. Other relevant definitions are:

- **Accompanying adults:** include teachers, school administrative staff, parents, activity leaders and volunteers.
- **Duty of care:** requires that accompanying adults should take all reasonable measures to ensure the health and safety of any school student under their care. This duty of care will arise whenever a student/school relationship exists. Primary responsibility remains with the teacher in charge.
- **Home school:** in this policy means the school or organisation (sporting, music etc) that billeted students normally attend, or the school or organisation with which billeted students are travelling.
- **Host school:** means the school or organisation that facilitates the billeting arrangements, usually by nominating host families.
- **Parent:** is a person having parental responsibility for the child under the *Children and Young People Act 2008* including a carer appointed under that Act.
- **Teacher in charge:** refers to the teacher nominated by the principal to have ultimate responsibility and therefore authority for the duration of the excursion.

6.2. Related Policies and Documents

Attachments

1. Excursion Information for Parents - sample letter to parents with excursion details
2. Excursion Information for Parents - sample permission note to parents

3. Excursion Information for Parents - sample letter to parents for medical information
4. Excursion Medical Information and Consent Form
5. Risk Assessment Pro Forma
6. Billeting Procedure Flow Chart
7. Nomination to Billet a Student – sample letter and form
8. Code of Conduct – for students over the age of 18 years
9. Teacher Checklist (optional)