



Gooseberry Hill Primary School

EXCURSIONS/INCURSIONS

POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Together as a strong community we strive to foster the potential of each child so that they contribute positively to their world.

We value Diversity, Resilience, Integrity and Accountability.

Rationale

The Department of Education Western Australia recognises that the experiences of students outside the school grounds contribute to the development of their understandings, skills and attitudes.

The *School Education Act 1999* requires principals and teachers to ensure the safety of students in their care. Because of their nature, activities conducted outside the protective environment of the school involve greater risk and require a higher standard of care. The level of risk is reduced by careful planning and ensuring that plans for educational excursions address the risk factors that may exist for both staff and students.

Definition

Any learning activity conducted outside a school site that is organised and supervised by teacher(s) employed under s235 of the School Education Act 1999 and has gained the appropriate approval is defined as an excursion.

Excursions must be undertaken in accordance with all other relevant Department of Education policies and procedures.

Duty of Care

Whenever a teacher is in charge of students they have a duty of care towards them. This duty is continuous and cannot be delegated. This duty of care involves providing:

- Adequate supervision "in loco parentis" (in the place of the parent), and
- Safe and suitable premises and equipment.

Teachers are required to take affirmative action to provide this care. This means that teachers must take such measures, which, in all circumstances, are reasonable to prevent injury to the student.

In deciding what is reasonable, account must be taken of:

- The particular skills and training of the teacher
- The nature of the risk
- The age and responsibility of the children.

The teacher-in-charge must be aware that teaching staff cannot delegate their primary responsibility for the safety and welfare of students to adults who are not teachers.

Adults who are not teachers, but who possess the appropriate competencies and/or qualifications, can be used as supervisors who act under the direction of the teacher(s). The roles of supervisors will be determined by the teacher-in-charge.

External providers or contractor(s) can only be used if the school is unable to meet the requirements of supervision or qualified supervision. In cases where an external provider is used for supervision or qualified supervision, the teacher-in-charge must ensure that the provider is appropriately qualified and competent to manage the activities. The following are to be confirmed:

- recent experience (including maintained log books);
- current qualifications, accreditation and any other relevant training;
- public liability insurance to a minimum of \$20 million;
- Certificate of Business Registration; and
- Federal Police clearance (not more than 3 years old).

Responsibilities

The principal

The principal must nominate a teacher to be in charge of the excursion and give written approval for the management plan for the excursion.

Teacher-in-charge

The teacher-in-charge must take reasonable steps to foresee the potential for injuries and areas of danger in the itinerary of the excursion and then take those precautions that minimise the risks to excursion participants.

The teacher-in-charge of a proposed excursion must develop an appropriate management plan for the excursion, including reference to:

- assessment of risks,
- identification of all attending excursion,
- identification of students with medical needs including asthma and severe allergies,
- supervision requirements;
- communication requirements;
- emergency response plan;
- insurance and liability; and
- coordination of excursion with other school programs.

Procedures

Applications

1. For all excursions an Application Form must be submitted to the Principal for approval. Where possible two weeks notice must be given. Excursion Application Forms are available from the Staff Room.
2. Once an Excursion has been approved, a Parent Consent Form will automatically be produced and returned to the teacher-in-charge, using appropriate details as outlined in the application. All Parent Consent Forms must provide comprehensive information for parents to be able to make informed decisions, including the decision to exclude their child from the excursion. It must include thorough details of the activities including likely risks or dangers, levels of supervision, a delegation to consent to emergency medical treatment, any medical information relevant and an acknowledgment that school rules apply and will be enforced. Only students returning signed consent forms and payment will be permitted to attend excursions. (Note: Payment is at teacher's discretion, and in certain circumstances, alternative arrangement are able to be made.)
3. Only those activities indicated on the permission slip are permitted during the excursion.
4. Before staff make an Excursion Applications they should check all details, such as transport, venue and staff availability and complete the checklist on the reverse. The teacher-in-charge must complete a Risk Management Plan to accompany the Excursion Application.
5. Once the Principal has given approval, the Department of Education WA automatically grants Public Liability Insurance. Please note that this does not cover insurance for property. It is the responsibility of families to insure their own children. This will be clearly indicated on the Parent Consent Form to be completed.

Guidelines for all Excursion Planning

• Risk Management Plan

Supervision requirements

- Each excursion must have a teacher-in-charge.
- It is essential that the teacher-in-charge develop a management plan for all activities conducted within the excursion.
- The management plan must demonstrate that the excursion has an appropriate number of supervisory staff with the:
 - appropriate knowledge and understandings;
 - skills to identify risks; and
 - experience to manage potential risks at any stage during the excursion.

• Risk factors

The supervisory requirements of an excursion vary according to the level of risk associated with the excursion. The following risk factors must be considered, both singly and collectively, when establishing supervisory requirements:

Student factors

- Age of the students;
- Number of students of each gender;
- Maturity and physical capabilities of students;
- Experience and ability of the students; and
- Disabilities of students and medical conditions including asthma and severe allergies.

The principal must be satisfied that the excursion activities do not exceed the capabilities of students and that the medical condition of each student has been considered. The match of the demands of the excursion with the skills of each student will be assessable in terms of teacher and parent/guardian knowledge of students.

The teacher-in-charge must ask parents/guardians for details of student skills and medical conditions relevant to the excursion and gain their written consent for their son/daughter's participation.

In their planning, teachers must take into account the cultural differences among students.

In the case of excursions involving an overnight stay single gender student groups must have a teacher-in-charge of the same gender; and mixed gender groups should have at least one adult of each gender, one of whom is to be a teacher.

Venue factors

- Type or purpose of the activities to be undertaken;
- Duration of the excursion;
- Requirements for overnight accommodation;
- Nature of the environment(s);
- Location(s) of the activities (local or remote);and
- Weather.

The teacher-in-charge and the manager of the venue or facility are to make a written arrangement that clearly establishes the responsibilities of the management of the venue and the school. This document is to be signed by both parties to indicate that the terms and conditions have been accepted.

The Department of Education will not accept a disclaimer clause that excludes the management of the venue or facility from liability.

In the case of venues to be used for an overnight stay, buildings must have smoke detectors and illuminated exit points. In addition, the teacher-in-charge must obtain a site plan showing evacuation assembly areas and the location of fire fighting and emergency equipment. The food preparation areas must be clean and the sleeping areas well ventilated. A sufficient number of clean toilet facilities must be available.

Transport factors

Most excursions will begin and end at the school site. In those instances where students make their own arrangements to or from an excursion site the teacher-in-charge must acknowledge the arrival and approve the egress of students from the excursion site.

The teacher-in-charge must ensure that arrangements for the safe transportation of excursion participants have been made. The transport of participants in an excursion may involve either one or a combination of vehicles including cars, buses, trains, boats and aircraft. The teacher-in-charge must be satisfied that the vehicle and its operator (driver, pilot, captain) are appropriately licensed, and the following insurance cover is held by the operator:

- compulsory third party insurance that is part of the vehicle's licence; and
- at least third party liability insurance of \$10 million.

In the case of bus travel, at least one supervisor must travel in each bus to supervise students and to ensure that safety regulations are followed.

The maximum number of primary school students is not to exceed three students for each double seat.

Private vehicles are only to be used when the teacher-in-charge is confident that:

- no other option is available;
- drivers and vehicles are reliable and appropriately licensed;
- that the vehicles are covered by comprehensive motor vehicle insurance policies; and
- drivers who are not DoE employees must sign a confidential declaration.

The parent or guardian of each student being transported in a private vehicle must be advised of the relevant details and their written consent obtained.

Communication requirements

Roles and responsibilities

Before an excursion, the teacher-in-charge must ensure that all supervisors and students are aware of their responsibilities and have received instruction regarding their roles.

Parental consent is required for all excursions and must remain in the possession of the teacher throughout the excursion. Parents must be reminded to provide current information about their children's health and fitness as close as possible to the date of the excursion. This information may lead the teacher-in-charge to take extra precautions or to discuss their concerns with the student's parents and to formulate an action plan in the event of treatment being required. To ensure that parents/guardians of culturally and linguistically diverse students comprehend the information regarding the excursion, interpreter and translator services must be considered and used where necessary.

On-site communications

Excursion planning must include the development of a communication strategy that enables regular communication amongst all members of the group (e.g., public address systems, megaphone, air-horns, whistles, or, if necessary, scheduling regular group meetings).

The strategy must clearly identify a signal for gaining the full group's attention.

An emergency signal must be selected and explained to all participants, and responses to it rehearsed both before and immediately prior to commencement of the excursion.

The teacher-in-charge is to decide on the most suitable system(s) for identifying students and supervisors, based on the

- assessment of the environment,
- students' skills and abilities,
- the type of activities to be undertaken, and
- the number of students participating.

Excursion planning must include the development of a strategy that will enable the group to communicate with on-site and off-site support services and include alternative modes of communication for use in case of the failure of the intended primary communication method.

Emergency response plan

The teacher-in-charge must

- devise a suitable emergency response plan that will ensure access to emergency support without compromising the safety and welfare of the group or of a casualty;
- ensure that emergency equipment is located where it is clearly visible and easily accessible;
- ensure that emergency procedures, including emergency signals, are clearly understood by all students and supervisors.
- ensure that a copy of planning documents, including student detail forms, are taken on the excursion, with a further copy provided to the principal.

For excursions to country locations, the emergency response plan is to include, as appropriate:

- a map of the area/s to be used, showing the location of the nearest telephone, ranger's residence, hospital, State Emergency Services office, nursing station and other similar relevant information;
- access details (i.e., on-foot, 2WD and 4WD) including barriers;
- a list of the resources the group will have with it (i.e., first aid kits, number of staff and external providers with first aid qualifications, stretchers, number and type of vehicles, and other camping equipment);
- an estimate of the time it might take to raise an alarm and the amount of
- time that might elapse before appropriate support could be provided; and
- the communication medium that will be employed (i.e., fixed telephone, mobile phone, satellite phone, radio, Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon).

The teacher-in-charge is to match the communication tools to the intended location.

Records of excursions

Details relating to all excursions are to be retained by the school in accordance with the Department of Education's Manual for Records Management (1995).

All staff are expected to read the Department of Education Policy on Excursions which can be viewed at <http://www.eddept.wa.edu.au/regframe/index.cfm>

CHECKLIST FOR EXCURSIONS	PLANNING
<p>PURPOSE OF THE EXCURSION The educational purpose of the excursion is described <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>1. ASSESS THE RISKS</p> <p>1.1 Assess the environment The site has been assessed and is considered to be appropriate for the excursion. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>1.2 Assess transport arrangements Arrangements have been made for the safe transport of excursion participants. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>1.3 Assess the students' skills AND NEEDS Excursion activities are suitable for the students' level of skill. <input type="checkbox"/> Provision has been made for any student with special needs. <input type="checkbox"/> Up to date information regarding student medical conditions has been obtained and treatment/action plan devised if necessary. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>1.4 Assess the capabilities of the supervisory team Collectively the supervisory team has the skills to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify and establish a safe activity environment • effect a rescue and/or render emergency care • monitor weather and environmental conditions before and during activities • monitor the physical performance of the students • relocate or cancel the excursion if conditions become adverse <p>Volunteer supervisors have completed a Confidential Declaration. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>1.5 Assess the involvement external providers Competence of external providers is established. <input type="checkbox"/> External providers conducting activities with students have a current Federal Police Clearance. <input type="checkbox"/> Staff responsibilities of the school and venue/facility have been established. <input type="checkbox"/> External providers hold the appropriate level of public liability insurance. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>2. ESTABLISH SUPERVISION STRATEGIES On-site supervision strategies have been established. <input type="checkbox"/> The teacher-in-charge will have a list of the names of participating students, contact telephone numbers and medical information pertaining to those students with medical conditions. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>3. DEVELOP MEANS OF IDENTIFYING EXCURSION PARTICIPANTS Systems for identifying students, teacher-in-charge, and supervisors have been established. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>4. PROVIDE INFORMATION AND SEEK CONSENT Parents/guardians of student participants have been provided with full details of the excursion and signed consent forms have been received. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>5. DEVELOP COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES Appropriate methods of communication, including emergency signals, have been developed. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>6. COMPLETE EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLANNING An appropriate emergency response plan has been developed. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>7. BRIEF STUDENTS AND SUPERVISORS Students and supervisors have been/will be fully briefed on all aspects of the excursion. <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Discussed the excursion with teachers of similar aged children <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Obtained a quote from a bus company <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Made tentative bookings with the venue <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Established the budget – this must make allowances for children who may not attend <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Completed an excursion application form <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Made arrangements for students not attending <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Notified the canteen about lunch arrangements <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Notified those teachers who may be affected eg DOTT, support <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Made arrangements for first aid kit and mobile phone <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Confirmed all arrangements eg venue, buses <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Prepared any paperwork for students <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Complete order forms for transport and venue <input type="checkbox"/></p>

Appendix 1: Asthma

For every school sporting day, excursion or camp:

- A minimum of one staff member capable of managing an acute asthma attack shall be present.
- Parents/carers will be notified of their responsibility to ensure that their child has an adequate supply of appropriate medication.
- Students shall be encouraged to continue taking their usual medications and to always carry their blue reliever puffer [Airomir, Asmol, Bricanyl or Ventolin]
- A large volume spacer and blue reliever puffer shall be carried in the offsite First Aid Kit/Asthma Aid Kit.
- A copy of the Asthma First Aid steps will be carried in the offsite First Aid Kit/Asthma Aid Kit.

In addition, for every school camp:

- Parents/carers will be requested to update their child's Students Asthma Records
- A copy of Students Asthma Records will be kept in a central location and this information will be known and easily accessible to the staff responsible for each student with asthma.
- Catering staff will be provided with a record of students known to have food allergies or have their asthma triggered by food or food additives.