

Excursion Policy for Students of Schools

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1.0 RATIONALE AND PURPOSE

All school excursions must be educational, curriculum based and school directed. Excursions that are not curriculum based should not be undertaken. They are aimed at complementing and assisting classroom learning and enhancing pastoral care. While recognising the potential benefits of an educational excursion, schools need to recognise that excursions do interrupt normal learning routines and place additional financial pressure on parents. Furthermore, staff need to be aware of the legal and moral responsibility for student welfare and their duty of care. Parents always have the right to choose for their child not to attend an excursion.

2.0 APPROVAL

- 2.1 The Principal approves and is responsible for excursions conducted in Australia.
- 2.2 Preparations for interstate excursions should begin at least four months before the departure date and be finalised one month before the date of departure.
- 2.3 Principals must give written approval after giving due consideration to the planning, safety of all participants, adequate supervision and child protection, both of a physical and a sexual nature.
- 2.4 Principals have the right to exclude a student from an excursion on the grounds of behaviour, risk to others or to the school's good name.
- 2.5 Each school must devise its own excursion policy, procedures and process, including the documentation and the necessary forms.
- 2.6 Parents should be part of the excursion policy formation process.
- 2.7 Child protection guidelines and the bona fides of adult supervisors and assistants must be thoroughly checked by the Principal.

3.0 RISK ASSESSMENT

- 3.1 A risk assessment must be completed to show that the excursion is safe in nature and location. The risk assessment should be completed in writing and signed by the teacher leading the excursion. A typical risk assessment pro-forma provides data on: travel arrangements, location, insurance, staff accreditation, activities, age group, equipment, supervision, access, egress, emergencies, repairs and first aid. Foreseeable and potential risks with documented control strategies must be provided.

Excursion planners must cater for bad weather, altered schedules and emergencies. Parents must be informed of any contingency plans in writing.

- 3.2 Where another educational institution is being visited, it is important that duty of care issues are agreed to e.g. school rules, travel arrangements, supervision, restricted areas and dress code.
- 3.3 Outside organisations e.g. retreat centres, sporting venues etc must provide their risk assessment and give evidence that they have fulfilled all child protection measures. It is the responsibility of the school to obtain these documents and to subsequently have a representative visit the site and verify the assessment as a reasonable person.
- 3.4 If the excursion involves adventure activities e.g. bush walking, swimming, a parent must sign permission for each specific adventure activity.
- 3.5 Clear written guidelines for the excursion must be prepared and issued. These guidelines should contain information and directions about the duties and expectations of all those working in a supervisory capacity.
- 3.6 Non-teachers must fulfil all the relevant child protection requirements.
- 3.7 The Disability Discrimination Act makes it unlawful for a school to subject students to any detriment on the basis of a disability. All reasonable efforts must be made to enable disabled students to attend excursions, including selection of venues and activities.

4.0 COSTS

- 4.1 The cost must be affordable and reasonable for all families.
- 4.2 Students must not be denied access to participation in excursions because of genuine financial hardship.
- 4.3 Principals need to be aware of the cumulative impact of a series of excursions on a student and a family's financial constraints.
- 4.4 Staff must not be paid extra remuneration for taking an excursion and genuine reimbursements must be covered by the cost of the excursion.
- 4.5 The Senior School Support Officer will provide guidance for excursion budgets and will maintain the necessary records.
 - 4.5.1 Monies not paid directly to a travel agent must be kept within the school's accounting system.
 - 4.5.2 A private excursion account, separate from the accounting system, must not be opened.
 - 4.5.3 All receipts are to be given to the school office.

5.0 PARENTS

- 5.1 Students who do not possess a signed, parental or guardian's permission note must not go on the excursion.
- 5.2 Parents must be advised well beforehand in writing of the reasons, the details and the desired outcomes for the excursion, cost, itinerary, travel and transport plans, activities, clothing requirements, hygiene and health requirements, spending money, medical requirements and supervision so that they can complete or not complete the necessary consent form.
- 5.3 Schools must advise parents that schools cannot be held responsible for students' property during an excursion.

6.0 PRIVATE TRAVEL

- 6.1 Only in exceptional cases will staff, parents and friends be allowed to provide transport and approval will only be given to those persons with the correct licence, child protection clearance, a good driving record, correct vehicle registration and insurance.

7.0 LEADERSHIP

7.1 Each excursion must have one nominated leader and a deputy where possible. The leader must be:

- 7.1.1 A teacher at the School.
- 7.1.2 Suitably qualified and experienced.
- 7.1.3 Know the excursion area.
- 7.1.4 Be responsible for all aspects of the excursion.
- 7.1.5 Have a sound awareness of the risks involved.

7.2 Supervisory staff and students must be advised of the position of nominated leader for the purposes of authority and risk management.

8.0 ON EXCURSION

8.1 Medical

- 8.1.1 Every excursion must have at least one teacher with knowledge of basic first aid and emergency care procedures.
- 8.1.2 In general, the school will be responsible for all students on an excursion under the normal basis of student-teacher relationship.
- 8.1.3 All overnight and all water excursions must have at least one adult staff member in attendance at all times who has a current qualification in First Aid and CPR (Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation).
- 8.1.4 Copies of permission notes and medical information must be taken on excursion. If at any time a student requires medical attention and the parents cannot be contacted, the school's office must be asked for medical information from the school's file. Advice can also be sought from the Principal.
- 8.1.5 Provisions must be made for students with special health or medication needs.
- 8.1.6 Staff on excursions must carry a mobile phone and, where appropriate, a first aid kit.
- 8.1.7 Self-medicating students must be checked on a daily basis.
- 8.1.8 Consent should be sought for teachers in charge of the excursion to authorise medical treatment for a student in the event that teachers were unable to contact the parents or guardians of a sick or injured student.

8.2 Supervision

- 8.2.1 The ratio of teachers and supervisors to students for an excursion will depend on the teacher's risk assessment.
- 8.2.2 A teacher from the school must head each excursion.
- 8.2.3 The students must be adequately supervised at all times.
- 8.2.4 Excursions must not include films that are of an inappropriate classification or nature.
- 8.2.5 The excursion roll must be taken at intervals during the excursion appropriate to the activity being undertaken.
- 8.2.6 Co-educational excursion groups must contain at least one male teacher or supervisor and one female teacher or supervisor.
- 8.2.7 Teachers cannot transfer their responsibilities to non-teachers.
- 8.2.8 All parent-supervisors must be clearly briefed on their role, responsibilities, duty of care and the risk assessment.
- 8.2.9 No supervisor is to be placed in a situation where there is potential for the making of allegations of improper conduct, e.g. accommodation or sleeping arrangements.

- 8.2.12 Students are never allowed to leave supervision unaccompanied by another. E.g. travelling, shopping, going to the toilet, etc.
- 8.2.13 Briefings are to be held daily during overnight excursion.
- 8.2.14 Equipment must be checked regularly and sometimes daily.
- 8.2.15 Alcohol must not be consumed by teachers and helpers whilst on an excursion and in charge of students.

9.0 EXCURSIONS WITH WATER ACTIVITIES

- 9.1 Parents must be advised in writing about any planned water activities.
- 9.2 A consent form must be received from the parents.
- 9.3 Parental permission must be expressly given for any swimming activities.
- 9.4 Parents should indicate whether their child is a strong, average, below average or non- swimmer. This will not affect the supervision.
- 9.5 Some special requirements may be required for some students, e.g. flotation devices.
- 9.6 Immediately before the commencement of any water activity, the prevailing condition must be examined by the supervising teacher for any possible dangers.
- 9.7 For water or near water excursions, at least one adult staff member in attendance at all times must have a current qualification in First Aid and CPR.

10.0 EXCURSIONS CHECKLIST

Please answer all the following questions:	Yes	No
Is there a School excursion policy?		
Is the policy clear?		
Do the excursion participants understand the policy?		
Are all laws, regulations & rules being complied with?		
Does the excursion need approval from the CEO?		
Has the Principal given permission?		
Is there an overall excursion plan?		
Has the plan been given to Principal, staff, parents & students?		
Has parental permission been obtained?		
Have you done/obtained and verified the risk assessment?		
Are there control measures for the risks?		
Have the control measures been implemented?		
Have the supervisory roles been allocated?		
Does the school excursion staff have the necessary qualifications?		
Does the non-school excursion staff have the qualifications?		
Has the required training & preparation been given to participants?		
Are the transport arrangements safe & adequate?		
Has the excursion site been checked for safety?		
Does the School's insurance policy cover the excursion?		
Have emergency procedures been developed?		
Do the participants know the emergency plans & procedures?		
Does the excursion have a First Aid and CPR trained staff member attending?		
Are appropriate records being kept?		

11.0 SCHOOL EXCURSION RISK ASSESSMENT TEMPLATE

Venue Name:

Location:

Name of the Organisation:

Address:

Phone:	Web:	Facsimile:
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Insurance: Is there a Public Liability concern?	Y/ N
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Activity	Age & Skills	Staff Accreditation	Potential Risks	Control Strategies

Equipment	Is equipment to be used in good order and condition?

Other Requirements:	
Clothing	
Footwear	
Sun protection	
Adequate food & water	
Other	

Provided Supervision Services	Activities
Briefings	
Guided Tours	

General Questions	Yes/No
Is the access to the venue safe?	
Is the access from the venue safe?	
Are disabled toilets available?	
Are emergency procedures in place at the venue?	
Are staff trained in First Aid/ Emergency Care?	
Are licensed personnel used for construction & maintenance?	
Are first aid kits available for each activity?	
Does the venue have a qualified first aid officer?	
Is there a first aid room?	
Are the employees of the venue engaged in child-related employment as defined by the Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998? If yes, which approved NSW screening agency registered your organisation as a child-related employer for the purpose of employment screening?	
If the organisation is registered with a NSW approved screening authority: Have all paid staff undergone employment screening? Have all staff completed a Prohibited Employment Declaration?	

Name of the Teacher-Leader:

Signature of the Teacher-Leader: _____ Date: _____

12.0 INTERNATIONAL EXCURSIONS

- 12.1 Given the different and potentially increased risks inherent in international travel there is a greater onus on the school to determine an educational purpose for the excursion and to conduct an extensive risk management process.

12.2 BEFORE THE EXCURSION

- 12.2.1 International excursions must have a clear and explicit curriculum and educational justification, and must promise to be of the highest calibre.
- 12.2.2 Planning should begin 12 months before departure.
- 12.2.3 Approval for an international excursion must involve consultation between the Principal and the Head of School Services. The application for the international excursion must be given to the Director, with generally at least 6 months advance notice. No proposed excursion can be advertised within a school community until it has formal approval by the Principal and the Director. No firm bookings are to be made before the Director's written consent is issued.
- 12.2.4 The application for an international excursion must include a current and totally comprehensive risk assessment of every detail of the excursion. The five essential steps of risk management are:
- 12.2.4.1 Risk identification
 - 12.2.4.2 Risk assessment
 - 12.2.4.3 Risk elimination or control
 - 12.2.4.4 Communication of the Risk Management Plan.
 - 12.2.4.5 Risk review and monitoring
- 12.2.5 Risk management must consider illness, theft, loss, violence, rape, harassment, disease, terrorism, political unrest, or natural disaster.
- 12.2.6 The risk assessment must be reviewed prior to departure to take account of any changes in local conditions that have occurred since the initial assessment.
- 12.2.7 The teacher's application must clearly demonstrate that the planned activities are unavailable in Australia and will not place undue financial burdens on students and their families.
- 12.2.8 International excursions must occur during the school vacation.
- 12.2.9 An international excursion must not be an expectation or a compulsory requirement of any course.
- 12.2.10 Staff choose to take part in international excursions and no obligation is to be placed on them to participate in or to run such excursions.
- 12.2.11 At least one adult staff member of the touring party must have a current qualification in First Aid and CPR.
- 12.2.12 Staff should not receive any extra remuneration, except for genuine pre-approved costs.
- 12.2.13 Students' participation costs must not be increased to cover the costs of teachers, organisers or other adults without the written permission of the parents of participating students.
- 12.2.14 All requirements relating to the prohibited employment of adults must be adhered to and considered.
- 12.2.15 A detailed itinerary, list of names and contact details must be provided to the Principal prior to the excursion.
- 12.2.16 The CEO guidelines on excursions, water activities and the requirements of teachers during excursions must be adhered to fully and strictly.
- 12.2.17 The licence and bona fides of the travel agency must be fully checked. e.g. licence, references, registration and insurance.

- 12.2.18 Where a school intends to engage the services of licensed travel agents three quotes from travel agents are required prior to selecting a provider.
- 12.2.19 The school should engage the agent before taking any money from students and obtain the agent's agreement regarding the money processes and procedures. Alternatively all monies should be paid directly to the travel agent. This way protects all monies through insurance cover. Monies received from other sources should pass through the school's normal CDF bank account. This activity will be allocated a separate account number in the school's books.
- 12.2.20 Adequate insurance must be arranged through either the Catholic Church Insurance, or QBE Travel Insurance or the travel agent to cover unexpected costs, such as, medical, dental, luggage and personal effects, cancellation and deferments, emergency travel and accommodation, rentals, death, personal liabilities and legal expenses.
- 12.2.21 Bookings must be covered by cancellation insurance.
- 12.2.22 Parents are free to withdraw for safety reasons at any stage.
- 12.2.22.1 In the light of increased terrorist activities, travel advice by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade is to be strictly observed. Advice is available on www.dfat.gov.au or phone 6261 3305.
- 12.2.23 A Head of School Services or the Principal may cancel the international excursion at any time if circumstances warrant such action.
- 12.2.24 Safety and security updates on travel advice from the Commonwealth Government must be conveyed to parents immediately as they become available.
- 12.2.25 Students should be selected on the bases of genuine interest, cultural sensitivity, and the signed agreement of the code of conduct.
- 12.2.26 Where the excursion is to a non-English speaking country, a teacher or supervisor with the language of the host country is most desirable.
- 12.2.27 Modes of transport in the host country must be researched. Indemnity forms that account for differing transport and safety standards will need to be signed by parents or guardians.
- 12.2.28 A code of conduct must be drawn up by the school, and signed by each student and parent or guardian. Such a code would be invaluable if a student misbehaves.

12.3 All necessary documents must be completed and secured at least two weeks prior to departure. The following documents should be taken by the teacher leader on the excursion and copies held at the school:

- 12.3.1 Consent forms.
- 12.3.2 Travel documents.
- 12.3.3 Medical forms on each student. This must be read thoroughly and a contingency plan prepared for each student by the teacher-leader.
- 12.3.4 Medical certificates. The teacher-leader must ensure the medication and health arrangements and that there are medical certificates to cover any on-tour medication. These would be obtained from the student's doctor. The doctor will also need to check whether the particular medication is permitted in the nominated country of tour.
- 12.3.5 The accident emergency action plan must be approved by the Principal before departure. The plan must contain the emergency contact numbers.
- 12.3.6 Current passports and visas - copies held at the school.
- 12.3.7 Insurance: medical, accident, loss of money, third party liability, cancellation documentation.

- 12.3.8 Full list of names, contacts and emergency contacts of students and adults (teachers, supervisors, parents etc)
- 12.3.10 Completed and signed indemnity forms for adventure activities.

12.4 Parent Briefings

- 12.4.1 Parents must be provided with all the latest information about every detail of the excursion so that they can make an informed decision. Two or more briefings may be required to explain the tour, e.g. purpose and desired outcomes, cost, itinerary, clothing needs, medical requirements, transport arrangements, hygiene and health, spending money, emergencies, host families, etc.
- 12.4.2 Advice regarding students accessing cash, can be given, but parents must take responsibility for ensuring students have appropriate access and back-up.
- 12.4.3 Comprehensive travel insurance must be taken out for medical costs, personal accidents, losses or damage to property or baggage, third party liability, and cancellation of fees. Where this cost has not been included in the negotiated fee, students are required to provide proof of insurance.

12.5 During the International Excursion

- 12.5.1 Students must carry with them the address and information of their hosts in the language of the host country.
- 12.5.2 Students and hosts must be fully aware on how to contact each other in time of need.
- 12.5.3 The legislative requirements relating to the mandatory reporting under the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 must be complied with.
- 12.5.4 The teacher-leader must be able to be contacted 24 hours a day and be sensitive to issues when children are separated from their parents.
- 12.5.5 Should a student have to return home early, a Principal and parents will decide if the student needs to be accompanied. If a supervisor needs to be appointed, the teacher-leader will decide, bearing in mind, the impact on the rest of the excursion. Failing this, it becomes the parents' responsibility to make the necessary arrangements to collect the student, according to prior arrangements and agreements. Any emergencies involving additional costs would be at the expense of the parent/guardian in accordance with prior agreement. Any grossly inappropriate behaviour must be reported, in turn, to the Principal, Head of School Services and the Director.
- 12.5.6 Members of the touring party must behave as good ambassadors of Australia, their school and the Wollongong Catholic Diocese.
- 12.5.7 Staff may be required to pay fringe benefits tax if they have been funded. Therefore, a teacher's diary and receipts or declarations must be kept on file for any audit purposes.

12.6 AFTER THE EXCURSION

- 12.6.1 *There should be a post-excursion evaluation by the teacher-leader, students and parents or guardians of the following:*
- 12.6.2 Summary of the dates and main events.
 - 12.6.2.2 Positive and negative aspects.
 - 12.6.2.3 Areas for improvement.
 - 12.6.2.4 Whether outcomes and objectives were achieved.
 - 12.6.2.5 Experiences and benefits.
 - 12.6.2.6 General comments.
 - 12.6.2.7 The general reaction and conclusion of each student.

13.0 INTERNATIONAL EXCURSION DOCUMENTATION

13.1 Application for an International Excursion

SCHOOL _____

Destination _____

Teacher-Leader _____

Teacher-Leader’s staff position _____

Dates of excursion _____

Description of trip (*Attach a draft itinerary and the outdoor activities*)

Purpose of the excursion _____

STUDENT DETAILS

Males _____ Females _____ Total _____

Total cost per student (Budget attached) \$ _____

Major risk assessment summary (Full assessment attached)

Names of the adults attending and their position e.g. teacher or parent etc.

Name of adult (s) with CPR, first aid qualifications & expiry dates

Are the students subsidising the cost of the staff or helpers? (Y/N) _____

Approval	Name	Signature	Date
Principal:			
Head of School Services:			
Director of Schools:			

Human Resource Services

13.2 Budget for an International Excursion

Name of the Teacher-Leader _____
Year Group & Curriculum Area _____
Date of excursion _____ to _____ Total days _____
Destination _____ Number of students _____
Cancellation fee \$ _____ Hardship students (Number) _____
Number of paying teachers/helpers _____
Method of travel _____
Fare per student _____
Accommodation per student _____
Meals per student _____
Other costs per student _____
Insurance costs per student _____
Other spending money required _____
Total cost per student _____
Teacher-Leader's signature _____

APPROVAL

School Financial Officer (*Print & Sign*) _____
Principal _____ Date _____

13.3 Parent Authority and Consent Form for International Student Travel

Please print clearly

I, (*Parent/Guardian*) _____

of (*Student*) _____

Hereby give permission for my child to attend the School excursion to:

_____ on (*Dates*) _____

- I consent to my child travelling on or in any form of public or private transport deemed by the School to be necessary.
- I consent to my child participating in all activities, outings and functions arranged.
- I consent to the School or its agents seeking such medical or dental advice on behalf of my child as seen fit in the event of accident or illness and if in the opinion of an attending medical or dental practitioner or officer my child requires medical or dental treatment, including but not limited to the administration of anaesthetic, blood transfusion or the performance of any surgical operation, to such medical or dental or medical officer giving such attention or treatment, provided that reasonable efforts are made to inform me of any serious injury or illness.

- I certify that my consent given in paragraph 6 is valid at all times while my child is in custody of the School attending an excursion.
- I certify that I understand that the School will take reasonable care in the event of my child suffering an accident or illness, but it will not be responsible for the costs of any medical or dental attention or treatment administered to my child in such an event nor will it be responsible directly for any act or omission of any medical or dental practitioner or medical officer attending or treating my child.
- I certify that if my child should bring or consume illegal drugs or alcohol or otherwise exhibit seriously bad behaviour or seriously endanger themselves or others, I will bear the cost of the return flight home.

MEDICAL INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR CHILD

Date of Birth: _____

Medicare Number _____

Private Health Insurance Provider _____

Membership number _____

Ambulance Cover (Y/N) _____

Is your child in good health (Y/N) _____

Does your child suffer from any chronic illness, disability or allergy (Y/N) _____

If 'yes' give details _____

Has your child suffered from any acute illness in the past four months? (Y/N) _____

If 'yes' please attach a medical certificate outlining treatment and stating if your child is fit to tour.

Has your child had any major surgery? (Y/N) _____

Please specify: _____

Does your child need to take medication on the excursion? (Y/N). _____

Please provide details of dosage, frequency, etc.

Does your child have special dietary requirements? (Y/N) _____

Details: _____

13.4 Emergency contact to home in case of accident

Name of Contact Person _____

Relationship to Child _____

Phone Numbers:

Home _____

Work _____

Mobile _____

Email _____

I understand that the information I have provided is true and will be handled in accordance with Diocesan privacy policy and the Privacy Act 1998.

Signature _____ (Parent/Guardian)

Date _____

13.5 Emergency Contacts to the excursion in case of accident

School & Group _____

Name of Teacher-Leader _____

Home phone _____

Mobile _____

Email _____

Departure Date _____

Return Date _____ Time _____ Location _____

Group numbers: Adults _____ Students _____ Total _____

Travel Agent

Phone:	
Fax:	
Email:	
Mobile:	
After Hours:	

Insurance Agent

Name:	
Company:	
Phone:	
Fax:	
Mobile:	

Other Emergency Contacts

School Principal (if necessary)	

13.6 International Excursion Organisational Flowchart & Checklist

