

Doonside

Excursion

Policy

2016



Doonside PS Excursion Policy

Rationale

Doonside Public School exists to provide a quality education for all students in the school's care. One way of doing this is through organising excursions that will allow students to consolidate knowledge of a subject, gain an in depth background knowledge of a subject, cater for different learning styles and to provide positive life experiences for our students.

Statements of Policy

This document sets out the requirements for the conduct of excursions by the school. Excursions are regarded as valuable experiences, integral to teaching and learning. They do however, potentially pose risks to the health, safety and welfare of participants. The instructions and guidelines in this document are direct at managing such risks.

The following statements of policy apply to excursions:

1. Determining the educational value of an excursion must take account of the needs and resources of the school, the needs of the students and the total learning program.
2. Excursions are inclusive, and all students within the specific learning group are to be given the opportunity to participate.
3. A duty of care is owed to students in the school environment and while on excursions.
4. The Department's duty of care owed to students for the duration of an excursion cannot be delegated from the school to parents, caregivers, volunteers or employees of external organisations.
5. The obligation to report suspected risk of harm to children and young people applies throughout all stages of an excursion, as it does in schools.
6. A risk assessment is to be conducted and a risk management plan developed before seeking approval for any excursion.
7. Signed consent forms granting permission for students to participate in excursions and a medical information form are to be obtained from parents or caregivers.
8. Safe transport or a safe walking route is to be organised for excursions.
9. Students must behave appropriately at all times while on excursions, including when animals are encountered.

Duty of Care

The Department's duty of care owed to students for the duration of an excursion cannot be delegated from the school to parents, caregivers, volunteers or employees of external organisations.

Excursions are potentially the most hazardous activities for school-related accidents. The duty of care owed to students applies whether the school excursion is held during school hours, after school, on the weekend or during school holidays.

The number of teachers to accompany the students for each excursion is to be determined by the principal. Decisions about the number of students and teachers should take into account factors such as the age of the students, their maturity, the location of the excursion, specific needs of students, anticipated behaviour and the nature of the activities to be undertaken. **All excursions must be accompanied by a member of staff who has undertaken emergency care training and whose qualifications are current. A first aid kit must be taken on all excursions.**

Parents or caregivers will frequently volunteer to assist in excursions. The number of parents or caregivers who might be of assistance will vary according to circumstances. The principal must be satisfied that there are sufficient teachers to maintain adequate control of the whole excursion. **Teachers retain the ultimate responsibility for supervision.**

Staff and student safety must not be compromised. Students and staff should be encouraged to use sunscreen and wear a peaked or broad brimmed hat on outdoor excursions.

Overnight Excursions

On overnight and extended excursions, supervisory and accommodation arrangements are to be such that no staff member or accompanying adult is placed in a position where there is potential for allegations of improper conduct to be made. In particular, sleeping and washing arrangements should not place any adults in a situation where the propriety of their behaviour could be questioned. Likewise, for sleeping and supervisory arrangements every attempt must be made to ensure that there is no sexual contact between students.

For coeducational groups, male and female staff supervisors are required.

Parents, Caregivers and Volunteers

Parents, caregivers and volunteers **must** be briefed on safety and behaviour measures prior to the excursion to ensure competency.

All parents, caregivers and volunteers accompanying school excursions or transporting students to venues **must** complete a *Prohibited Employment Declaration* prior to the excursion. Depending on the circumstances, principals might also consider:

1. checking the Department's not to be employed list, or
2. consulting referees.

In most circumstances parents, caregivers and volunteers who assist on excursions should not have to pay.

Registered Excursion Sites

The principal or other delegated person must ascertain if an employer or contractor providing a service to students during a school excursion is registered with an Approved Screening Agency (ASA) for the purpose of conducting the *Working with Children Check* on their employees. The principal or other delegated person must ascertain that the employer or contractor has met their legal requirements as a child-related employer. If the employer or contractor is not registered with an ASA, they must not be used to provide a service to students until such time as they:

1. are registered with an ASA;
2. have screened those staff considered to be engaged in paid child-related employment; and
3. have required those staff to complete *Prohibited Employment Declarations*.

Risk Management

A risk assessment is to be conducted and a risk management plan developed before seeking approval for any excursion. A copy must be given to every teacher supervising on the excursion.

*****The Risk Management Plan must be signed by ALL teachers attending and the Principal or Principal delegate.*****

The [OHS Act](#) and [Regulation](#) require principals and teachers organising excursions to use risk management to ensure the health and safety of students, staff and excursion volunteers. Risk management supports better decision making by contributing to a greater insight into the potential risks and their impacts.

Principals should ensure that individual health care plans for students with health care needs or disabilities include provision for the management of such conditions on excursions. A copy of this plan should be given to the teacher in charge of the excursion and its implications discussed before departure.

Students participating in an excursion must not be permitted to engage in additional or alternative activities, which were not originally scheduled in the program, and for which parental or caregiver approval would normally have been necessary (e.g. horse riding or water activities).

Swimming and Water Activities

Principals are to ensure that any excursion involving swimming or water activities and any excursion involving overnight stays, includes a member of staff who possesses **current accreditation** in cardiopulmonary resuscitation and emergency care.

Parents must be asked to indicate the swimming ability of their children when giving consent for students to participate in excursions involving water activities. Coloured wrist bands must be worn by each student on the excursion and all teachers be made aware of what swimming ability is what colour.

If parents indicate students are poor or non-swimmers and no flotation devices are available for use by the students, principals will need to assess whether such students should participate in the swimming or water activities of the excursion. This assessment must take place irrespective of parental or caregiver permission for the students to participate in the swimming or water activities.

Consent

The fact that parents or caregivers consent to the participation of their child in an excursion should not be taken as removing the responsibility of school staff for taking all reasonable steps to ensure the particular activity is safe.

Excursion consent forms do not create any waiver of rights by the parent or the caregiver in relation to their child. The main purpose of consent forms and information forms is to give enough detail to parents and caregivers to allow them to make an informed decision about whether their child should attend the excursion.

For many excursions it will not be necessary to collect a new medical information form. Medical information held by the school should, however, be updated as required and take account of activities proposed for the excursion.

In exceptional circumstances, where it is not possible to obtain signed consent forms from parents or caregivers, oral approval can be sought. The principal must keep a written record of any oral approvals given by parents or caregivers.

Transport

Public transport (government bus, rail and ferry services, or private bus and ferry services) should be used for school excursions, wherever appropriate.

Train - When organising an excursion by rail, principals/ excursion organisers should contact their local railway station concerning excursion concessions and other arrangements.

Bus - Principals should attempt to hire buses with seatbelts wherever practicable and particularly for long distance travel. In the case of large vehicles, the number of passengers must not exceed the number that the vehicle is licensed to carry.

Car - The transporting of students in the cars of staff members, parents, caregivers or volunteers should only occur in those circumstances where there is no feasible option available to provide alternative transportation. This may only occur under the following conditions:

1. written permission from the parent(s) or caregiver(s) of the student(s) being transported is obtained
2. the driver is licensed
3. the vehicle is registered
4. the number of passengers in the vehicle does not exceed the number of seatbelts
5. current driver's licence and car registration details are sighted by the school prior to giving permission for students to be transported in the vehicle.

Comprehensive insurance is not generally required. Nevertheless, comprehensive insurance is required if a member of staff is authorised to use his or her vehicle for official business and wishes to make a claim for the payment of mileage.

Principals must ensure that all parents, caregivers or volunteers who transport students in cars complete a *Prohibited Employment Declaration* prior to the excursion.

Benefits and Subsidies

Excursions should not provide the opportunity for organisers to gain extra *Fly Buy* or *Frequent Flyer* points, rewards or commissions. All sources of funding, gratuity or subsidy, including free airline tickets, donations, rewards or commissions, must be disclosed in the submission for approval. Donations, rewards, etc., must be applied to the relevant event and cannot be used for personal purposes.

Related Documents

Depending on the type of excursion, the following documents will contain useful guidance and advice:

- [Anaphylaxis: Guidelines for Schools \(2003\)](#)
- [Animals in Schools: Animal welfare guidelines for teachers \(2001\)](#)
- [Cruelty to Animals \(96/169\)](#)
- [Guidelines for Schools and TAFE NSW Colleges and Campuses: Management of Serious Incidents \(00/158\)](#)
- [Guidelines for the Safe Conduct of Sport and Physical Activity in Schools 1999 \(PD/2002/0012\).](#)
- [Guidelines for the Implementation of the Working with Children Check and Completion of Prohibited Employment Declarations \(01/248\)](#)
- [Money Matters Part 2: GST Guidelines for Schools \(June 2001\)](#)
- [School Manual on Financial Management](#)
- [Use of seatbelts on buses \(99/293\)](#)
- [Welfare of Students While Engaged in Activities Conducted Under the Auspices of the School \(PD/2004/0019\)](#)

Responsibilities of staff conducting excursions are outlined in:

- [Settlement of the Dispute on the Care and Supervision of School Students \(98/139\)](#)
- [Occupational Health, Safety and Injury Management: A Guide for the principal or manager 1999](#)
- [Professional Responsibilities of Teachers \(97/227\)](#)
- [Protecting and Supporting Children and Young People, Revised Procedures, December 2000](#)
- [Code of Conduct \(PD/2004/0020\).](#)

Doonside Public School Excursion Checklist

Details

Excursion to: _____ Date:

From _____ to _____

Excursion Organiser: _____ Grade/Stage/Class/Whole
School _____

What is the educational value of the proposed excursion?

Consent

Is there a signed Excursion consent form for each student?

Yes / No

If No, has a verbal consent has been obtained?

Yes / No

If Yes, has a written record of when and by whom verbal consent was obtained, been attached?

Yes / No

Does the school hold medical information for each child?

Yes / No

Have the parents been informed in writing of all the excursion details?

Yes / No

Supervision

Has a risk assessment been conducted?

Yes / No

Is a risk management plan attached?

Yes / No

If Yes, has it been signed by all staff members attending and Principal?

Yes / No

If Yes, have they been forwarded to the Deputy Principal responsible (Colleen)?

Yes / No

Have individual risk assessments been conducted on students who pose potential risks?

Yes / No

Is a list of teachers accompanying students on the excursion attached?

Yes / No

Have parents or caregivers been provided with details of supervision and risk reduction?

Yes / No

Will a teacher with emergency care training be present?

Yes / No

Will a teacher with CPR training be present?

Yes / No

Are parents or volunteers going?

Yes / No

If Yes, has the Principal:

- Received a signed 'Prohibited Employment Declaration'
Yes / No
- Checked the Department's not to be employed list
Yes / No
- Consulted referees
Yes / No

Cost of Excursion

What is the cost per student of the excursion?

\$ _____

Is the exact breakdown of costs attached?

Yes / No

Are there strategies in place to support students who cannot afford the excursion?

Yes / No

If Yes, please state:

Other

Is a list of students including gender and school year attached?

Yes / No

Is a detailed itinerary attached?

Yes / No

Are details of accommodation, including names, addresses and phone numbers attached?

Yes / No

Will a complete medical kit be present on the excursion?

Yes / No

Have students with individual medical needs and/or food allergies been catered for?

Yes / No

Is an individual health care plan of students with health care needs or disabilities required?

Yes / No

If Yes, are these attached?

Yes / No

Will a supply of sunscreen be present on the excursion?

Yes / No

Will there be a teacher present with a mobile phone?

Yes / No

Are there alternate activities for non-attendees? (eg Split work, teacher left behind)

Yes / No

If Yes, please

state: _____

Are the non-attendees allocated to a split class?

Yes / No

If Yes, is this list attached?

Yes / No

Have at school playground duties been catered for or swapped?

Yes / No

If Yes, has this been forwarded to the appropriate executive?

Yes / No

Have Support/Specialist teachers been notified of change to their routine?

Yes / No

Has the canteen been given at least 1 week's notice to cater for lunches?

Yes / No

Have the students been briefed on the school's expectations of their behaviour?

Yes / No