



ACT
Government

Education

ACT PUBLIC PRESCHOOL – EXCURSION PROCEDURE

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This procedure is supported by ACT Education Directorate Excursion Policy

1. Overview

1.1. These procedures cover the requirements for planning preschool 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;
- the completion of a risk assessment is prior to seeking parent permission for the excursion is mandatory for all preschool excursions; and must consider requirements of Regulation 101 of the [Education and Care Services National Regulations](#);
- for Category A excursions that are a regular outing (such as local walks) a risk assessment must be in place prior to seeking parent/guardian permission;
- risk assessments for regular outings (such as local walks) must be conducted annually;
- 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; and
 - have appropriate registration under the *Working with Vulnerable People (Background Checking) Act 2011*.

- supervision requirements meet minimum ratios of 1:11 and is adjusted in accordance 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; and
- 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 and requirements set out within the [Education and Care Services National Regulations](#);
- 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 ensure that a participating staff member holds a current first aid certificate and an appropriately stocked and maintained first aid kit is 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 current and up to date;
- 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 all preschool excursions; and
- 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.

Supervision

3.3. Accompanying adults may be used to meet the supervision requirement above the 1:11 educator/child ratio for preschool. This is 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 (eg. A local walk)	Not required	Minimum of 1:11 educator/child ratio. Analysis of risks, excursion type, student needs may inform higher ratios.
B	Other than Category A within the ACT	To be considered by principal	Minimum 1:11 Recommended 1:4 (including volunteers)
C	Day travel beyond the ACT	To be considered by principal	Minimum 1:11 Recommended 1:4 (including volunteers)

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. Additional requirements for preschool are included in the *ACT Public Preschool Water Safety Procedure*.
- 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* and *ACT Public Preschool Water Safety Procedure* 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. Formal excursion authorisation from parents/guardians that meets the requirements set out within Regulation 102 of the [Education and Care Services National Regulations](#) , must be obtained once in every 12 month period for **Category A** excursions.
- 3.8. Once permission of a **Category A** excursion has been obtained, parents must be provided with notice of proposed outings prior to leaving the preschool site.
- 3.9. **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).
- 3.10. 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.

- 3.11. **Category C** 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).
- 3.12. 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).

Accidents

- 3.13. The teacher in charge should follow the *ACT Public Preschool Incidents, Injury, Illness and Trauma Procedure*.
- 3.14. 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.
- 3.15. The choices stipulated by the parent on the Excursion Medical Information and Consent Form should be respected where possible.
- 3.16. Parents must be advised as soon as practicable of action taken in an emergency.

Use of Transport

- 3.17. 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 or other adult.
- 3.18. 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.
- 3.19. 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.
- 3.20. 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.
- 3.21. 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.
- 3.22. 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

- 3.23. 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.
- 3.24. 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.
- 3.25. 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.
- 3.26. 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.
- 3.27. 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.
- 3.28. 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.
- 3.29. 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

- 3.30. 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. The Director, School Improvement is **responsible for this procedure**.
- 4.2. For support contact **The School Operations Branch** on 6205 3313 or email at SchoolOperations@act.gov.au

5. Monitoring and review

- 5.1. The procedure owner will be responsible for monitoring the procedure through annual scans. A full review will occur as necessary, or within a three-year period.

6. Complaints

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

7. References

7.1. 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.

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.

7.2. Regulation 101 of the National Law – Conduct a risk assessment for excursion

The risk assessment must identify and assess risks that the excursion may pose to the safety, health and wellbeing of children taken on the excursion and specify how the risks will be managed and minimised.

- i. The risk assessment must consider:
- ii. The proposed route;
- iii. Any water hazards;
- iv. Risks associated with water-based activities;
- v. Transport to and from the proposed destination;
- vi. Number of adults and children involved in the excursion;
- vii. The educator to child ratio appropriate to supervise given the destination of the excursion;
- viii. Specialised skills that may be required by the adults attending the excursion;
- ix. The proposed activities;
- x. The proposed duration of the excursion; and
- xi. The items that should be taken on the excursion.

7.3. Regulation 102 of the National Law – Authorisation for excursions

Written authorisations must be provided for any child taken outside of a Public preschool. The authorisation by a person named in the child's enrolment record must state;

- i. The child's name;
- ii. The reason the child is being taken outside the premises;
- iii. The date of the excursion;
- iv. A description of the proposed destination;
- v. The method of transport;

- vi. The proposed activities to be undertaken;
- vii. The period of time the child will be away from the premises;
- viii. The anticipated number of children likely to attend the excursion;
- ix. The anticipated ratio of adults to children attending the excursion;
- x. The anticipated number of staff members and any other adults attending the excursion;
and
- xi. That a risk assessment has been undertaken.

An authorisation is only required to be obtained once in a 12 month period.

8. Related Policies and Implementation Documents

- 8.1. Excursion Policy
- 8.2. Excursion Procedures
- 8.3. Excursion Policy Medical Information and consent
- 8.4. Excursion Policy medical Information consent and known medical information
- 8.5. Excursion Policy Excursion Teacher Checklist
- 8.6. Preschool Excursion Information for Parents - sample letter to parents with excursion details
- 8.7. Preschool Excursion Information for Parents - sample permission note to parents
- 8.8. Preschool local walking excursion
- 8.9. Preschool risk assessment