

EXCURSION PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

Implementation document for the Excursions policy

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Contact: Curriculum and Reform

Email: SchoolsPolicyExcursions@det.nsw.edu.au

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1 Planning excursions

School excursions are structured learning experiences that may pose risks. The [Excursions policy](#) and this document provide guidance to schools on managing such risks. The safety and wellbeing of students and staff is the priority for all excursions.

Throughout the document, the term parent(s) includes a guardian or other persons having the custody or care of the student. Section [15](#) provides a definition of terms used in this document.

The department's travel contractor does not manage school excursions or manage travel for students.

1.1 Delegations for approving excursions

Schools initiate, organise and supervise school excursions. Principals or, when more than one school is involved, the principals of all participating schools, approve or endorse excursions.

1.1.1 Domestic excursion approvals

Principals can approve travel on excursions for students and staff within Australia, including road, rail, ferry and air travel.

Air travel includes interstate and travel to Lord Howe Island and all external Australian territories including Norfolk Island.

1.1.2 Overseas excursion approvals

Overseas excursions must be endorsed by both the principal and their Director, Educational Leadership and approved by the appropriate Executive Director or above. When more than one school is involved, directors of all participating schools must endorse/approve the excursion.

Section [11](#) provides further information on overseas excursions.

1.1.3 Other overseas travel or sporting visits

Different approvals and lead times may be required when specific groups of students are selected to travel overseas, for example tours conducted by, or with the assistance of, the Arts unit and the School Sports unit.

Principals should discuss delegations and approvals with the appropriate senior officer – the relevant director in accordance with the reporting line.

1.1.4 Instructions responding to emerging issues and events

Excursions may be cancelled or varied in accordance with instructions provided by senior department officers in response to issues or events impacting on the health, safety and wellbeing of excursion participants. This may include health emergencies, travel advisory or local emergencies. See [Overseas Travel COVID-19 \(PDF 182 KB\)](#) for issues that may arise related to overseas excursions.

Instructions may be provided via email, online or other communication channels.

1.2 Application and exclusion

This document applies to all school and preschool excursions. Additional procedures may apply depending on the:

- activities (for example, water activities)
- excursion venue (for example, an overseas venue, student billeting)
- student group (for example, age or students with disability or particular medical conditions)
- travel options (for example, bus, coach, air travel, ferry, boat)
- type of school (for example, a residential high school or an education and training unit).

[Private tours information sheet \(PDF 149 KB\)](#) are excluded from this policy and the procedures because they are arranged in a private capacity external to the school. Schools must not authorise, endorse, promote or organise a private tour, including collecting paperwork or payments. The department does not accept any responsibility or liability in respect of students or staff members who attend private tours, events or other activities.

When determining whether an event is a private tour, refer to the [Private Tours information sheet \(PDF 149 KB\)](#).

Workplace learning programs are excluded from this policy and procedures. For further information, refer to Workplace learning's [Keeping students safe](#).

1.3 Educational value

Teachers must link the educational value of an excursion to curriculum outcomes.

Principals should consider the following when determining the excursion's educational value:

- relationship to the curriculum
- anticipated learning outcomes
- school needs and resources
- student and staff needs
- impact on the continuity of regular teaching and learning programs
- the evaluation of teaching and learning outcomes following the excursion.

Relevant law:

The [Education Act 1990 \(NSW\), Part 3](#), establishes the school curriculum and key learning areas.

1.4 Inclusivity

All students in the specific learning group, including those with learning and support (including disability) needs, should be given the opportunity to be included in an excursion unless exceptional circumstances exist. Schools must make reasonable adjustments, where appropriate, to enable access and participation, in consultation with students and parents as needed.

Refer to [Legal Issues Bulletin number 60](#) and [Inclusive education for students with disability policy](#).

Schools may provide financial assistance to students who are unable to participate due to financial hardship.

Alternative activities that provide for similar learning outcomes must be available to non-participating students.

Schools may select individual students or groups of students to represent the school at functions, events or competitions held at venues outside the school.

Relevant law:

This section accords with the purpose of the following legislation, to recognise human rights, control unlawful discrimination and support the principles of multiculturalism:

[Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 NSW](#)

[Disability Inclusion Act 2014 NSW](#)

[Multicultural NSW Act 2000](#)

[Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 \(Cth\)](#)

[Age Discrimination Act 2004 \(Cth\)](#)

[Disability Discrimination Act 1992 \(Cth\)](#)

[Disability Standards for Education 2005 \(Cth\)](#)

[Racial Discrimination Act 1975 \(Cth\)](#)

[Sex Discrimination Act 1984 \(Cth\)](#)

[Work Health and Safety Act 2011 \(NSW\)](#)

1.5 Duty of care

The department has a legal obligation to ensure the safety of staff, students and others in the workplace so far as is reasonably practical. Excursions are considered an extension of the workplace and the duty of care still applies. All departmental employees must exercise this duty of care by taking reasonable care for the safety and welfare of students in their charge and taking all reasonable action to protect students from risks of harm that can be reasonably predicted. The priority for all excursions is the safety and wellbeing of all students, staff and other people (for example, volunteers) participating in the excursion under the auspices of the school.

The standard of care required (for example, the degree of supervision) needs to be commensurate with the students' developmental maturity, ability, and learning and support needs. The duty of care to students applies during all activities that schools conduct or arrange.

The duty of care cannot be delegated or transferred to another person or organisation even where the excursion is managed by an independent organisation.

Relevant law:

The duty of care the department, through its staff, owes to students arises directly from the Common Law and special relationship between teachers and students. The duty of a school authority to its pupils may extend outside of normal school hours or away from school premises (extant cases involving excursions). The duty also arises from the [Civil Liability Act 2002](#), [Education Act 1990 \(NSW\)](#) and [Part 5 Work Health and Safety Act 2011](#).

1.6 Local school practices

Schools implement their own procedures to provide for the safe conduct of each excursion in accordance with the policy, based on local practices and experience.

Schools improve their procedures by de-briefing following an excursion to identify successful practices as well as areas for improvement, including systemic and locally produced risk profiles.

2 Child protection

The department is required to assist, and report on, children and young people whose safety, welfare or wellbeing is at risk. This applies to any issues that arise during an excursion. The department's [Child Protection: Responding to and reporting students at risk of harm policy](#) and procedure have further advice regarding staff roles and responsibilities in relation to child protection, including mandatory reporting obligations.

The department requires staff to complete child protection training annually.

Relevant law:

Staff have a legal obligation to report risk of harm concerns about children and young people, [Children and Young Persons \(Care and Protection\) Act 1998 \(NSW\), Section 27](#).

Other relevant legislation:

[Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998](#)

[Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002](#)

[Children's Guardian Act 2019](#)

[Education Act 1990](#)

2.1 Working with children checks

In accordance with the department's [Working with Children Check policy](#) and procedures, all people seeking to employ or engage in child related work in the department are subject to [Working with Children Check requirements](#). There are different requirements for staff and other adults participating in an excursion. Some are outlined below.

2.1.1 Staff, volunteers and contractors

All school-based staff or are engaged in child-related work as a paid employee of the department must have a probity clearance prior to engagement. This includes a Nationally Coordinated Criminal History Application and a [Working with Children Check](#) clearance.

Parents or close relatives of a student who volunteer to participate in a day excursion only need to complete and sign the [Working with Children Check – Declaration for Child-Related Workers \(PDF 220 KB\)](#).

Parents or close relatives of a student who volunteer for an overnight excursion must have a [Working with Children Check](#) clearance. They need to complete the [Declaration for Child-Related Workers \(PDF 220 KB\)](#). Principals must sight and verify this through eCPC before the excursion date.

Volunteers and contractors participating in an excursion who are not parents or close relatives of a student at the school must have a [Working with Children Check](#) clearance. They need to complete the [Declaration for Child-Related Workers \(PDF 220 KB\)](#). Before the excursion date, principals must sight, verify through eCPC and retain any clearances.

Further information can be obtained in the [Working with Children Check procedure \(PDF 244 KB\)](#) and [Working with Children Check clearance page \(staff only\)](#).

2.1.2 External providers

External providers are not required to hold a Working with Children Check clearance unless they are providing a child-related service during the excursion. For example, employees of a museum may not be required to hold a Working with Children Check clearance if they are providing services not related to children such as research services.

3 Health and safety

School staff manage risks to health and safety in their day-to-day work at school and in their classrooms. The same approach to safety applies to all excursions and off-site activities, considering the different nature of each activity and the environments in which those activities take place.

All excursions should consider infection control measures.

The Work Health and Safety (WHS) policy requires principals and teachers organising excursions to manage risks to the health and safety of staff, students and others so far as is reasonably practicable. Refer to the department's WHS Risk Management Procedures (staff only) for information on identifying hazards and managing risks on excursions.

A risk management approach to planning school excursions supports decision-making, providing greater insight into the potential risks as well as the impact on health, safety and wellbeing. The risk management process of identifying hazards, assessing risk and determining control measures helps to inform what planning is needed to ensure the safety of students, staff and others on excursions. This may include emergency response planning, incident reporting, identifying and managing individual health care needs for students, child protection, any necessary first aid response (staff only) and infection control. This should be incorporated in a school excursion risk assessment. Before endorsing excursions that involve sporting and physical activities, principals should consult the School Sport, Sport Safety guidelines and the Principal Endorsed Activities procedures (staff only).

Principals should ensure staff follow the Incident Notification and Response policy and procedures and promptly report any incidents or hazards that occur on any excursion.

Relevant law:

Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012 (NSW)

Child Protection (Working with Children) Regulation 2013 (NSW)

Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (NSW)

Work Health and Safety Regulation 2017 (NSW)

Staff also have a duty to take reasonable care for their own health and safety and take reasonable care that their acts or omissions do not adversely affect the health and safety of other persons. See section 28 of the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (NSW).

3.1 Risk assessment and management plan

Before approving any excursion, principals need to ensure that staff organising excursions have completed a satisfactory risk assessment.

Public orders, such as those from NSW Health or the Rural Fire Service, must be always adhered to.

Risk assessments must follow the department's WHS Risk Management Procedures to:

- identify hazards
- assess risks
- determine control measures to eliminate or reduce the risk as far as is reasonably practicable
- review and monitor risks.

This will confirm that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of students, staff and others on excursions.

Control measures may include adjustments such as modifying excursion programs, addressing physical barriers, substituting activities to minimise potential exposure to common allergens, using specialised technology or equipment, or producing materials in different formats or languages.

A risk assessment must be completed during the planning of an excursion, reviewed prior to the excursion, and throughout the excursion as needed.

A risk assessment

- identifies hazards or potential sources of injuries or illness within activities at each stage of an excursion, including transport options
- is developed in consultation with key staff members and, where appropriate, external venue providers
- is communicated to those who need to know. This may include the principal, students, staff and other adults (parents, volunteers, specialist instructors and venue staff) on the excursion and appropriate school-based staff members who may be involved in any emergency response
- should be actively used during the excursion and inform the supervising teacher whether to alter or cancel an excursion, in consultation with relevant authorities, if safety concerns emerge
- identifies hazards that may impact on the learning and support needs of students with disability or with health care requirements. Specialised services and other department support officers may be engaged to support or assist in developing appropriate risk management strategies
- includes management of student medical requirements and an emergency response plan.

Previous risk assessments may be helpful in developing a new risk assessment for a repeat excursion. The new plan must address the new activities and local circumstances.

The extent of risk assessment planning activities will depend on the nature of the excursion, the students' age and learning and support needs, the number of students, the schools involved and the location of the excursion. Certain hazards should be assessed immediately before undertaking the excursion as some factors such as weather forecasts or safety warnings, student health or healthcare plans, first aid requirements or student behaviour may change. Ensuing decisions must be communicated to students and parents as soon as possible.

Preschool excursions have additional specific requirements, refer to section 12 for more information.

Some common activities and the strategies for managing specific risks are outlined in section 14. Further information to help excursion coordinators develop their risk management plans is available from the [Health and Safety website](#) (staff only) including [WHS Fact sheet Excursions – domestic \(PDF 140 KB\)](#) and [WHS Fact sheet Excursions - overseas \(PDF 160 KB\)](#)) and the [disability, learning and support website](#).

3.1.1 Acquiring prohibited items

Consideration should be given to specific risks associated with travel to certain overseas countries where students might be tempted to acquire dangerous or illegal items such as replica guns, slingshots, nunchucks and lasers. Prohibitions about acquiring these items should be in writing and parents should be asked to sign an acknowledgement that they are aware of the directive and have explained this to their child, including the consequences if not adhered to. The prohibition warnings should cover the risks of fines and penalties associated with illegally importing these items into the destination countries as well as the risk of serious injury to the student and others, associated with the use and misuse of these items.

Relevant law:

Education providers can be prosecuted under the [Work Health and Safety Act 2011 \(NSW\)](#) for failing to ensure student safety while on the education provider's site. The [Weapons Prohibition Act 1998](#) lists main offenses and prohibited weapons.

The department has a duty to ensure the health and safety of students, staff and volunteers by eliminating or minimising risks under [section 17 of the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 \(NSW\)](#).

3.2 Specific risk management considerations for venue

Venue selection will depend on the nature of the excursion and its location. Prior experience of the venue or a briefing from a responsible person with sound knowledge of the venue will often suffice. A visit to the proposed venue or a meeting with venue operators is recommended when unfamiliar or potentially high-risk activities are contemplated.

Further information, including venue and safety information, can be obtained directly from the venue. Where available, venue and safety information sheets may be attached to the school's excursion risk management plan. Venue safety sheets and information provided by venue staff will be helpful in undertaking risk assessment and developing the Risk Management Plan.

Some venues, such as camping locations in remote areas, courts of law, and abattoirs require further consideration. These are addressed below.

3.2.1 Camping/field trips

Staff should visit camping or field trip sites before an excursion to assess risks such as access, injury prevention and emergency evacuation. Staff involved in wilderness camping or field trips to inhospitable terrain or remote areas require additional skills and competencies. See bushwalking in the listing for specific sport and physical activities in the [Sport safety guidelines](#).

3.2.2 Trips to courts of law

For court visits, teachers should:

- check the list of court matters to be heard on the day of the excursion and consult with court officers and any police officers involved
- in consultation with the principal, assess the court matter to ensure it is appropriate to the student's age, maturity and experiences
- develop strategies to minimise exposure to any potentially traumatising material/events.

Include advice on court etiquette in the excursion briefing (see section [10](#)).

3.2.3 Abattoirs and meat processing plants

School excursions to abattoirs are generally not encouraged due to the risk of contracting Q fever and other zoonotic diseases. Possible exposure is notifiable to [SafeWork](#). In addition, some students may have religious or ethical concerns about visiting abattoirs. However, curriculum-specific circumstances in Agriculture and HSC VET where livestock and carcass assessments are integral to the program may warrant visits to abattoirs and meat processing plants. Consequently, students aged 15 years or over may undertake learning in meat processing plants with an abattoir facility, under strict conditions.

Further information can be found at [Student workplace learning \(Keeping students safe – Horses and livestock\)](#).

3.3 Indemnities and waivers

External providers may request the principal signs an indemnity or waiver, releasing the organisation from liability for injury, loss or death. A principal should not sign any indemnity or waivers. If further information is required, contact [Legal Services](#) (staff only).

4 Transport

Consider and document any risks associated with travel, including risk associated with infection control, within the excursion risk management plan. Further information can be found on the [promoting safe travel](#) section of the Road safety education website. The following considerations may apply.

4.1 Bus, train and ferry

Where appropriate, use bus, rail and ferry services for school excursions.

While planning excursions, staff should:

- select vehicles licenced to carry the required number of passengers and ensure that this is not exceeded
- select buses or coaches fitted with seatbelts, where practical, particularly for long distance travel outside urban areas and ensure students wear available seatbelts
- organise accessible transport for students with disability and additional learning and support needs so they can participate in the excursion on the same basis as other students

- be aware of heavy vehicle safety regulations and its impact on travel time and driver availability. Further information can be found in section 4.6
- for private transport operators, check the operator holds appropriate licence and insurance
- develop strategies to manage crowds and mixing with other commuters to limit risks of students straying from the group or being placed at risk. This includes conducting regular head counts, providing clear group instruction and vigilantly monitoring more vulnerable students.

For regional and intercity services, group travel bookings can be made through NSW TrainLink.

Within the Opal network, each individual requires an Opal card or single use ticket as there are no other ticketing options. The recommended option is for students to use their own child/youth Opal card or one the school provides. Staff and volunteers require an adult Opal card.

More details are provided on the school excursions section of the Transport for NSW website.

Further information can be found in the Finance in Schools Handbook (FISH) section 8.23 for staff members, parents, volunteers and other students where there is no practical alternative transportation.

4.2 Car travel

Car travel is conditional on:

- written permission from the parent of each student travelling
- a current licence held by the driver that is sighted and documented by the excursion organiser. Parents transporting only their own children are not required to present their current licence to the excursion organiser. A provisional licence holder needs to comply with any relevant peer passenger conditions
- a current vehicle registration certificate, sighted and documented by the excursion organiser. Parents transporting only their own children are not required to present their current vehicle registration papers to the excursion organiser
- if students are transporting other students, written permission from the parent(s) of the driver to not only use the vehicle but also to transport other students
- all passengers having and wearing a seatbelt
- approved child restraints being used where applicable.

Comprehensive insurance is not generally required, except where a member of staff is authorised to use their vehicle and intends to submit a mileage claim.

Risk assessment and management plans must address the possibility of car accidents. NSW Police has resources on actions to take if an accident occurs (PDF 112 KB).

Staff members should not travel alone with a single student for any part of the journey. Further information regarding the use of private vehicle by students, staff and parents can be found on the promoting safe travel section of the Road safety education website and within the department's Legal Issues Bulletins number 8 and number 24.

4.3 Air travel

Principals may approve air travel for students and teachers to travel on an excursion within Australia. Preference must be given to scheduled airline flights over chartered flights.

Principals must confirm that operators of charter flights have public liability insurance. For general insurance requirements see section [13](#).

4.4 Walking

Students and their supervisors may walk to the excursion location if it is close to the school.

Some excursion activities may involve walking between excursion venues and transport services. Consider the distance, route, access and supervision requirements within the risk assessment and management plan.

4.5 Unsupervised travel

This is not a preferred method of travel. Only students in Years 11 and 12 are permitted to travel unsupervised.

If students are using their own cars, section [4.2](#) must be followed.

Staff should:

- brief students on travel routes, expected standards of behaviour and safety strategies
- obtain parental consent where a student or group of students travel to or from the excursion venue without teacher supervision.

4.6 Travel using heavy vehicles

Heavy vehicles used for excursions need to be registered with the appropriate government department (Transport NSW or equivalent in other states). Bus and coach operators should be able to provide evidence of registration for the vehicle.

Use of vehicles must comply with [Chain of Responsibility laws](#). Heavy vehicles or buses operated by schools are also subject to these [procedures](#) (staff only).

Vehicles with seatbelts are preferred.

Ensure vehicles used on an excursion are appropriate for the needs of the group, for example, wheelchair access if required.

5 Activities while on an excursion

When the excursion includes activities with specific risks, identify and manage issues accordingly. Use Table 2 in section [14](#) as a guide for indoor and outdoor activities, water activities, contact with animals, viewing films and live performances.

5.1 Alternative activities while on the excursion

Students participating in an excursion are not permitted to engage in additional or alternative activities not originally scheduled in the program, for which parental approval would normally have been required (for example, horse riding or water activities).

5.2 Unscheduled activities

Separate to excursions, leaving the school grounds for brief, local, spontaneous educational activities will happen occasionally. The value of such activities is recognised and, on limited occasions, there may be insufficient time to obtain parental permission before the visit. Such activities may only take place at the discretion of the principal, who must consider the safety, welfare and wellbeing of students and be satisfied of the educational value. Such unscheduled activities should not involve vehicle travel.

Preschool children should not participate in such unscheduled activities unless parent authorisation has previously been given.

5.3 Unsupervised activities

Activities involving mature students may occur without direct supervision on limited occasions, on an individual or small group basis. The principal and teachers must ensure the safety and welfare of the unsupervised students. Parents must be informed of, and agree to, unsupervised activities.

5.4 Activities for non-attending students

Schools must provide students unable to attend excursions with supervised activities that provide for similar learning outcomes to the excursion.

6 Student health

The principal must provide a copy of current student individual health care plans and ensure that issues such as administration of prescribed and emergency medication (for example, adrenaline injector, asthma medication), health care procedures and emergency response plans are discussed and supervising staff fully understand these before departure.

In accordance with the [Student Health in NSW Public Schools: A summary and consolidation](#) policy, principals must ensure that individual health care plans for students with health care needs include provision for managing such conditions while on excursions.

Principals should also consider information about students with disabilities and additional learning and support needs that may impact on overall management of the student's health on the excursion. Staff and volunteers on the excursion should be briefed about students with particular health care needs and the role they may have in supporting those needs.

For many excursions it will not be necessary to collect a new medical information form. However, consent forms should instruct parents to inform the school where the information has changed. The school will use the medical information it currently holds to assist staff organising excursions. Medical information should be updated at least annually and as required and take account of activities proposed for the excursion.

6.1 First aid

Immediate and effective first aid must be provided to excursion participants who have become injured or ill during excursions.

6.1.1 First aid kits

Staff must take an appropriately equipped first aid kit, including a general use adrenaline injector, a general Australasian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy (ASCIA) First Aid Plan for Anaphylaxis (Orange), and an asthma reliever inhaler and spacer on all excursions. For overseas excursions, principals should check any requirements that the countries to be visited may have in relation to this medication being brought into the country. This can be done by sending an email to that country's embassy. Retain a copy of any response received with the general use adrenaline injector.

ASCIA advises that an adrenaline injector should be taken on as hand luggage so that they are within reach and not exposed to fluctuations in temperature and pressure. Enquiries should also be made of the airline carrier to confirm whether the adrenaline injector can be carried onto the plane as part of hand luggage. For more information see [Legal Issues Bulletin number 52](#).

6.1.2 First aid training

All school staff are required to have current first aid training recognised by the department. This includes mandatory first aid training such as the anaphylaxis e-learning and e-emergency care for school-based staff. Further information on mandatory [first aid training courses](#) is available from the Health and Safety directorate.

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 a nationally recognised competency in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). Schools should also consider whether staff may require additional training including rescue competencies or lifesaving qualifications.

Relevant law:

[Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011 \(NSW\) section 42](#) – The department has a duty to provide first aid, including access to equipment, facilities and training to administer first aid. Pecuniary penalties apply for non-compliance.

6.2 Anaphylaxis

Parents/carers must provide information, in writing, to the school on food or other allergies. This will assist planning to minimise the risk of exposure to allergens for these students. Legal rights for, and responsibilities to, a student at risk of anaphylaxis are detailed in [Legal Issues Bulletin number 52](#).

Further advice is available from your local work health and safety advisor and from the [Anaphylaxis](#) web page.

6.3 Immunisation

For domestic excursions, address any immunisation concerns in the risk management plan. Immunisation records for primary and preschool students are requested at enrolment and students classified as not immunised may be excluded if there is an outbreak of a vaccine-preventable disease. For overseas excursion procedures see section [11](#).

Relevant law:

[Public Health Act 2010 \(NSW\)](#)

6.4 Dietary requirements

Parents need to provide information about food or other allergies, special dietary needs, cultural or religious dietary needs, and prior conditions such as medical procedures in the last 12 months. This information will assist planning to accommodate student needs and minimise risks.

6.5 Medication

Students may need access to non-prescription medications at particular times and for particular events, for example, a student with a tendency for travel sickness who is going on an excursion involving coach travel. NSW Health advises that over-the-counter medication can be potentially harmful and that schools should follow the same procedures for all medication as for [administering prescription medications](#).

When [travelling with medicines and medical devices](#), risk management plans should also consider implications for transporting [Schedule 8 drugs](#) either interstate or overseas.

Key points to remember:

- Except in an emergency, only staff who are trained can administer prescribed medication. Staff can complete [e-safety online training](#) on administering prescribed medication
- In an emergency, all staff have a duty to respond and administer medication if required
- Students must not self-administer or carry medications unless there is a written agreement between the school and the student's parents
- Parents must complete a written [request form \(DOC 74.3 KB\)](#) and provide consent for the administration of medication, both prescribed and over-the-counter
- Parents are responsible for providing prescribed medication and consumables to the school in a container that is clearly labelled with the student's name and required dosage. The principal may agree for the student to self-administer their medication, but this will be dependent on the maturity of the student, parental consent and any other issues that could affect the safety of the individual student or others
- Schools should not supply medications for administration to students (except for first aid where necessary).

Refer to the [administering prescription medication](#) section of the health care procedures website for more information.

Information on taking medication overseas is found on the [Smarttraveller website](#).

7 Supervision

To satisfy the department's duty of care, schools must ensure excursions are appropriately staffed. Students on excursion should be subject to direct adult supervision, unless prior approval for unsupervised activities has been obtained in accordance with section [5.3](#).

School staff retain the ultimate responsibility for supervision but may be assisted by appropriate adults, parents, volunteers, specialist instructors and venue staff. Staff may not bring partners or children who are not part of the excursion cohort.

For overseas excursions, staff must not extend their overseas stay or to leave the planned excursion for personal reasons, unless there is an emergency.

7.1 Parents and volunteers

The department's duty of care owed to students for the duration of an excursion cannot be delegated from the school to parents, volunteers or individuals associated with external organisations.

The number of parents/volunteers assisting will vary according to circumstances. In most circumstances, parents and volunteers required to assist on domestic excursions should not have to pay to attend.

Adults other than supervisors and volunteers are not allowed to attend the excursion. Parents or volunteers cannot bring partners or children who are not part of the excursion cohort.

Principals must ensure that all parents or volunteers accompanying to assist on school excursions comply with the Working with Children Check policy before the excursion.

Parents or volunteers on overnight excursions must have a Working with Children Check clearance (see section 2.1).

As part of their induction before the excursion, parents and volunteers must be appropriately briefed on safety and behaviour measures, student health, additional learning and support care needs and their role in supporting these requirements where relevant. The student and his or her parent must be advised that this is being done.

7.2 Specialist instructors and venue staff as supervisors

Specialist instructors, contractors and venue staff providing services on the excursion must have a current Working with Children Check clearance if supervising students. This must be verified by the employer and confirmation provided to the school.

7.3 Overnight supervision

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

Including male and female staff supervisors is a consideration for risk management on overnight supervision. Schools make appropriate risk management judgements based on the needs of the student cohort and staff.

Information on parents and volunteers on overnight excursions is in section 7.1.

7.4 Teacher/student ratios

Using average class sizes as a guide, the principal determines the number of teachers (and volunteers) required to supervise an excursion. In addition to the risk assessment, a higher teacher-to-student ratio will be necessary for water activities or some outdoor activities such as bushwalking.

To ensure appropriate and effective levels of supervision, the principal will consider:

- the experience, training and skills of staff to respond in emergency situations (including volunteers and instructors)
- students' age, maturity, physical characteristics and gender
- the nature, location and duration of the excursion
- the activities to be undertaken
- students' ability and experience
- students with disability and additional learning and support needs
- the size of the group
- the requirements outlined in the [Sport and Physical Activity policy](#), [Sport safety guidelines](#), and guidelines for specific sports and physical activities
- any other relevant factors.

Relevant law:

[Child Protection \(Working with Children\) Act 2012 \(NSW\)](#)

[Child Protection \(Working with Children\) Regulation 2013 \(NSW\)](#)

8 Accommodation

To select the most appropriate type of accommodation for the excursion, the excursion organiser needs to consider the purpose of the excursion, cost, capacity, facilities, accessibility, supervision and security.

Consider the accommodation available to students on an overnight excursion in any risk management plan. It is recommended that the person assessing these risks inspects the facilities before planning the excursion to ensure suitability. Overnight excursions are not recommended for preschool children.

General types of accommodation may include:

- hotel or motel accommodation
- caravan parks
- camping in tents
- residential camps
- billeting.

8.1 Billeting

Billeting involves students staying overnight in the homes of volunteer host families. It is sometimes referred to as 'homestay' and is a component of some excursions. Billeting relies on the goodwill of host families offering to accommodate visiting students, usually without financial compensation. This can sometimes be a sensitive issue. Many parents will appreciate the obligation that the department has in relation to the welfare of students and the measures that need to be in place to fulfil that obligation.

While homestays are a rewarding and successful experience, students might be placed in situations where they are unsafe or are vulnerable to inappropriate behaviour. The [Good Practice in Billeting](#)

[\(DOCX 27 KB\)](#) guidelines offers suggestions for consideration and use when planning an activity that involves students being billeted.

If the wellbeing or safety of a student is at risk, or if there is a suspicion of risk, the student should be relocated to another approved accommodation arrangement and the student's parents informed. Staff will need to meet their department reporting obligations as well as obligations of the local jurisdiction, such as reporting to local police.

Principals must ensure that all staff have up-to-date training in child protection and are aware of the need to be vigilant in all matters relating to the safety and welfare of students involved in billeting.

Schools will need to carefully screen accommodation where students are to be billeted. If it is difficult to complete screening, alternative accommodation may be more appropriate. Suitable alternative accommodation must be arranged if there are not enough families volunteering to host the visiting students.

8.1.1 Host families checks

Parents or carers agreeing to billet students must complete a host family check by filling in the 'Acknowledgement of billeting conditions by billeting families' and 'Undertaking to provide a billet' form. Further information can be found in the [Good Practice in Billeting \(DOCX 27 KB\)](#) guidelines. Schools must retain a copy of the signed acknowledgement. For billeting students overseas, the forms may need to be provided in the host family's language if English is not spoken or read by the adults in the home.

For overseas and interstate billeting, schools should obtain the local version of a [Working with Children Check](#). This will assist teachers and principals in fulfilling risk management responsibilities.

Working with Children Checks or alternative local versions are mandatory when billeting for more than 3 weeks. Principals should verify host families checks where available. For periods under 3 weeks, a Working with Children Check is not mandatory but it is prudent to obtain this where possible.

8.1.2 Teacher responsibilities

The teacher in charge must ensure that where students are required to be billeted on an excursion, the following conditions are met.

Parents:

- are briefed before providing consent to their child being billeted
- are provided with the host family's contact details to ensure they can contact their child as necessary.

Host families:

- are deemed suitable by the host school and have met all appropriate local education authority guidelines
- can provide accommodation that includes a private bedroom or one shared with a student of the same gender
- immediately report risk of harm and wellbeing issues for their billet to the teacher in charge and are provided with the teacher's contact details
- can provide privacy for bathing and toilet facilities

- are suitably trained to address students' health care needs (for example, administer an adrenaline injector of students identified as being at risk of anaphylaxis, asthma or other medical condition that may require an emergency response)
- notify the teacher in charge of any travel by the student involving an overnight stay during the period of the billet.

Billeted students:

- have reasonable means to contact the teacher and their parents
- always have emergency contact details.

The teacher in charge must also ensure that they:

- are contactable for the duration of the billet by both the student and host family
- contact the student(s) regularly during the period of the billet
- can access transport to visit the student(s) at short notice
- arrange alternative accommodation for students who need to be relocated.

Relevant law:

Working With Children Check required is for billeting of 3 weeks or more, see [Child Protection \(Working with Children Regulation\) 2013 \(NSW\) section 14](#)

9 Consent

Schools must obtain parental consent for all excursions and provide parents with consent forms that contain detailed information about the excursion. This will allow parents to make an informed decision about their child's participation. Parents are also to provide relevant information to the school about their child's needs.

Consent forms should include the details of all planned activities, their educational value, method of transport, accommodation, level of supervision and payment methods.

If the parent's consent and instructions are not clear from the excursion consent form, the school must seek clarification and resolve any issues before the student goes on the excursion.

This is particularly important when the excursion involves relatively high-risk activities such as swimming or water activities. Obtaining parental consent does not remove the school's duty of care. Excursion consent forms do not create any waiver of rights by the parent in relation to their child.

Controversial issues may arise during or following an excursion depending on the content delivered; views expressed; or by the actions of teachers, external providers or speakers addressing the students. If controversial issues are likely to be addressed on an excursion, content should be clearly set out in an excursion consent form. Refer to the [Controversial Issues in Schools policy](#) for more information.

Consent for excursions may need to align with court orders, if these are in place, particularly with regards to interstate or overseas travel. Consent for children in [out of home care](#) may have additional requirements for interstate or overseas travel, which may require approval from the relevant Minister's delegate.

9.1 Written consent

Completed consent forms granting permission for students to participate in an excursion should include relevant medical information. Proforma information and consent forms for domestic excursions are available in [Appendix 3](#). The proforma documents provide the minimum information required. Note that additional information may need to be collected for specific activities or types of excursions.

Organisers should seek additional parent or carer consent around the risk of COVID-19. Check the [Consent](#) webpage for the most up to date advice.

Information and consent forms are available in many languages other than English, including translations of selected [generic excursion consent forms](#) and [medical information form](#).

There are additional requirements for overseas excursions outlined in [section 11](#).

9.2 Verbal consent

Students whose parents have not completed a consent form are usually not permitted to participate in a school excursion. However, verbal consent for a local excursion is accepted in circumstances where it is not possible to obtain completed consent forms from parents. The principal must keep a written record of any parental verbal consent. Principals should consider confirming with the parent, in writing, the verbal consent.

9.3 Consent by person other than parent

When parental consent cannot be obtained, schools can seek consent from any other person the principal considers appropriate. If the student is independent of parent or other carers, written agreement to participate in the excursion must be obtained from the student. In particularly contentious situations, principals may wish to seek advice from [Legal Services](#) (staff only).

If parents do not permit a student to participate in an excursion, the school will make available an alternative educational experience that provides for similar learning outcomes, particularly where an assessment task relates to the excursion.

9.4 Consent forms for multiple excursions

Schools should limit the use of excursion consent forms covering multiple excursions. If excursions involving the same or very similar activities are to take place regularly, for example, each week for a term, one consent form may suffice. The consent form should remind parents to notify the school if the student develops health care needs or if there are changes to an existing medical condition. If a significant variation in the activities occurs, a separate consent form is required.

9.5 Privacy

As personal information will be sought, a consent form should include advice on privacy and the use of personal details. Collection of personal information such as consent and medical information is done in accordance with the legislative requirements that protect all personal information the department holds. The privacy notice in the [Parent information and consent form for domestic excursions \(DOCX 75 KB\)](#) and [Appendix 3](#) outlines the purpose of obtaining the information, how it will be used and by whom. The department's [Legal Services website](#) provides further information on privacy protection.

Relevant law:

Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998

Health Records Information Privacy Act 2002

10 Briefings prior to excursion

Before an excursion, the organising teacher should brief the relevant staff, assistants and parents on the excursion planning.

10.1 Staff and assistants

Assistants include any parent or volunteer assisting with the excursion. Staff and assistants attending the excursion should be briefed on all aspects, including:

- the risk assessment that includes control measures
- student health care needs
- students with disability or additional learning and support needs
- first aid, including emergency first aid response
- expected standards of behaviour
- communication strategies
- supervision strategies, including grouping, name tags, meeting points
- equipment
- venue expectations
- travel arrangements, including safe road user behaviours
- incident reporting.

10.2 Students and parents

The school should consult and brief, in advance, students with health care needs and their parents about how the school will meet the student's needs. Students participating in excursions to communities that are culturally different to their own need to be briefed on cultural sensitivities and appropriate communication in cross-cultural contexts.

In addition to educational instructions the school provides to students before all excursions, students should receive a briefing on all other relevant information, such as their rights and obligations. The briefing should contain information specific to the excursion and information about the following areas:

- right to be safe and protected
- the risk assessment including control measures, monitoring and reporting
- expected standards of behaviour
- communication strategy
- incident reporting.

10.3 Expected standards of behaviour

Students on excursions interact with the public and are representative of their school and community. Students should be briefed on the expected standards of behaviour and applying the

school's discipline code or school rules. Policies and procedures relating to student behaviour, including the [Behaviour code for students \(PDF 83 KB\)](#) apply while on excursions.

Staff are on duty during excursions and must conduct themselves in line with the [Code of Conduct](#). This includes maintaining professional boundaries with students, not consuming alcohol or illicit substances and taking all reasonable action to protect students from foreseeable risks.

Relevant law:

The department's discipline policy is in accordance with the [Education Act 1990 \(NSW\), Section 35](#), which governs student behaviour in government schools.

11 Overseas excursions

Overseas excursions require very detailed planning and are a large undertaking made on behalf of the school. Teachers should carefully consider the intended learning outcomes for the activity and if these could be met by alternative activities that would not involve overseas travel.

In addition to the implementation procedures that apply to all excursions, there are additional procedures for overseas excursions. These are outlined below and in the [overseas excursions planning website](#), which also contains the [OEX](#), the department's overseas excursions application pack.

Overseas excursions are not recommended for preschool or early primary school students.

Overseas excursions must be conducted substantially during school vacation time. If the excursion includes school days, planning must address how students will complete work for other subjects during their absence. Excursions that span over a significant number of school days may not be approved.

11.1 Approvals required for overseas excursions

Approval for overseas excursions cannot be assumed. Teachers and principals need to be aware of the timelines required for notifying their Director, Educational Leadership and the Executive Director.

Use the [overseas excursions website](#) for further information on approvals and advice.

11.1.1 Approval of overseas sporting visits and music tours

Overseas visits organised by or with the assistance of state offices will require the approval of the relevant Executive Director in accordance with the reporting line. This includes overseas music tours conducted by or with the assistance of the Arts unit and the School Sports unit.

11.1.2 Informed consent for overseas excursions

Due to the complex nature of overseas excursions, consent forms need to provide as much detail as possible for parents and carers on the items outlined in this section.

Travel details, including:

- itinerary
- travel times, dates and modes of transport
- planned activities.

Accommodation details, including:

- addresses
- contact phone numbers where applicable.

Supervision details, including:

- names and gender of all accompanying adults
- staff with first aid qualifications, including CPR, anaphylaxis, administration of prescribed medication and emergency care
- communication methods including in an emergency.

As personal information will be sought on students, the consent forms must include advice on privacy and the use of personal details. Parents and carers should provide the organising teacher(s) with informed consent for the excursion, including:

- relevant medical information
- a copy of individual travel insurance that includes adequate cover for serious injury and repatriation expenses. This is not required where the school has obtained group travel insurance
- acknowledgement of the supervision and accommodation arrangements.

The cost payable to attend the excursion, including:

- breakdown of costs
- inclusions and exclusions
- any subsidies relating to the attendance of the supervising staff.

11.1.3 COVID-19

The Overseas Travel Health, COVID-19 fact sheet provides advice and risk management information for department approved overseas travel.

11.2 Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade recommendations

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) provides advice regarding travel to particular countries, including safety and security issues, practical tips on health, local laws, local customs and entry and exit requirements. If DFAT has recommended against travel, the excursion will not proceed, regardless of the proximity to the date of departure and other organisational matters. DFAT advice should be checked regularly through the planning process, including just before departure. DFAT provides most of the service relevant to schools through the [Smartraveller website](#).

11.2.1 Immunisations required for overseas excursions

Students travelling overseas should consult a health professional and have the correct up-to-date immunisations for the destination. The [World Health Organization](#) has information on preventable diseases and areas at risk, vaccine-preventable diseases and vaccines.

12 Preschool excursions

Preschool excursions are required to comply with the Excursions policy and these procedures so far as applicable and consistent with legislative requirements. Departmental preschools are subject to specific legislative requirements for educator-to-child ratios, risk assessments and parental authorisations for excursions. Pecuniary penalties apply for non-compliance.

12.1 Educator/child ratio in preschools

Departmental preschools must adhere to the ratios set out under the Education and Care Services National Law.

Table 1 Minimum ratios under the National Law

Age of child	NSW-specific ratios
Birth to 24 months	1:4
24 months to 36 months	1:5
36 months to preschool	1:10
Over preschool age	1:15

A risk assessment will determine whether each excursion requires additional supervision. The person conducting the risk assessment must be satisfied that the ratio is sufficient to ensure proper and effective supervision.

12.2 Risk management for preschools

The preschool must develop a risk assessment by assessing risks for an excursion before seeking permission unless the excursion is a regular outing and a prior risk assessment has been conducted. Further information including the definition of a regular outing is available on the [Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority™ \(ACECQA\) website](#).

The risk assessment must:

- identify and assess risks the excursion may pose to the safety, health or wellbeing of any preschool children being taken on the excursion
- specify how the identified risks will be managed and minimised.

The following areas must be considered while assessing risks:

- proposed route and destination
- proposed activities
- proposed duration
- method of transport and child restraint requirements
- risks associated with water-based activities
- number of teachers or other responsible adults appropriate to provide supervision, given the risk/s posed and whether any specialised skills are required to ensure preschool children's safety (for example, life-saving skills)
- children with disability and additional learning and support needs
- items to take on the excursion (for example a mobile phone and a list of emergency contact numbers for preschool children on the excursion and any required medication).

12.3 Parental authorisation for preschools

Authorisation is required in writing, from the parent or authorised person named on the enrolment form, to take a preschool child outside the preschool. The authorisation must state:

- preschool child's name
- reason for taking the preschool child outside the premises

- date of the excursion, unless a regular outing
- duration of the excursion
- description of the proposed destination
- method of transport and details of safety requirements
- whether consent is for a regular outing and a description on when and where the regular outings will occur
- proposed activities
- cost of the excursion
- anticipated number of preschool children attending
- anticipated ratio of educators to preschool children
- anticipated number of staff and other adults accompanying to supervise
- that a risk assessment has been prepared and is available.

Further information is available on the [ACECQA website](#).

Relevant law:

Education and Care Services National Regulations (NSW)

Ratios – Chapter 7, Part 7.2, Division 3, Subdivision 1, Regulation 263

Risk management and authorisations – Chapter 4, part 4.2, Division 6

13 Administration

Schools must maintain a paper file or electronic record of all costs associated with excursions, along with copies of insurance papers where required. Retain records in accordance with the department's records management program.

Excursion costs should be managed to minimise the financial burden imposed on students and their families. Section 5.3.3 of the Finance in Schools Handbook (FISH) provides further guidance.

13.1 Accounting for excursion funds

The accounting requirements for excursions over one day are outlined in FISH. For information on calculating excursion and casual relief costs refer to FISH section 6.5.3 Estimating anticipated expenditure. For information on GST, schools should refer to FISH section 5.3.3.3 Managing GST on excursions.

The money parents pay for excursions does not belong to the school and can only be used on or for the excursion (including miscellaneous funds).

Any money paid by parents that remains unexpended after the excursion must be refunded on a pro rata basis in accordance with FISH section 7.16.1 Refunds of excursion collections.

If the excursion was paid for by the fundraising, unexpected funds remain with the school as per FISH section 5.9.

13.2 Benefits, subsidies and gratuities

The principal must be satisfied that the teachers or executive staff as organisers of the excursion do not receive benefits in excess of what would be considered reasonable. This judgement is made by

the principal, who may consult with members of the school community to determine whether any benefits are reasonable. Any benefits, subsidies and gratuities need to comply with the [Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality procedures \(PDF 342 KB\)](#).

In some circumstances, it may be appropriate for students attending an excursion to bear the reasonable travel, accommodation and admission costs of employees and volunteers. There should be a clear benefit for the excursion such as allowing a supervising teacher to attend. The subsidy may be in the form of direct subsidisation by students attending or in kind by the travel provider. The subsidy must not be used to cover salary costs for the excursion. The teacher in charge must declare the market value of the subsidy to the principal and the principal must approve the subsidy.

Excursion organisers who have an actual or potential conflict of interests (pecuniary or non-pecuniary) must disclose that interest to their supervisor, who will determine what action will follow. See the department's [Code of Conduct policy](#).

Excursions should not enable organisers to gain extra customer loyalty scheme points, rewards or commissions. Schools must disclose all sources of funding, gratuity or subsidy, including free airline tickets, donations, rewards or commissions, in the submission for approval. These must be used for the relevant event and not for personal purposes.

13.3 Insurance arrangements

The department is a member of the NSW Treasury Managed Fund, a self-insurance scheme introduced in 1989 to provide cover for member agencies across workers' compensation, property, motor vehicle and miscellaneous risk claims. Information concerning insurance arrangements is available from the Insurance, Risk and Claims Management unit, Business Services directorate.

This [website](#) provides details of the department's coverage arrangements across 5 insurance lines of business and provides the Certificate of Currency.

The Certificate of Currency gives excursion venues evidence of the department's membership and cover under the NSW Treasury Managed Fund. Where a student is injured on an excursion, [Legal Issues Bulletin 39](#) regarding preparing and using accident reports is to be followed.

The department does not hold personal accident cover for students involved in school activities. For further advice, refer to [Accident insurance for students](#) (staff only).

13.3.1 Insurance cover for staff

Staff on excursions are considered 'on duty' and therefore covered by the following departmental insurance provisions:

- Workers' compensation insurance – for injury while on the excursion. Staff on overseas excursions are covered by a policy with benefits equivalent to that provided by the workers' compensation insurance. The Health and Safety directorate manages this cover
- Miscellaneous insurance policy – the department's insurance arrangements also extend to staff essential personal belongings and baggage. Coverage limits apply. The Insurance, Risk and Claims Management team manages this cover.

Staff will still require travel insurance on overseas excursions.

All lodged claims are assessed on their merit in accordance with departmental policy and Treasury Managed Fund coverage guidelines. Final determination of cover is made by the Fund Manager.

13.3.2 Ambulance Group Cover Scheme – Schools

Students enrolled in NSW government schools may be covered under the NSW Ambulance School and Group Cover Scheme, in accordance with the policy established by the Ambulance Service of NSW.

Excursion organisers should check the [Ambulance cover FAQs](#) on the Health and Safety directorate website or by calling 1800 811 523.

Students without cover will be liable for the cost of emergency ambulance services if they are injured while on excursions.

13.3.3 Travel insurance – Students, parents and volunteers

Travel insurance is required for students travelling overseas. See [Overseas travel COVID-19 factsheet \(PDF 151 KB\)](#) for further information about travel insurance and COVID-19. Organisers will determine whether to obtain insurance as a group or as individuals. Where excursions within NSW, interstate or overseas involve air travel, parents are primarily responsible for arranging travel insurance for their child.

Excursion organisers should consider obtaining a group insurance policy for overseas travel, covering all attendees and all activities. This will assist in managing student information and may decrease costs for parents. The insurance policy should include appropriate cover for medical costs and personal property loss and clearly indicate whether coverage has been provided for any pre-existing medical condition/s. Proof of the insurance policy must be provided to the principal before the excursion begins.

When travel does not involve air travel, insurance is optional but strongly encouraged. The same applies to volunteers and parents who accompany staff and students on excursion. Parents are to make independent enquiries to their insurer of choice. The department cannot provide advice in relation to commercially arranged or commercially available insurance products to members of the community.

Where travel involves the use of a private motor vehicle for transporting students for departmental activities, refer to [Legal Issues Bulletin number 8](#) and [Legal Issues Bulletin number 24](#).

Claims for damage to private motor vehicles are the approving school's responsibility and cannot be lodged under the department's insurance arrangements with the NSW Treasury Managed Fund.

13.3.4 Personal property insurance – students, parents and volunteers

The department will not accept liability for the loss of, or damage to, any personal property taken on excursions or for personal items purchased while on excursions.

Where students, parents or volunteers take such items, they are to understand they do so at their own risk. For items of significant value, it is recommended they hold privately arranged insurance to cover any loss and/or damage.

Individuals should check with their own insurer for any specific exclusions or limitations of their cover.

13.4 Reporting incidents

Staff are required to report incidents that occur while on excursion. This may include unplanned events that result in an injury to any person or have the potential to significantly affect the health,

safety and wellbeing of students, staff and others. The Incident Notification and Response procedures contain a list of incident types that staff must report.

Before the excursion, principals should ensure that staff leading the excursion are familiar with the department's [Incident Notification and Response policy and procedures](#) and incident notification information from the [Health and Safety directorate \(staff only\)](#).

13.5 Excursion records

The principal must ensure a record of each excursion, including any overseas excursion and a register of approved overseas excursions, is maintained in accordance with local school record keeping practices. The records must include:

- a copy of the principal-endorsed risk management plan
- copy of information given to parents
- approval letters
- completed consent forms
- details of costs, supervision, travel and administration
- records of incidents and accident reports.

13.6 Records management

General records for excursions are retained for a minimum of 5 years after the excursion is completed and then destroyed. For further information see the Information management for schools website [Retentions and disposal section](#) and the [Functional Retention and Disposal Authority: FA387 \(PDF 218 KB\)](#).

13.6.1 Student health records

Retain any individual student health records for 25 years, then destroy.

This includes the administration of medication and any record of incidents, accidents or first aid during the excursion.

13.6.2 Records of injuries

Retain accident reports for 25 years then destroy.

This includes injury to a student or third party and/or property damage while on excursion. Retain copies of records relating to the particular student as well as any general information about the excursion.

13.6.3 Child safety and wellbeing records

Retain reports concerning the safety, welfare or wellbeing of a child or young person while on excursion for 25 years, then destroy.

Retain records relating to allegations of child abuse, including copies forwarded to other agencies, for 99 years, then destroy.

When principals make contact with the [Child Wellbeing Unit \(staff only\)](#) or Community Services Helpline about the safety, welfare or wellbeing of a child or young person during the course of an excursion, a record must be retained and kept confidential.

Refer to the [Child Protection Policy Guidelines: Responding to and reporting students at risk of harm](#).

14 Activities with specific risks

Table 2 Managing specific risks

Activity	Issue	Management
All outdoor activities	Sun Safety	Students and staff should wear clothing such as broad brimmed hats and longer sleeve lengths and apply at least a 30+ sunscreen. Students should also be encouraged to carry water in an unbreakable container.
Sport and physical activities	Relevant safety	Consult the Sport safety guidelines . Obtain advice related to specific activities by selecting a relevant activity on the Requirements for all sport and physical activity (PDF 466 KB) in schools. Where an excursion involves a sports activity that is not listed in the Sport safety guidelines or included in the banned activities list (PDF 466 KB) , principals should refer to the Principal Endorsed Activities Procedures (staff only) for further guidance.
Water activities	Requirement for CPR	At least one supervising teacher must have current CPR and anaphylaxis training.
Water activities	General safety	Supervision ratios and instructor qualification vary depending on the aquatic environment. Principals must ensure they review the School swimming and water safety website within the specific sport information section in the Sport safety guidelines. Note – specific guidelines exist for Unstructured Aquatic Activities and must be followed. These can be found in the Swimming and Water Safety guidelines .
Water activities	Students' swimming ability	Obtain parental consent by requesting an Aquatic activity consent form in the Swimming and Water Safety guidelines before students participate in swimming or water activities.
Water activities	Situational and water awareness	Complete inductions for both staff (testing and surveillance techniques) and students (elements of the water challenge).
Water activities	Ratio	The overall ratio of teacher supervisors to students in the water must be no more than 20 students to one supervising teacher. Depending on the student cohort, health issues, activities and location, there may need to be fewer students per teacher. However, aquatic activities have specific teacher/instructor to student ratios. Where relevant, obtain this information by selecting an activity from the sport safety guidelines page .
Water activities	Flotation devices	Personal flotation devices that comply with Standards Australia specifications must be worn for relevant activities. See Swimming and Water Safety Guidelines .
Food consumption	Food purchased or provided at excursion venue	At least one supervising teacher must have current CPR and anaphylaxis training. Confirm appropriate food with parents/carers for student with allergies. Liaise with venue managers about providing appropriate food for students with food allergies in liaison with parents/carers. For further information, refer to the Health and Safety website (staff only) or contact the local WHS advisor (staff only) .

Activity	Issue	Management
Animal contact	Treatment of animals	The use of animals for educational purposes must be in accordance with the Animal Welfare – Schools policy. The principal must refer to the Animals in schools website when considering approval.
Animal contact	Contact with animals and exposure to potential health risks	Manage contact with animals to minimise exposure to potential health risks. Specific risk management guidance material in relation to managing exposure to animals in the workplace and on excursions is available from the Health and Safety website (staff only) . Follow infection control and hygiene procedures. To protect animals and minimise exposure to infectious conditions, students are expected to behave in accordance with the Animal Welfare– Schools policy and requirements of the specific venue.
Animal contact	Expected standards of behaviour towards animals	Students should handle animals respectfully and empathetically. Students should be advised of incident procedures if an animal behaves in an unexpected way.
Science and Industry	Chemical, laboratory or industry hazards. For more information visit Safework Australia website .	Science activities may include field work or industry visits, where chemical safety procedures (staff only) must be followed. A member of staff who has current e-Emergency Care training (staff only) must accompany the students. The excursion organiser must identify industry or site specific and personal protective equipment requirements. Staff and students must wear appropriate clothing, footwear and specialist safety equipment to ensure adherence to industry expectations and requirements.
Films or live performances	Appropriateness of material	Principals must approve the material to be appropriate to the educational context and the age and maturity of the students. Films can only be shown as part of a course of instruction. Staff considering excursions involving: film screenings should comply with the Smartcopying official guide to copyright issues for Australian schools live performances, including public lectures and presentations, should comply with the Controversial Issues in Schools policy .
Films or live performances	Compliance with copyright requirements	Staff need to be familiar with the Smartcopying website as it is the official guide to copyright issues for Australian schools.

15 Definitions

Day/part day excursion – a school or preschool excursion taking place during school hours for a whole or part day, on or external to the school site.

eCPC – the department’s system for verifying Working with Children Check (clearances, checking the department’s Not to Be Employed database and checking for barred or disqualified persons).

Exceptional circumstances – limited to circumstances that are unusual, not typical, or unable to be foreseen or planned for in advance.

External providers – any person or organisation providing venue, activities, transport, presentations or materials for excursions and incursions.

Incursion – a school or preschool activity that occurs on a school site, conducted by community members, organisations or other schools. This may also include structured learning activity taking place via online communication between physical locations.

Overnight excursion – a school excursion taking place in a location in Australia on or external to the school site and which includes overnight accommodation the school organises.

Overseas excursion – a school excursion taking place in a country outside Australia and which includes overnight accommodation the school organises.

Parent – includes a guardian or other person having the custody or care of a child.

Preschool excursion – an educational or recreational activity provided or controlled by a departmental preschool, conducted on or external to the preschool site.

Preschool children – children enrolled in a government preschool.

Privately organised tours/private tours – tours that occur outside of school hours, are organised and conducted by members of the community. These tours may have department staff attending while on leave.

Relevant law – includes applicable legislation and legal principles that relate to the information but is not exhaustive.

School excursion – a structured learning activity provided or controlled by a departmental school, conducted on or external to the school site that may also include online communication between physical locations.

Water-based activities – any activity where it was planned to, or have a foreseeable risk of, entering water. Conveyance by water transport such as ferries is not considered a water activity.

Appendix 1 – Application for domestic excursion

Use this form to outline the details of a domestic excursion before commencing any planning. Once approved, proceed with planning the excursion using the [Domestic excursion checklist](#).

Details of excursion	
School name	
Class(es)/student group	
Organising teacher/s	
Staff attending	
Excursion destination	
Excursion purpose	
From (day and date)	
To (day and date)	
Number of school days	
Number of non-school days	
Transport	
Estimated cost per student	
Plan for non-participating students	

Name of organising teacher: _____

Signature of organising teacher: _____

Date: _____

Approved by

Name of principal: _____

Signature of principal: _____

Date: _____

Once approved, retain a copy of this application and attach it to the completed excursion checklist.

Appendix 2 – Domestic excursion checklist

Use this checklist during planning to ensure all requirements are addressed and the required information is collected and retained. When completed, the organising teacher and principal need to sign the checklist before the excursion proceeds.

The school will keep this checklist and all attachments in accordance with records requirements in section [13.6](#).

If the excursion involves students from other schools, each principal should provide their approval.

Requirements	Mark as completed	Documents attached (if applicable)
Outline the educational purpose of the proposed excursion		
Detailed itinerary for the excursion		
Excursion consent forms		
Medical information forms		
Evidence that parents have been informed in writing of all details		
Risk assessment completed		
Risk assessment attached		
Details of any unsupervised activities		
List of teachers and staff attending		
Details of attending teachers with CPR and e-emergency care training		
Details of supervision and risk reduction strategies provided to [relevant] parents or carers		
List of parents, carers or volunteers attending. Parents and carers are required to complete a Declaration for child-related workers Volunteers must provide their Working with Children Check (WWCC) clearance Parents volunteering for an overnight excursion must provide their WWCC clearance and complete a Declaration for child-related workers		
Child protection issues have been addressed		
Personalised learning and support needs of students with disability have been addressed.		

Costs	Mark as completed	Documents attached (if applicable)
The cost per student for the excursion		
Detailed breakdown of costs		
Details of any gratuities, donations or subsidies, including free airline tickets received and how they have been applied		
Details of any school fundraising support for the students		
Details of strategies in place to support students who cannot afford the excursion		
Details of the alternate activities for non-attendees		

Other	Mark as completed	Documents attached (if applicable)
The principal and excursion coordinator have checked details against the current <u>Excursions policy</u>		
A list of students including gender (if relevant) and school year attached		
Details of accommodation, including names, addresses and phone numbers		
Registration number for travel companies registered in Australia		
Travel insurance arranged by participants		
Location of excursion documents maintained at the school		
Copy of signed <u>Application for domestic excursion</u>		

Name of organising teacher: _____

Signature of organising teacher: _____

Date: _____

Approved by

Name of principal: _____

Signature of principal: _____

Date: _____

Appendix 3 – Parent information and consent form for domestic excursions

Instructions for organiser: Create an information and consent form on school letterhead using the text below. Insert appropriate details where indicated.

Dear parent/carer

The <insert class> class will be going on an excursion to <excursion venue> on <start date> to <end date>.

This excursion has been planned to <insert objectives of excursion>.

The excursion will cost \$<amount>, which will cover <cost details>.

The class will depart from <departure point> at <departure time> and return to <dismissal point> at <dismissal time>.

Travel will be by <add travel arrangements>.

The following staff members will supervise the students:

<staff names>

[If applicable] The staff member with CPR training is <staff name>.

Students will need the following items on this excursion: [insert as appropriate]

- swimsuit, towel and plastic bag
- waterproof clothing, for example raincoat, umbrella
- change of clothing
- warm clothing
- sunhat and sunscreen
- snacks, lunch and drink to be brought from home
- lunch can be bought during the excursion
- cost of lunch is covered in the excursion
- full school uniform
- other:

<Insert as appropriate>

<Preschool advice>

The number of preschool children attending will be <insert number>.

The number of teachers and responsible adults will be <insert number>.

The adult to child ratio will be <insert ratio – adults: children>.

<Insert as appropriate>

<Overnight excursion advice>

Accommodation will be at <insert booked accommodation>.

Travel will be by <insert mode of travel>.

The group will be supervised by <insert name of supervising teacher/s>.

<insert additional information – consider advice on the number of students and teachers, protective clothing or equipment>

<Swimming or water activities advice – for excursions involving swimming or activities actively undertaken in or on water as listed on the [Sport safety guidelines](#) including canoeing and kayaking>.

The excursion will involve the following swimming or water activities <insert description of planned swimming or water activities>.

These activities will take place at <insert venue/s>. [Consider using a table if the activities will be held in different venues.]

The school will provide the following flotation devices to students who may require assistance in the water: [describe the device/s and how they would be used].

Please complete the attached swimming [or water activities] form.

<Travel insurance advice>

The department recommends that parents or caregivers arrange travel insurance for students for intrastate or interstate excursions that require travel by air.

Privacy advice

The NSW Department of Education is collecting the information requested on this form. The information is being obtained for the purpose of ascertaining relevant medical information, requirements and other health care related needs about your child who is currently enrolled at the school and who may participate in school excursions, sporting activities or other educational or school activities conducted by or in conjunction with <school name>.

The school will use this information to plan, support students, and minimise risks when conducting the school excursions or other related school activities.

Other persons or agencies that may be provided with this information include, but are not limited to, volunteers and members of external organisations who join with the school or are otherwise involved in planning or delivering the excursion, sporting or other school activity; and persons who may be called on to provide health care treatment or other assistance during or as a consequence of such excursions or activities.

Provision of this information is voluntary, however, if you do not provide all or any of the information requested, your child cannot participate in the excursion. In such circumstances, the school will make available a sound alternative educational experience.

Provision of this information will significantly assist the school in planning a safer educational activity. It will be stored securely. If you have any concerns about provision of this information, please contact the school principal to discuss further.

You may correct any personal information provided at any time by contacting the school office on <phone number>.

Name and signature of excursion coordinator: _____

Name and signature of principal: _____

Date: _____

Please complete the permission slip below, detach and return to <name> by <deadline>.

I consent to <student full name> participating in an excursion to <excursion venue> on <excursion date>.

My child has the following additional needs (please provide full details and include any relevant medical details): _____

I understand that my child will receive medical treatment in the case of an emergency. I understand that when a medical practitioner has prescribed medication (including emergency medication) that will need to be administered during the excursion, parents are responsible for:

- bringing this need to the attention of the school
- ensuring that the information is updated if it changes
- supplying the medication and any 'consumables' necessary for its administration in a timely way
- any medication should be well within its expiry date and correctly labelled
- collaborating with the school in working out arrangements for the supply and administration of the prescribed medication for the duration of the excursion
- for some excursions, the school will ask parents to supply the medication in a different way to what has already been agreed to by school. For example, parents may be asked to supply an additional adrenaline injector.

<Insert as appropriate>

<Overnight excursions – consent>

I understand that my son/daughter will stay overnight at <insert booked accommodation>.

<Travel insurance – consent>

I have arranged travel insurance with _____.

A copy of that policy is attached.

<Swimming or water activities – response>

I understand swimming or water activities have been planned. Attached is the completed Swimming advice [or Water activities advice] for my child.

Parent full name: _____

Parent signature: _____

Date: _____

Translated version

Parent/carer information form

Medical information form

Water activities advice form

Swimming activities advice form

Parent/carer consent form

Appendix 4 – Swimming advice for domestic excursions

SWIMMING ADVICE FORM

For excursions involving swimming or activities actively undertaken in or on water as listed on the [Sport safety guidelines](#) website, including canoeing and kayaking.

Excursion to <insert destination>

From: / / To: / /

Student name:	Parent/Carer name:
---------------	--------------------

This excursion will involve the following swimming activities: <List swimming activities to be undertaken by students during the excursion>

Activity	Date	Place

Students may choose not to swim; however, it is important for organisers to know a student's swimming ability in case of emergencies or accidents.

Declarations by parent/carers

1. In relation to the proposed swimming activities, I advise that my child is a:

(Tick one box and leave all others blank)

- Non swimmer** – my child is unable to swim.
- Weak swimmer** – my child is not a confident swimmer or is not comfortable in the water.
- Average swimmer** – my child is a reasonable swimmer but is not very strong or confident in deep or fast water.
- Strong swimmer** – my child is a strong swimmer and is very confident in deep or fast water.

2. In relation to the proposed swimming activities, I advise that:

(For each line, tick one box and leave the other blank)

- a. My child can tread water YES NO
- b. My child can float on water YES NO

I understand students may have to undertake a swimming proficiency test.

3. I have completed the above information regarding swimming activities and

(Tick one box and leave the other blank)

- I consent to my child participating in the swimming activities.
- I **do not** consent to my child participating in the swimming activities.

Parent/carers' name: _____

Parent/carers' signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix 5 – Water activities advice for domestic excursions

WATER ACTIVITY ADVICE FORM

For activities that may take place on water and have a low risk of students entering water. This may include activities such as small ferry travel or jet boat tours. It does not include large ferries run by Transport NSW, which are addressed as ordinary travel in the Risk Management Plan.

Excursion to <insert destination>

From: / / To: / /

Student name:	Parent/Carer name:
---------------	--------------------

This excursion will involve the following activities: <List the planned water activities to be undertaken by students during the overseas excursion>

Activity	Date	Place

This excursion involves NO SWIMMING, however as a precautionary measure, it is a departmental requirement that you indicate how well your child can swim (if they accidentally fall into the water).

Declarations by parent/carer

4. In relation to the proposed water activities, I advise that my child is a:

(Tick one and leave all others blank)

- Non swimmer** – my child is unable to swim.
- Weak swimmer** – my child is not a confident swimmer or is not comfortable in the water.
- Average swimmer** – my child is a reasonable swimmer but is not very strong or confident in deep or fast water.
- Strong swimmer** – my child is a strong swimmer and is very confident in deep or fast water.

5. In relation to the proposed water activities, I advise that:

(For each line, tick one and leave the other blank)

- a. My child can tread water YES NO
- b. My child can float on water YES NO

6. I have completed the above information regarding water activities and

(Tick one and leave the other blank)

- I consent to my child participating in the water activities.
- I **do not** consent to my child participating in the water activities.

Parent/carer's name: _____

Parent/carer's signature: _____ Date: _____