



KATHERINE HIGH SCHOOL

EXCURSIONS POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Rationale

An excursion is a movement of students for educational purposes under the direction of a teacher that takes place outside the areas used for the day-to-day conduct of the program of a school. An excursion/s may be required to meet the learning outcomes of a course or to enhance them or an excursion may be conducted in order to allow students to participate in extra curricula activities.

Policy Statement

School and departmental policies, procedures and responsibilities encompass all excursions conducted by schools; including excursions conducted by associated entities such as ASSPA committees but not School Sport NT (SSNT) sporting excursions which are determined by the SSNT as the agent of DEET. [For further information refer to SSNT policies and procedures which are reviewed and updated at the annual conference in November each year.]

Principals cannot waive their obligation of duty of care. In the event that an excursion takes place that has not been appropriately planned, documented and carried out, the principal is obviously at risk. It is a prime responsibility of principals to ensure that excursions are in accordance with departmental policy and that reasonable care is taken to ensure the safety of students and staff.

An educational excursion must have clear educational outcomes that take into account the learning programs of the students and the educational program of the school, the needs of the students and the resources of the school. Students should be notified when enrolling in a course of study of those excursions that are an integral part of the course. Alternative educational activities should be available to students unable to participate in any excursion.

All relevant documentation must be submitted and approved prior to any excursion taking place. Documentation includes all relevant DEET forms, the Katherine High School *Excursion Checklist* and all information outlined in that checklist. No excursion may be undertaken which has not had prior approval in accordance with these requirements.

All of the relevant documentation for an excursion must be submitted for approval to the Assistant Principal Student and Staff Welfare **at least 2 weeks** before the due date of the excursion. This include a completed Katherine High School *Excursion Checklist* form [copy attached].

- **Excursions are classified as follows:**

Category A

Category A excursions comprise those which involve movement generally on foot in the immediate vicinity of the school. Examples are environmental studies, visits to a local conservation reserve, or social education visits to the local shops, and sport lessons on a nearby oval. The teacher conducting the excursion is the Requesting Officer and the Principal the Approving Officer.

Category B

Category B excursions are those other excursions within the community which take students further afield, generally requiring transport but not involving absence overnight. Parents must be informed of all details of the excursion and parental approval is required (Form NTE 250) The teacher conducting the excursion is the Requesting Officer and the Principal the Approving Officer.

Category C

Category C comprises excursions which involve travel within the Northern Territory beyond the community and/or which involve overnight accommodation. Parents must be informed of all details of the excursion and parental approval is required (Form NTE 250). A Movement Requisition (Form NTE 122) is required for each member of staff on duty away from their normal place of duty. The teacher conducting the excursion is the Requesting Officer and the Principal is the Approving Officer. On approval, Principals are to forward a copy of the excursion itinerary to their General Manager Schools.

Category D

Category D comprises excursions interstate. Such excursions require approval from the Chief Executive Officer. Excursion applications by the Principal as Requesting Officer are to be made through the appropriate General Manager Schools who is the Recommending Officer. Parents must be informed of all details of the excursion and parental approval is required (Form NTE 250).

All completed documentation is to reach the appropriate General Manager Schools at least six weeks prior to the proposed excursion date.

Note: Approval in principle from the appropriate General Manager Schools is required for interstate excursions.

Approval in principle is to be sought very early in the planning process and prior to submitting completed excursion documentation. The approval request would normally take the form of a concise memo from the Principal outlining:

- dates of excursion
- nature of excursion
- educational benefit
- need for it to be undertaken during school time
- effect on school program
- support for excursion from school council (school community).

Category E

Category E comprises excursions overseas and require ministerial approval. Excursion applications by the Principal as Requesting Officer are to be made through the appropriate General Manager Schools who is the Recommending Officer, and through the Chief Executive Officer. Parents must be informed of all details of the excursion and parental approval is required (Form NTE 250).

Note: Approval in principle from the appropriate General Manager Schools is required for overseas excursions.

Approval in principle is to be sought very early in the planning process and prior to submitting completed excursion documentation.

The approval request would normally take the form of a concise memo from the Principal outlining:

- dates of excursion
- nature of excursion
- educational benefit
- need for it to be undertaken during school time
- effect on school program
- support for excursion from school council (school community).

All overseas excursions are to involve International Services Branch at the planning stage, to help identify potential problems and arrange Approval in Principle.

Excursion forms and categories

- NTE 122 – Movement Requisition for Official Travel
- NTE 210 – Application for Extended Excursion
- NTE 250 – Permission for Child to Attend Intraterritory/Interstate Education Activity
- NTE 563 – Request for Approval – Interstate or Overseas Travel

Category D and E documentation

Documentation for interstate or overseas excursions includes:

- Application for Extended Excursion (NTE 210)
- Movement Requisition(s) – one for each staff member (NTE 122)
- list of all students involved in the excursion – showing names, gender, date of birth and class/year level
- detailed educational program
- detailed itinerary – including contact telephone numbers
- for international excursions, evidence of suitable medical and evacuation insurance

All completed and signed student consent forms are to be retained at the school until the excursion has been undertaken.

• Accidents

DEET instructions relating to accidents apply to excursions. Refer to Student accident reports SP-01.1.1.

• Alcohol

Staff are not permitted to consume alcohol whilst on duty on an excursion. Staff and others who act as a driver of a bus or other vehicle conveying students during an excursion must have a zero blood alcohol level whilst undertaking driving duties.

• Consent forms

Schools are to send home full details of excursions in categories (B) to (E) with a consent form for each excursion or series of excursions of the same kind.

The furnishing of a consent form does not absolve schools and teachers from liability.

In advising parents of excursions, details should include (where appropriate)

- times and dates of departure and return
- destination
- mode of travel and route, including supervision available
- purpose of the excursion and details of activities and level of supervision
- accommodation arrangements

- names of teachers and adults accompanying the group
- name of teacher in charge
- equipment and clothing needed
- details of cost
- special rules applicable to the excursion
- means of contact with party

An appropriate response of the parent or guardian should be on a standard form which clearly indicates that she or he:

- consents to the student taking part in the excursion
- authorises the teacher in charge to make arrangements for the welfare of the student (including medical or surgical treatment) in an emergency
- agrees to meet the costs associated with any emergency arrangements made by the teacher in charge
- agrees to the student being under the teacher's authority for the duration of the excursion, and to the teacher being empowered to return the student home at the expense of the parent or guardian if the teacher considers that circumstances warrant such action
- agrees, where appropriate, to the student travelling by private car, driven by a teacher, parent or another person as the case may be
- provides details of special medical/physical/dietary or other problems

- **Duty of care**

Teachers taking part in excursions have the responsibility to ensure that departmental policy is carried out. In addition, they have the responsibility of exercising proper care and supervision throughout the duration of the excursion. The duty of care of a teacher requires that the teacher shall take all measures as are reasonable in all circumstances to prevent injury to a student. This duty does not extend to the financial insurance of students against injury, but to the taking of reasonable steps to protect the student against risks of injury, which the teacher should reasonably foresee. It is the responsibility of principals to ensure that all teachers are aware of their responsibilities.

- **Insurance**

DEET does not provide any automatic insurance cover for teachers, ancillary staff, parents or students participating in school excursions. If participants are not satisfied with the normal cover provided by transport companies they should make personal arrangements for additional cover. Note – this particularly applies to overseas excursions.

Teachers and ancillary staff are covered by the *Work Health Act – Workers' Compensation* for work-related injuries. Adult volunteers are not covered by workers' compensation though some limited insurance cover may be provided for volunteers through insurance policies held by school councils.

Refer to the *School Management Handbook* for more information.

- **Teacher–student ratio**

A teacher must always be present and in charge of an excursion, however, other responsible adults may also be included in the following ratios.

- For pre and primary school day visits a ratio of 1:15 is satisfactory although a lower ratio is recommended.
- For junior and senior secondary school day visits a ratio of 1:30 is satisfactory although a lower ratio is desirable.

- For overnight and overseas excursions a ratio of 1:15 is recommended. Mixed parties should be supervised by both a male and a female supervisor.
- It is recognised that there may be instances where very small groups of students are given the opportunity to travel interstate to engage in national conventions, competitions and similar activities. On such occasions, providing that supplementary supervision is arranged at the interstate venue and that all duty of care requirements are met, it may be considered satisfactory for one teacher to accompany a mixed party of students or for a teacher to accompany students of the opposite sex whilst travelling.
- Where an activity may be considered more than usually hazardous, these ratios should be varied-see *Outdoor Education Leadership and Safety Guidelines for NT Schools – Books 1, 2 and 3*.

- **Use of private vehicles**

Where private vehicles are used, the teacher in charge of the excursion shall ensure that the vehicle is in current registration, the driver has an appropriate and valid NT driving licence, and that the number of passengers does not exceed the seat belt authorised carrying capacity provision of the vehicle.

Insurance is not usually invalidated where the vehicle is used in the course of duty, but may be if a charge is levied on passengers. Should any doubt exist, the insurer must be consulted.

Parental consent must be obtained, in advance, where it is necessary for students to travel in private cars driven by teachers or parents. It is not advisable to have students travel in vehicles driven by other students, and should the need arise, then the necessary parental consent must be obtained. Where transport is to be provided by students, teachers should carefully monitor the arrangements. This will include the requirements outlined above as well as ensuring that the student's licence is appropriate and the necessary consent is obtained.

This policy was last ratified by School Council in....

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