GOVERNMENT OF
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Department of
Education

Excursions in Public Schools Procedures

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These procedures must be read in conjunction with the Duty of Care for Public School Students Policy.

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These procedures must be read in conjunction with the Duty of Care for Public School Students Policy.

1. Policy supported

Duty of Care for Public School Students Policy

2. Scope

These procedures apply to all principals and Department of Education employees in public schools.

3. Procedures

3.1 All excursions

Principals must:

- authorise a Department employee or a representative of an Approved Provider to be the Excursion Leader for any excursion undertaken by the school;
- confirm that a proposed excursion has an educational purpose;
- not endorse an excursion where activities or locations pose a safety risk;
- in the event of cancellation of an excursion, advise the school community to what purpose monies raised through fundraising will be redirected;
- establish processes for the School Council or Board to approve the costs of all optional activities (including school camps and excursions); and
- comply with the Department's insurance requirements.

Guidance

From the perspective of cultural understanding and respect, when planning an excursion, consider the following:

- whether or not it is appropriate to acknowledge the traditional lands being visited; and

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- is the site culturally significant to Aboriginal people, and does this mean Aboriginal students may not be able to visit dependent on gender or if they have gone through lore.

Accounting guidelines to assist with costing camps and excursions are available for schools on the Finance for Schools (staff only) website. If an excursion is cancelled, any fees paid should be refunded to families. However, if fundraising has occurred and it is not possible to identify individual contributions, then the funds may be used at the discretion of the Principal, with communication to the school community to that effect.

Locations of potential environmental or safety risk include Wittenoom Township or locations near the Wittenoom mining area or overseas locations with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) warning: Do Not Travel. All other DFAT warnings should form part of the risk assessment process to be taken into consideration prior to endorsing a proposal.

Principals must confirm that the authorised Department excursion leader or representative of an Approved Provider has complied the following:

- prepared and submitted the required proposal and approval forms to the principal in accordance with one of the following documents:
  - Local Area Excursions;
  - Local Area Excursions with Overnight Stay including Camps;
  - Interstate Excursions; or
  - International Excursions.
- take all documentation attached to the Proposal for Excursion on the excursion;
- confirm that all external providers have minimum levels of insurance of $20 million public liability insurance and if appropriate, $5 million professional liability insurance; and
- confirm that the following information is current, updated in school records and accessible to staff during the excursion:
  - approvals;
  - permissions/consents; and
  - medical and emergency information.

Guidance

Refer to Appendix A: Decision making flowchart: Planning activities in public schools when planning an activity.

All on-school site and off-school site recreation and outdoor education activities must meet the requirements outlined in the Recreation and Outdoor Education Activities for Public Schools procedures and

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any of the requirements contained in the relevant activity specific documents within the procedures.

Any off-school site recreation and outdoor education activity will require approval in accordance with the Excursions in Public Schools Procedures.

Excursions are affected by a number of other mandated policies and legislative requirements and the excursion documents support employees in addressing all requirements.

Records may be carried by excursion supervisors on electronic devices, but should not rely on internet access to be accessible.

Principals must inform Department employees or a representative of an Approved Provider that they must not sign waivers, indemnities, disclaimers or other documents which absolve an excursion venue or other external provider from liability for their own negligent acts or omissions; or require volunteers, parents or students over the age of 18 years to sign such documents.

Guidance

Excursion Leaders and staff should be aware that disclaimers or waivers may be obscured within certain terms and conditions of sale. Many excursion venues are prepared to give up or amend their waivers to enable schools to access their activity and the excursion leader should suggest this option to the provider.

3.2 Local area excursions

Principals must only approve a Proposal for Local Area Excursion that has been prepared in accordance with the document Local Area Excursions.

Guidance

The principal is the Excursion Approval Authority for all local area excursions.

Local Area Excursions are those that occur within relatively close proximity to the school, i.e. held within the same town/city/locale or district. Examples of local excursions include, but are not limited to: attending the local town oval, zoo, cultural precinct, theatres or shopping centres. These excursions do not require extensive travel or overnight accommodation.

Excursions by remote schools across the Northern Territory or South Australian borders are considered:

- Local Area Excursions if they do not involve an overnight stay; or

- Local Area Excursions with Overnight Stay Including Camps.

Recurring excursions are regularly timetabled classes that occur offsite, and may be approved for the same group of students, through one Proposal for Local Area Excursion.

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3.3 Local area excursions with overnight stay including camps

Principals must only approve a Proposal for Local Area Excursion with Overnight Stay Including Camps, that has been prepared in accordance with the document Local Area Excursion with Overnight Stay Including Camps.

Guidance

The principal is the Excursion Approval Authority for all local area excursions with overnight stays including camps.

Local Area Excursions with Overnight Stay Including Camps are those that occur within Western Australia, requiring accommodation for any period of time. These include, but are not limited to, extended educational trips, sporting tours and camps. Travel to and from Christmas and Cocos Islands is considered to be travel within Western Australia.

3.4 Interstate excursions

Principals must:

- only approve a Proposal for Interstate Excursion that has been prepared in accordance with the document Interstate Excursions; and
- complete and endorse an Approval of Interstate Excursion.

Guidance

The principal is the Excursion Approval Authority for interstate excursions.

3.5 International excursions

Principals must:

- confirm that the international excursion activities cannot be undertaken in Australia;
- only approve an International Excursion: Application for Approval and Plan that has been prepared in accordance with the document International Excursions;
- prior to the school advising students or parents and any exchange of money, **at least ten months prior** to the date of the planned excursion, the International Excursion: Application for Approval form must be forwarded by the principal via the Director of Education, who will forward it to the Deputy Director General, Schools in order to reach

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the Minister for Education at least nine months prior to the proposed departure date. Any excursion that requires a longer lead time should be submitted for approval by the Minister earlier while the planning is conceptual; and

- at least four months prior to the proposed departure date, submit the International Excursion: Plan with approved International Excursion: Application for Approval to their Director of Education, to obtain agreement that arrangements are compliant.

Guidance

The Minister for Education is the Excursion Approval Authority for all international excursions.

4. Definitions

Approved Provider

An Approved Provider is an entity listed on the current Approved Provider Register for public school excursions (excluding interstate and international excursions).

Educational purpose

An outcome linked to students' educational programs, Western Australian Curriculum outcomes and/or the total educational program of the school.

Excursion

Any student-learning activity conducted off the site of the school, at which the student is enrolled, that:

- has an educational purpose;
- is organised or managed by a member of staff employed by the Department of Education or a representative of an Approved Provider;
- involves any associated costs being paid directly to the school, not to a third party;
- is insured by the Department of Education; and
- has gained the appropriate approval(s).

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Excursion leader

A member of staff employed by the Department of Education or a representative of an Approved Provider authorised by the principal to be in charge of an excursion

External Provider

An External Provider is a business or individual paid by the school to provide a venue, service and/or expertise appropriate to a particular school activity; or a staff member of a TAFE college or a University who delivers an educational program, or part thereof, to students.

5. Related documents

Relevant legislation or authority

Building Regulations 2012

Occupational Safety and Health Act 1984

Occupational Safety and Health Regulations 1996

School Education Act 1999

School Education Regulations 2000

Working with Children (Criminal Record Checking) Act 2004

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Related Department policies

Alcohol and Other Drugs in the Workplace

Child Protection in Department of Education Sites

Official Travel

Records Management

Risk and Business Continuity Management

Student Health Care in Public Schools

Student Behaviour in Public Schools

Working with Children Checks in Public Schools

Work Health and Safety

Other documents

Financial Management in Schools Finance and Accounting (staff only)

Guidelines for First Aid in Department Workplaces (staff only)

Insurance and Claims Management Guide (staff only)

Records Management for Schools (staff only)

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6. Contact information

Policy manager:

Service Director, Secondary, District High Schools and Post School Pathways

Policy contact officer:

Please contact your local Regional Office if you have any enquiries about Excursions. Should your Regional Office not be able to answer your question, they will contact the policy owner at Statewide Services Centre on 94026100 or by email on secondarydhs.enquiries@education.wa.edu.au and provide clarification back to the school.

7. History of changes

Effective date	4 February 2014
Last update date **Procedure version no.**	2.0
Notes	Major review undertaken and policy split into policy and procedures. Endorsed by Corporate Executive 2 December 2013.

Effective date	4 February 2014
Last update date	27 February 2014
Procedure version no.	2.1
Notes	Minor changes to Appendices and update to contact details. D14/0061889

Effective date	4 February 2014
Last update date	9 April 2014
Procedure version no.	2.2

All policy and procedural statements contained within this document are lawful orders for the purposes of section 80(a) of the Public Sector Management Act 1994 (WA) and are therefore to be observed by all Department of Education employees.

Notes	Minor changes to Appendix B - point 32, Appendix C – documents attached and Appendix D – regarding additional approval for interstate excursions. D14/0158355
Effective date	4 February 2014
Last update date	12 August 2014
Procedure version no.	2.3
Notes	Minor changes to Appendices A and E D14/0355782.
Effective date	4 February 2014
Last update date	28 August 2014
Procedure version no.	2.4
Notes	Minor changes to Appendices B to F regarding insurance provisions D14/0416237
Effective date	4 February 2014
Last update date	18 November 2014
Procedure version no.	2.5
Notes	Update to contact details and link D14/0510227
Effective date	4 February 2014
Last update date	26 May 2015
Procedure version no.	2.6
Notes	Changes regarding public liability and professional indemnity insurance D15/0195602.
Effective date	4 February 2014
Last update date	4 February 2016
Procedure version no.	2.7

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Notes	Minor change to Appendix B – removal of School Excursions website D16/0123310.
Effective date	4 February 2014
Last update date	5 August 2016
Procedure version no.	2.8
Notes	Updated contact information D16/0508024.
Effective date	4 February 2014
Last update date	25 August 2017
Procedure version no.	2.9
Notes	Minor change to Appendix D & E D17/0360809
Effective date	4 February 2014
Last update date	21 March 2018
Procedure version no.	2.10
Notes	Updated contact information D18/0119506
Effective date	4 February 2014
Last update date	31 August 2018
Procedure version no.	2.11
Notes	Minor changes to include reference to Public Schools D18/0151652.
Effective date	28 April 2020
Last update date	
Procedure version no.	3.0
Notes	Major review undertaken. Endorsed by the Director General on 16 January 2020 D20/0043706.

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Effective date	16 February 2021
Last update date **Procedure version no.**	4.0
Notes	Major changes endorsed by Director General 24 November 2020 D20/0615218 and re-alignment of Excursions in Public School Procedures under Duty of Care for Public Schools Policy endorsed by Director General on 11 February 2021 D21/0074488.

Effective date	16 February 2021
Last update date	31 March 2021
Procedure version no.	4.1
Notes	Minor change to include definition of Excursion. D21/0172483

Effective date	16 February 2021
Last update date	24 October 2022
Procedure version no.	4.2
Notes	Minor change to update contact detail. D22/0780742

Effective date	16 February 2021
Last update date	19 June 2023
Procedure version no.	4.3
Notes	Minor changes to links, to include a flowchart as an appendix, strengthen guidance and add definition (D23/1232225 and D23/1232274).

Effective date	16 February 2021
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Procedure version no.	4.4

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Notes	Minor change to link for Recreation and Outdoor Activities for Public Schools procedures on page 4. (D26/0823401)

8. Appendices

Appendix A: Decision making flowchart - Planning activities in public schools (PDF file - 130kB)

9. More information

Supporting content

Policy

Duty of Care for Public School Students Policy

Guideline

Local Area Excursions with Overnight Stay (Including Camps)
Local Area Excursions
International Excursions
Excursions in Public Schools Policy Approved Providers Register
Interstate Excursions

Procedure

Recreation and Outdoor Education Activities for Public Schools procedures

Procedure review date

16 February 2024

Procedure last updated

20 October 2026

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