



EXCURSION & INCURSION POLICY

(Safety of Children Working with External Providers)

General Statement

- Excursions reinforce, complement and extend learning opportunities beyond the classroom. These experiences develop an understanding that learning is not limited to school, and that valuable and powerful learning takes place in the real world.
- They provide first-hand experience of topics included in the school curriculum.
- This policy is designed to ensure:
 - that parents/carers and students are fully informed about the educational objectives of the excursion
 - that students are fully prepared for the experience
 - that staff understand and comply with all DET requirements

It is intended for School Leadership, the Teacher-in-Charge of the activity, all staff involved in excursions, and School Council.

Rationale

- An excursion is defined as any activity, which occurs on a single day, when children leave the school grounds for the purpose of engaging in educational activities.
- An incursion is an activity that involves school visitors who provide a performance or service to the children for a fee or voluntarily.
- Excursions and incursions are linked to curriculum programs and individual learning goals as articulated in children's Individual Learning Plans.
- Emergency management planning in schools extends to and incorporates school excursions.
- When undertaking excursion planning, Principals, teachers, School Councilors and others involved in school excursions (including camps and adventure activities), must anticipate the possibility of litigation following an incident or injury. They must be prepared for a detailed examination of their planning, actions and the curriculum role of any activity.

Aims

- To ensure that excursions at Northern School for Autism are planned and approved appropriately.
- To ensure that the school obtains informed consent from parents / guardians for their child to participate in an excursion.
- To ensure children are adequately prepared for camps and excursions.
- To reinforce, complement and extend the learning opportunities beyond the classroom.
- To develop an understanding that learning is not limited to school and teachers, and that valuable and powerful learning is often achieved with other people and experiences.
- To ensure the safety of children working with external providers.
- To ensure that appropriate standards of safety and compliance by the provider are in place at all times.
- To establish protocols for allowing services to be provided at the school by external providers.
- To ensure the school complies with Child Safe Standards 1 & 2.

Definitions

An excursion is an activity organised by a school during which children leave the school grounds to engage in educational activities (including camps and sport). Adventure activities are included in this definition (regardless of whether they occur outside the school grounds or not).

An adventure activity is an activity that involves greater than normal risk which may include travel into a relatively undeveloped area of the country in which vehicle contact is difficult or uncertain, confrontation with environmental challenges requiring greater reliance upon personal resources than would normally be required in day-to-day life, less than normal contact by person or by telephone, medical or other public services and/or exposure to natural elements with less than the normal physical protection afforded in everyday life.

Activities may include among others: abseiling, artificial climbing and abseiling walls, bushwalking, canoeing/kayaking, challenging rope courses, cross country skiing, downhill skiing, snowboarding, cycling, orienteering, horse riding, overnight camping, surfing, windsurfing, water skiing, sailing, scuba diving, sea kayaking, snorkelling, recreational swimming, rafting and cycling. Activities such as bungee jumping, hang gliding, parachuting and flying ultra light aircraft are deemed unsuitable.

Note: Bush walking, cycling and overnight camping may be considered adventure activities where they involve greater than normal risk (as outlined above) and in the circumstances outlined in the activity descriptions in the Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors.

Flying foxes may be used at school camps provided:

- safety precautions are taken in its construction and maintenance
- it can be locked or have the carriage removed when not in use
- all children are carefully briefed on its use and associated dangers
- staff supervise all use
- a safety harness is always used.

Residential campsites are campsites which usually have permanent facilities (such as cooking and eating facilities, beds and an amenities block) and adventure recreation options. This definition does not include caravan parks, hotels/motels, ski lodges or Victorian government residential schools.

The Department recognises three accreditation providers:

Australian Camps Association's Campsite and Outdoor Activity Provider program see: ACA Accredited Camps

Australian Tourism Accreditation Program (ATAP) see: ATAP Accredited Businesses (select Accredited Camp and Adventure Activity Provider)

National Accommodation, Recreation and Tourism Accreditation (NARTA) program see: NARTA Accredited Camps

Other venues may include:

- overnight campsites and venues that only provide accommodation such as caravan parks, hotels/motels or ski lodges
- Victorian government residential schools (for example: Rubicon Outdoor Centre or Bogong Outdoor Education Centre)
- interstate camps or excursions
- overseas venues.

ACA or NARTA programs' accreditation criteria may be used to assess the suitability and safety of these venues. However this criteria should be used when assessing overseas venues

Implementation

- The safety and wellbeing of children is this school's highest priority.
- The school has **zero tolerance** for any form of harm that may befall a child.
- The Principal is responsible for the conduct of all excursions / incursions and must ensure:
 - an online notification of school activity form is completed prior to the activity
 - compliance with Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors which are mandatory for excursions requiring School Council approval

- a planning and approvals process is undertaken, in accordance with DET policy and requirements, which takes into account the following considerations:
 - venue selection
 - safety, emergency and risk management
 - informed consent from parents
 - medical information
 - appropriate staffing and supervision
 - student preparation and behaviour
 - requirements for any adventure activities
 - Departmental approval requirements for excursions and staff travel
 - maintenance of full records, including documentation of the planning process
- With respect to arrangements between the school and third parties, the Principal will:
 - carefully negotiate terms and conditions with third parties (e.g. travel agents, travel insurance companies, camp providers, specialist instructors, expedition providers) prior to accepting arrangements
 - ensure the terms of any travel insurance offered to the school by the third party are satisfactory
- The educational purpose of the excursion/incursion and its contribution to the curriculum must be clarified and explained.
- There must be an assurance that the proposed activity meets the requirements of any school-level policy or procedure.
- Where external providers have been engaged to deliver specific activities or programs for students, or provide other services, the school retains responsibility for its students, as the duty of care of the school staff to students cannot be delegated to a third party
- Minimising Disruptions or Costs to Parents
- The Principal will:
 - Inform parents that any costs associated with the student returning from an excursion early due to illness or serious misbehaviour are the responsibility of the parent:
 - ensure parents are advised of the possibility of cancellations or alterations and of any cancellation fees imposed on the parents by third parties
 - with respect to arrangements between the school and third parties, principals should:
 - carefully negotiate terms and conditions with third parties (e.g. travel agents, travel insurance companies, camp providers, specialist instructors, expedition providers) prior to accepting arrangements
 - ensure the terms of any travel insurance offered to the school by the third party are satisfactory
- Excursions must be under the direct control of a teacher employed by the DET, have enough DET employed staff to maintain control of the excursion and each activity with teachers comprising at least half of the excursion staff.
- Overnight stays for mixed gender groups must include a staff member of each sex.
- For small excursions in the local area, the Principal may approve supervision by a non-teacher employed by DET e.g. an integration aide.
- Approved staff may include teachers, parents/carers, Education Support Class officers, community members, trainee teachers, campsite staff, specialist instructors. Excursion staff who are not teachers, must have a Working with Children Check.
- Transportation requirements: public transport should be used if practicable with transport authorities consulted as to appropriate travel times and with at least two weeks' notice
- The school will give parents/carers, who are to sign consent forms, sufficient information about the excursion/incursion to enable them to make an informed decision. This includes the nature of the proposed activity, degree of supervision and the risks involved. It includes financial costs, any adventure activities that may be undertaken, for children to be sent home in the event of serious misbehaviour (with costs to be met by the parent/carer) and if necessary the school can consent to emergency medical treatment.

- Consent must also enable the parent/carer to alert the school to any medical conditions or allergies.
- Consent forms will be kept at the school with a designated contact person and for excursions requiring School Council approval, the teacher-in-charge of the excursion will take a copy of each consent form on the excursion.
- Venues will be assessed and selected on the basis of their safety and suitability for the activities proposed. Where possible, venues will be selected based on the recent and first-hand knowledge (for example, through an inspection of the site by at least one member of the planning and supervising staff).
- Criteria for assessing venues such as campsites or overnight accommodation venues include health and hygiene of buildings and facilities, activity equipment and the conduct of activities, certification and qualifications of venue staff, participant supervision provided, risks posed by other users of the site, emergency and risk management plans of venues, fire precautions, first aid facilities, quality assurance and consumer protection, relevant accreditations and references from other schools.
- Parents/carers will be advised of the telephone numbers (both during and outside school hours) for the designated school contact person in the event of an emergency.
- During the excursion, if parents/carers have reason to believe an emergency may have occurred (such as a media report) they will be informed that in the first instance they should call the contact person and not personnel on the excursion as this will keep the telephone lines free at the excursion site.
- Arrangements for communicating with parents/carers in the event of an emergency, cancellation or recall of the excursion will be made.
- The Principal will be prepared to cancel an excursion at short notice on days of extreme fire danger or total fire ban. On such days, the Security Services Unit liaises with fire authorities to obtain up to date information for communication to schools that may be affected by wildfire, including schools that may have children attending camps or other venues in areas affected by wildfire. If an excursion is not cancelled, special fire safety precautions will be required. When required, schools must follow the Department's emergency management (bushfires) procedures for off-site activities for all excursions.
- In the event of an emergency, accident or injury, staff on the excursion will take emergency action, then immediately notify the School Principal who should make arrangements for the Department's Security Services Unit to be telephoned on 9589 6266.
- Children and parents/carers will be fully informed about the behavioural expectations and (misbehaviour) consequences of the excursion/incursion. In extreme circumstances, after full consultation, a student may be excluded from or sent home from the activity.
- Continuous instruction will be provided for children remaining at the school during the absence of staff accompanying the excursion
- Day excursions other than those listed above only require the approval of the Principal.
- The school will obtain written consent from parents/carers for the school to take the child outside of the school environment for a day excursion. The school will provide sufficient information to enable the parent to make informed consent.
- The Regional Director will be informed if an excursion leaves a school unoccupied.
- Children will not be denied attendance at excursion/incursion because of disability or medical condition. The school will take all reasonable steps to support the inclusion of all children.
- Students will not be denied attendance at the excursion because the parent/carer refuses permission for a blood transfusion.
- The school may require additional information depending on the nature of the proposed activities.
- The Principal will determine if the external provider can work with children without staff supervision e.g. instrumental music sessions for individuals or small groups.

All Excursions and Incursions:

- Commence no earlier than Week 4 of Term 1 to allow teachers to identify children's needs and complete the required planning/documentation.
- Commence no earlier than Term 2 of each year for entry children (Foundation). This is to enable entry year children to settle into school routines and learn skills to keep them safe, prior to leaving the school grounds.
- Must be approved by the Campus Principal.
- Have a designated teacher in charge to coordinate the activity, fulfil accountability and Duty of Care responsibilities.
- Comply with all DET requirements.
- Are only attended by children who have a signed parent/carer permission note.
- All external providers, such as Music instructors, coaches or similar professionals must have undertaken a Police Check, a Working With Children Check and other relevant checks, before they are invited to provide services to the school. The Campus Principal must be informed when external providers are engaged.
- When working with an external provider, the children will work in groups in designated and visible work places through the school.
- The External Provider is to undertake a brief induction program which will outline all legal obligations, all school operating procedures including classroom rules, the professional approach to children in our school which is expected at all times and the expectations of the provider should emergency procedures be put into place. The teacher in charge is responsible for providing this information – support will be provided by a member of the leadership team.

Parent/Carer Payment

- Payment for excursions and incursions are included in the essential education items fee charged to parents/carers each year. The administration team are responsible for the collection of these charges.
- Children will not be excluded from excursions/incursions, including the swimming program for financial reasons - the Principal will, on a case-by-case basis, approve alternative payment arrangements for families of children experiencing hardship.
- All families will be given sufficient time to make payments for excursions.

Excursion/Incursion Process for Teachers

- Excursions/incursions must be planned and finalised at least two weeks prior to taking place.
- Teachers are able to access \$150 per term for excursions/incursions (\$600 per year) for their class-group. Funds not used in one term may be rolled over to the following term.
- There are no full day excursions permitted for Reservoir Campus class-groups. Lalor Campus class-groups may attend full day excursions with permission of the Campus Principal.
- Teachers may apply for a curriculum initiatives funds or pool their funds with other classes for a more expensive program.
- Teachers do not need to collect from, or liaise with, parents/carers about monies for excursions/incursions.
- Teachers do not have to apply for funds for non-payers.

General Process

Pre-Approval

- Make a tentative booking for the excursion or incursion: check availability, cost, dates and time. If accessing an NSA bus, cross check the bus timetable to ensure the booking is at the time your class is assigned bus. If using a Mee's Bus Line Shuttle bus, teachers must include the cost of the bus in the excursion planning.
- Complete an Excursion Incursion Notification form (attached to this policy). The Campus Principal will sign the form and thereby approve the excursion.

Once Approved

- Confirm the excursion with the venue, or the incursion with the provider.
- Complete an order form in the purchase order book. The order book is kept in the general office – please refer to the instructions in the Staff Administration Manual – Purchase Order Protocols.
- Attach a copy of the Excursion/Incursion Notification form to the order in the order book. The administration team will generate Excursion/Incursion Permission forms for parents/carers to sign as well as a cheque to pay for the excursions (which teachers may or may not need to take with them depending upon the venue).
- Distribute to and collect from parents/carers signed Excursion/Incursion Permission forms. Form slips must be signed and returned for all children attending an excursion.
- Complete an Excursions Risk Management Assessment form.
- Enter the excursion details into the 'Excursions' field on SharePoint. Update this prior to taking children on an excursion to ensure the information is accurate.
- Enter the excursion into the Department's Notification of School Activity Form (there is a link on SharePoint) <https://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/forms/school/sal/enteractivity.asp>. Complete the on-line notification and then print a copy.
- Provide a copy of the Excursions Risk Management Assessment and Notification of School Activity forms to the Campus Principal.

Swimming Program - Process

- Children who do not attend swimming will be placed in another classroom while the swimming program takes place. The swimming program and buses are booked by the leadership team. Please follow the instructions below before going swimming:
- Distribute to and collect from parents/carers signed Excursion Incursion Permission forms. Form slips must be signed and returned for all children attending an excursion. These forms will be provided by the administration team.
- Enter the excursion details into the 'Excursions' field on SharePoint. Update this prior to taking children on an excursion to ensure the information is accurate.
- Complete an Excursions Risk Management Assessment form.
- Enter the excursion into the Department site Notification of School Activity form (there is a link on SharePoint) <https://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/forms/school/sal/enteractivity.asp>. Complete the on-line notification and then print a copy.
- Provide a copy of the Excursions Risk Management Assessment and Notification of School Activity form to the Campus Principal.
- When you go on the excursion remember to take your excursion bag, student medication, DISPlan and a mobile phone.

Cash/Shopping Programs.

- Cash is not provided for shopping or any other excursions.
- Lalor Campus teachers have 'Coles' cards to support shopping programs. Teachers must complete a Curriculum Initiatives form to determine the approved amount of money which can be spent on a 'Coles' card over the course of a program.
- Please refer to the Food Service Policy for more information on cooking/food technology programs.

Duty of Care

- There are no fixed ratios for staff/children; a minimum of two adults including a teacher must accompany each excursion group. The only exception to this is travel training programs at Lalor Campus or by negotiation with the Campus Principal.
- The adult/student ratio will be no less than 1 adult per 3 children (including the supervising teacher) for swimming.
- Any water activity requires the presence of a teacher or pool supervisor with a current AustSwim certificate. Epileptic children require a doctor's certificate stating they are permitted to participate in water activities.

- The teacher in charge or designated teacher of an excursion or incursion must carry a mobile phone, excursion plan, student medication, DISPlans and know the location of a first aid kit.
- The teacher in charge will have copies of this policy, all confidential medical forms and permission notes with contact details. A copy of this material will also be kept at school.
- During excursions and incursions children are usually less constrained and, therefore, more prone to accident and injury than in a more closely supervised classroom.
- In the event of an accident or emergency, the teacher in charge will be responsible for the administration of first aid, and will contact parent/carers.
- An incursion with an external provider does not absolve supervision duties of the teacher, including first aid duties. A teacher must be present at all times and remain the person designated with duty of care responsibilities.
- Incursions and excursions require teachers to fully comply with DET guidelines and bring with them an increased duty of care. It is a teacher's responsibility to be aware of these guidelines and remain the person designated with duty of care.
- Teachers must ensure that venues and external providers adhere to DET guidelines.
- Children must be counted on a regular basis whilst participating in excursions and incursions.
- Arrangements must be made for children not attending incursions or excursions, for whatever reason, to continue their normal program at school under supervision of another classroom teacher.
- Children must wear or carry identification in case of an emergency.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES (from NSA EMP)

Lost Student on Excursions

- Notify all staff on excursion which student is missing
- One staff member to search for student
- All other staff members to stay with remaining children in a fixed position
- After a quick search of no longer than 5 minutes;
 - notify police 000. Provide
 - description of student
 - emotional state of student
 - search area
 - notify Campus Principal - Lalor Campus 9464 3480/Reservoir Campus 9462 5990
- Campus Principal to notify Emergency and Security Management, parents/carers and Principal

Bushfire Risk Management

- On days of high fire risk all excursions will be reviewed. Excursions to high fire danger areas will be cancelled.

References: School Policy and Advisory Guide

www.education.vic.gov.au/management/governance/spag/default.htm
www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/excursionsafety.aspx
www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/health/Pages/outdoorresfire.aspx
<https://edugate.eduweb.vic.gov.au/Services/Schools/Infrastructure/Health/Pages/Safety.aspx#anchor13>
www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/Pages/planning.aspx
www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/Pages/consent.aspx
www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/Pages/staffing.aspx
www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/Pages/venue.aspx
www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/Pages/medicalinfo.aspx

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually.

Ratification

This policy was ratified by NSA School Council: 30th October 2014

This update was ratified 26th March 2015

This update was ratified 18th February 2016

This update was ratified on 6 December 2018

Excursion/Incursion Notification Form

**Submit this form to admin' 2 weeks prior to an excursion/incursion.
Administration will provide parent/carer Excursion Permission notes.**

Teacher in Charge (Supervising Staff Member): _____

Date of Excursion/Incursion: ____/____/____ Class Group: _____

Type of Activity (circle):

Local Environment <small>i.e. local walk/local park etc.</small>	Excursion	Swimming	Incursion
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Duration Excursion: *Departure Time:* _____ *Return Time:* _____

Duration Incursion: *Start Time:* _____ *End Time:* _____

Transport (circle):

School Bus (name of driver) :	Mee's Bus Line Charter Cost: \$ _____	Public Transport Cost \$ _____	Walk	Incursion - not applicable
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Venue destination and excursion details or external provider details (incursion):

Student requirements for the activity (sunscreen/bathers, etc.):

Staff attending:

Community members/volunteers attending:

Educational rationale:

Total Cost \$ _____

Purchase Order Number: _____

Invoice requested from the venue? Yes/No (please circle)

*If payment on the day is requested by a venue, teachers are asked to make the payment and the school will reimburse the teacher.

Approved by Campus Principal/Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Name of Creditor:

Address:

Telephone: ABN: