Excursions

Rationale:
The provision of experiences in the wider community is an essential way of reinforcing and enriching the planned curriculum within the school.

Focus Area:
- Teaching/Learning

Goals:
The school aims to:-
- Extend and enrich classroom learning experiences
- Provide children with meaningful and relevant experiences outside the classroom.

Student Outcomes:
Each student will:
- Transfer classroom learning to situations outside the classroom and transfer out-of-class learning experiences to activities within the classroom.

Implementation Strategies:

Transport
Public transport (Government Bus, Rail and Ferry Services, or Private Bus and Ferry Services) should be used for school excursions wherever possible.

In exceptional circumstances (e.g. for small groups) consideration may be given to the use of private motor vehicles. In such cases, reference must be made to the policy governing the use of private motor vehicles for school activities (section 16.7, Issue 8 of the School Manual on Financial Management).

Supervision
Before the planned excursion is undertaken the principal must be satisfied that all precautions have been taken in relation to the safety of the participants and that supervision will be adequate in relation to the number of students, their maturity, anticipated behaviour and the activities planned. Details of teacher/student ratios and the number of parent/caregiver helpers will be required on the “Excursion Proposal Form”. An OHS risk assessment must be completed.

Staff planning overnight or extended excursions should recognize their special duty of care for student safety and welfare in these circumstances. They should take all necessary steps to provide sufficient numbers of appropriate, responsible adults to ensure adequate supervision, especially with co-educational groups. Staff should be aware that they retain the ultimate responsibility for supervision while on excursions and cannot transfer that responsibility to parents, other volunteers or employees of external organisations, such as motel/hotel staff.
The principal will need to be assured of the bona fides of adults who are accompanying such excursions to assist with supervision. Depending on the circumstances, the principal should:

- Check the Department’s “Not to be Employed List”;
- Consult referees;
- Sight evidence of a satisfactory criminal record check by police; and
- Require the person to sign a declaration that they have no convictions that would preclude their working with children.

**Unscheduled Activities:**

Students participating in an excursion must not be permitted to engage in additional or alternative activities which were not originally scheduled in the program and for which parental approval would normally have been necessary (e.g. horse riding, water activities).

**Performance by School Musical Ensembles:**

The attendance of school performing ensembles (choirs, orchestras, bands etc) and combined school ensembles (both locally and centrally organized) at concerts, festivals and competitions, and the presentation of converts by such groups in other schools, is subject to the same conditions which apply to excursions.

**Special Requirements:**

Where a particular excursion activity requires special equipment or apparel (e.g. hard hats), this must be used. Under no circumstances may safety requirements be compromised.

Where any excursion involves swimming or water activities, the principal may encourage but not insist that parents provide any flotation devices considered necessary for students. Parents must be asked to indicate the swimming ability of their child(ren) when giving consent for students to participate in excursions.

If parents indicate students are poor or non-swimmers and no flotation devices are available for use by the students, the principal will assess whether such students should participate in the swimming or water activities of the excursion. This assessment must take place irrespective of parental permission for the student(s) to participate in the swimming or water activities.

**Film Screenings and Live Performances:**

The principal must note the classification, comments and details on Matinee Performances – Film Screenings published in the *Education Gazette*. Schools are not to arrange for students to attend any film that is rated “R”.
Guidelines on the handling of controversial issues must be followed (section 11.4 of *School Manual on Education Management*) and the principal must take into account the age and maturity of students and be acquainted with the details of any film or live performance prior to granting approval.

**Record of Excursions:**

The principal must ensure that a record of all excursions held is maintained at the school and available upon request.

- It is mandatory that a member of staff who has undertaken emergency training accompany all student excursions.
- Emergency care needs to be updated every three years.
- CPR needs to be updated every 12 months. In addition overnight excursions and sports activities involving water activities are to be accompanied by a staff member with a current training in cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and emergency care.

**Organisational Procedures:**

**School Procedures –**

The following procedures are to operate for excursions arranged for students of this school:

Excursions initiated by the class teacher should be discussed first with the appropriate team leader and/or the principal, before students and parents are informed.

It is the responsibility of the teacher(s) initiating the excursion to justify the excursion in terms of its value as a relevant learning experience for students.

An excursion proposal initiated outside of the school e.g. an invitation to “send a small group of students to …” should be considered on its merits, with particular attention to its relevance to the current program and the number of students who may participate.

The planning of an excursion should take place sufficiently far in advance of the excursion date to enable:

- The formal requirements of approval
- An adequate program of preparatory lessons
- OHS risk assessment for excursions
- List of those attending the excursion

Filled documentation of an excursion should include the following:-

- Excursion Proposal Form (attached) which incorporates the formal approval by the principal;
- A copy of each letter to parents; and
• A copy of any work sheet(s) to be used during the excursion.

It is the responsibility of the teacher(s) accompanying pupils on an excursion to provide supervision to ensure that:
• Student safety is paramount at all times;
• Student behaviour does not bring discredit to the school;
• Student dress is appropriate to the nature and location of the excursion; and
• Supervision of pupils on an excursion commences at departure and continues until the last child has left the teacher’s care after returning.

The number of adults accompanying an excursion should be considered carefully, with regard to suitability, safety factors and the nature and location of the excursion.

The selection of parents accompanying an excursion must first be discussed with the supervisor and/or principal and must meet with the approval of the principal.

Both male and female adults should accompany an excursion group if possible.

Teachers accompanying an excursion must ensure that they are aware of any students who will need to take medication or who have allergies. Teachers should familiarise themselves with medical details and bring emergency contact details of all students on the excursion.

A first aid kit must be taken on each outing. Check the kit prior to departure to ensure its contents are complete.

Students may participate in an excursion only with the parental consent for that specific excursion. The form used must include all the features of the example in this policy. If it is not possible to obtain a signed consent form from parents, oral approval can be sought. The principal must keep a record of any oral approvals given by parents.

A separate consent form is required for each excursion.
If parents do not permit participation of a student in an excursion the school will make available a sound alternative educational experience.

If a teacher suspects that parental consent is withheld because of the cost of an excursion, the case should be discussed with the supervisor and/or the principal. Student Assistance Scheme funds may be a source of supplementary funding for individual cases.

All medical forms and permission notes must be checked prior to the departure of the excursion to see that all contingencies have been considered.

It is the responsibility of the person organizing the excursion to inform all persons affected. i.e. Canteen, scripture, librarian, R.R.F. teacher.
An evaluation of the excursion must be completed on return and filed with all other documentation relating to the excursion.

Resources/Supporting Material/Budget Requirement:

- High support needs students’ excursion procedures.
- Excursion Consent Form
- Parent information and Consent Form
- Transporting Letter
- Prohibited Persons Declaration
- Parent Transport Information
- Excursion Proposal Form
- Medical Information Note
- OHS risk assessment excursion form
- Excursion and Performance check list

**HIGH SUPPORT NEEDS STUDENTS’ EXCURSION PROCEDURES**

** All planning and organizational guidelines already covered in Excursion Policy are equally applicable for High Support Needs students, however, extra emphasis on transport organization, students’ individual needs and level of assistance is required.

**Preparation:**

- Name tags must be prepared for all students.
- Arrangements must be made for every student to have an adult helper, preferably persons already familiar with the students.
- Safe/approved transport must be organized.
- All helpers must be briefed on the individual special needs of the student they are assisting, eg: if student is prone to seizures, if student has a tendency to “run off” and requires full supervision.
- Parents/caregiver must be consulted regarding the particular requirements their child may have to special excursion situations, e.g. swimming – the student may require ear plugs due to grommets or chronic ear infections, particular flotation devices may be required, the student may have particular fears such as a refusal to lie on their back in the water.
Transport:

Options –
- Special arrangement with students’ regular drivers (particularly for safe wheelchair transport) or
- Hiring of approved wheelchair adapted Taxis or
- Hiring of adapted transport van from local nearby S.S.P. (School for Specific Purposes) if teacher/aide have approval to drive vehicle or
- Special arrangements with parents made for them to transport their child to and from the excursion venue on the day.

Special Considerations:

In the case of transportation via Taxi or Regular Driver:
- The teacher and teachers aide must supervise the students loading into the vehicle to ensure all body straps, supports, pillows, boosters are in place.
- The parents must be informed of the complete cost, including transport costs (and details of transport arrangements) on the permission form.
- Teacher and aide should travel with students if possible.
- Due to the extra costs of transportation to parents, careful selection of excursion and venue is recommended.

Under no circumstances will a child be transported in a teacher’s or aide’s personal vehicle, nor on anybody’s lap for support. If the student requires extra support they must be transported in a safety seat with approved modifications or in their transport approved wheelchair.

ON THE DAY
- All assistants briefed on individual student needs, and the agenda of day given out.
- All necessary safety precautions followed, such as: sunscreen, hats, safety belts, chair straps checked.

These precautions must be adhered to with extra care as High Support Needs Students are often completely dependent on adults to ensure these precautions are adhered to and implemented.

Special Considerations:
- All personal needs requirements such as toileting and dressing can only be attended to by the teacher or teacher’s aide for privacy and dignity of students.
- Venue must have disabled toilet facilities and easy access.
Date ……………………

To Whom it May Concern

It is now a legal requirement of those working or transporting children to complete a Prohibited Declaration Form. This form is a statement to be signed declaring that you are not a prohibited person i.e. you have not been criminally convicted of child misconduct. The guidelines are attached to the form for explanation.

We also require from those who transport children, to sight a copy of current driver’s licence, car registration and insurance policy.

For the benefit of our children we hope that you do not consider this an inconvenience and we thank you for your co-operation.

Yours sincerely,

Principal