

# **ST EUPHEMIA COLLEGE**

**7-12**



## **EXCURSIONS PROCEDURES**

**2014**

## **Excursions Procedures**

### **Procedures**

A school excursion is initiated, organised and supervised by the organising or assigned supervising teacher and approved by the Principal.

While recognising the potential benefits of excursions, it is also recognised that such activities may interrupt regular learning routines of students and affect the daily routine of the school. Organising teachers must complete the Excursion Application form (see Appendix 1) and complete the checklist provided. (Appendix 2) is a sample consent letter for an excursion. The Organising Teacher must inform staff via the public folders of the intent of an excursion at least 2 weeks prior. Once an excursion has been approved, a list of student names must be included in the public folders.

All students have the opportunity to participate in an excursion. Where financial hardship is understood to be the reason for a student's non-participation, the school will provide financial assistance.

The School expects the usual high standards of dress and behaviour of students on excursions. As a safety requirement, all students are expected to be in uniform. Exceptions to this will appear in the information given to parents/caregivers for particular excursions such as farm visits, beach studies, etc.

### ***Film screenings and live performances***

Prior to approving excursions involving film screenings and live performances, careful consideration will be given by the organising teacher in consultation with the Faculty Coordinator as to the appropriateness of the film or performance for the proposed viewing group.

### ***Duty of Care***

Excursions are potentially the most hazardous activities for school-related accidents. The duty of care owed to students applies whether the school excursion is held during school hours, after school, on the weekend or during school holidays.

Teachers planning excursions adopt a risk management approach. The College is prepared to alter or cancel excursions due to emerging safety concerns. These decisions are communicated to students and parents/caregivers via the school's website [www.steuphemia.nsw.edu.au](http://www.steuphemia.nsw.edu.au).

All excursions are accompanied by a member of staff who has undertaken Senior First Aid Training and whose qualifications are current (all staff have completed or upgraded their First Aid training in 2012). An appropriately equipped first aid kit and emergency medication (Ventolin) are taken on excursions. Students are to supply their own EpiPen. Student medications are to be given to the Supervising Teacher.

Students on excursion are subject to direct adult supervision at all times and are not be allowed to 'go off on their own'.

### ***Teacher to student ratios***

The number of teachers to accompany the students for each excursion is determined by the Principal. Factors such as the age of the students, their maturity, location of the excursion, specific needs of students, anticipated behaviour and the nature of the activities to be undertaken are taken into account.

### ***Overnight excursions***

On overnight and extended excursions, supervisory and accommodation arrangements are such that no staff member is placed in a position where there is potential for allegations of improper conduct to be made. Both male and female staff supervisors are required.

### ***Child Protection***

The same standards of conduct and the obligation to report suspected risk of harm to children and young people, including any allegation of reportable conduct or improper conduct by an employee against students, apply throughout all stages of an excursion, as they do in school.

Students are briefed about their right to be safe, relevant safety strategies and ways of seeking help should concerns arise during an excursion.

### ***Excursions to Court***

Teachers planning excursions to courts and court hearings are mindful of the potential for students to be exposed to psychological harm and trauma due to the nature of the matters being heard before some courts.

Teachers planning excursions to courts are required to conduct a risk assessment with a view to ensuring students are not exposed to court hearings where the subject matter is inappropriate to their age, maturity or life experiences.

### ***Risk Management***

A risk assessment is to be conducted and a risk management plan developed before approval can be given for any excursion.

The [Work, Health and Safety Act 2011](#) require the Principal and teachers organising excursions to use risk management to ensure the health and safety of students, staff.

The Principal will decide whether a representative of the School is required to visit the excursion site, prior to the excursion, or the documentation or briefing from the venue will suffice. In most instances, venues will provide Risk Assessment documentation to the school and a Risk Management Plan can be prepared without the need for site visit.

A sample risk management plan and sample risk management plan proforma for excursions are provided in appendix 3 and Appendix 4.

A visit to the proposed excursion site is recommended when unfamiliar or potentially high risk activities are contemplated. In these circumstances the pre-excursion visit should address issues such as access, injury prevention and emergency evacuation.

Fundamental to effective excursion risk management is the communication of risk management plans to those who need to know, including staff on the excursion and appropriate school based staff member (High School Secretary) who may be instrumental in initiating an emergency response.

### ***Water Activity***

Where any excursion involves swimming or water activities, the Principal will ensure that venue selection, parent/caregiver consent, staff supervision, risk management, staff induction, student induction, testing student proficiency and classifying students requirements are all complied with.

Parents/caregivers will be asked to indicate the swimming ability of their children when giving consent for students to participate.

The fact that parents/caregivers consent to the participation of their child in an excursion is not taken as removing the responsibility of school staff for taking all reasonable steps to ensure the particular activity is safe.

### ***Consent***

Signed consent forms granting permission for students to participate in an excursion and a medical information form (for overnight excursions and camps) must be obtained from parents/caregivers.

The main purpose of consent forms and information forms is to give enough detail to parents/caregivers to allow them to make an informed decision about whether their child should attend the excursion. It is also to assist the parent/caregiver to provide relevant information to the school about the child's care needs.

It is necessary to collect new medical information for each excursion. Medical information held by the school should, however, be updated regularly. Information regarding all school camps must include a Medical Information Sheet along with the information and consent form. (see Appendix 5).

As a general rule, students without a signed consent form from a parent or caregiver will not be permitted to participate in a school excursion.

If parents or caregivers do not permit participation of a student in an excursion, the school makes available an alternative educational experience which provides for similar learning outcomes, particularly where an assessment task relates to the excursion.

### ***Transport***

Safe transport or a safe walking route are organised for excursions.

In some circumstances where the site of the excursion is close to the school, it is appropriate for students and their supervisors to walk to the site. The decision to walk is preceded by a risk assessment and the route is determined consistent with the objective of ensuring staff and student safety.

When hiring buses or coaches for excursions, attempts are made to hire vehicles with seatbelts wherever practicable and particularly for long distance travel. Seatbelts will be worn on buses and coaches when they are available.

### ***Car travel***

The transporting of students in the cars of staff members is determined on a case by case basis at the discretion of the Principal. When approval is given, the excursion consent form must expressly state that transportation to the excursion will be by teacher's car.

Senior students are not to drive to an excursion.

### ***Student Behaviour***

Students must behave appropriately at all times on excursions. Students on excursions interact with the public and are representatives of our school and community. Prior to excursions, they should be reminded of expected standards of behaviour and the application of the school's discipline code.

Students also should be briefed on appropriate behaviour around animals. Responsible behaviour involves not interfering with the animal.

### ***Overseas Excursions***

The Bi-annual Cultural Tour of Italy and Greece has the endorsement of the Principal.

Overseas travel will not proceed, regardless of the proximity to the date of departure and other organisational matters, if the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) has recommended against travel.

### ***Reporting of Incidents Occurring while on Excursions***

Staff leading school excursions are required to report incidents occurring while on excursion.

Incidents which cause disruption to the excursion, create danger or risk that could significantly affect individuals participating in the excursion, impact on the effective operation of the excursion, attract negative media attention or a negative public profile for our school or is an incident which WorkCover describes as a “serious incident” must be reported by law.

### ***Record Keeping***

The Principal will ensure that a record of all excursions, including overseas excursions, is maintained.

### ***Guidelines for implementation***

Determining the educational value of an excursion must take into account the needs and resources of the school, the needs of the students and the total learning program.

Excursions are inclusive, and all students within the specific learning group are to be given the opportunity to participate.

A duty of care is owed to students in the school environment and while on excursions.

The College's duty of care owed to students for the duration of an excursion cannot be delegated from the school to parents/caregivers, volunteers or employees of external organisations.

The obligation to report suspected risk of harm to children and young people applies throughout all stages of an excursion, as it does in schools.

A risk assessment is to be conducted and a risk management plan developed before seeking approval for any excursion.

Signed consent forms granting permission for students to participate in excursions and a medical information form are to be obtained from parents/caregivers.

Safe transport or a safe walking route is to be organised for excursions.

Students must behave appropriately at all times while on excursions, including when animals are encountered.

Regular weekly school sport is not regarded as an excursion but is subject to operational and consent procedures.

Some excursions involve interstate and overseas travel. Particular additional mandatory procedures relate to such excursions.

## **APPENDIX 3: EXCURSION RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN**

### ***Hazard Identification***

The following may assist with identifying hazards relating to activities at each stage of an excursion. Consider what could go wrong. Hazards are the sources of potential injuries or illnesses.

***Travel*** – aspects of travel that may present a hazard such as walking to and from the train, crossing the road, transport to the venue. If CBD location, consider travel arrangements in the event of lockdown or evacuation.

***Venue*** –aspects of the excursion venue that may present a hazard such as location near water, cliffs, crowds, slippery floors. Ensure appropriate water supervision is available, e.g. life guards. If CBD location, consider possibility of CBD lockdown or evacuation due to evacuation trial or major emergency.

***Excursion Program Activity*** –activities of the excursion program that may present a hazard such as hazards of bushwalking, collecting leaves, observing animals, swimming, singing at an eisteddfod, climbing, eating at different venues for students with anaphylaxis.

***Equipment*** –any equipment that may present a hazard such as sporting equipment, high risk equipment at the venue.

***Environment*** –aspects of the environment that may present a hazard such as weather conditions, natural hazards such as bushfires, floods or storms, the nature of the terrain, plants, animals and insects.

Consider common allergens that may pose a hazard e.g. foods, insect stings or bites, latex (e.g. balloons or swimming goggles and caps) that may trigger allergic reactions. These must be considered as part of the risk assessment for students with allergic conditions (anaphylaxis).

***People*** –aspects of people that may present a hazard such as poor behaviour, the nature of participants such as maturity, age and skill, child protection issues, medical conditions or disabilities.

***Accommodation*** –aspects of accommodation that may present a hazard such as insufficient supervision, standard of accommodation and amenities, meal menus and allergies, security and child protection issues.

***Other*** –other hazards related to specific excursions such as access to first aid and mobile phone reception. Investigate access to emergency services and equipment.

### ***Risk Elimination or Control***

***Eliminate the risk.*** Eliminate the item or activity; e.g. do not undertake a particular high risk activity such as abseiling in high wind; do not use high risk equipment.

***Substitute the hazard:*** Replace the activity, material, or equipment with a less hazardous one eg choose an easier bushwalk; substitute a food known to cause severe allergic reactions (for example, peanut butter or tree nuts) with alternative nutritious food.

***Isolate the hazard:*** Isolate the hazard from the person at risk; isolate through distance e.g. select a lunch location well away from the water; check if a coastal walk has fencing.

***Use engineering controls:*** Have access to equipment to counteract the hazard; consider hiring coaches with seatbelts and ensure these are worn if available; ensure that an appropriately trained person is with the student at all times and has immediate access to an EpiPen in the event of an emergency.

***Use administrative controls:*** Establish procedures and safe practices e.g. supervision of students, clear rules, instruction in safe methods, training of staff, volunteers and students in the excursion activities or in the use of equipment and qualifications of instructors. Ensure health care plans are reviewed and updated for the excursion for students known to have severe allergic conditions. Discuss student health needs with caterers, in consultation with parents/caregivers.

***Use personal protective equipment:*** Use appropriately designed and properly fitted equipment such as safety goggles, hats and sunscreen and helmets, in conjunction with other control measures identified from above. Encourage students and staff to wear appropriate footwear and protective clothing at all times; students wear medic alert bracelet or necklace where required.



**APPENDIX 5: MEDICAL DETAILS AND CONSENT FORM**

**NEED SCANNING – YEAR 8 CAMP TOUKLEY**