

Excursions - policy

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This policy should be read with the Department of Education's (the department) Excursions guidelines and procedures, and the Official travel policy.

1. Policy

This policy outlines responsibilities and procedures that must be adhered to when planning and undertaking school excursions. Excursions must have clear educational outcomes that consider the learning programs and individual needs of students, as well as the educational programs and resources of the school. Activities must be inclusive, with all students appropriately supported to participate.

All excursion documentation must be submitted and approved in accordance with this policy and associated guidelines and procedures prior to any excursion taking place.

It is important to note: interstate and international excursions may not be considered for approval if documentation is not submitted within the timeframes as set out in the Excursion guidelines and procedures.

The department does not accept responsibility for expenses incurred for excursions unless prior approval for the expenditure has been granted by the appropriate delegate.

Students should be notified when enrolling in a course of study where excursions are an integral part of the course. Alternative educational programs should be available to students unable to participate in an excursion.

1.1. Excursion categories

1.1.1. Category A – local area excursions and regular outings

Local area excursions include recurring excursions and regular outings that involve movement either on foot or requiring transport within the local community, but not involving absence overnight. Category A excursions require principal approval.

1.1.2. Category B – excursions beyond the local area or overnight

Excursions which involve travel beyond the local community but within the Northern Territory (NT) and overnight accommodation, for example school camps. Category B excursions require principal approval.

1.1.3. Category C – interstate excursions

Interstate excursions require in-principle approval from the Senior Director Education before planning commences. Final approval is required from the Chief Executive.

1.1.4. Category D - international excursions

International excursions involve travel overseas and require in-principle approval from the Senior Director Education before planning commences. Applications are then submitted and processed through the Regional Director School Operations, with endorsement from the Senior Director School Operations, Deputy Chief Executive Regional Services and Chief Executive. Final approval is required from the Minister for Education. All requests for international excursions are to be justified in terms of need, educational benefits and cost prior to seeking approval for travel from the Minister for Education.

2. Business need

Excursions are a valuable teaching and learning experience, providing an opportunity for students to learn from the wider community, building on and reinforcing the school curriculum. To ensure the safety and wellbeing of students and staff, educational excursions and regular outings should be conducted with consistent processes and awareness of all parties of their responsibilities. This policy and related guidelines seek to clarify the obligations and procedural requirements for preschools and schools, including independent public schools, and particularly principals, teachers and parents.

Where a school operates a preschool service or other education and care service regulated under the National Quality Framework for early childhood education and care, the department is obliged to ensure regulatory requirements are maintained at all times in accordance with the *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010* (Vic) and Education and Care Services National Regulations.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all excursions arranged by NT Government schools, including preschools and independent public schools, and department coordinated programs such as the Katherine Stronger Smarter Sisters program.

This policy does not apply to:

- third party arranged excursions such as Clontarf and Role Models and Leaders Australia excursions, however:
 - principal approval must be sought in accordance with any third-party organisation's procedures prior to students participating in such excursions
 - prior to approving any such excursion, principals must be satisfied that appropriate risk management strategies are in place to ensure student wellbeing
 - where students are participating in overseas travel as part of an international excursion, the Chief Executive must be notified.
- work experience
- vocational education placements.

4. Definitions

Term	Definition
Accompanying adults	Teachers, parents, school representative body employees or any other adult individual who will be participating in the excursion and providing supervision.
Authorised department officer	Any Department of Education officer who has been requested to arrange an excursion in a division other than Regional Services.
Consent	The parent agrees to their child participating in an activity after they have been made aware of the details, risks and associated costs involved.
Excursion	An educational, sporting or cultural trip by students within or outside the NT, under the direction of teachers and activity leaders authorised by the department.

Higher risk or of a significant nature	For the purpose of this policy, excursions that include water-based or outdoor education activities, overnight stays or include travel outside of the local area, are considered to be higher risk or of a significant nature.
Ochre Card	Photo identification proof that an individual has received a Working with Children Clearance Notice.
Parent	A child's father, mother or any other person who has parental responsibility for the child, including a person who is regarded as a parent of the child under Aboriginal customary law or tradition. The definition of parent does not include a person standing in place of the parent on a temporary basis.
Parental responsibility	In regard to the definition of parent, refers to a person who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) has daily care and control of the child, or b) is entitled to exercise all the powers and rights, and has all the responsibilities, in the relation to the long-term care and development of the child, c) has daily care and control of the child and the entitlement and responsibilities at (b) and includes a person who has been given the above responsibilities under another state or territory law.
Principal	For the purpose of excursion approval, includes a teaching principal.
Recurring excursion or regular outing	A walk, drive or trip to and from a destination that the student cohort visits regularly as part of its educational program, where the circumstances relevant to the risk assessment are the same on each outing, such as swimming lessons or visiting a local playground.
Teacher in charge	The teacher nominated by the principal to organise the excursion and to have ultimate responsibility and authority while the activity is in progress. In some circumstances a principal may nominate a trainer to be the teacher in charge of Category A or B excursions. For department-coordinated programs the teacher in charge may be a departmental employee who is not a teacher.
Trainer	An educator or instructor that has at least a Certificate IV in Training and assessing and vocational competencies, or qualifications to the level being trained and assessed.
Travel with students for official purposes	Travel either interstate or overseas by school staff on official business, such as travel to foster sister school relationships or interstate and intrastate events and ceremonies.

5. Roles and responsibilities

5.1. Teacher in charge or authorised department employee

The teacher in charge or authorised department employee, is responsible for:

- following the Excursion guidelines and procedures to prepare all required documentation for the relevant excursion category
- submitting all documents to the principal for endorsement or approval within the required timelines
- identifying and addressing any potential conflicts of interest in consultation with the principal or relevant authorising officer

- considering special care relationships and professional boundaries and how these will be managed during excursion planning
- ensuring that there is an alternative program available for those students not attending the excursion
- working with the principal to ensure that reasonable adjustments are made to assist students with additional needs to participate in the excursion activities and overall program
- ensuring that all relevant information about respective responsibilities and obligations is clearly communicated to all accompanying adults
- ensuring that all excursion staff and, where appropriate, students will be familiar with the specific procedures for dealing with emergencies on each excursion following comprehensive risk assessments
- exercising proper care and supervision throughout the duration of the excursion
- monitoring destination advice level on the [Smartraveller](#) website when a Category D excursion is being planned.

5.2. Principal

The principal is responsible for:

- authorising an appropriate department employee to be in charge of any excursion undertaken by the school
- identifying and addressing any potential conflicts of interest in consultation with the teacher in charge
- review any special care relationships and professional boundary issues identified by the teacher or authorised department officer in charge
- approval of Category A and B excursions
- obtaining approval from the relevant authorising officer for Category C and D excursions, as directed in the Excursion guidelines and procedures
- ensuring that excursion outings are planned and conducted in accordance with this policy and the Excursion guidelines and procedures and that reasonable care is taken to ensure the safety of students and staff. This includes ensuring that volunteers, accompanying adults, have completed mandatory reporting training, as outlined in the department's Mandatory reporting guidelines.
- ensuring that all teaching staff, trainers and volunteers adhere to the requirements of this policy and the Excursion guidelines and procedures
- submitting international and interstate travel forecasts to School Operations via the Managing School Operations [eLearn](#) site
- that any expenditure of school funds required for the excursion is within their financial delegation and approved by the School Representative Body or School Management Council if required.

5.3. Senior Directors

Senior Directors are responsible for:

- in-principle approval of Category C and D excursions.

For excursions organised by Regional Services, Senior Directors Education are responsible for:

- notification of any in-principle Category C and D approvals to School Operations by email copy to Schoolopsorro@education.nt.gov.au when notifying schools.

For excursions organised by divisions other than Regional Services, Senior Directors are responsible for:

- coordinating the planning and preparation of excursions
- endorsing completed excursion application forms for progression to the Division Head, Deputy Chief Executive, Regional Services and the Chief Executive for approval.

5.4. Regional Directors School Operations

Regional Directors School Operations are responsible for the following actions for excursion applications generated through Regional Services:

- supporting principals and Senior Directors Education to meet requirements of this policy and the Excursion guidelines and procedures
- endorsing Category C and D excursions for progression to the Senior Director School Operations.

5.5. Senior Director School Operations

Senior Director School Operations is responsible for:

- endorsement of Category C and D excursions organised within Regional Services for progression to the Deputy Chief Executive, Regional Services
- coordinating advice and guidance to other divisions on preparation and planning for excursions, if required.

5.6. Division Heads

Division heads are responsible for:

- endorsement of Category C and D excursions and progression to the Deputy Chief Executive, Regional Services.

5.7. Deputy Chief Executive, Regional Services

The Deputy Chief Executive, Regional Services is responsible for:

- endorsement of Category C and D excursions and progression to the Chief Executive.

5.8. Chief Executive

The Chief Executive is responsible for:

- approval of Category C excursions
- endorsement of Category D excursions and progression to the Minister for Education for approval.

5.9. Secretariat, Department of Education

Secretariat is responsible for:

- seeking Department of Industry, Tourism and Trade support of international travel –Category D
- providing Strategic Communications, Engagement and Protocol, Department of the Chief Minister and Cabinet with notification of any Category D travel approved by the Minister for Education.

6. Related legislation, policy resources and documents

6.1. Legislation

- *Care and Protection of Children Act 2007* – <https://legislation.nt.gov.au/en/Legislation/CARE-AND-PROTECTION-OF-CHILDREN-ACT-2007>
- *Education and Care Services (National Uniform Legislation) Act 2011* – <https://legislation.nt.gov.au/Legislation/EDUCATION-AND-CARE-SERVICES-NATIONAL-UNIFORM-LEGISLATION-ACT-2011>
- *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 (Vic)* – <https://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/in-force/acts/education-and-care-services-national-law-act-2010/016>
- *Education and Care Services National Regulations* – <https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/sl-2011-0653>

6.2. Policy

Department policy documents are available on the Policy and advisory library - <https://education.nt.gov.au/policies>

- Excursion guidelines and procedures – <https://education.nt.gov.au/policies/school-operations#excursions>
- Alcohol consumption on department premises policy – https://education.nt.gov.au/policies/school-operations#alcohol_consumption
- Mandatory reporting guidelines – https://education.nt.gov.au/policies/health-safety#mandatory_reporting
- Recording and reporting student injuries guidelines and procedures – https://education.nt.gov.au/policies/health-safety#recording_and_reporting
- Safety in school sport policy – https://education.nt.gov.au/policies/health-safety#school_sport
- School swimming, water safety programs and aquatic activities policy and procedures – <https://education.nt.gov.au/policies/health-safety/swimming-and-water-safety>
- Sexual behaviour in children guidelines – https://education.nt.gov.au/policies/health-safety#sexual_behaviour

- Working with children clearance notices (Ochre Card) policy – https://education.nt.gov.au/policies/conduct#working_with_children_clearance

The following policy documents are for staff use and accessible on the Document Centre:

- Delegations policy – http://ed.ntschoools.net/documentcentre/pfgdocs/2/Delegations/Department_of_Education_Delegations_Policy.PDF
- NTG travel policy statement: overseas travel - http://ed.ntschoools.net/documentcentre/Pages/show_all.aspx?RootFolder=pfgdocs%2F2/Travel&doctype=Policy
- Official travel guidelines and procedures – http://ed.ntschoools.net/documentcentre/pfgdocs/2/Travel/Official_Travel_Guidelines_and_Procedures.pdf
- Official travel policy - <http://ed.ntschoools.net/finance/travel/Pages/Travel.aspx>
- Official vehicle allocation, use and management – http://ed.ntschoools.net/documentcentre/Pages/a-z_more.aspx?topic=Finance|Official%20Vehicles&letter=v&doctype1=Policy&doctype3=Guideline
- Remote travel guidelines – http://ed.ntschoools.net/documentcentre/pfgdocs/2/Travel/Remote_Travel_Guidelines_22.06.2021.pdf

6.3. Resources

- Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade travel advice – <https://www.dfat.gov.au/travel/Pages/travel>
- National Quality Framework – <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/national-quality-framework>
- NT Public Sector Teacher and Educator Enterprise Agreement – <https://ocpe.nt.gov.au/employment-conditions-appeals-grievances/current-enterprise-agreements>
- School of Sport Education NT policies - <https://sporteducation.nt.edu.au/forms-and-policies/policies>
- Teacher Registration Board's Managing Professional Boundaries guidelines provide guidance when considering special care relationships and professional boundaries – <https://www.trb.nt.gov.au/system/files/uploads/files/2019/Managing%20Professional%20Boundaries%20-%20Guidelines%20for%20Teachers.pdf>
- Teacher Responsibilities Guide – <https://education.nt.gov.au/careers-in-education/teacher-responsibilities-guide>

6.4. Supporting documents

- The following supporting documents are for staff use and are available on the Policy and advisory library on eLearn – <https://elearn.ntschoools.net/policies/4262>
 - Excursions - parent consent form
 - Excursions - planning checklist
 - Excursion application – Category A and B
 - Excursion application – Category C and D
 - Excursions – interstate or international travel - memo for in-principle approval

- Category C (Interstate) and Category D (International) travel forecast – <https://elearn.ntschoools.net/form/category-c-and-d-excursions-fore>

Acronyms	Full form
FAQ	Frequently Asked Questions
NT	Northern Territory

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6	August 2020	Quality School Systems and Support	Amended to meet the Early Childhood and Education Services Regulations. Minor amendments including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update to current NTG template Plain English amendments Update of titles post realignment
7	April 2021	Quality School Systems and Support	Minor amendments including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aligning principal and teaching principal role and responsibility Role clarity for QSSS Remove requirement of movement requisition for category A and B Remove requirement of category A and B excursions being submitted to QSSS
8	October 2022	Quality Standards and Regulation – Operational Policy	Administrative amendments to align roles and responsibilities to the structural alignment in effect from 1 July 2022, including NTG template and minor formatting

Version	Date	Author	Changes made
9	July 2023	School Operations	Minor amendments including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Addition of link to Teacher Responsibilities Guide• Removal of reference to Movement Requisition• Strengthened language on risk assessment