



South Grafton High School

Excellence and Innovation

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Excursion Policy

South Grafton High School is committed to providing a safe, secure, disciplined and quality learning environment in which students can develop their individual talents, interests and abilities through a curriculum that fosters the intellectual, physical, social and moral development of the student. Excursions are a valuable teaching and learning vehicle and are often integral to quality curriculum delivery.

The term excursion when used in this document relates to a learning experience external to the school site and conducted under the auspices of the school. The student group participating in the excursion may be a class or classes or students drawn from a number of classes. They may be, for example, a team, a performance group or an audience for a performance. An excursion can range from a brief visit of less than one hour to a local point of interest, to an extended journey occupying a number of days, weeks or months requiring overnight or long term accommodation.

Policy Statement

The following statements of policy apply to excursions:

1. Determining the educational value of an excursion must take account of the needs and resources of the school, the needs of the students and the total learning program.
2. Excursions are inclusive, and all students within the specific learning group are to be given the opportunity to participate.
3. A duty of care is owed to students in the school environment and while on excursions.
4. The Department'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 organizations.
5. 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.
6. A risk assessment is to be conducted and a risk management plan developed before seeking approval for any excursion.
7. Signed consent forms granting permission for students to participate in excursions and a medical information form are to be obtained from parents or caregivers. If a medical form has previously been collected for a student, the excursion organiser needs to be aware of its contents.
8. Safe transport or a safe walking route is to be organised for excursions.
9. Students must behave appropriately at all times while on excursions, including when animals are encountered.
10. Sufficient time should be allowed for, to thoroughly organise an excursion.
11. All policies of the DE and South Grafton High School are to be adhered to during all stages of the planning and implementation of any excursion.
12. Students on excursions are subject to the same codes of behaviour and discipline as they would be at school. Infringements of school rules and policies will be subject to disciplinary action

Where a student's behaviour on an excursion is such that it satisfies the criteria for a Head Teacher level or higher, this student may be excluded from the excursion, and under a teacher's supervision, sent home from the excursion at the parents' expense.

A Deputy Principal or the Principal is to be notified ASAP of any incidents of serious misbehaviour, and they are to notify the parents ASAP.

For minor disciplinary incidents, the teachers attending the excursion may impose sanctions during the excursion.

All cases are to be followed-up on returning to school.

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

1.1 While recognising the potential benefits of excursions, we must also recognise that such activities may interrupt normal learning routines of students. The rationale for any excursion should reference the school's curriculum objectives and should be relevant to their achievement.

1.2 Consider the possibility of traveling either on a weekend or overnight to minimize the time students and staff lose out of school.

1.3 "Free time" is not to be built into an itinerary if it is possible for the group to be at school undertaking normal activities - students in class and teachers teaching. While 'free time' is happening students are missing lessons and colleagues are doing extras to cover missing teachers.

1.4 Consider the range of venue / activity options - could the learning outcomes be met in another way, but with less expense, both to the students and the school?

1.5 Where whole year groups are required to attend, the logistics may be too large to conduct the excursion as a 'one-off'. The excursion may need to be repeated a second time. Where this is the case, the organisation of the excursion should be that whole classes are taken each time. This will not only minimize disruption to the school, but the creation of 'in lieu's' will mean that there is less demand on the pool of 'extras'.
This will also address the equity issue, providing the logistic support for all students to attend an activity, and doing away with the notion of "first in, first served".

1.6 Activities week will be of three school day's duration prior to the last day of Term 4. This will be the time allocated not only to *Interest Activities* that teachers wish to offer, but it will also be the time when major - year - experiential excursions are conducted.
Activities Week will not be offered to HSC students - this time is to be used for assessment activities.

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

2.1 With the exception of students who are currently on Head Teacher, Executive and Probationary Levels (as per Welfare & Discipline Policy), all students are to be given equal opportunity to attend an excursion; except in the case of overnight excursions those considered in Point 2.6

2.2 Costs should be organised to ensure that there is no undue financial burden imposed upon individual members of the group or their families. Where financial hardship is understood to be the reason for a student's non-participation, schools must endeavour to provide financial assistance.

2.3 Where an excursion is designed to meet compulsory learning outcomes, students identified in 2.1 are required to attend. Students and parents should be made aware that the excursion is considered as mandatory.

2.4 The support needs of students with disabilities or medical conditions will require careful consideration and consultation with parents and caregivers. Appropriate support should be provided for these students so they can access the learning experiences available through excursions

2.4.1 Through the Learning Support Team, School Learning Support Officer time may be organised to permit them to accompany the identified student.

2.4.2 The support needs of students with disabilities or medical conditions will require careful consideration and consultation with parents and caregivers. Appropriate support should be provided for these students so they can access the learning experiences available through excursions

2.5 Where a student is unable to attend an excursion for any reason, alternative arrangements are to be made for that student to achieve the desired learning outcomes.

2.6 Notwithstanding the requirements of 2.1, any student who has been assessed as being a risk to the safety and well-being of themselves, other students or teachers whilst on the excursion may not be permitted to attend an excursion. For example, any student who has 10 or more negative RISC (Sentral Wellbeing) entries would be considered such a risk, particularly to, but not exclusively to, an overnight excursion. This information, accompanied by the reasoning behind the decision is to be conveyed to the student and parents as soon as possible.

As with any other student not attending the excursion, this student is to be afforded the opportunity to achieve as many of the outcomes (or similar) as possible in a classroom environment with alternate activities.

3. A duty of care is owed to students while on an excursion. The Department'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.

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

The purpose of excursion *risk management* is to make excursions as safe as possible. Risk management processes are used to identify hazards, assess and then eliminate or control risks associated with excursions.

The degree of planning required is influenced by the nature of the excursion, the level of risk and the student group. For excursions that have previously been planned and conducted, previous risk management plans may be reviewed and updated.

An important component of the risk management process is consultation, which should include staff, and where appropriate external venue providers and parents.

3.2. Any excursion involving swimming or water activities and any excursion involving overnight stays, includes a member of staff who possesses current accreditation in cardiopulmonary resuscitation and emergency care. All other excursions must be accompanied by a member of staff who has undertaken emergency care training and whose qualifications are current.

All water activities must be fully supervised at ALL times

3.3. A *first aid kit* must be taken on all excursions. Anaphylaxis and Allergy Procedures must be followed as well.

3.4. A mobile phone is to be taken by at least one teacher on the excursion. The number of this phone is to be included on the Excursion Application.

3.5 Student/Teacher Ratio

3.5.1. To avoid undue disruption to the school as a whole, there is a limit of how many teachers who may be absent on excursions/activities at any one time. The use of the School Calendar will assist with this coordination.

3.5.2. As a starting point, the number of teachers required for an excursion should be guided by Department statements on class sizes

3.5.3 The number of students and teachers should take into account factors such as the age of the students, their maturity, the location of the excursion, specific needs of students, anticipated behaviour and the nature of the activities to be undertaken.

3.5.3.1 DE Guidelines for Specific Activities section of Guidelines for the Safe Conduct of Sport and Physical Activity in Schools policy specifies ratios for particular water and outdoor activities.

3.5.4 There must be sufficient numbers of appropriate, responsible adults, including support teachers and SLSOs, to ensure and assist with adequate supervision - duty of care will always remain with the teachers.

Unsupervised Activities.

- 3.6 On **rare** occasions, where it is proposed that an individual or a small group of **mature students** participate in a specialised excursion, it may be necessary for part of the excursion (e.g. independent travel) or all of the activity to take place without the direct supervision of a staff member. In such circumstances, it is imperative that parents or caregivers be fully informed of, and agree to the arrangements, and that the teacher in charge of the excursion takes all steps to ensure the safety and welfare of the unaccompanied students. This must be clearly stated in the permission notes, and the Principal must be fully aware of details.

4. The organisation of the excursion is to be done within the given time frames

- 4.1 Applications to conduct an excursion are to be submitted via a Head Teacher 10 school days prior to the activity pre approval at executive meeting.
- 4.2 The closing date for final payments (unless individual parents make alternate arrangements with the teacher-in-charge) for the excursion will be four school days prior to the activity. If the students fail to meet this deadline, the excursion will be cancelled. It is the responsibility of the teacher-in-charge to monitor payments by students
- 4.3 Where the activity involves round 2 and subsequent rounds of a CHS knockout competition, it is recognised that dates provided to the school may not allow for the conditions of 4.1 and 4.2 to be met. In this case the timeframes may be shortened.
- 4.4 For the forthcoming year, it is expected that all known activities and excursions are submitted for inclusion on the School Calendar. This document will be collated prior to the end of the school year, on a date to be advised by the Principal.
- It is the responsibility of teachers to ensure that their activity is planned and included, or be prepared to work around scheduled events.
- It is the responsibility of sport coaches to contact their respective conveners and be aware of the timing requirements for their sport.
- 4.5 Excursions / activities that have been duly set on the annual Calendar will have absolute priority over any subsequent activities that may also desire to use this date where the total number of staff who may be absent in that time exceeds five (5). This will apply to any activity that requires staff to be absent from class.
- CHS knock-out coaches will need to carefully consider the 3 dates they offer when playing an "at-home" round, and insist on being offered the 3 dates when playing an "away" round.