

Excursions Policy – Master

What is an Excursion?

An excursion is any activity organised by Penola Catholic College (except work experience) whereby students leave the College grounds for the purpose of engaging in educational activities. Refer to our Work Experience Policy for information with respect to work experience.

Why have an Excursion Policy?

A teacher has a Duty of Care to take reasonable steps to protect students from any injury that the teacher may have reasonably foreseen.

Because excursions are conducted off College premises, away from the usual protections of the College environment, they have the potential to present unique risks for Penola Catholic College, our students, our teachers and others involved.

The purpose of this policy is to manage the risks associated with College excursions and to make excursions as safe as possible. All WorkSafe Policies and Student Duty of Care Policies continue to apply on excursions unless it is impractical for them to do so.

Different Types of Excursions

During the course of the College year Penola Catholic College conducts or students attend, a number of different types of excursions including:

- Regular Off Campus Activities;
- Single Day Excursions;
- Overnight Excursions;
- Recreation and Outdoor Activities; and
- International Excursions

As different types of excursions involve different types of risks separate policies have been developed to manage the risks associated with each type of excursion.

General Principles to be Followed

When planning an excursion the following general principles must be followed:

- Excursions should relate to the College's educational program;
- Excursions must be age/stage appropriate;
- Excursions must provide valuable outcomes for students;
- Excursions are inclusive and all students within a specific learning group are to be given the opportunity to participate;
- Excursions should be planned so to not interfere with exams; and
- Excursions are to be costed in the most cost beneficial way possible.

Proposing an Excursion

A teacher who wishes to put forward a proposal for an excursion may do so by completing an Excursion Proposal Form and submitting it to the Organisational Team.

Excursion Management Plan

In the event the Organisational Team provides preliminary approval, a teacher will need to prepare an Excursion Management Plan which will then need to be submitted to the Principal for final approval.

An Excursion Management Plan Template is a written document which is used to identify risks posed by a particular excursion, and to assess those risks having regard to mitigation strategies that have been developed.

Penola Catholic College has developed an Excursion Management Plan Template to assist staff seeking approval for a particular type of excursion. Where similar excursions have been conducted in the past previous Excursion Management Plans should be reviewed and if suitable, used as a starting point for planning the new excursion.

A link to the Excursion Management Plan Template can be accessed from the Related Documents section at the end of this policy.

Copies of previous Excursion Management Plans and Risk Assessments are available on MyPenola.

Final Approval for Excursions

Final approval for an excursion may only be given by the Principal upon satisfaction that the risks posed by the particular excursion have been appropriately identified and appropriate risk mitigation strategies have been developed which will be implemented effectively.

Approval is given by the Principal signing and dating a copy of the Excursion Management Plan.

The Principal shall notify the organiser once the excursion has been approved, or alternatively shall provide reasons if approval has not been granted.

Standard Risk Management Procedures for Excursions

Whilst the length, nature and activities involved in every excursion will be different there are a number of standard procedures that Penola Catholic College employs in order to minimise the risk of harm to students, staff and others.

These strategies are addressed in the Excursion Management Plan. They include ensuring:

Consultation

- All key stakeholders including students, staff, parents, and where appropriate external providers, are consulted as to the nature of the excursion, and any potential hazards which may be associated with the excursion.

Informed Consent

- Full details of the excursion have been provided to each student and their parents/carers; and
- All students attending the excursion have received written permission from their parents/carers to attend.

Clothing and Equipment

- All students attending the excursion have been provided with details of excursion requirements such as suitable clothing and equipment.

Venue Selection

- The appropriate nature and location of the selected venue/s.

Consideration of the risk of bushfire in the location of the selected venue/s.

Transport Arrangements

- Appropriate transportation arrangements; and
- Appropriate drop off and pick up arrangements.

Known Medical Issues

- All parents are requested, prior to the excursion, to provide up-to-date details of any medical conditions which, if not known to supervising staff, may present a heightened risk to their child; and
- Where a child is considered at higher risk, because of an existing medical condition, appropriate mitigation strategies are implemented.

Student's Capacity

- That any required skills have been identified and the planned activities are appropriate for the student's capacity; and
- Where a student is identified as not having the necessary capacity, appropriate risk management strategies are implemented for that particular child.

Supervision

- The development of a supervision strategy;
- The availability of supervisors with appropriate competencies, skills and experience (including first aid);
- An appropriate supervisor-student ratio having regard to the nature and length of the excursion;
- Consideration of the supervision requirements for activities undertaken on excursions, having regard to:
 - the nature and particular risks of the activity, such as swimming and other water-based activities; and
 - the risks presented by the activity venue and its location, such as bushfires and other environmental hazards.
- Appropriate care is taken in selecting non-teaching staff to perform a supervisory role during the excursion (including the conduct of Working with Children Checks); and

- All supervisors are properly briefed with respect to all aspects of the Excursion Management Plan.

External Providers

- Where possible external providers are selected from our Approved Supplier List as outlined in our Outsourcing (External Providers) Policy; and
- Due diligence has been conducted on all external providers involved in the excursion to ensure their competency, their compliance with workplace safety laws and other relevant legislation.

Critical Incident (Emergency Situations) Response

- Appropriate emergency response procedures are in place.

Communication Strategies

- Appropriate communication strategies are in place.

Insurance

- Appropriate insurance coverage is in place.

Additional Risk Assessments

Because the risks associated with each type of excursion vary, in addition to this policy which outlines general procedures, Penola Catholic College has developed specific procedures and risk assessments for particular types of excursions and particular types of activities. These can be accessed through the Related Policies links at the end of this policy.

Where the need for additional risk assessments have been identified these must be included in the Excursion Management Plan.

Incident Notification

If during the course of an excursion an incident occurs (e.g. a lost child), whether or not the incident results in injury to a student, the incident must be immediately reported to the Principal.

Excursion Debriefing

At the conclusion of every excursion (including at the conclusion of Regular Off Campus Activities), the Teacher in Charge is required to complete the Excursion Debriefing Form which is contained in the Excursion Management Plan, and provide a copy to the Organisational Team.

Staff debriefings following excursions provide an excellent opportunity to identify successful practice, areas of risk not previously considered, as well as areas for improvement.

Record Keeping

Copies of all records relating to a particular excursion must be maintained for at least 7 years from the date of completion of the excursion. If an incident or accident occurs then all the records will be maintained indefinitely.

Records to be maintained include:

- A copy of the Excursion Management Plan signed by the Principal and the Teacher in Charge;
- A copy of the Excursion Debriefing Form;
- Names and contact details of the Teacher in Charge;
- Names and contact details of all supervisors, including non-teaching staff and parents;
- Names and contact details of all students;
- A copy of child protection declarations for non-teaching staff and parents (where required) who acted in a supervisory capacity during the excursion;
- A copy of any contracts that Penola Catholic College may have entered into with third party organisations;
- A copy of any risk assessments; and
- In the event that an incident occurred during the excursion, copies of all reports, documents and or records (including communication records) relating to the particular incident.

Related Policies

Excursions Policy – Regular Off Campus Activities

Excursions Policy – Single Day Excursion

Excursions Policy – Overnight Excursion

Excursions Policy – Recreation & Outdoor Education

Excursions Policy – International Excursions

Outsourcing (External Service Providers) Policy

Related Documents

Excursion Management Plan Template

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