

Blue Mountains Steiner School

Policies and Procedures



Excursions and Other Visits Policy and Procedures

Introduction

Blue Mountains Steiner School places high educational value on school excursions and other visits. Excursions and other visits offer enrichment and cultural enhancement to the planned Steiner curriculum and should reflect the educational philosophy and ethos of the School.

1.1 General Requirements

1. An excursion is a learning experience external to the school site, initiated, organised and supervised by Blue Mountains Steiner School and approved by the College as appropriate. Certain excursions are already approved by College that are in keeping with the Blue Mountains Steiner School Curriculum. See "College Pre-approved Excursions" document.
2. An excursion is an integral part of the school's curriculum and specifically of the students' learning program and must be justified on this basis.
3. An excursion can range from a brief visit of less than one hour to a local point of interest, to an extended journey over a number of days and requiring overnight accommodation.
4. Since excursions offer enrichment to the planned curriculum all students within the specific learning group should be given the opportunity to participate unless exceptional circumstances exist.
5. The same standards of conduct and the obligation to report suspected child abuse, improper conduct of a sexual nature and misconduct apply throughout all stages of an excursion as they do in schools.

1.2 Specific Requirements

1. All excursions must have the approval of the Principal. Adequate notice is essential.
2. Prior to an excursion taking place, there must be consultation between the Principal and staff concerned with its organization. Parents or guardians should be informed of the full details of any planned excursion in writing, including details of all planned activities for the excursion. A permission note is needed for all excursions and camps.
3. All staff or volunteers attending an overnight camp/ or excursion must have an up to date WWCC that has been sited and kept on file by the office administration team.
4. While recognizing the potential benefits of excursions, Blue Mountains Steiner School must also recognize that such activities may interrupt normal learning routines of students. Accordingly, the Principal must consider the educational value of a proposed excursion in relation to the total needs and resources of the school and in relation to the students' needs and total learning program.
5. All teachers participating in an excursion must accept responsibility for students in their care for the duration of the excursion.
6. Signed permission notes and medical forms must be obtained prior to the excursion.
7. Cost of planned curriculum-based excursions will be stated on the Term's Fee Invoice for the term the excursion is planned to take place. Payment will be included in any payment plan already in place.
8. Cost of excursions organized after the start of term will be stated on the permission note sent home for the parent/guardian to sign and the payment for the excursion made at the office.
9. If the parent/guardian is unable to pay before the date of the excursion they should contact the office to make a suitable arrangement to pay.
10. If the student is unable to attend and payment has been made to the School, a refund will be considered based on individual circumstances. Any refund approved will be made by way of reduction in the following terms fees.
11. School Council approval is required where the school is requested to cover additional costs or costs in advance.

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12. Where financial hardship is understood to be the reason for a student's non-participation, Blue Mountains Steiner School may consider financial assistance.
13. Blue Mountains Steiner School recommends all students to actively participate in excursions. However, all activities that involve risks are optional (parents to be informed) and the class teacher and the Principal may use their discretion to decide if the reason for absence of a child from an excursion or activity is permitted.
14. If parents do not permit participation of a student on an excursion, the child will remain at home wherever possible.

Does a School's Duty of Care Extend to Students on Excursions?

- 1) Where excursions are part of the school curriculum or facilitated by or approved by a school, the school owes a duty of care to its students while students are on those excursions. This is the case even if:
 - a) the school does not have direct control over the student during the excursion (or parts of it); or
 - b) the excursion is held after school, on the weekend or during school holidays.
- 2) Because of the non-delegable nature of the school's duty of care, a school cannot assume that once a student on an excursion is handed over to the supervision of another party (for example the excursion provider) that other party is solely responsible for the student's wellbeing.
- 3) While an excursion provider will have its own responsibilities, the school will also have responsibilities to take reasonable steps to ensure that the student is not exposed to risk of injury. This is the case whether the teacher(s) in charge of the excursion directly participate in managing activities comprising the excursion or not.
- 4) While the law recognises the advantages and aims of excursions, education must give way to safety. A balancing act is involved. Schools must strike a balance between supervision of children every moment they are under the school's care and the encouragement of independence of students.

What Obligations Does a School Have Under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (NSW) ('WHS Act') in Relation to Excursions?

- 5) The school will have an obligation (as a person conducting a business or undertaking) to **ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable**:
 - a) the health and safety of:
 - (i) workers engaged, or caused to be engaged by the person;
 - (ii) workers whose activities in carrying out work are influenced or directed by the person, while the workers are at work in the business or undertaking; and
 - a) that the health and safety of others is not put at risk from work carried out as part of the business or undertaking.
 - b) As is set out in the Information Sheet regarding Work Health and Safety, any school activity conducted elsewhere - such as an excursion - will be part of the school's undertaking and the school's duty as a 'person conducting a business or undertaking' will apply to that activity. The extent of the school's duty in relation to the activity will depend on what is 'reasonably practicable'. Other persons and entities involved in the activity will generally also be duty holders in relation to those activities.
- 6) Under its duty of care, a School is required to **take reasonable steps to ensure** that a student is not

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exposed to risk of injury. Under WHS legislation a school is required to **ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable** that the health and safety of students is not put at risk from work carried out as part of the business or undertaking.

While the duties are formulated differently, in general, the steps a school should take to fulfil its duty of care to students should also allow it to fulfil its obligation to ensure their health and safety under work health and safety legislation. However schools should err on the side of caution and, if a step is reasonably practicable the school should take it.

- 7) This policy does not focus on a school's obligations to its employees or other workers on excursions, but rather on its obligations to students. However, the school ensure that risks to workers are also included and addressed in risk assessments and risk management plans.

What Must a School do to Discharge its Duty of Care (and its Work Health and Safety Obligations)?

- 8) Whether or not a school has discharged its duty of care (or any work health and safety obligations) will depend on the particular circumstances in each case. This means that it is difficult to set out precisely how a school may discharge its duty of care (or work health and safety obligations) in respect of excursions. However, some guidance can be provided as to steps that the school can put in place to ensure that it is more likely to have discharged its duty of care (and work health and safety obligations) should a student suffer harm during an excursion. The information provided is by no means exhaustive.

What Steps Should a School Take Before the Excursion?

- 9) The Department of Education and Training has issued guidelines in relation to excursions ('**Excursions Policy**'). Schools should have regard to the requirements of this policy, as whether a school has discharged its duty of care may be assessed in relation to the requirements of this policy. For example, if proceedings are brought against a school, the Excursions Policy is likely to be put into evidence by the student.

Risk Assessment

- 10) The Excursions Policy requires that a school carry out a risk assessment and develop a risk management plan prior to the excursion. This would also be required under work health and safety law. This may or may not require a representative of the school to visit the excursion site. In many cases a briefing from a person responsible for the site will suffice. In other cases, especially where the activity is high risk or the site is unfamiliar, a site visit may be required prior to the excursion to assess the risks.
- 11) In determining whether a site visit is required, a school should have regard to:
 - a) the information provided by the excursion provider. Many excursion providers are experienced in providing the information required by the Excursions Policy and will provide sufficient information to schools for a risk assessment to be carried out and a risk management plan to be prepared without the need for a site visit. This information may be provided by way of documentation and/or a briefing from a person responsible for the site;
 - b) the nature of the excursion, including the location of the site and the riskiness of the activity to be undertaken;
 - b) the familiarity of the supervising teacher with the excursion site, including transport arrangements. For example, if public transport is to be used to attend the site, the supervising teacher should ensure that they are familiar with the transport arrangements; and
 - d) any special needs of the students participating in the excursion.
- 12) Obviously, the most cautious approach is to arrange a site visit prior to the excursion, but this may

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not always be practical or necessary.

- 13) Potential hazards and risks that may arise during each stage of the excursion should be identified and measures to eliminate or minimise these risks put in place.
- 14) Activities chosen for school excursions must be suitable for the students' ages, levels of maturity, experience, capacity and natural propensity for mischief.

School Policies

- 15) Schools should have in place policies relating to the following:
 - a) authorisation of excursions;
 - b) equipment to be taken on excursions (including first aid and other safety equipment);
 - c) the staff to student ratio on excursions; and
 - d) the training required for staff members participating in excursions.
- 16) In addition, schools should have specific policies in relation to adventure sports or high risk activities.
- 17) These policies should be followed when preparing for excursions.

Teachers

- 18) Schools must ensure that supervising teachers:
 - a) have been selected because they have appropriate skills and expertise;
 - b) have been extensively briefed on the nature of the excursion;
 - c) have been consulted about and involved in the preparation of the risk assessment and risk management plan for the excursion;
 - d) have been trained in relation to all relevant elements of the risk management plan;
 - e) understand their role and obligations including regarding supervision, emergency procedures and first aid.

Volunteers

- 19) A school should consider whether parents/guardians or other volunteers should assist in excursions. It is important to note that, because of the non-delegable nature of the duty of care (and work health and safety obligations), a school should ensure that there are sufficient teachers to properly administer the excursion and sufficient teachers and responsible volunteers to supervise the students.
- 20) If volunteers are to assist, a school must ensure that:
 - a) they are appropriately briefed in relation to their responsibilities, safety and behaviour requirements; and
 - b) supervisory roles and responsibilities are clearly allocated and understood by all involved.
- 21) Volunteers should complete a 'Prohibited Employment Volunteer/Student Declaration'.

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Safety

- 22) Schools should consider whether children who have not displayed sensible, reliable behaviour at school should be excluded from participating in school excursions.
- 23) Schools should ensure that they are aware if any safety equipment is required for the excursion.
- 24) If safety equipment is required schools must:
 - a) ensure that it is provided by the excursion provider (and make such enquiries as are required to satisfy themselves that the equipment is properly maintained); or
 - b) ensure that it is provided by the school; or
 - c) advise the students of the need to provide safety equipment and that participation in the excursion will not be permitted without such equipment.
- 25) If, as part of excursions, students participate independently, without direct supervision from teachers, schools should ensure that parents/guardians are fully informed of and agree to the arrangements and that all possible steps are taken to ensure the safety and welfare of the unaccompanied students including: giving students proper instructions, checking the travel details; giving students instructions in relation to emergency strategies and so on.

Medical information

- 26) For many excursions it will not be necessary to collect a new medical information form.
- 27) The school should, however, ensure that any medical information held by the school is appropriate and takes account of the activities provided by the excursion. If it does not, additional medical information should be sought. This can be dealt with in the permission note.
- 28) Schools should know the health and fitness of students who are to participate in excursions and make a decision as to whether the excursion activities are appropriate in light of this knowledge.
- 29) Schools must ensure that permission to obtain appropriate medical treatment if required is obtained from parents/guardians. This can be dealt with in the permission note.
- 30) The school must ensure that first aid procedures are prepared and known by teachers and volunteers during the excursions.
- 31) Particular health care plans may need to be prepared for students with special needs.

Permission notes

- 32) Schools should ensure that parents/guardians are kept informed about all excursions students attend.
- 33) Schools must obtain the permission of a student's parent/guardian prior to the student's participation in the excursion. One way of approaching this is for the school to provide parents/guardians with a 'master' permission form at the beginning of each term/year:

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- a) setting out the kinds of excursions that students will be participating in during the term;
 - b) briefly explaining what each excursion involves; and
 - c) seeking the consent of the parent/guardian to all of the excursions listed on the form.
- 34) The 'master' permission form could be prepared per grade or, for older students, per subject. The advantage of such a form is that it provides parents/guardians with a significant amount of notice of proposed excursions.
- 35) The 'master permission form' would, however, need to be supplemented by additional information provided in relation to specific excursions as and when they occur. The supplementary information is required because schools must provide sufficient information to allow parents to make an informed decisions as to whether or not to allow their child to participate in a particular excursion. Schools should make an administrative decision as to whether a 'master permission form' would assist.
- 36) If a 'master permission form' is used, parents/guardians should then be advised of each excursion prior to its occurrence, and given the opportunity to withdraw their consent.
- 37) Permission forms or supplemental information provided in relation to particular excursions should be tailored to the particular excursion, but include, at a minimum, the following information:
- location of excursion;
 - description and aims of excursion;
 - teacher in charge;
 - excursion itinerary/information sheet;
 - proposed travel arrangements; and
 - other relevant information.
- 38) It is important to note that the consent of a parent or guardian to a student's participation in an excursion does not absolve the school of liability or alter the school's duty of care. Parents/guardians do not-- in consenting to a student's participation in an excursion-- consent to negligent acts or omissions of the school. Rather the purpose of the permission form is to provide parents/guardians with sufficient information in order to:
- a) make an informed decision as to whether their child should be permitted to participate in an excursion; and
 - b) assess whether any information about a child's special needs is required.
- 39) For events involving specific skills, parents/guardians should be required to indicate the skill level of the student.
- 40) If permission is not granted for a student to attend an excursion, appropriate alternate arrangements must be made.
- 41) A sample Master Permission Form is attached.

Transport

- 42) Safe transport or walking arrangements must be made for excursions.

Student Briefings and Preparation

- 43) Prior to the excursion, students should be given information about the excursion including:

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- a) general information about the aims of the excursion and the activities to expect;
 - b) information about appropriate behaviour while on the excursion;
 - c) instructions to follow directions given by (as appropriate) teachers, volunteers, third party providers and so on. In particular, students should be advised to follow all safety instructions;
 - d) information about particular risks they may face during the excursion. Any safety information that has been provided to the school in relation to the excursion should be passed on to the students;
 - e) information in relation to dealing with unexpected situations and risks that might occur during the excursion; and
 - f) information in relation to steps that should be taken should a student feel unsafe or uncomfortable at any time during the excursion. This information should include ways of seeking help should concern arise during an excursion.
- 44) Students should be told that they have a right to feel safe during excursions. Students should be advised of ways to seek help if they are concerned about the behaviour of any person participating in the excursion.
- 45) If any pre-excursion activities or preparation are required, the briefing should take place early enough to allow the activities/preparation to take place.
- 46) Where the excursion involves an activity that students have not previously undertaken or require training in, schools must ensure that instructions and assistance are given to novice students until they acquire the necessary skills.

Changes to Circumstances

- 47) Schools should ensure that appropriate contingency plans are in place in the event of inclement weather or changes in the circumstances of the excursion environment.
- 48) In the lead up to the excursion schools must (as appropriate):
- a) check safety warnings;
 - b) consult relevant authorities;
 - c) monitor weather conditions; and
 - d) be prepared to cancel or amend the excursion due to changing circumstances or safety concerns.

Third Party Providers

- 49) Where a third party provider is to conduct the excursion, a school must be satisfied that the third party provider is sufficiently experienced and competent to carry out the excursion.
- 50) The level of investigation required will depend on:
- a) the nature of the excursion;
 - b) any special characteristics of the students participating in the excursion;
 - c) the riskiness of the activities to be undertaken on the excursion;
 - d) the skills and experience of the teachers in relation to the activities to be undertaken on the excursion;
 - e) the school's past experience with the third party provider; and
 - f) the supervising teacher's familiarity with the location of the excursion.

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- 51) While the use of external providers does not remove the duty of care or exclude the school's liability, in relation to duty of care, it can assist the school where they are able to rely on expertise that the school does not have, limit the matters which a school must consider, reduce the risk of being sued or share the burden of any liability.
- 52) However, under work health and safety legislation, while the external provider will have obligations under work health and safety legislation, the school will continue to have overlapping obligations. A school needs to ensure that it is satisfied that third party providers will take all steps necessary to ensure, so far as reasonably practicable, the health and safety of workers and students and that it is satisfied as to the experience and competence of a service provider.
- 53) Depending on the circumstances and the activity involved, a school may need to make some or all of the following inquiries:

Safety

- a) request copies of or information as to the:
- i. safety policies implemented by the third party provider;
 - ii. nature of, and steps taken to eliminate or minimise, known hazards;
 - iii. training, supervision and monitoring that will be in place to ensure compliance with safe procedures;
 - iv. safety record of the third party provider; and
 - v. emergency procedures and first aid arrangements in place;
- b) request confirmation that equipment and machinery (including personal protective equipment) is maintained, repaired and in good working order;

Personnel

- c) request copies of the curriculum vitae of guides who will be in charge of students and request confirmation that the guides have appropriate expertise and qualifications for the activities being undertaken;
- d) confirm that the provider and any person working with students is appropriately accredited to work with children, including under child protection legislation;

Insurance

- e) request evidence of the third party provider's public liability insurance;

General

- f) request references from previous participants;
- g) make inquiries of the Department of Fair Trading to determine whether there has been any complaints about the third party provider;
- h) request evidence of accreditation/licensing of the venue and its staff for the activities to be undertaken;
- i) (request information about access and special requirements for students with special needs; and
- j) confirm the availability of appropriate facilities for example: refreshments, toilets.

Depending on the nature of the excursion, and particularly the level of risk involved, the school may want to review some or all of this material, rather than simply requesting confirmation that it exists. The higher the risk the more involved the school should be.

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Consultation

- 54) Where there are a number of duty holders e.g. the school and the third party provider, they should consult in relation to safety issues.

Excursions run by Schools

- 55) Where excursions are run by schools, schools must:

- a) choose an area safe for the age and skill level of students;
- b) choose activities safe for the age and skill level of students;
- c) use proper equipment in good condition which is checked regularly;
- d) ensure an adequate supervision ratio is maintained at all times;
- e) actively supervise throughout the activity;
- f) ensure that the qualifications of all staff are appropriate and current;
- g) review the site or route beforehand;
- h) consult experts (if appropriate);
- i) train teachers and students beforehand (if appropriate); and
- j) develop emergency procedures appropriate to the activity.

- 56) In determining what precautions to take, schools must have regard to the age of students, the risks associated with the excursion/activity and the particular risks facing a particular group (for example a co-ed versus a single sex group or a group of students with special needs).

What Steps Must a School Take During the Excursion?

- 57) Immediately prior to the excursion, students should be reminded:

- a) of any specific safety instructions given in relation to the excursion;
- b) of appropriate behaviour while on the excursion; and
- c) to follow instructions given to them by persons in authority for the duration of the excursion.

- 58) Teachers must implement control systems to ensure that students are supervised at all times during excursions and do not become lost. This might include head counts, buddy systems, provision of maps, and the arrangement of rendezvous points and so on.

- 59) Teachers must ensure that behavioural standards are enforced during the excursion and that the skylarking and other inappropriate behaviour is prevented.

- 60) Even where a teacher is unfamiliar with an excursion site or the activities to be undertaken on an excursion, the teacher can take steps to discharge the school's duty of care by:

- a) inspecting the premises to ensure that they appear safe;
- b) familiarising themselves with emergency procedures, including the location of emergency exits;
- c) satisfying themselves that the equipment to be used is apparently safe and is under the control of competent and careful people who are supervising its use;

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- d) satisfying themselves that the premises are staffed by people:
 - i. engaged in active supervision; and
 - ii. apparently competent, careful and experienced; and
 - e) observing the checks and inspections carried out by the provider to ensure they are adequate.
- 61) Teachers should continue to supervise students throughout the excursion, even in the course of activities conducted by third party providers. This is because the school's duty of care is non-delegable. Accordingly, the staff to student ratio must be sufficient to maintain control of students throughout the excursion.
- 62) If a teacher considers that a risk to the students has arisen the teacher must take steps to eliminate or minimise that risk.
- 63) If the excursion is to take place outside, students and others should be encouraged to wear appropriate sun protection.
- 64) Students must not be permitted to take part in 'extra' activities in the course of an excursion if these activities are of a kind that would normally require the consent of parents/guardians.
- 65) Where the activities undertaken require specific skills, teachers should consider whether it is appropriate to separate novices from more experienced students in order to prevent injuries.
- 66) Teachers should ensure that, where relevant, they have a copy of a student's medical record or special medical needs with them during the excursion.

Risk Warnings

- 67) Appropriate risk warnings may assist in reducing a school's liability for breach of duty of care. A separate Information Sheet has been prepared in relation to Risk Warnings. The provision of a risk warning will not impact on a school's work health and safety obligations or potential exposure for breach of those obligations.
- 68) As a risk warning is not effective unless it is given by or behalf of the party seeking to rely on it, a risk warning given by a third party excursion provider will not protect the school. Schools should have regard to these risk warnings and determine whether a similar warning should be given on behalf of the school.
- 69) Risk warnings should be provided to both students and parents.
- 70) Risk warnings given pursuant to the provisions of the *Civil Liability Act 2002* will only be effective where the excursion is a recreational activity within the meaning of that Act. There remains little case law on this aspect of the legislation at this stage, the educational purpose of many excursions may preclude the application of the provisions relating to risk warnings.
- 71) In addition, the risk warning provisions do not apply if the student was required by the school to attend the excursion.

Sporting Excursions

- 72) See separate Information Sheet relating to Inter-School Sport.

High Risk Excursions

- 73) Excursions that involve interstate or overseas travel, overnight stays or risky activities (such as adventure tours and camping) are higher risk and require additional care and planning as well as

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specific parental consent as set out in the attached sample consent forms.

74) Specific measures must be taken to deal with the individual risks these excursions face. Of particular importance is:

- a) ensuring the supervision ratio is adequate;
- b) ensuring supervising teachers and others in positions of responsibility have appropriate experience and qualifications;
- c) ensuring contingency plans and emergency procedures are in place; and
- d) being prepared to alter plans should conditions change or risks arise

STAFF TO STUDENT RATIO

75)

All elements of the Blue Mountains Steiner School Outdoor Education programme are required to meet the Department of Education minimum standards for student supervision. Each camp or group will be supervised by a minimum of two staff, one of whom must be employed as a teacher by Blue Mountains Steiner School (State qualified, NSW Institute of Teachers, Police Check). Minimum standards vary in the event of students with disabilities, impairments or special needs.

Minimum staff to student ratios are:

- Base camp: 1:10
- Bushwalking/Orienteering: 1:6
- Horse Riding: 1:6 (with a minimum of 2 riding qualified and experienced staff)
- Canoeing: 1:6 (boats)
- Sea Kayaking: 1:6 (boats)
- Swimming 1:10 for competent swimmers, 1:6 for non-swimmers (see Swimming Policy, Staff must hold a Bronze Medallion)

76. Staff Roles Responsibilities and Experience

A) Outdoor Education Coordinator

The Outdoor Education Coordinator is responsible for the development and administration of the Outdoor Education Programme including:

- Upholding and maintaining the ethos of Blue Mountains Steiner School and the Outdoor Education Programme
- Planning and budgeting of the outdoor education programme
- Safety Management, Emergency Procedures
- Parental consent forms
- Organisation of individual camps including briefings for staff, students and parents; accommodation; transport; food; equipment; packing.
- Promotion of the overall programme

B) Outdoor Education Teacher

The Outdoor Education Teacher is responsible for delivery of individual camps. The Outdoor Education teacher has specific responsibility for:

- Curriculum delivery
- Pre---camp briefings
- Place Knowledge
- Bush Awareness
- Transport Driving
- Skill Implementation
- Camp---site set---up
- Safety

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- Daily Programme
- Activity Management and supervision
- Camp Rules, Discipline & Pastoral Care

Required qualifications and experience:

- Knowledge of activities and place to be visited in the Outdoor Education Programme
- Knowledge and upholding of Steiner Education Philosophy
- Bachelor of Arts (Outdoor Education) or equivalent
- Wilderness First---Aid /Remote Area First Aid or equivalent experience
- Heavy Vehicle Licence (& Drivers Certificate if required)
- Bronze Medallion

C) Outdoor Education Assistant

Outdoor Education Assistants are responsible for assisting the Outdoor Education Teacher in the delivery of individual camps. Ideally students will know the Outdoor Education Assistant (preferably employing the same assistant for the whole year). Assistants have responsibility to assist outdoor education teachers in:

- Curriculum delivery
- Place Knowledge
- Bush Awareness
- Skill Implementation
- Camp---site set---up
- Safety
- Daily Programme
- Activity Management and Supervision
- Camp Rules, Discipline & Pastoral Care
- Required qualifications and experience:
 - Remote area First---Aid or Level 2 Workplace First---Aid
 - Car Licence
 - Knowledge of place to be visited and activities in the Outdoor Education Programme
 - Knowledge and upholding of Steiner Education Philosophy
 - Bronze Medallion

D) Guardian / Class / Subject Teacher (in attendance)

Class and Subject Teachers form a link to school and provide necessary insights into each student. Class teachers are responsible for assisting the Outdoor Education Teacher in the delivery of individual camps. Teachers have responsibility for:

- Delivery of curriculum
- Camp Rules, Discipline & Pastoral Care

E) Guardian / Class Teacher (not in attendance)

Class Guardians support the Outdoor Education Program before and after a camp. They assist students to prepare for camp and translate into meaning after the event. Class Guardian responsibilities include:

- Delivery of curriculum
- Collection of Medical and Parental Consent Forms
- Organisation of Tent Groups
- Organisation of Cooking Groups
- Informing Outdoor Education Teacher of specialty needs
- Class work link before and after camp
- Student Preparation

The Outdoor Education programme at the Blue Mountains Steiner School is designed to expose Students to unfamiliar environments, activities, and experiences. To ensure their experiences are educationally rewarding, it is essential that prior to outdoor education camps, students are prepared educationally, physically, and psychologically.

Outdoor Education staff need to be aware of students' abilities and needs to ensure maximum camp participation. Some programmes may need to be modified to meet this objective.

Students and parents will be provided with information about the camp well in advance including the nature of the camp, the venue, food, clothing and equipment. They will also be briefed on the specific requirements for their positive participation, menu planning, navigation, safety procedures, expected behaviour, and essential outdoor skills and knowledge.

77. Student Code of Conduct

A) Smoking, Drugs & Alcohol

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No Student is permitted to consume alcohol, smoke or take un-prescribed drugs during the Outdoor Education programme. Students and parents will be informed of this before departure and warned that any student who fails to comply will be disciplined and immediately returned to school or home at the parents cost.

B) Electronic Devices & Mobile Phones

No Student is permitted to bring electronic devices or mobile phones on the Outdoor Education programme. These the experience of being in the Australian bush and detract from the community ethos that the programme nurtures. Students and parents will be informed of this before departure and warned that any student who fails this policy will be disciplined and the device confiscated.

C) Food Packaging

- Remove advertising and commercialism from our experiences
- Reduce waste to an absolute minimum.
- Educate Students to minimise packaging in their everyday lives.
- Encourage Students to think in an environmentally conscientious manner.

Excessively packaged foods are inconsistent with these aims. Students will be encouraged to remove unnecessary packaging from their food items and eventually eliminate unwisely packaged goods from their diet.

D) Student Behaviour

Students and parents will be made aware of the standards of behaviour expected during outdoor education camps and that while on camp disciplinary measures will apply consistent with the school's Pastoral Care and Positive Behaviour Policy.

E) Consequences of Misbehaviour

In extreme breaches in standards of behaviour, outdoor staff may determine that a student should return home during a camp. In such circumstances, the parent will be advised of the:

- Circumstances associated with the decision to send the Student home
- Time when the parent may collect the Student from the camp, or the anticipated time that the Student will arrive home.

Consideration will be given to the age and maturity of the student when travel arrangements are made. Parents will be responsible for any costs associated with student's return.

78) Emergency Procedures

Emergencies that occur during the Outdoor Education programme are subject to the general provisions of the

In the event of an emergency during the Outdoor Education Programme, excursion, the Outdoor Education Co-ordinator will contact the Principal or in his absence the faculty chair. The Principal will:

- Gather all necessary facts from Outdoor Education Staff on location including number of students involved, current condition and location of students, actions already taken (services notified) and likely next events and timeframe.
- Notify appropriate authorities, teachers and ancillary staff as appropriate.
- Inform parents or guardians of the situation and debrief upon arrival back at school.
- Establish recovery room within school for affected students and a waiting room for parents.
- Arrange counselling for parents, staff and Students as appropriate.
- If necessary respond to the media.

79) Emergency Contact Numbers

Outdoor Education Phone

- 1) School Phone 4758 6044
- 2) Martin Buckmaster 0401 587 755

Emergency Contact Person

- 1) Martin Buckmaster 0401 587 755
- 2) Police/Fire/ Ambulance 000.

When contacting either parents or the school's Emergency Contact person, do not rely on voice-mail messages. If for whatever reason parents cannot be contacted directly by Outdoor education staff, the Emergency Contact Person must be advised. In any emergency a detailed incident report form must be filled out by the Outdoor Education Staff and delivered to the Principal.

Blue Mountains Steiner School

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CHECKLIST FOR SCHOOL EXCURSIONS

Minimum Steps - Before the Excursion:

- 1) Ensure school is aware of requirements e.g. Department of Education and Training Excursions
- 2) Carry out a risk assessment and prepare a risk management plan.
- 3) Ensure school policies in relation to excursions are adhered to.
- 4) If appropriate (in particular if the excursion is to a new and unknown area where high risk activities are to be undertaken), arrange for a representative of the school to attend the site for the purpose of assessing any risks, becoming familiar with transport arrangements and so on.
- 5) Obtain permission from the student's parent/guardian.
- 6) If volunteers are to assist on the excursion, ensure that they are provided with an appropriate briefing in relation to their responsibilities, safety and behavioural requirements. Volunteers should also be required to complete a 'Prohibited Employment Declaration' prior to being permitted to participate in an excursion.
- 7) Ascertain whether any safety equipment is required and, if so, ensure that it is provided.
- 8) Ensure safe transport arrangements are made.
- 9) Brief students in relation to:
 - a) the aims of the excursion;
 - b) appropriate behaviour while participating in the excursion;
 - c) the student's right to feel safe and steps to take if a student feels unsafe or uncomfortable.
- 10) Consider whether a risk warning is appropriate.
- 11) If third party providers are involved, take all reasonable steps to satisfy the school that they are fulfilling their safety obligations and consult about safety issues.

During the Excursion:

- 12) Maintain supervision of students throughout the excursion.
- 13) Ensure that any safety equipment required is utilised correctly by students.
- 14) Inspect the excursion site and become satisfied that:
 - a) the site is apparently safe;
 - b) any third party providers are apparently careful and competent; and
 - c) equipment is maintained and used appropriately.
- 15) Ensure safety equipment is used if required.
- 16) Be prepared to alter plans or cease the activity if conditions change.
- 17) Ensure that behavioural standards are enforced.

Blue Mountains Steiner School

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MASTER PERMISSION FORM

During term *[insert]*, year *[insert]* students may have the opportunity to participate in the following excursions:

[Name of excursion]

[Details of excursion including: likely timing; duration; a short description and aims of excursion (as appropriate)]

This form seeks your consent to your child's participation in the above excursions.

Please indicate your consent by marking the boxes next to the excursions you consent to your child attending and signing and returning this form.

Prior to each excursion, a notice will be sent containing additional information in relation to the particular excursion. If you no longer give permission for your child to attend the excursion, please advise the school in writing immediately.

Medical treatment

This form also seeks your consent to the school arranging medical treatment for your child while on an excursion should it become necessary.

You will be advised as soon as practicable of action taken in relation to medical treatment for your child.

Contact information

Please complete the 'Emergency contact information' section of this form. If this information changes, please advise the school in writing as soon as possible.

Insurance

The school's insurance does not extend to cover injuries to students while at school or on excursions. You should consider arranging insurance for your child for injury, disease or illness to your child resulting from school activities or school organised excursions.

Non-attendance at an excursion

If your child cannot attend an excursion due to illness or some other reason please notify the school immediately.

Blue Mountains Steiner School Policies and Procedures



CONSENT

I consent to my child participating in the excursions marked above:

NAME OF STUDENT:

YEAR OF STUDENT:

My child has the following special needs:

I understand that:

- I will receive an information letter containing information as to the specific excursion details prior to the excursion occurring;
- if I wish my child to attend a particular excursion I will forward my payment by the due date stated in the information letter; [Consider if appropriate. Some schools may include the cost of excursions in school fee notices]
- receipt of the money at the school for the excursion/activity/sport will be taken as parental consent for the student to participate;
- if, after forwarding payment to the school for an excursion/activity/sport, I wish to withdraw my consent for my child to participate in the excursion/activity/sport I will advise the school in writing as soon as possible.

I agree to:

- my child's returning to school if necessary in the event of illness, injury or non co-operation and to pay any expenses involved or to come and collect my child from the excursion;
- reimburse the school for any damage caused by my child;
- reimburse the school for any hospital, medical or ambulance expenses incurred by the school on behalf of my child.

Signature:
.....

Date:

Blue Mountains Steiner School Policies and Procedures



BLUE MOUNTAINS STEINER SCHOOL

Medical Form

Child's Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Mobile: _____

Emergency contact and phone number: _____

The following information is required for all children participating in _____

and is to be completed by parents/guardians and returned to the class teacher prior.

Please circle the applicable responses:

1. Is your child in good health? Yes No

2. Has your child suffered from any acute illness during the past 4 weeks? Yes No

3. Has your child been treated by a medical practitioner for any illness or injury during the past 4 weeks? If so, give details _____

4. Is your child taking any mixture, tablets or any other form of medication at present? Yes No
If so, give details _____

5. Does your child suffer from:
 Asthma or any allergic conditions? Yes No
 Skin conditions? Yes No
 Epilepsy, fits etc? Yes No
If so, give details _____

6. Has your child been fully immunised against tetanus? Yes No

7. Any other information about your child which the class teacher should be aware of _____

8. Please list any foods that cannot be eaten by your child due to allergies or religious/cultural reasons.

9. Do you give permission for First Aid administration?
 Homeopathic & Rescue Remedy Yes No
 Ointments (calendula, antiseptic) Yes No
 Panadol (in tablet form) Yes No

In the event of any accident or illness (considered serious by the class teacher) I authorize them obtaining, on my behalf, of such medical assistance as my child may require. I also undertake to pay medical fees and/or cost of medications which may be incurred while my child is at the camp.

Signature of parent/guardian: _____

Medicare number: _____



STUDENT DECLARATION

I agree to observe the rules of the excursions and to co-operate with the teachers throughout the

excursions. Student's signature: Date:

PRIVACY NOTICE

[School's privacy notice to be inserted]

ADDITIONAL INCLUSION HIGH RISK ACTIVITIES

I understand that the excursion to **[insert destination]** involves the following high risk activities that carry a risk of physical harm and/or loss and damage: **[insert]**. I am not aware of anything that would prevent my child participating in these activities.

I consent to my child participating in **[insert]**.

Signature: Date:

An organisation offering its service to Blue Mountains Steiner School but not under the auspices of the school may not use the name of the school. However if the organisation provides a school endorsed activity, it will be necessary for The College of Teachers to be assured of the bona fides of the care givers (eg After School Care Program)

Unless it has been specifically approved by The College of Teachers, activities cannot take place on the school's grounds.

Other policies/documents that may be relevant:

- College pre-approved excursions / curriculum-based excursions
- Transport Policy
- Visitor and Volunteer Policy and Trespass Guidelines
- Student Code of Conduct and Pastoral Care and Positive Behaviour Policies
- Risk Assessment Procedures
- Accident or Medical Emergency Procedures
- Excursions – *Information Sheet for AIS Member Schools*
- Water Based Activities – *Swimming Policy*
- Inter-School Sport – *Information Sheet for AIS Member School*
- Code of Conduct for the Care and Protection of Children – *AIS*
- Duty of Care - *Information Sheet for AIS Member Schools*
- WHS Information Sheet



Excursion Application to Principal

Excursion proposal _____

Participating group(s)Total Pupils

Date

Intended times: Departure Return

Travel arrangements (bus)

Proposed costs per pupil

Lunch arrangements

Aims and purpose of excursion _____

Pre excursion activities _____



Excursion Arrangements

Date Approved by College: OR College Pre-Approved Excursion:

Teacher – please record as each of the following steps is completed.

1. Travel arrangements confirmed
2. Recorded on term program board/diary
3. Parents notified of excursion details. Copy of letter attached to this file
4. Permission notes returned and filed. Retain till end of term.
5. Any risk assessment and security risk assessment. Attach to this file.
6. Prohibited employment checks for volunteers
7. Names of non-participating children
8. Rearrangement of duties for participating teachers
9. Cost of excursion and list of non-participating students given to admin for invoicing purposes

Teacher Duty

Replacement

.....
.....
.....

Name(s) of assisting parent(s):	Office Check – WWC number & Verified	
	Yes / No	Date:
	Yes / No	Date:
	Yes / No	Date:
	Yes / No	Date:
	Yes / No	Date:
	Yes / No	Date:
	Yes / No	Date:
	Yes / No	Date:



Post Excursion Details

Were aims achieved? Detail if not _____

Were activities appropriate? _____

What alterations would you suggest to improve a similar future excursion? _____

Would you recommend this excursion for repetition by another class? _____

Additional comments _____

Please attach copies of letters to parents.



CAMP ASSESSMENT FORM

Class Level _____

Camp Name & Location _____

Teacher _____ No of adults _____

Duration & Date _____

1. Brief description of activities/skills _____

2. Strengths/weaknesses/suitability for age group

3. Food

4. Sleeping Arrangements
