ST MARYS POLICY AND PROCEDURES

FOR OVERNIGHT EXCURSIONS

(e.g. school camps, excursions to Sydney and Canberra)

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Purpose of Policy and Procedures

St Mary's Primary School is committed to providing a safe and supportive learning environment for its students, staff and volunteers. This commitment includes the health and safety of staff and students when conducting curriculum activities at school or other locations.

School excursions enhance student learning by providing the opportunities for students to participate in curriculum-related activities outside the normal school routine. School activities are well planned curriculum-related activities that aim to maximise student learning experiences. All planned school excursions should be approved by the school principal and when more than one school is involved, principals of all participating schools should approve the excursion.

To ensure the health and safety of students and staff, schools are required to proactively manage all aspects of variations to school routine. The school's duty of care to students extends to school excursions and camps which are integral to student educational programs. Activities conducted away from schools may increase risks and therefore the standard of care required must reflect the increase in identified risks.

It is important when considering overnight excursions that the school is able to demonstrate that activities have been thoroughly planned to protect students, staff and others whilst undertaking the activity. <Insert name of school> recognises the additional responsibility and level of care that must be undertaken when students are taken by their school for overnight excursions.

This sample policy is intended to clarify requirements for the planning of overnight excursions so that legal obligations are met and that school values are upheld in what is undertaken. It will also provide a suggested formal procedure for obtaining the necessary approvals for excursions of this kind.

Role of the Principal

While recognising that excursions can have significant educational benefits, <insert name of school> is aware that such activities can be disruptive to academic study, both for students undertaking the excursion and for those students whose teachers are participating and are therefore absent from school. It also places additional financial pressures on parents.

In considering whether to proceed with an excursion of this type, the Principal must weigh carefully the educational value of a proposed excursion with the total needs and resources of the school and the financial burden for families of students. Consideration should be given to whether the excursion will provide students with significant educational opportunities not available by other means.

In planning excursions, Principals and staff need to be conscious of the legal and moral responsibility for student welfare that accompanies such activities. Arrangements for

care and supervision must reflect the greater degree of risk to students that can exist when travelling long distances within Australia.

Principals need to communicate to parents that such excursions are approved school activities and that staff will exercise the appropriate duty of care. Principals should consider the cost of overnight excursions and the accessibility to students whose families may be experiencing financial constraints. Excursions that would place financial pressure on a significant number of families should not be undertaken.

Teachers

Staff members choose to take part in such excursions. No obligation is to be placed on them to participate in or to organise excursions. No extra remuneration other than reimbursement of genuine pre-approved expenses is to be paid in respect of such excursions.

Accommodation and bathroom arrangements are to be such that no staff member or adult is placed in a position where there is potential for allegations of improper conduct to be made. For co-educational groups, it is advisable that both male and female supervisors are in attendance.

When it has been determined there is an educational need for an overnight excursion, the person planning the event must ensure all necessary requirements are met in relation to budget and number of supervising teachers to support the number of students attending.

A comprehensive risk assessment of the proposed excursion is fundamental. A formal proposal including a comprehensive risk assessment and management plan should be presented to the Principal for approval prior to the event being advertised.

In case of illness, accident or other emergency there must be a plan of action and agreed notification procedure approved by the Principal prior to departure. At least one teacher member of the touring party must have a current qualification in First Aid and all should have CPR. Alcohol must not be consumed by teachers or helpers whilst on tour and in control of students.

Students

The *Disability Discrimination Act* makes it unlawful for a school to subject a student to any disadvantage on the basis of his / her disability. All reasonable efforts must be made to enable disabled students to attend excursions with their classes, including thoughtful selection of excursion venues and activities in the first instance.

An updated school medical form must be obtained for each student and a **copy** taken with staff on the tour. Prior to departure the staff member organising the excursion must read each medical form so that he/she is aware of potential medical emergencies that may arise such as asthma attacks or serious allergies

On the rare occasion where it is proposed that a student or group of students will participate in an independent activity without the direct supervision of a staff member, it is imperative that the parent or caregiver be fully informed of, and agrees with the arrangements. The signed approval of the parent or caregiver should be obtained.

Supervision Arrangements

When determining the ratio of adults to students required for adequate supervision of overnight excursions, the following factors should be taken into consideration:

- age, capability and number of students
- individual student's educational and behavioural needs
- individual student's medical and physical requirements
- rationale for the activity
- identified risks
- adequate instructions for students and supervisors
- provision of sufficient safeguards
- experience, qualifications and insurance status of commercial excursion organisers (if used)
- health plans for individual students

Parents, Caregivers and Volunteers

Parents, caregivers and volunteers ('volunteers') chosen to accompany students should be selected according to the expertise they have relevant to the activities undertaken and must be briefed on arrangements prior to the excursion. Written information should be provided to volunteers including information about their role, hazards that might be encountered and precautions to be taken.

All volunteers should be asked to sign a declaration that they are aware of the risk management plan, accommodation arrangements, supervision details and the itinerary.

Arrangements need to be in place to facilitate the return to their parents of any student who exhibits behaviour that seriously endangers themselves or others. Written confirmation from parents should be obtained to acknowledge agreement to the arrangements proposed.

Excursion Records

The Principal is responsible for the retention of records related to the excursion. This includes a copy of any advice given to parents, costs, approval letters, risk assessments and administrative and travel details. In the event of an injury to a student or property damage, records relating to the excursion must be retained until the injured party reaches the age of 24, or for seven years, whichever is the longer.

Application for Overnight Excursion

School

Name of Schoo ....

Name of Organiser .... **Position** ....

Application Date .... **ID** ....

Excursion

Destination ....

Date from .... **Date to** ....

Description ....
....
....

Purpose ....

Curriculum context ....

Educational value ....

Outdoor activities ....

Draft itinerary ☐ Itinerary attached ☐ Travel arrangements included

Student dress ☐ School uniform ☐ Mufti ☐ Other: ....

Cost ☐ Budget attached ☐ Students to subsidise adult travel?

Students and Personnel

Number of students .... **Gender** ☐ F ☐ M

Year group(s) ....

Genders, names and roles of adult personnel attending:

☐ F ☐ M .... ☐ Teacher ☐ Parent ☐ Other:

☐ F ☐ M .... ☐ Teacher ☐ Parent ☐ Other:

☐ F ☐ M .... ☐ Teacher ☐ Parent ☐ Other:

☐ F ☐ M .... ☐ Teacher ☐ Parent ☐ Other:

☐ F ☐ M .... ☐ Teacher ☐ Parent ☐ Other:

☐ F ☐ M .... ☐ Teacher ☐ Parent ☐ Other:

First Aid

Gender, name and of CPR/first aid-qualified school personnel attending:

Date qualifications expire

☐ F ☐ M _____   ....

☐ F ☐ M _____   ....

Other Relevant Notes

Approvals

	Name	Signature	Date
Principal	_____	....	....
Other relevant authorities if required	_____	....	....

Excursion Budget

Practical Details

Application date		**ID**	
Name of organiser		**Position**	
Signature of organiser			
Excursion destination			
Year group attending		**Subject**	
Date from		**Date to**	
Number of days			
Numbers attending:	Paying students		
	Hardship students		
	Paying adults		
Method of travel			

Cost Details

	Total	Per student / paying adult
Fares		
Accommodation		
Meals		
Entries		
Other		
Travel/medical Insurance		
Sub-total		
Other spending money		
Total		
Cancellation allowance		
Suggested charge per student / paying adult		

Approvals

Final approved charge per student

	Name	Signature	Date
Approved by			
Coordinator			
Financial Officer			
Principal			

Parent / Caregiver Excursion Consent and Student Medical Information Form

Details

School ....

Excursion ....

Date from .... **Date to** ....

Permission

I, ... parent / guardian of ....

(name of parent or guardian)   (strike-out inapplicable)   (name of student)

give my:

1. permission for my child named above to attend the excursion described above, which I understand has been approved by the school Principal,

2. consent for my child to travel on or in any form of public or private transport where such transport is deemed by the school to be necessary or desirable for the safe conduct of the excursion,

3. consent for my child to participate in all activities, outings, trips and functions arranged as part of this excursion,

4. consent for the school, by its servants or agents:

   • to seek such medical or dental advice on behalf of my child as seen fit in the event of accident or illness, and

   • if, in the opinion of an attending medical or dental practitioner or medical officer ('*health practitioner*') my child requires medical or dental attention or treatment (including but not limited to the administration of anaesthetic, blood transfusion or the performance of any surgical operation), to that *health practitioner* giving such attention or treatment

   provided that reasonable efforts are made to inform me of any serious injury or illness,

5. certification that the consent which I have given in paragraph 4 is valid at all times while my child is in the custody of the school while attending or participating in the excursion,

6. certification that I understand that the school will take reasonable care in the event of my child suffering accident or illness but that it will not be responsible for the costs of any medical or dental attention or treatment administered to my child in such event nor will it be directly responsible for any act or omission of any *health practitioner* attending or treating my child, and

7. certification that if my child should bring or consume drugs, alcohol or cigarettes or otherwise exhibit behaviour that seriously endangers themselves or others, I will bear the full cost of return transport home for my child and any adult supervisor that may be required to ensure the safety of my child during that transport.

Signature .... **Date** ....

(Parent / Guardian)

Health Fund

Student's date of birth			
Medicare no.		**Position on card**	
Private health fund		**Membership no.**	
Ambulance cover	☐ Yes ☐ No		

Medical Information

Is your child in good health? ☐Yes ☐No

Does your child suffer any chronic illness? ☐Yes ☐No

Details

Does your child suffer any disability? ☐Yes ☐No

Details

Does your child suffer any allergy? ☐Yes ☐No

Details

Has your child suffered any acute illness in the past four months? ☐Yes ☐No

Details

Has your child been treated by a doctor in the past four weeks? ☐Yes ☐No

(If 'Yes' please attach a medical certificate outlining treatment and statement of your child's fitness to attend this excursion)

Has your child had any major surgery? ☐Yes ☐No

Details

Does your child need to take any form of medication on the trip? ☐Yes ☐No

Medication	Dosage	Frequency	Medical purpose

This medication is to be kept on the excursion by: ☐ my child (secondary student)
☐ nominated staff member (primary student)

Do you give permission for Panadol to be administered if needed? ☐Yes ☐No

Has your child had a Diphtheria Tetanus Toxoid booster injection? ☐Yes ☐No

Year of booster injection

Diet

Does your child have any special dietary requirements? ☐Yes ☐No

Details ....

....

....

Emergency

Contact details in case of accident or illness:

Name ....

Relationship to student ....

Phone (home) .... **Phone (work)** ....

Phone (mobile) ....

Name ....

Relationship to student ....

Phone (home) .... **Phone (work)** ....

Phone (mobile) ....

Authority

I understand that the information I provide on this form will be handled in accordance with the Diocesan Privacy Policy and the *Privacy Act 1998*.

Signature .... **Date** ....

(Parent / Guardian)

Excursion Emergency Contact Information

Group

School _____

Name of group leader _____

Contact details

Phone (home)	Mobile	Email

Departure

Date	Time	Location

Return

Numbers attending

Students	School staff	Other adult helpers

Total group numbers

Is there an emergency contact list for everyone in the Group? ☐Yes ☐No

(If 'Yes', attach the list to this sheet. If 'No', assemble the list and attach it to this sheet)

School

Emergency contact details during school hours:

	Phone (home)	Mobile	Email
Principal			
Other			

Emergency contact details out of school hours:

	Phone (home)	Mobile	Email
Principal			
Other			

Travel Company

Travel company contact details:

Company	Name		
	Address		

	Phone	Fax	Email

Contact personnel	Name		

	Phone	Mobile	Email

Company

Additional contact person	Name	
	Phone	Mobile Email

Accommodation

Accommodation details:

Type ☐Hotel/motel ☐Tourist park ☐Sport & rec centre ☐ Campus

☐Other:

Venue Name _____

Address _____

Phone Fax Email

Contact person Name _____

Role / position _____

Other (Phone Tree)

Other emergency numbers:

Name	Phone	Mobile	Emergency role

Excursion Risk Management Process and Plan[1]

The purpose of excursion risk management is to make excursions as safe as possible. Risk management processes are used to identify hazards, assess risks 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, updated where required and reused.

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

Steps in developing an Excursion Risk Management Plan

1. **List the excursion activities**

   List the activities of the excursion by breaking the whole excursion into its parts e.g. getting to and from the venue, being at the venue, each of the major activities at the venue, having meals, staying at the accommodation etc.

2. **Identify the hazards**

   Determine the hazards associated with the activities listed. Consider hazards associated with travel, the venue, activities at the venue, equipment used in the activities, the environment, people (e.g. behaviour and medical conditions), and accommodation.

3. **Assess the risks**

   Using the risk assessment matrix, determine the seriousness of the risks associated with the hazards by considering both the likelihood and severity of risks. This gives you a risk ranking from 1 being the most serious to 6 being the least serious.

4. **Eliminate or control the risks**

   Consider the most suitable control strategies for each of the identified hazards using the hierarchy of controls.

5. **Document a Plan**

   Document the Excursion Risk Management Plan.

6. **Communicate the Plan**

   Communicate the Plan to excursion supervisors. Provide relevant information to participants and their families.

7. **Monitor and review the Plan**

   Monitor the effectiveness of controls and change if necessary. Review the risk assessment if an incident or a significant change occurs.

Principals should retain the documented Plan as verification of the planning undertaken. Documentation will aid communication of the Plan, and can also be used in future planning of excursions.

Planning Process and Hazard Consideration Checklist[1]

The following Checklist is not exhaustive but is provided to guide the process of excursion risk management and to help prompt the identification and pro-active control of safety issues that may be relevant to overnight excursions so that those participating can safely enjoy the excursion.

	Process Component	Completed? (☒ when Yes)
1. Check Records	Is a previous risk assessment for the excursion available?	☐
	If available, has it been reviewed and updated with reference to:	
	• the process outlined in this checklist	☐
	• potential effect of changes to the student group	☐
	• individual student health care plans for students in the group	☐
	• effectiveness of risk controls previously implemented	☐
	• any incidents that occurred previously on the excursion	☐
2. Obtain Venue Information, Assess and Document	Is venue and safety information already on file at the school?	☐
	Does information on file or obtained from the venue include, if relevant:	
	• public liability cover	☐
	• accreditation of venue staff for the task/activity	☐
	• adequate access and provision for persons with special needs	☐
	• emergency procedures and relevant training of venue staff	☐
	• known hazards and controls related to proposed activities	☐
	• mobile phone and emergency services access for the excursion	☐
	• required equipment and/or machinery availability	☐
	• safety of required equipment and/or machinery in terms of:	
	◦ regular maintenance	☐
	◦ good operating condition	☐
	◦ full function of safety features	☐
	• licensing of construction, maintenance and repair personnel	☐
	• adequacy of facilities (e.g. refreshments, showers, toilets etc)	☐
	• catering procedures for persons with food allergies	☐
	Have parents or carers of students with food allergies been consulted?	☐
	Has the venue been informed of any severely allergic students':	
	• anaphylactic condition and consequences?	☐
	• anaphylaxis trigger foods?	☐
	Has previous and venue safety information been assessed?	☐
	Have the assessments been recorded in the Risk Management Plan?	☐
	Are the assessments attached to the Risk Management Plan?	☐

Process Component	Completed? (☒ when Yes)
Have key stakeholders been consulted in analysing activities?	☐
Have all excursion activities been listed, including:	☐
• travel to and from the venue and while en route, including:	☐
• mode of transport	☐
• walking on, off and between modes of transport	☐
• crossing traffic routes	☐
• using drill or emergency evacuation routes	☐
• each activity programmed	☐
• moving around and being at the venue, listing for example:	☐
• open water, cliffs, crowds	☐
• sporting, elevated or high-risk equipment at the venue	☐
• weather, fire, flood, storm, plant, terrain and living creatures	☐
• meals at the venue (and off site)	☐
• common allergens (latex, pollens, stings, bites, dusts) present	☐
• people factors, for example:	☐
• student ages, maturity and skill levels	☐
• known problematic student behaviours	☐
• child protection issues	☐
• medical issues and student Health Care Plan requirements	☐
• accommodation factors such as:	☐
• supervision requirements	☐
• standard of facilities	☐
• security	☐

3. List Activities and Associated Considerations

Process Component	Completed?
Have all activity, excursion and related hazards been identified?	☐
Have all previous, venue, activity and related factors been considered?	☐
Has the risk arising from each hazard identified been assessed?	☐
Have incident analyses from previous excursions been considered?	☐
Have relevant Health Care Plans been updated for excursion factors?	☐

4. Identify and List all Hazards

NOTE: Anaphylaxis is potentially life threatening and can result in severe and sudden reactions occurring when affected persons are exposed to allergens (such as a food or insect bites). Reactions usually begin within minutes of exposure and can progress rapidly over a period of up to two hours or more. Excursions may pose hazards that differ from those in the school environment and Health Care Plans must be updated accordingly.

	Process Component	**Completed?** (⊠ when Yes)
5. Assess Risk	Has the risk associated with each identified hazard been assessed?	☐
	Was the DET risk assessment matrix used for the assessment?	☐
	Has each risk and rating been recorded in the Risk Management Plan?	☐
	Have risks been prioritised for management based on risk ratings?	☐
6. Plan Risk Management	Have risk management strategies been developed for each risk?	☐
	Do the risk management strategies follow the hierarchy of controls?	☐
	Do the risk management strategies include actions to ensure:	☐
	Child protection procedures are followed?	☐
	Health Care Plans are updated for each student applicable?	☐
	All necessary aides are safe to use and available?	☐
	All necessary equipment is safe to use and available?	☐
	Are all risk management strategies in the Risk Management Plan?	☐
7. Document Plan	Has the Risk Management Plan been documented?	☐
	Does the Risk Management Plan follow the pro-forma provided?	☐
	Does the Risk Management Plan include:	☐
	Emergency response and management procedures?	☐
	Incident response and management procedures?	☐
8. Communicate Plan	Has each excursion supervisor been provided with:	☐
	A copy of the completed Risk Management Plan?	☐
	Information about his or her emergency response responsibilities?	☐
	Has relevant safety information derived from the Plan been provided to:	☐
	Each person participating in the excursion	☐
	The parent or carer of each student participating in the excursion	☐
9. Review	Was the Risk Management Plan reviewed after the excursion?	☐

Excursion				
	Excursion		**Date**	
	Person completing checklist			
	Position			
	Signature		**Date**	

Risk Assessment Matrix[1]

		How serious could the illness or injury be?			
		Death or permanent disability	Long-term illness or injury	Medical attention and days off	First aid attention
How likely is injury or illness to occur?	Very likely Could happen frequently	1	1	2	3
	Likely Could happen occasionally	1	2	3	4
	Unlikely Could happen but only rarely	2	3	4	5
	Very unlikely Could happen but probably never will	3	4	5	6

Risk Ranking

1: EXTREME	3: HIGH-MODERATE	5: LOW
Deal with hazard urgently	Deal with hazard as soon as possible	Deal with hazard when able
2: HIGH	4: MODERATE	6: VERY LOW
Deal with hazard immediately	Deal with hazard as soon as practicable	Deal with hazard when able

Risk Management Guidelines - Hierarchy of Control Measures[1]

The following hierarchy of risk elimination and control measures is sequenced with the most effective measure at the top of the hierarchy. Effectiveness diminishes as the hierarchy descends, making higher level and combination measures preferred and recommended.

Eliminate

Eliminate the item or activity, for example by:
- not undertaking particular high risk activities (eg. abseiling in high wind)
- not using high risk equipment

If elimination *isn't* reasonably practicable, control the risk as far as practical using the hierarchy of controls following. Select the highest possible control and/or use a combination of controls to minimise the risk.

▼

Substitute

Replace the activity, material, or equipment with a less hazardous choice such as.
- choosing an easier bushwalk;
- using an alternative nutritious food instead of food known to cause severe allergic reactions (eg. peanut butter or tree nuts)

▼

Isolate

Isolate the hazard from the person at risk, for example by:
- using distance and selecting a lunch location well away from the water
- ensuring a coastal walk has adequate safety fencing.

▼

Engineer

Use equipment with built-in protective mechanisms to counteract hazards, for example by:
- hiring coaches with seatbelts and ensuring these are worn during travel
- ensuring equipment to be used has safety guards

▼

Administer

Establish and use safe procedures and practices such as:

- supervising students
- giving clear rules, instruction and training (including by qualified instructors) for all people participating in activities involving risk
- for students known to be severely allergic:
    - reviewing and updating Health Care Plans for the excursion
    - consulting with parents or carers and venue caterers about safe foods
    - ensuring a trained person with immediate access to an Epipen is always with or near them

Protect (PPE)

Always use appropriately designed and properly fitted clothing and equipment such as

- protective footwear
- activity-appropriate clothing including hats and sunscreen
- (for relevant students) medic alert bracelets or necklaces as appropriate
- (for relevant activities) safety goggles, helmets or protective pads

in conjunction with other control measures identified from above.

Excursion Risk Management Plan[1]

School .... **Principal** ....

Excursion destination .... **Students** Group/class ....

Number ....

Excursion description ....

Excursion coordinator Name ....

Departure .... Contact phone ....

Excursion dates

Return .... Venue safety information attached? ☐Yes ☐No

Accompanying staff .... **Accompanying volunteers** ....

Activities and Issues	Hazards Identified	Risk Rating	Risk Elimination and Control Measures	Person(s) Responsible	When Required

Activities and Issues	Hazards Identified	Risk Rating	Risk Elimination and Control Measures	Person(s) Responsible	When Required

Monitor and review the effectiveness of risk control measures following an incident or significant change and before the next excursion

Plan prepared by .... **Position** ....

Signature .... **Date** ....

Personnel consulted ....

Plan communicated to

Overnight Excursions Organisation Flowchart

Excursion deemed to be of significant educational worth and relevance
in light of school calendar and cost is reasonable

▼

3 months notice given for excursion

▼

Prior to advertising the excursion
organising teacher prepares a formal proposal for the Principal including full budget
(based on three quotes) and detailed risk assessment (Attachments A and B)

▼

If relevant approval from other relevant authorities is obtained

▼

travel agent is engaged
in line with policy guidelines and excursion is advertised to students

▼

Appropriate travel insurance is organised
with guidance from the school's insurer

▼

Medical and parent consent forms (Attachment C) obtained and read by organising teacher.
Necessary medical certificates also obtained

▼

Emergency plan of action and emergency contact forms (Attachment D) completed

▼

Fringe Benefit Tax implications discussed with staff attending the excursion

▼

Child protection and first aid requirements considered

▼

All final plans and documents as detailed in the policy
lodged with the Principal two weeks before departure

▼

After excursion completed
summary report including thorough evaluation submitted to Principal

▼

Accounting records audited by school's financial officer

▼

All excursion documentation including Risk Management Plan retained for future reference

1. **NSW Department of Education and Training.** Excursions Policy.