



ASHBURY PUBLIC SCHOOL

EXCURSION POLICY

Policy: School Excursion Policy

Number: DoE Reference No: PD/2004/0010/V07

Source of Authority: Department of Education

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Distribution: School Council Members, Website, Ashbury Staff

1. Policy

Overview

Excursions are an integral part of Ashbury Public School's curriculum and student learning. Experiential learning is a fundamental principle in NSW Department of Education (DoE) curriculum guideline documents and syllabuses. Ashbury Public School is committed to providing valuable educational opportunities. Staff consider a range of incursions and excursions as part of their planning for student learning. We aim to provide each grade with at least one excursion per year.

School excursions include:

- Local visits outside the school grounds
- Minor excursions which are less than a day's duration
- Major excursions involving overnight accommodation
- Overseas Excursions.

In addition, virtual excursions (accessed using the Connected Classroom) and incursions (visits and events organised within the school grounds) shall be subject to the same policy guidelines as excursions. Incidental learning opportunities are strengthened by walks or visits within the local area. For any overnight and overseas excursions please check the DoE Excursion Policy Implementation Procedures.

Purpose of Policy

This policy outlines guiding principles for the organisation of excursions, virtual excursions and incursions, and the implementation of the NSW DoE's policy and procedures for managing these learning experiences.

2. Context

The policy of Ashbury Public School is bound by statements issued by NSW DoE. All excursions arranged by the school will comply with the guidelines set out in the NSW DoE Excursion Policy and the NSW DoE Excursion Policy Implementation Procedures.

The NSW DoE Excursion Policy focuses on the following nine guiding objectives:

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 organisations.
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.
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.

3. Responsibilities

Planning

In the planning of excursions, teachers at Ashbury Public School must give consideration to:

- the educational value of the excursion and curriculum relevance
- the total number of planned activities each year and the potential for disruption to regular teaching and learning programs
- the total financial cost placed upon parents/caregivers of children attending
- inclusion of all students, including those with disabilities, medical and other special requirements.
- teacher to student ratios.

When students are not able to participate due to financial constraints, the school endeavours to make financial assistance available according to need and the availability of funds. Where fund raising is used to help reduce per capita costs, all students participating will benefit from the fundraising.

Duty of Care

All parents, caregivers, or volunteers and excursion staff accompanying, supporting and presenting at school excursions and incursions must have a Working With Children Check – Declaration for Volunteers or Contractors. The declaration must be submitted to the office prior to the date of the excursion. However, 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 individuals associated with external organisations.

Procedures

All excursions must receive the approval of the Principal before they are publicised and scheduled to take place. A risk assessment is to be conducted and a risk management plan developed before approval can be given for any excursion, incursion or local area walk. Permission notes will ideally be sent home at least one month prior to the excursion. Permission is sought at the beginning of the school year with a generic note for parents to give consent when staff take students on walks in the local area.

All permission notes should include:

- the Ashbury Public School letterhead and /or emblem
- the date
- the Principal's name and signature
- the name and signature of the organising teacher
- venue
- educational value and reason for the excursion or activity
- cost
- excursion timings
- travel arrangements
- supervision arrangements
- request for medical and special needs information
- other relevant information, such as what to wear, what to bring, including sunscreen, hat, wet weather gear, footwear
- Parent Online Payments (POP) – online payment option receipt number.

An Excursion checklist is available to assist staff with their planning. Teachers at Ashbury Public School must complete an Excursion or Incursion Planning booklet and submit it to the Principal for approval. The booklet includes details of the educational rationale for the experience, dates and the proposed itinerary, itemised costs for travel, entry or participation fees and accommodation, arrangements for supervision and a detailed risk management report. Staff are required to follow the Risk Management Process and use the proforma as provided by the DoE.

All excursions planned that include water activities, overnight accommodation or interactions with animals will abide by NSW DoE procedures.

The school will retain excursion records, notes, costs and approval letters, risk management plan, administrative and travel details for two years, after which time they will be destroyed. Information relating to school camps will be retained for five years and then destroyed. If there is an injury to student/s or third party or property damage records must be kept until the injured party reaches 25 or for seven years, whichever is the greater.

4. References

NSW Department of Education Excursion Policy

https://detwww.det.nsw.edu.au/policies/student_admin/excursions/excursion_pol/PD20040010_i.shtml?level=Schools

NSW Department of Education Excursions Policy Implementation Procedures

https://detwww.det.nsw.edu.au/policies/student_admin/excursions/excursion_pol/implementation_1_PD20040010_i.shtml