



**ACT**  
Government  
Education

# ACT PUBLIC PRESCHOOLS EXCURSION PROCEDURE

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**Education Directorate**

## Contents

1. OVERVIEW .....	1
2. RATIONALE .....	1
3. PROCEDURES.....	1
4. CONTACT.....	1
5. MONITORING AND REVIEW .....	6
6. COMPLAINTS.....	7
7. RELATED POLICIES AND IMPLEMENTATION DOCUMENTS.....	7
8. REFERENCES.....	7

## Glossary

<b>Term</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>Regulatory authority</b>	Children’s Education and Care Assurance (CECA), who undertake investigation, compliance, enforcement and assessment and rating functions against the <a href="#">National Quality Standard</a> .
<b>Approved provider</b>	Approved providers must operate approved services that meets the obligations in the <a href="#">National Law</a> . Approved providers must exercise effective leadership, governance and management to meet their legal obligations. Providers must also employ suitably qualified and experienced nominated supervisors, educational leaders, coordinators and educators.  In the case of government preschools in the ACT, the approved provider is the ACT Education Directorate.
<b>Setting</b>	An early childhood education and care service (centre-based) under the <a href="#">National Law</a> that provide education and care services. For the purposes of this procedure, these settings are public preschools (managed by ACT Education Directorate as the approved provider and undertaking the government preschool program for four-year-olds).
<b>Guardian</b>	A person who is legally responsible for the care and wellbeing of a child.
<b>Parent</b>	A person having parental responsibility for the child under the <i>Children and Young People Act 2008</i> including a carer appointed under that Act.
<b>Accompanying adults</b>	Teachers, school administrative staff, parents, activity leaders and volunteers
<b>Duty of care</b>	Requires that accompanying adults should take all reasonable measures to ensure the health and safety of any school student under their care. This duty of care will arise whenever a student/school relationship exists. Primary responsibility remains with the teacher in charge.
<b>Authorised person</b>	A parent* or family member of a child who is being educated and cared for by an ACT public preschool; or an authorised nominee of a parent or family member of a child who is being educated and cared for by an ACT public preschool.  * Does not include a parent who is prohibited by a court order from having contact

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	with the child.
<b>Authorised nominee</b>	A person who has been given permission by a parent or family member to collect a child enrolled in an ACT public preschool.
<b>Nominated supervisor</b>	As part of an application for service approval, approved providers must identify the nominated supervisor for the service. The nominated supervisor must be over 18 years old, have adequate knowledge and understanding of the provision of education and care to children, and have the ability to effectively supervise and manage an education and care service.  In the case of government preschools in the ACT, the nominated supervisor tends to be the principal of the associated school campus.
<b>Person in day-to-day charge</b>	The approved provider and/or nominated supervisor needs to designate a responsible person to be placed in day-to-day charge of a service if the approved provider and/or nominated supervisor is not present. The person in day-to-day charge must be over 18 years old, have adequate knowledge and understanding of the provision of education and care to children, and have the ability to effectively supervise and manage an education and care service.  The person nominated to be in day-to-day charge must accept this responsibility in writing. The nominated person must have adequate knowledge and understanding of the provision of education and care to children and be able to effectively manage a service.  A record that demonstrates who is the responsible person in day-to-day charge should be in place. Being in day-to-day charge of a service does not place any additional legal responsibilities on the person under the <a href="#">National Law</a> . The responsibilities relevant to educators under the <a href="#">National Law</a> continue to apply.  An approved provider does not have to appoint a person in day-to-day charge if a nominated supervisor(s) or an approved provider is to be the responsible person in attendance during service operational hours.
<b>Educators</b>	Qualified staff who work directly with children to meet their developmental and educational needs. It includes staff who are tertiary qualified teachers.
<b>Educational leader</b>	The <a href="#">National Law</a> requires approved providers to designate, in writing, a suitably qualified and experienced educator, coordinator or other individual as educational leader.
<b>Blue Book</b>	Personal Child Health Record used to record a child's health, illnesses, injuries, growth and development.
<b>Centre-based service</b>	An education and care service other than a family day care service.
<b>Obligations to notify</b>	Approved providers and services have an obligation to notify CECA about incidents, complaints and changes to information about the approved provider or approved service. This includes serious incidents, complaints and circumstances where the health, safety or wellbeing of children may have been put at risk.

## Obligations

ACT Public Preschools must meet the obligations of the [National Law](#), including Regulation 168, which states that education and care services must have policies and procedures in relation to the following:

- health and safety, including matters relating to:
  - nutrition, food and beverages, and dietary requirements;
  - sun protection;
  - water safety, including safety during any water-based activities;
  - the administration of first aid; and
  - sleep and rest for children.
- incident, injury, trauma and illness procedures;
- dealing with infectious diseases;
- dealing with medical conditions in children;
- emergency and evacuation;
- delivery of children to, and collection of children from, education and care service premises;
- excursions;
- providing child-safe environments;
- staffing, including:
  - a code of conduct for staff members;
  - determining the responsible person present at the service; and
  - the participation of volunteers and students on practicum placements.
- interactions with children;
- enrolment and orientation;
- governance and management of the service, including confidentiality of records;
- the acceptance and refusal of authorisations;
- payment of fees and provision of a statement of fees charged by the education and care service; and
- dealing with complaints.

## 1. Overview

- 1.1. The following procedure covers the requirements for planning preschool excursions.
- 1.2. This procedure is supported by the [ACT Education Directorate Excursion Policy](#).
- 1.3. Regulation 168 of the [National Law](#) requires that education and care services must have policies and procedures in relation to excursions.
- 1.4. [Division 6](#) of the [National Regulations](#) outlines obligations relating to excursions.

## 2. Rationale

- 2.1. In accordance with provider approval conditions, this procedure aims to comply with the requirements set out within the [National Law](#).
- 2.2. The procedures aim to minimise any risks associated with excursions and contribute to an enriching experience for students and accompanying staff and volunteers.

## 3. Procedures

### *Principal's responsibilities*

- 3.1. It is principal's responsibility to ensure that:
  - the excursion is directly related to the curriculum and not predominantly recreational;
  - the excursion, including planning processes, is fully documented and records are kept and maintained in accordance with the Directorate's record management policies;
  - parents are aware an excursion is generally an optional enrichment activity and parents will have to cover the costs incurred;
  - all participating teaching staff know the requirements of this policy and other relevant [Directorate](#) and school policies, supervision requirements and safety procedures;
  - accompanying adults are advised of their responsibilities, relevant Directorate and school policies and the consequences of non-compliance;
  - all Directorate requirements for planning and accounting for monies are met;
  - the completion of a risk assessment is prior to seeking parent permission for the excursion is mandatory for all preschool excursions and must consider requirements under [Regulation 101](#) of the [National Regulations](#);
    - for Category A excursions that are a regular outing (such as local walks) a risk assessment must be in place prior to seeking parent/guardian permission;
    - risk assessments for regular outings (such as local walks) must be conducted annually;
  - an assessment has been undertaken to determine that a private provider meets the following criteria relevant to the excursion activity and any risks involved:

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- the provider's staff are trained to the industry standards required to supervise;
  - the activity and accreditation is sighted;
  - the provider meets industry standards and accreditation is sighted;
  - the provider has a risk management and/or safety plan relevant to the activity and it is sighted;
  - the provider has appropriate insurance including at least a \$20 million Public Liability cover for any one event; and
  - have appropriate registration under the Working with Vulnerable People (Background Checking) Act 2011.
- supervision requirements meet minimum ratios of 1:11 and are adjusted in accordance to the number and needs of students, their maturity, anticipated behaviour and the activities planned;
  - arrangements are made for any student unable to participate in an excursion by having alternative activities and/or strategies available;
  - students with a disability have an equal opportunity to participate in excursions and reasonable adjustments are made to facilitate participation;
  - staff are aware of their obligations under [Section 9 of the Public Sector Management Act 1994](#) and (non-Directorate) accompanying adults are aware of their obligations under the [Working with Children and Young People – Volunteers and Visitors Policy](#) and have appropriate registration under the [Working with Vulnerable People \(Background Checking\) Act 2011](#);
  - accompanying adults are aware that they must not drink alcohol during hours of duty or when they have a continuing responsibility for students; and
  - copies of emergency contacts and procedures and contingency plans are kept in the school and by the teacher in charge of the excursion.

#### *Teacher in charge responsibilities*

3.2. It is the responsibility of the teacher in charge:

- to know and comply with the requirements of related and relevant policies and requirements set out within the [National Regulations](#);
- to ensure that students and parents are aware of supervision and transport arrangements;
- to advise the owner and/or driver to have appropriate insurance cover where private or hire vehicles are used;
- to ensure that a participating staff member holds a current first aid certificate and an appropriately stocked and maintained first aid kit is carried;
- to ensure that all accompanying adults are appropriately screened, qualified and/or experienced and are advised of their responsibilities and relevant

Directorate and school policies and safety procedures (refer to the [Working with Children and Young People – Volunteers and Visitors Policy](#) and have appropriate registration under the [Working with Vulnerable People \(Background Checking\) Act 2011](#));

- to gain informed consent by ensuring that parental information, medical and consent forms are issued where appropriate and completed and returned prior to the excursion;
  - to ensure Excursion Medical Information and Consent Forms (refer to [First Aid Policy](#)) are current and up to date;
- 3.3. to ensure Excursion Medical Information and Consent Forms and General Management and Emergency Treatment Plans (refer to [First Aid Policy](#)) are carried on Category C and D excursions and to be aware of relevant medical conditions for Category A and B excursions;
- 3.4. to develop emergency contacts and procedures for all excursions – copies of these contacts and procedures must be taken on all preschool excursions; and
- 3.5. to ensure the cultural and religious needs of all students are considered and met in both the preparation stage of the excursion and whilst on the excursion.

#### *Supervision*

- 3.6. Accompanying adults may be used to meet the supervision requirement above the 1:11 educator/child ratio for preschool. This is provided the principal is satisfied there are sufficient teachers to maintain adequate control of the excursion and to control each activity. Additional adults should accompany excursions when extra care is considered necessary for the safety and welfare of students.
- 3.7. Excursions generally fall into the following categories. Supervision requirements for each category are included:

<i>Category</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Gender balance</i>	<i>Minimum supervision ratios</i>
A	Movement, generally on foot or by bicycle in the vicinity of the school or a variation to normal activity (e.g. local walk)	Not required	Minimum of 1:11 educator/child ratio. Analysis of risks, excursion type, student needs may inform higher ratios.
B	Other than Category A within the ACT	To be considered by principal	Minimum 1:11 Recommended 1:4 (including volunteers)

C	Day travel beyond the ACT	To be considered by principal	Minimum 1:11 Recommended 1:4 (including volunteers)
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*Outdoor adventure activities*

- 3.8. When outdoor adventure activities or sporting fixtures are included in excursions, the procedures in the [Outdoor Adventure Activities Policy and Mandatory Procedures](#) and/or the [Physical Education and Sport Policy and Guidelines](#) and/or [Swimming Pool and Water Park Aquatic Activities Policy](#) must be followed as appropriate.
- 3.9. Additional requirements for preschool are included in the ACT Public Preschool Water Safety Procedure.
- 3.10. These procedures and policies must be followed for all occasions when students are engaged in swimming/water activities, irrespective of the duration of the activities.

*Parent consent and medical forms*

- 3.11. Formal excursion authorisation from parents/guardians must meet the requirements set out within [Regulation 102](#) of the [National Regulations](#).

*Category A*

- 3.12. Authorisation must be obtained once in every 12 month period for Category A excursions.
- 3.13. Once permission for a Category A excursion has been obtained, parents must be provided with notice of proposed outings prior to leaving the preschool site.

*Category B*

- 3.14. Full details of each excursion, together with the *Excursion Medical Information and Consent Form*, must be sent to parents to complete and return to the school prior to the excursion.
- 3.15. On sequential excursions of a similar nature multiple parent consent forms are not required for Category A and B excursions. Parents must advise of any changed medical requirements and/or other needs prior to each excursion.

*Category C*

- 3.16. Full details of each excursion or series of related excursions, together with the *Excursion Medical Information and Consent Form*, must be sent to parents to complete and return to the school prior to the excursion.
- 3.17. While the use of the *Excursion Medical Information and Consent Form* does not absolve schools and teachers from liability as a result of an act of negligence, it is evidence of care and parent awareness to have forms completed, returned to the school and retained on file. In the event of an accident/incident these forms should be attached to the *Student Accident/Incident Report Form* and forwarded to the [Governance and Legal Liaison Section](#) (refer to [Student Accidents policy](#)).

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### *Accidents*

- 3.18. The teacher in charge should follow the *Incidents, Injury, Illness and Trauma Procedure*.
- 3.19. In serious cases where medical attention is necessary and a parent is not available, the teacher in charge should send for an ambulance or a doctor, whichever is appropriate, or arrange transport to the nearest or most convenient medical facility.
- 3.20. The choices stipulated by the parent on the Excursion Medical Information and Consent Form should be respected where possible.
- 3.21. Parents must be advised as soon as practicable of action taken in an emergency.

### *Transport*

- 3.22. See the *Transport Procedure* for more information.
- 3.23. On each occasion, informed parental consent must be given in writing for their children to travel by public transport, government plated and private plated buses, or by private car driven by a staff member, parent or other adult.
- 3.24. Where private or hire vehicles are used, each owner and/or driver must:
  - carry the required licence;
  - have valid insurance which is appropriate to the excursion;
  - ensure that the vehicle is registered and roadworthy; and
  - ensure that the seatbelt provision of the vehicle is not exceeded.
- 3.25. For bus transport, the registered carrying capacity must not be exceeded. Wherever possible, students should be transported in buses with seatbelts. Seatbelts are essential for all excursions involving interstate travel.
- 3.26. Schools must ensure that coach operators who are contracted for excursions are accredited to operate a bus service in the ACT. Students and staff on buses without appropriate accreditation are not covered by third party insurance. Moreover, schools may be abetting an offence where, knowingly or ignorantly, an unlicensed operator is contracted.
- 3.27. Companies are issued with a specific accreditation certificate. A list of accredited operators can be found [here](#).
- 3.28. Access Canberra advises that:
  - the person in charge of the vehicle must ensure that every child travelling in a private vehicle is using a suitable restraining device;
  - children under eight years of age should be restrained in the rear seating positions first; and
  - a front seat should only be used by a child when all of the rear seating positions are already occupied by children. In these circumstances the largest child should be seated in the front.

*Insurance*

- 3.29. ACT public schools do not meet all claims for injury, disease or illness to students resulting from school activities or school-organised excursions. The ACT Government meets claims (including claims resulting from school activities and excursions) against it where there is a liability to do so.
- 3.30. Parents should obtain their own advice about insurance protection which may assist in meeting expenses if their child is injured in circumstances where there is no liability on the part of the Government.
- 3.31. Under the principle of vicarious liability, ACT Government employees, in the course of their employment, are protected by law should legal action be initiated, provided they have acted responsibly, within their level of competence, and followed established policies and guidelines and with proper motive.
- 3.32. Contractors and consultants such as leaders and resource persons are not covered for insurance purposes. The school should advise contractors to ensure that they have workers' compensation, public liability, personal accident and professional liability cover sufficient for the nature of the work they are undertaking.
- 3.33. The ACT Government has limited public liability and personal accident insurance cover for volunteers in the service of the Territory. This does not include personal property insurance.
- 3.34. Persons at a school organised activity who are not participants in the activity (for example, siblings, friends, grandparents) are not afforded insurance cover by the Directorate for public liability or personal accident.
- 3.35. The Directorate does not provide insurance cover in respect of the use of public transport or private vehicles. Where private or hire vehicles are used, the owner and/or driver must ensure that they carry the required licence and that the vehicle is registered and roadworthy. Owners/drivers need to ensure the insurance cover is valid and appropriate for the excursion and that loading does not exceed the seat belt provision of the vehicle.

*Ambulance*

- 3.36. The ACT Ambulance Service provides free ambulance transport for students who are injured or suddenly become ill at school or during school-approved activities within the ACT. There are no reciprocal arrangements with other state or territory ambulance services. Jervis Bay Primary School students do not receive free ambulance cover.

**4. Contact**

- 4.1. The Director, School Improvement is responsible for this procedure.
- 4.2. For support contact School Operations on 6205 3313 or email [SchoolOperations@act.gov.au](mailto:SchoolOperations@act.gov.au)

**5. Monitoring and review**

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5.1. The procedure owner will be responsible for monitoring the procedure through annual scans. A full review will occur as necessary, or within a three-year period.

## 6. Complaints

6.1. Any concerns about the application of this procedure or the procedure itself, should be raised with:

- the school principal in the first instance;
- the Directorate Feedback and Complaints team on (02) 6205 5429 or through the [online form](#); and
- ACT Education's Regulatory Authority, Children's Education and Care Assurance on [\(02\) 6207 1114](#) or [complaintsCECA@act.gov.au](mailto:complaintsCECA@act.gov.au).

6.2. For more information also refer to the [Complaints Policy](#) on the Directorate's website.

## 7. Related Policies and Implementation Documents

- [Excursion Policy](#)
- [Excursion Procedures](#)
- Excursion Policy Excursion Teacher Checklist

## 8. References

- [Education and Care Services National Regulations](#)