

School excursions and risk management

What is risk management?

Risk management involves the identification, measurement, control and minimisation of risks within your organisation. It is a process that requires ongoing monitoring and evaluation.

Ensuring school excursions as safe as possible requires the identification of hazards in advance, followed by the elimination or control of the potential risks associated with the excursion.

School excursions

Museums and galleries have a number of responsibilities to uphold in participating as a host venue for school excursions.

The Department of Education and Communities (DEC) has an Excursion Policy that lists the requirements for the conduct of excursions by schools and units of the Department. It outlines the need for schools to conduct a risk assessment and to develop a risk management plan before seeking approval for any excursion.

Under the OHS Act and Regulation, principals and teachers organising excursions are required to ensure the health and safety of students, staff and excursion volunteers. This process aims to identify potential risks and their impacts, and a visit to the proposed excursion site by teachers is recommended.

The DEC Excursion Policy is available on the Department's website.

Developing a plan for excursions

The Excursion Policy is directed at schools and teachers initiating school excursions, however museums and galleries should be aware of the issues and procedures involved.

Developing a risk assessment and management plan for your museum, gallery or Aboriginal keeping place will make your institution a more viable option for school excursions.

The Lithgow State Mine Heritage Park and Railway has developed its own school excursion Risk Management Plan, which can be viewed at on their website.

<https://www.statemine.org.au/learn/ohsrmp.pdf>

In preparing your plan, talk to other stakeholders such as museums, libraries, sector support agencies and schools, along with relevant council representatives for local examples and similar plans.

NSW Child Protection Legislation

TA Working with Children Check is a prerequisite for paid and unpaid child-related work. Under Part 2, section 6 of the child-related work is defined as work in a specific, child-related role or face-to-face contact with children in a child-related sector.

Further information relating to the Act, along with advice such as how to adopt a policy statement in relation to child protection, and how to provide training and awareness about child protection issues, is available from the Office of the Children's Guardian website.

www.acyp.nsw.gov.au/

First aid

Your museum should have an up to date first aid kit on hand. St John Ambulance sells kits on line and has a restock service.

<https://stjohnnsw.com.au/>

Alternatively, your local chemist should supply basic kits. Ideally, the museum would have someone on the premises with first aid training. Where this is not possible, it is advisable to have emergency phone contacts for people with first-aid experience listed at the reception desk.

Training

It is necessary that all staff members be trained on health and safety practices and child protection issues. They should also be familiar with your organisation's Risk Management Plan. This will assist in ensuring the health and safety of all those who visit your excursionfriendly organisation.

You might also like:

Fact sheet: Working with Children

Museums & Galleries of NSW

<http://mgnsw.org.au/sector/resources/online-resources/education/working-children/>