



## Nearer to Nature Schools

# DoE Excursion Management Plan Checklist

### 1.1 Assess the environment

The Perth Hills Discovery Centre, Wharncliffe Mill, Wellington Discovery Forest, Henderson Environmental Centre and Dwellingup Forest Heritage Centre are all venues which have been purpose built for educational activities. Activities take place both indoors and outdoors, along tracks in the forest.

All areas in which excursions are conducted for school groups are subject to Parks and Wildlife Service's rigorous Visitor Risk Management process.

\* NOTE: Henderson Environment Centre in North Beach is covered by the VRM process of the City of Stirling.

Teachers can assess the Centres prior to an excursion

- by attending a professional learning (PL) day. These are run throughout the year, or
- by attending a PL day for the staff of the whole school, or
- by contacting the Coordinators for a tour of the facilities and areas used for activities.

### 1.2 Assess transport arrangements

All venues have dedicated areas for safe embarkation/disembarkation of buses. For a small number of excursions, a bus will need to remain on site to transport excursion participants to different areas of a venue.

### 1.3 Assessing students' capacity

Nearer to Nature schools programs are suitable for students of all ages. The activities have been designed to suit the different developmental stages of young people. Our advertising material indicates the appropriate age for each of the excursions/activities offered.

There is wheelchair access to and around the Centres and limited access along some of the forest tracks.



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It is essential that any students with special medical needs, especially allergies requiring epipens, have necessary medications with them and an adult capable of administration. Nearer to Nature Officers will request this information on arrival.

## **1.4 Assess the capabilities of the supervisory team**

Nearer to Nature Officers have training and experience in the hazards of, and safe conduct in, natural environments.

Nearer to Nature Officers are trained in First Aid and hold current St John's Senior First Aid Certificates.

Weather conditions are monitored prior to and during excursions, and Nearer to Nature officers may modify or cancel activities in the event of adverse environmental conditions.

## **1.5 Assess the involvement external providers**

Nearer to Nature Officers have been trained for, and have experience in, leading activities in the natural environment.

Nearer to Nature Officers hold a current Working With Children Check. Copies of these can be provided on request.

DBCA is a government department and holds general and professional liability insurance cover with a limit of \$600,000,000 through the RiskCover. Certificates of currency are available on page 3 of this section.

Each school group is allocated a Nearer to Nature Officer for the duration of the excursion.

The school is required to bring the minimum number of adult supervisors suitable for the age group and capacity of their students and the excursion type.

The minimum requirement for supervision is:

- ONE teacher/adult for every SIX Pre-primary to Year 3 students.
- ONE teacher/adult for every FIFTEEN Year 4 to Year 12 students.
- The required ratio of adults to students varies according to the type of excursion and activities.

On arrival at the Centre an Officer will greet the students and outline the program and the 'housekeeping rules' for the day. These include safety measures and defining boundaries for students.

The role of Nearer to Nature Officers is to facilitate the students' activities. School staff members, however, have overall duty of care for their students.



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Teachers must inform the Nearer to Nature Officer of any students with special needs or medical conditions.

Nearer to Nature Officers will request numbers of students, staff and parent helpers on arrival for an excursion. Numbers will be checked at all critical times. During outdoor activities and walks, students are required to remain with the group at all times, with a supervising adult following the group.

We request that all students arrive for the excursion activities with a nametag.

Upon booking Nearer to Nature excursion, a confirmation package will be sent which includes full details of the excursion and an information booklet for parents. It is the responsibility of the booking teacher to provide excursion consent forms to parents.

We appreciate the opportunity to use photos from excursions on this website and in our information brochures. Permissions are required by a parent or legal guardian for us to publish student images.

The school will be advised before the group departs for the excursion if the weather conditions change suddenly and are unsuitable for the excursion eg very strong winds, a fierce storm or very hot conditions. Our staff will arrange for an alternative day.

Walkie-talkies are carried by Nearer to Nature Officers from The Perth Hills Discovery Centre for activities that occur beyond 1km from the Centre.

NextG Mobile telephones are carried by Nearer to Nature Officers at all country venues.

The Centres have an Emergency Response and Fire Evacuation Plan. Our Nearer to Nature Officers, in collaboration with other delegated departmental staff are responsible for implementing the plan. In the event that an evacuation is required all school staff, students and assistants must take directions from our Nearer to Nature Officers. They can be recognised by their uniform.

On arrival at the Centre an Officer will greet the students and outline the program and the 'housekeeping rules' for the day. These include safety measures and defining boundaries for students. Where parent helpers are attending, their roles will be explained by the Nearer to Nature Officer.

The Nearer to Nature Coordinators of the Centres have records of when and where all activities are taking place. Student and adult numbers are recorded at the Centre prior to departure for activities in the forest and these records are kept for seven years.