**Urrbrae Wetland Risk Management Overview for School Excursions**

As with all public open spaces there are inherent dangers associated with the natural and urban environment. The Urrbrae Agricultural High School, Urrbrae Wetland and Mitcham Council take the staff and visitor safety seriously.

At this point in time there have been no major safety issues involving school students or teachers and all minor incidences have been dealt with on-site.

**Bookings**

All excursions to the Urrbrae Wetland must be pre-booked, well in advance to ensure learning objectives of the excursion can be met and student needs are catered for. The teacher in charge of the excursion must ensure they are clear about the program details before embarking on the excursion, including ‘duty of care’ obligations and the role of the Education Officer (Wetland Manager). Programs can be booked by contacting the Wetland Manager via email or phone.

**Role of the Wetland Manager / Education Officer**

The Wetland Manager is experienced and trained in delivering outdoor education safely and accompanies all classes when conducting field activities.

The Wetland Manager will highlight the WHS Policies and Procedures that need to be followed to ensure staff, student and visitor safety.

At the beginning of the excursion the Wetland Manager meets with the school group to highlight safety considerations, expectations and brief each class on specific risks associated with the particular activities. These include appropriate actions they will need to preform to minimise the risks (this may change depending on the circumstances e.g. weather, onsite work, etc.)

**Role of the teacher in charge and accompanying staff and supervising adults**

The Teacher in charge of the excursion MUST determine the level of supervision required and ensure that it is maintained for the duration of the excursion. Supervision requirements will be determined by considering:

* age, development and needs of all students/children
* students/children with disabilities or special needs
* planned student/child learning outcomes
* nature of the activity
* reasonably predictable hazards
* time of day
* location and environment
* supervision level offered by other teachers, supervisors or instructors within the party.

Accompanying teachers supervise their students in accordance with the DECD Policy. More information can be found in the ‘DECD Camps and Excursions Guidelines’ <http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/docs/documents/1/CampsandExcursionsGuide.pdf>

All school excursions take place in the presence of the Wetland Manager and accompanying school teachers have a ‘Duty of Care’ for their students. Student ratios for the wetland excursions are in accordance with the DECD Excursion Policy Ratio:

* 1 : 6 for preschool – year 2
* 1 : 10 for years 3 – 7
* 1 : 15 for years 8 – 12

**Please note that the Wetland Manager should NOT be taken into account when calculating these ratios.**

All staff involved with visiting school groups are expected to undertake safety talks amongst themselves and with students before attending the activities at the Urrbrae Wetland.

**If a hazard is identified during your visit, please report it to the Wetland Manager who will take appropriate action.**

If the key teachers are unfamiliar with the Urrbrae Wetland, it is recommended that they contact the Wetland Manager and organise a site visit, so they can become familiar with the site and can identify any risk that may affect their specific student group.

The Wetland Manager will work with teaching staff and other supervisors to ensure the safety of students.

**Risk Reduction Control Measures for school excursions to the Urrbrae Wetland include:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Identified Risk | Risk Reduction Strategies |
| Traffic HazardsEntry to Urrbrae WetlandInjury cause by road accidentPresence of contractor vehicles  | * If walking across Cross Road to enter the Wetland Main gates, all groups must cross at pedestrian lights located at:

 *The Cross Rd / Fullarton Road intersection* (800m east of main gate) or *Near West Tce* (200m west of main gate) * Public Transport bus pick up and drop zones are located inside the Main gate of the Urrbrae Wetland.

*Supervising teachers and staff are to lead the groups down the path to the Learning Centre ensuring students walk next to, or behind their leader.* * Vehicles must follow a strict speed limit of 10km per hour on site.
* Licenced and competent bus drivers, must park in the appropriate parking area INSIDE the main wetland gates before students disembark
* Teachers must actively supervise students at all time.
* The Wetland Manager will inform contractors of groups, and groups will avoid the areas contractors are working in.
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| **Responsibility** – Teachers and accompanying adults / bus driver & company / Wetland Manager  |
| Lost Students | * All school / educational institutions MUST follow supervision ratios of 1 : 6 for preschool – year 2 (recommended 1:4 for preschools); 1 : 10 for years 3 -7 and 1 : 15 for years 8-12
* Ensure the students are mentally and physically prepared for walking through a site of 6ha.
* Teachers/supervising adults should employ effective supervision strategies.

**For Example:** Identify meeting points (Wetland Learning Centre), make regular head counts, name badges, supervising staff to carry mobile phones with the Wetland Managers mobile number for direct contact. * Teachers / accompanying adults carry a site map, which displays the walking paths and infrastructure
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| **Responsibility:**  Teachers and accompanying adults / Wetland Staff to provide map |
| WeatherHeatRainExtreme Weather Conditions | Refer to the Urrbrae Hot and Wet Weather Policies available on the Urrbrae Wetland Learning Centre Website. * Ensure students are equipped with appropriate, close-toe footwear and weather protection - hats, sunscreen, wet weather gear, etc.
* The Wetland Staff will operate activities in shaded and sheltered areas.
* Ensure students bring their own water bottles. These can be refilled at the Wetland Learning Centre.
* Education sessions may not operate in extreme weather conditions, including when temperatures exceed 35°C (some groups are accepted), very high winds, during electric storms, high rainfall events and catastrophic fire rating days.
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| **Responsibility:**  Teachers and accompanying adults / Wetland Staff |
| Slips Trips FallsSlipping on pathsTripping over tree rootsSkidding on tracks / boardwalks | * Climbing trees / gates / fences, etc is not allowed.
* Many of the paths are uneven and not sealed. Therefore students are not to run around the Wetland and must wear enclosed, flat, foot ware. When on tour with the Wetland Manager, students must walk at the same pace alongside or behind the Manager.
* Students must keep to the designated paths and listen to the Wetland Manager’s instruction as to whether they need to walk in single file or as a group.
* Teachers ensure students are actively supervised
* Paths are regularly maintained by Council Volunteers.
* All schools are required to carry their own First Aid Kit, and ensure teachers have current first aid qualifications (BELS)
* The Urrbrae Education Centre has a Senior First Aid officer on site at all time. They can be contacted by calling Urrbrae Agricultural High School 8372 6955.
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| **Responsibility**: Teacher / accompanying adults / Wetland Staff |
| Exposure to plants High pollen counts Prickly Plants  | * There are many flowering plants at the Wetland (particularly in August – November), these may be an issue for students suffering hay fever. The teacher in charge must identify any students have severe allergies to flowering plants and the Wetland Manager will use alternative routes.
* High risk students to bring own medication and medical plans.
* Wetland Staff will highlight the plants with spines (*Acacia paradoxa*) and students are to take extra care when walking past these plants
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| **Responsibility:**  Teachers and accompanying adults / Wetland Staff |
| Exposure to insects and small animals Bites (bees, ants, mosquitoes) ReptilesSwooping birdsScats | * Hand washing facilities are available within the vicinity and students must wash their hands at the end of all programs.
* The Wetland Manager will explain the correct and safe method of collecting and sampling invertebrates identify any which may be poisonous and not to be touched.
* Please notify the Wetland Manager if any students have anaphylaxis / allergies to insect bites. Ensure students have epi-pen, medication and medical plans easily accessible.
* All students are adequately supervised. The Wetland Manager will highlight and avoid any areas with active nests, hive, etc.
* Teachers are to bring pest repellent and treatment for insect bites.
* The Wetland Manager will brief each group at the beginning of the excursion about the possibility of seeing a snake and appropriate behaviour to follow if one is sighted. The Wetland Manager and supervising staff are to carry a mobile phone at all times. Senior First Aid officers are on site of the Urrbrae Education Centre at all times, schools have their own first aid kits and teacher in charge has current first aid qualifications (BELS).
* Ensure students are aware of the risks of direct contact with scats – wash hands before eating, sit in areas free of scats for eating. The boardwalks have modifications to prevent birds fouling the surfaces.
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|  | **Responsibility**: Teachers and accompanying adults / Wetland Staff  |
| Exposure to bodies of waterSedimentation ponds & Main Pond Falling in or getting wet during activities  | * Swimming in or drinking water from within the wetland is strictly prohibited.
* All boardwalks and inlets are fenced. Students must not climb the fences.
* Students are warned about the dangers of water and how to safely behave around water ways at the beginning of the program.
* Students are only allowed at the water’s edge when accompanied by a supervising adult and must follow the appropriate ratios.
* Groups are encouraged to bring a spare pair of socks / pants.
* Hand washing facilities are available for students to wash their hands after each activity.
* In the very rare event that the water quality be deemed unsafe, excursions will be cancelled. The Wetland Manager will contact schools to reschedule.
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|  | **Responsibility:** Teachers and accompanying adults / Wetland Staff |
| Scientific EquipmentWater testing Digital microscopes | * The Wetland Manager will explain to each group how to safely use the equipment inside the Learning Center. Including the correct use of microscopes.
* There are signs in the Learning Centre that identify potential risks / hazards and how to avoid them.
* Electrical items tagged, correctly dated and in good condition.
* All students are actively supervised in accordance with the DECD ratios.
* All water samples are taken with a water sampling reach pole.
* All hazards water testing reagents are identified and standard handling procedures undertaken

 (this may vary depending on individual groups). |
| **Responsibility:** Teachers and accompanying adults / Wetland Staff |
| Fire | * The Urrbrae Wetland will be closed to schools on catastrophic fire rating days.

<http://www.cfs.sa.gov.au/site/prepare_act_survive_2012/prepare/identify_the_risk/am_i_at_risk/fire_danger_rating.jsp> * In the case of a Fire, staff are to immediately follow the evacuation procedures, contact Emergency Services and the Wetland Manager, and assemble the group in the emergency assembly area, at the Main Gate or as directed by the Wetland Manager. All staff and supervising adults to be carrying a mobile phones and are responsible for ensure all students are accounted for.
* The Wetland Learning Centre is equipped with a fire extinguisher within the service date and has emergency fire exits clearly labelled and clear of obstructions.
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| **Responsibility:** Teachers and accompanying adults / Wetland Staff / Urrbrae Agricultural High School  |
| Child Protection | * All Urrbrae Education Centre staff, volunteers and contractors are compliant with police checks and Mandatory Notification checks where necessary.
* The Urrbrae Wetland is not freely open to the general public.
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|  | **Responsibility:** Teachers and accompanying adults / Wetland Staff |

**Other Considerations**

**First Aid**

The Wetland Manager and supervising teachers have current Basic First Aid accreditations and are able to administer first aid (CPR and Emergency Care). There is always a Senior First Aid Officer available onsite oat the Urrbrae Education Centre.

The Wetland Manager and key teachers have first aid kits on hand and have access to mobile communication at all times. It is advised that teachers bring their own first aid kits, especially for students with specific medical conditions.

**Clothing / Bags**

**All students must wear closed toe shoes** and other appropriate clothing suitable for the weather conditions

(e.g. sun protection in summer, warm and water proof clothing and/or accessories in winter).

Small groups (one class) can store the bags on a table in the learning centre so they do not obstruct exits or walking areas. Large groups (2 and 3 classes) will need to store the bags are stored under the verandah.

**This form needs to be signed by the supervising teacher / group leader prior to activities commencing at the Urrbrae Wetland.**

I will be supervising the groups from (school/organisation) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_during the visit to the Urrbrae Wetland on \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_.

I acknowledge that I have read, understood and agree to the above conditions of entry. I will be held responsible for the actions and safety of the group.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_