



School Excursion Policy

Document Control

Item	Detail
Document Title	School Excursion Policy
School	Grace Academy High School
Governing Entity	Grace Academy Foundation
Governing Entity Registration Number	2025/881786/08
School Phase	Grades 8–12
School Type	Independent, co-educational, English-medium school
Registered Office of Governing Entity	31 Tracy Watts Road, Manors, Pinetown, KwaZulu-Natal, 3610
Policy Custodian	Executive Principal / Head of School
Approval Authority	Governing Board / School Governing Council
Approval Date	24 September 2024
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1. Purpose

This policy regulates all school excursions, educational visits, tours, camps, outreach activities, sports travel, and off-site learning events arranged under the name of **Grace Academy High School**. It gives effect to the school's duty of care, values-based ethos, and governance framework by ensuring that excursions are:

- educationally justified;
- properly approved and supervised;
- safely planned and managed;
- financially controlled;
- conducted in a manner consistent with learner dignity, discipline, and accountability; and
- documented for internal oversight and external quality assurance.

This policy should be read with the school's broader governance framework, including the constitutional role of **Grace Academy Foundation** as the school's governing entity, the school's ethos statement, learner code of conduct, anti-discrimination framework, and health and safety controls.



2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- all learners participating in school excursions;
- all employees, volunteers, contractors, and accompanying adults involved in excursions;
- all excursions organised by the school during school hours, after school, over weekends, or during school holidays where the school retains responsibility; and
- local, regional, and out-of-province excursions, whether academic, cultural, sporting, service-oriented, pastoral, or developmental.

3. Guiding Principles

Grace Academy High School's excursion programme must reflect the school's stated mission of providing structured, values-based, academically purposeful education in a safe and orderly environment.

Accordingly:

- excursions must support learning, development, service, leadership, or school participation;
- learner safety takes priority over convenience or cost;
- planning must be proportionate to the nature and risk of the activity;
- supervision must be active, competent, and accountable;
- no learner may participate without the required parental consent and relevant information;
- school funds and parent payments must be handled transparently; and
- conduct on excursions must reflect the school's Christian, disciplined, and respectful ethos.

4. Definitions

4.1 Excursion

Any organised off-site activity conducted under the authority of the school, including educational visits, field trips, camps, retreats, service activities, competitions, sports tours, and enrichment outings.

4.2 Excursion Leader

The staff member formally designated to plan, coordinate, and manage the excursion.

4.3 Supervising Adult

A staff member or approved adult accompanying the excursion for supervision, support, or specialist responsibilities.

4.4 High-Risk Excursion

Any excursion involving overnight travel, water activities, strenuous physical activity, large crowds, remote locations, long-distance transport, or any activity requiring additional precautions.

4.5 Parent

A parent, guardian, or lawful caregiver responsible for the learner.



5. Educational Purpose

Every excursion must have a clear and recorded purpose linked to one or more of the following:

Category	Examples
Academic enrichment	Museum visits, subject fieldwork, laboratory visits, literary events, university exposure
Learner development	Leadership camps, mentoring events, study skills workshops
Cultural development	Debates, performances, heritage visits, arts exposure
Sport	Fixtures, tournaments, training camps
Service and outreach	Community service projects, charitable initiatives, civic engagement
Pastoral or values formation	Retreats, fellowship events, wellness programmes

Excursions may not be arranged merely for convenience, prestige, or recreation without a legitimate developmental or school-related purpose.

6. Authority and Approval

6.1 Internal Approval Structure

Type of Excursion	Minimum Approval Required
Short local excursion during school hours	Deputy Principal and Principal
Full-day off-site excursion	Principal
Overnight excursion	Principal and Governing Board Chair or delegated Board committee
High-risk or out-of-province excursion	Principal and Governing Board approval
International excursion	Specific Board approval and separate risk/legal review

6.2 Approval Requirements

No excursion may proceed unless the following have been completed in advance:

- written motivation by the Excursion Leader;
- educational purpose statement;
- excursion itinerary;
- supervision plan;
- risk assessment;
- transport arrangements;

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- costings and payment process;
- parental communication and consent pack; and
- confirmation of approval by the appropriate authority.

6.3 Governing Oversight

Because the school operates under the governance of **Grace Academy Foundation**, the Principal remains accountable to the Governing Board for ensuring that excursions are consistent with the school's governance standards, duty of care, and policy framework.

7. Planning and Documentation

The Excursion Leader must prepare an excursion file containing at least:

- excursion proposal form;
- list of participating learners;
- names and contact details of supervising adults;
- final itinerary;
- venue information;
- transport provider details;
- signed parent consent forms;
- medical and dietary information;
- emergency contact list;
- risk assessment form;
- budget and payment record;
- incident forms, if any; and
- post-excursion report.

All records must be submitted to the school office and retained in accordance with the school's data and records practices.



8. Supervision and Staff Responsibilities

8.1 General Duty

All supervising adults owe learners a duty of care and must act prudently, attentively, and consistently with school rules.

8.2 Recommended Supervision Ratios

The school should apply the following minimum ratios unless a stricter ratio is justified by age, risk, venue rules, or specific learner needs:

Excursion Type	Recommended Minimum Ratio
Low-risk daytime excursion	1 adult : 15 learners
Urban excursion requiring movement between sites	1 adult : 12 learners
Sport travel / events	1 adult : 12 learners
Overnight excursion	1 adult : 10 learners
High-risk activity	Risk-based ratio determined by Principal

Additional supervision must be arranged where:

- learners have identified support needs;
- male and female learners both attend an overnight excursion;
- the venue or activity requires specialist oversight; or
- the group size, travel time, or complexity of the programme makes standard ratios inadequate.

8.3 Gender and Pastoral Considerations

Where appropriate, supervision should include both male and female staff for mixed-gender groups, especially for overnight events.

8.4 Responsibilities of the Excursion Leader

The Excursion Leader must:

- coordinate planning and approvals;
- brief staff, learners, and parents;
- maintain attendance and movement control;
- ensure required documents are carried on the day;
- monitor safety and conduct during the excursion;
- respond to incidents and report them promptly; and
- submit the post-excursion report.



9. Parental Consent and Communication

9.1 Written Consent

No learner may participate without a signed parent consent form submitted by the deadline set by the school.

9.2 Consent Pack

The school must provide parents with enough information to make an informed decision, including:

- purpose of the excursion;
- date and times;
- departure and return arrangements;
- venue and itinerary;
- cost and payment terms;
- supervision arrangements;
- transport details;
- required clothing or equipment;
- medical or fitness requirements; and
- contact details for the school representative.

9.3 Special Permissions

A separate written acknowledgement may be required for:

- overnight stays;
- high-risk activities;
- swimming or water-based activities;
- medication administration;
- use of learner images where applicable.

10. Risk Assessment and Safety Planning

10.1 Mandatory Risk Assessment

A written risk assessment must be completed before approval is granted. The assessment must consider:

- venue suitability;
- transport risks;
- learner age and maturity;
- medical needs;
- supervision ratios;
- weather exposure;

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- crowd control;
- activity-specific hazards;
- emergency access; and
- safeguarding concerns.

10.2 Risk Control Measures

The Excursion Leader must identify clear mitigation steps, such as:

- pre-visit inspection where feasible;
- venue safety confirmation;
- learner briefing;
- staff briefing;
- first aid provision;
- attendance checkpoints;
- emergency communication plan; and
- clear group movement rules.

10.3 High-Risk Activities

No high-risk activity may be included unless:

- the venue is suitable and reputable;
- the activity is properly supervised by competent personnel;
- parents have been specifically informed; and
- the Principal has approved the risk controls.

11. Transport Safety

11.1 Approved Transport

Only transport considered suitable, lawful, and safe may be used for school excursions.

11.2 Minimum Requirements

The Excursion Leader must ensure that the transport provider, whether contracted or school-arranged, meets the following requirements:

- roadworthy and appropriate vehicle;
- licensed and professional driver;
- lawful operating authority where required;
- adequate insurance cover, where applicable;
- sufficient seating for all passengers;
- no overcrowding;

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- adherence to seatbelt requirements where fitted and legally required.

11.3 Private Vehicles

Private vehicles may only be used with prior approval from the Principal and only where:

- the arrangement is necessary and reasonable;
- driver details have been recorded;
- driver licensing has been verified;
- parental communication has been clear; and
- insurance and safeguarding considerations have been addressed.

11.4 Travel Control

A teacher or designated adult must:

- maintain a passenger list;
- verify attendance before departure, at checkpoints, and on return;
- ensure orderly embarkation and disembarkation; and
- carry emergency contact details throughout the journey.

12. Medical Information and Learner Welfare

12.1 Medical Information

The school must hold up-to-date information relevant to participating learners, including:

- emergency contact details;
- allergies;
- chronic conditions;
- medication requirements;
- dietary restrictions where relevant.

12.2 Medication

Where a learner requires medication during an excursion:

- parents must provide written instructions;
- medication must be clearly labelled;
- a responsible adult must be designated to oversee administration where necessary.

12.3 First Aid

At least one supervising adult with current first aid competence should accompany the excursion where reasonably possible, and a first aid kit must be available.

12.4 Illness or Injury

If a learner becomes ill or injured, the Excursion Leader must:

- secure immediate care;

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- contact the parent as soon as reasonably possible;
- inform the Principal or delegated school leader;
- arrange medical treatment if necessary; and
- record the incident.

13. Financial Controls

13.1 Budgeting

Each excursion must have a documented budget showing:

- transport costs;
- venue or entry costs;
- accommodation, if applicable;
- staff costs, if applicable;
- contingency amount; and
- learner contribution amount.

13.2 Approval of Costs

All excursion costs must be approved through the school's financial controls before commitments are made.

13.3 Collection and Receipting

All money collected from parents or sponsors for excursions must:

- be receipted through the school's finance process;
- not be handled informally or privately by staff;
- be recorded against the relevant excursion; and
- be reconciled after the event.

13.4 Use of Funds

Funds collected for a specific excursion may be used only for that excursion or a clearly communicated related purpose approved by school management.

13.5 Refunds and Cancellations

The parent communication pack must state the school's approach to:

- non-refundable bookings;
- learner withdrawal after confirmation;
- cancellation by the school; and
- partial refunds where possible.



14. Conduct Expectations

14.1 Learner Conduct

All learners remain subject to the **Learner Code of Conduct** while on excursion. In particular, learners must:

- obey staff instructions promptly;
- behave respectfully toward staff, peers, venue personnel, and the public;
- protect school property and the property of others;
- refrain from bullying, intimidation, or harassment;
- comply with safety instructions at all times;
- avoid prohibited substances, dangerous items, and misconduct; and
- uphold the good name of Grace Academy High School.

14.2 Staff Conduct

Staff must model professionalism, attentiveness, fairness, and self-control throughout the excursion.

14.3 Breaches

Serious misconduct may result in:

- immediate restriction from the activity where safe and practical;
- parent notification;
- disciplinary action on return; and
- exclusion from future excursions.

15. Safeguarding and Inclusion

The school's Christian values-based ethos and commitment to dignity require that excursions be conducted in a manner that is:

- non-discriminatory;
- respectful of learner privacy and dignity;
- attentive to safeguarding concerns;
- sensitive to medical, cultural, and support needs; and
- fair in access and participation, subject to legitimate safety and operational constraints.

A learner may be excluded from a particular excursion only on reasonable grounds connected to safety, conduct, medical limitations, or failure to meet essential participation requirements.



16. Emergency Response

16.1 Emergency Contacts

The Excursion Leader must carry:

- Principal's contact details;
- school emergency contact details;
- parent emergency numbers;
- venue contact details;
- transport provider contact details; and
- emergency medical contact information.

16.2 Incident Management

In an emergency, the Excursion Leader must:

1. protect life and secure the immediate safety of learners and staff;
2. contact emergency services where required;
3. notify the Principal or delegated school leader;
4. communicate with parents as directed and as soon as reasonably possible;
5. keep accurate records of the event and decisions taken; and
6. submit a formal incident report after the event.

16.3 Media and Public Communication

Only the Principal or an authorised representative may make public or media statements concerning a serious incident.

17. Post-Excursion Reporting

Within a reasonable time after the excursion, the Excursion Leader must submit a brief written report covering:

- whether the educational purpose was achieved;
- attendance and participation;
- any incidents, injuries, or near misses;
- learner conduct;
- financial reconciliation;
- transport performance;
- strengths, concerns, and recommendations for future excursions.

Where an incident occurred, all supporting records must be attached.



18. Monitoring and Review

The Principal must ensure that excursion practice is periodically reviewed for compliance, safety, and quality. The school may amend procedures where needed in response to:

- incidents or near misses;
- changes in legal or regulatory requirements;
- operational experience;
- venue-specific concerns; or
- governance review.

19. Non-Compliance

Failure by staff to comply with this policy may result in corrective action, withdrawal of authority to lead excursions, disciplinary action, or other appropriate measures.

20. Approval

This policy is approved for use by Grace Academy High School and takes effect on the date recorded below.

Approval Item	Details
Approved By	[GOVERNING BOARD / SCHOOL GOVERNING COUNCIL]
Name and Position	Mr Philani Mchunu
Signature	[SIGNATURE]
Approval Date	24 September 2024
Effective Date	23 January 2025
Review Date	24 January 2028



Annexure A: Minimum Excursion Planning Checklist

Requirement	Completed
Educational purpose recorded	<input type="checkbox"/>
Principal approval obtained	<input type="checkbox"/>
Board approval obtained where required	<input type="checkbox"/>
Risk assessment completed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Venue confirmed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Transport verified	<input type="checkbox"/>
Supervision ratios confirmed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parent communication issued	<input type="checkbox"/>
Signed consent forms received	<input type="checkbox"/>
Medical information reviewed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Emergency contacts compiled	<input type="checkbox"/>
Budget approved	<input type="checkbox"/>
Payment process confirmed	<input type="checkbox"/>
First aid arrangements confirmed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Learner code of conduct briefing done	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff briefing done	<input type="checkbox"/>
Attendance registers prepared	<input type="checkbox"/>
Post-excursion report submitted	<input type="checkbox"/>