



2020 Centre Policies

Penrith Lakes Environmental Education Centre (PLEEC) is committed to providing quality educational experiences in an equitable, effective and efficient way for the maximum benefit of school students and their communities.

The following policies outline Centre operational procedures aimed at maximising the learning opportunities offered by PLEEC.

1. CLIENT GROUPS:

PLEEC is Department of Education (DoE) School that also has the following contributing partner organisations:

Catholic Education - Parramatta Diocese
Western Sydney Social Sciences Teachers Association

2. COSTS:

- The cost for all (DoE) public and Parramatta Diocese Systemic Schools (K-12) up to a 60 student **maximum** per day is **\$2.50** per student.
- The cost for all other private/independent schools is **\$15.00** per student.
Bookings for small groups (30 or less) will incur a minimum charge of \$525.00, unless the day can be shared with another school where available.
- Where applicable, large school groups (**60 +**) will incur an excess student surcharge of \$525.00 as per the DoE casual payroll schedule.
- Additional charges are applicable for the use of kayaks and PLEEC buses. They are as follows;
 - Kayaking Programs - \$10.00 per student;
 - PLEEC bus transport - \$5.00 per student;(Please Note: PLEEC bus transport ('pick up and drop off') service will only be provided to and from Penrith train station and local schools within the (10-minute maximum radius) of the Centre for a maximum of 24 passengers).
- Buses to be organised by the visiting schools and are required to remain at the centre for the duration of the excursion.

3. BOOKING PROCEDURE:

- Bookings are taken on '**first in**' basis up to one year ahead;
- Bookings will not be split for groups smaller than 60 students across two days (unless special circumstances apply and this will be at the discretion of the Principal);
- Groups of less than 30 students might need to share their day with another school of 30 or less if that same day is requested for the same program;

3.1 Information required for a booking

To make a booking: A Booking Form must be completed through the PLEEC website. Upon receipt of the booking form the centre will send an email confirming the booking enquiry and scheduling of the excursion on the PLEEC calendar. If you do not receive a reply within 5 working days, please contact the centre as soon as possible to ensure that the booking form was delivered to our email address.

3.2 School Excursion Confirmations

- PLEEC will email out all of the excursion confirmations (including risk assessments), **4-6 weeks** prior to the excursion
- All school **MUST** confirm they have received and read all the booking information via email; If no reply is received **3 weeks** prior to the excursion date, you may risk your booking being cancelled.
- All confirmations, relevant program information and any additional notes will be added to the PLEEC Google Calendar;
- The teacher organising the excursion is **responsible** for ensuring that they and any other accompanying staff/parents attending have read and understood all of the excursion information, including risk assessments sent to them by the Centre;
- To ensure safety and smooth running of the day, all visiting school staff must abide by PLEEC risk management plans and staff instructions at all times during their excursion.

4. STUDENT NUMBERS:

- Student numbers undertaking centre programs are limited by a number of factors. The nature of fieldwork, the size of the site, proximity to water and the physical size of PLEEC facilities can all limit the number of students that can be effectively accommodated. Therefore, a general rule of **60** students maximum per day (1 bus load), applies for most of our day-to-day programs on site with the exception of 'whole year' excursions.
- Student numbers should be negotiated with visiting teachers and confirmed prior to the visit. Emphasis should be given to ensuring student safety and access to meaningful experiences. Therefore, a general student-teacher ratio of 15:1 is deemed most appropriate for fieldwork as per (DoE) outdoor learning policy.

5. IN-SCHOOL VISITS:

PLEEC will endeavour to develop and implement in-school environmental education programs where possible. In-school visits will be treated in the same way as visits to the centre, and normal booking procedures will be followed.

6. PRE & POST LEARNING:

PLEEC has developed a number of pre and post excursion teaching and learning materials for some of its programs. These are available on the PLEEC website. In the future, PLEEC will endeavour to develop more of these valuable resources for all of its programs so that student learning and achievement of learning outcomes can be maximised.

7. CENTRE RECORDS:

For the purpose of Centre reporting, planning and informing of the PLEEC community, a database record will be kept of all users of the Centre and its programs. This will include specific information on each school and its PLEEC use history.

These records will form the basis of annual reporting to the PLEEC management committee, Department of Education and wider PLEEC community. Summaries of these records will be part of the regular reporting by the Principal to the PLEEC Committee.

8. EVALUATIONS:

Both visiting school and PLEEC staff will complete separate centre program evaluations at the end of each excursion. These will be complimented by other teacher, student and parent evaluations. This will then be used to inform future planning and adjustments being made to PLEEC teaching and learning programs.

Program evaluations will form the basis of PLEEC annual reporting and other regular reports by the Principal to the PLEEC Committee.

Care and supervision of students

1. Supervision and Discipline:

- Supervision of students is the joint responsibility of the visiting school staff and PLEEC staff.
- A student to staff ratio of 15:1, in line with Departmental policies, should be adhered to for effective supervision of students in a fieldwork context.
- Visiting staff should be made aware of the need for control of students and their supervisory responsibilities during a visit.
- Visiting staffs are responsible for discipline of students during their visit, although PLEEC staff may also take action when student/staff safety is compromised.
- Discipline of students during a visit to the PLEEC should take into account the fair discipline code and excursions policy of the visiting school along with the special needs attached to fieldwork.
- Where students travel on minibuses provided by the PLEEC, it is preferred that a teacher or other responsible adult accompanies the driver/teacher.
- Care and supervision of students during recess and lunch breaks is the responsibility of the visiting teacher(s).

2. Student Safety:

- Outdoor activities carry additional risks that are not normally encountered in an everyday school classroom environment. Visiting school staff must read and become familiar with program-specific PLEEC risk management plans and adhere to them at all times. All PLEEC staff, including casual teachers must also do the same. Any concerns encountered during the excursion need to be reported to the Principal. All PLEEC risk assessments will be evaluated and reviewed on an annual basis.
- The nature of fieldwork and the safety requirements of the site determine that maximum student to staff ratios. This should be 15:1. This limit should be strictly adhered to when activities are conducted near water.
- PLEEC staff will devise programs that take into account the ages of students with a view to minimising the potential dangers and hazards that apply to the program.
- PLEEC staff will brief visiting staff on potential dangers and hazards associated with their program. While this information should be transmitted to students by PLEEC staff, it is ultimately the responsibility of the visiting staff to ensure students act in a way that takes account of the potential dangers and hazards indicated.
- PLEEC will adhere to any special safety requirements its host partner (Sydney International Regatta Centre) has in its risk management plans.
- Student safety on buses during pick-up, movement around the scheme and in return to station/school requires that PLEEC staff observe normal safety requirements as set down by traffic authorities. All students must be seated during bus movements. All passengers must wear the safety belts provided.

- PLEEC staff will try to minimise or avoid the use of chemicals in water testing and other fieldwork procedures as much as possible. Any use will be restricted to high school students, and under strict supervision of PLEEC staff.

- As programs are developed, PLEEC staff will purchase and undertake training or develop expertise in recommended safety equipment, such as hats, bicycle helmets, gloves, waders, gumboots and buoyancy vests to improve safety for participating students and staff.

- Access to PLEEC programs will be provided to students with disabilities through the provision of access ramps and/or by the modification of programs that allow these students to participate on equal terms with other students.

- Visits to external venues/industrial areas will require increased safety strategies for students. PLEEC staff will ascertain site-specific risk assessments/guidelines from these providers and adhere to these guidelines. PLEEC staff will also communicate this information to visiting school staff via program specific risk assessments.

- The dangers associated with prolonged exposure to the sun require that students should wear hats, sun cream and protective clothing. These needs shall be communicated to visiting schools at time of confirmation of visit. Adequate shelter will be available on site for student use during breaks.

3. Medical and Emergency procedures

- PLEEC staff will be trained in emergency and first aid procedures. Teaching staff and the School Administration Manager will gain and maintain mandatory qualifications in First Aid and Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation as per (DoE) policy. Recommended emergency procedures shall be followed in case of any accidents and/or medical emergencies.

- First Aid kits will be available and fully maintained by PLEEC so that minor medical emergencies can be dealt with on site. Each PLEEC teacher when away from the Centre shall take an individual kit on any fieldwork activity.

- The administration of medicines for visiting students is the responsibility of the visiting school and staff.

4. Reporting of accidents

- In case of a serious accident/injury occurring during the excursion, PLEEC staff will complete an appropriate student or staff (DoE) Accident and Injury Report form (see attachment) and submit it to the Principal.

- A copy of the completed report form will be then forwarded to the visiting school immediately following the excursion.