

AN EXCURSION TO SYDNEY AQUARIUM

Background information for Teachers making Risk Assessments



The following information provides background information for teachers planning a school excursion to Sydney Aquarium. This information will assist teachers to prepare a **RISK ASSESSMENT PLAN** for their excursion. For more information contact Sydney Aquarium Education on Ph: 8251 7801

SYDNEY AQUARIUM INFO

Arrival and Departure

Schools should plan to arrive at least 15 minutes before the allocated entry period. This will allow time to organise payment, have a quick food break and use bathrooms prior to entry.

Group entry to the Aquarium is staggered to avoid congestion in the Exhibit Area and to satisfy capacity regulations.

Groups exit the Aquarium and assemble outside. In the interests of public safety, groups are not permitted to gather in the foyer or in any of the exhibit areas.

Access to the Aquarium

Entry and exit to the Aquarium is via the front doors. Exhibits are on one level and a series of ramps gives access to underwater viewing opportunities.

Students are advised to walk at all times, to not block corridors and to use the ramps in a safe and responsible manner.

AQUARIUM FACILITIES

Exhibit Area

Sydney Aquarium is a major tourist attraction with over 1.3 million visitors per year. Over 11 000 animals are exhibited in enclosed and open tanks/spaces.

A mixture of general public, primary and secondary students will be in the Aquarium at most times. Visitors are requested, as much as possible, to move through the Aquarium in a one way direction to assist with crowd control and traffic flow.

The touchpool is attended by Aquarium staff from 9am – 5pm every day.

Café and Retail Sales

A café/restaurant is located in the foyer. A specially discounted schools meal is available but it must be pre-ordered at time of booking. If permitted by teachers, students may buy items from the café/restaurant and Gift Shop at regular retail prices.

All visitors exit through the licensed restaurant which is wholly owned and operated by Sydney Aquarium and strictly adheres to all legislation related to licensed premises.

Toilets

Toilets are located in the foyer near the entry doors and in the centre of the attraction at the entrance to

the Great Barrier Reef exhibit.
A toilet for the disabled is located in the Gift Shop, (through the café).

Disabled Access

The Aquarium is fully wheelchair accessible.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY ISSUES

Fire Exits and Evacuation

The Aquarium has clearly marked Fire Exits in all public areas and complies with Fire Control regulations. Sydney Aquarium Duty Managers have been formally trained in emergency evacuation procedures.

First Aid

A First Aid Kit is located at the Sydney Aquarium Information Desk and between 9am and 5pm there are formally trained First Aid officers on site.

For First Aid assistance please contact the Admissions Supervisor.

CHILD PROTECTION ACT AND WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECKS

Supervision Levels

Supervision of students in the Aquarium is wholly the responsibility of the teachers/carers. Supervisors are allowed free entry on the following ratios:

1:3 for pre-school students, 1:6 for K-2 students, 1:8 for Yr 3-12 students, 1:1 for disabled students

It should be remembered that the Aquarium is a busy public building and students need direct supervision at all times, including in the toilets.

Working with Children Checks

Sydney Aquarium staff are responsible for the following duties: Admission/payment procedures, meet and greet procedures, café and gift shop sales, attending touchpools.

At all times, teachers/carers are the direct supervisors of students at the Aquarium.

The Child Protection Act legislation does not consider Sydney Aquarium as a provider of specific services to children and it is therefore not necessary for Sydney Aquarium staff to have Working with Children checks. This information has been verified by the NSW Department of Education and Training.

Government school teachers who have questions about excursion policy should contact the Operational Co-ordinator, Schools at DET on (02) 9561 8514.

PUBLIC LIABILITY INSURANCE

Insurance cover

Sydney Aquarium has the appropriate Public liability Insurance in place to cover injury and damage. A Certificate of Currency of insurance can be supplied on request. Please call 8251 7801.

PERSONAL BELONGINGS

In the Exhibit Area

During your visit it is strongly advised for teachers and students to keep their belongings with them or leave them on the bus. For security reasons Sydney Aquarium does not have lockers or storage for backpacks.

Sydney Aquarium takes no responsibility for lost items.

Lost property

Any items found in the Aquarium are placed in Lost Property, located at the Information Desk. Schools lose many items so students should be encouraged to be responsible for their own belongings.

PAYMENT PROCEDURES**Payment options**

Prior to your visit:

Credit card payment at time of booking; cheque posted prior to visit; EFT payment prior to visit. Tickets can be sent out prior to your visit, or collected on the day.

On the day:

Bring cheque, credit card or cash for payment on the day. Tickets will be available for collection on the day of the visit.

Students cannot pay individually.

Sydney Aquarium will issue a tax invoice prior to the excursion if requested. Ring with final student numbers at least 48 hours prior to the day of visit and it will be faxed.

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT**Student behaviour**

Students should be aware that there will be both other schools and general public in the Aquarium during their visit. Therefore we ask that teachers outline the following Code of Conduct and monitor student behaviour on the day.

Students should:

- behave in a courteous and responsible manner at all times
- behave safely and walk, not run inside the Aquarium
- refrain from throwing any items into open tanks
- refrain from putting their hands into open tanks, apart from the Touchpools
- place all rubbish in the bins provided
- respect the animals and at the Touchpool, follow the instructions of the attendant.

Sydney Aquarium reserves the right to remove any students from the Aquarium if their behaviour is disruptive or dangerous. A teacher will be required to supervise such students outside the building.

We expect teachers to ensure that this Code of Conduct is adhered to.

This document was developed in consultation with the NSW Department of Education and Training school excursion policy. Teachers making **RISK ASSESSMENTS** as part of School Excursion Planning should note that Sydney Aquarium **cannot make the assessment for you.** Teachers must make their own risk assessment based on the information provided. Please contact Sydney Aquarium Education office on 02 8251 7801 if you have any questions.