

# WA Gould League's Excursion Safety Policy

WA Gould League, Herdsman Lake Wildlife Centre meets the  
Department of Education: *Excursions: Off School Site Activities - Excursion Management Plan* requirements

The following information is made available to teachers so that they can complete the Department's **Excursions: Off School Site Activities: Appendix A: Checklist for Excursion Management Plan** as part of their assessment of Herdsman Lake Wildlife Centre as an excursion venue.

Where possible, we have correlated the information, with the headings used on the Department's form. The following information relates to **Section 4: Procedures** and **Appendix A** of the Department's **Excursions: Off School Site Activities**. Although Herdsman Lake is a closed water body, due to the nature of the activities conducted by students during School Excursions, an excursion to Herdsman Lake Wildlife Centre is not considered a Water-based Excursion as per **section 19: Water-based Activities** of the Department's **Outdoor Education and Recreation Activities** policy. If you wish to discuss this further please do not hesitate to contact our Centre Manager.

## The Environment

Herdsman Lake Wildlife Centre is an educational discovery centre consisting of an activities room, mezzanine bird observatory and foyer with aquarium, live animal and touch table displays. It is located at the southern end of Herdsman Lake, on the corner of Selby and Flynn Streets, Wembley and is situated in a wetland environment. Student activities take place on the grassed area adjacent to the Centre and via a raised wooden boardwalk leading into the lake. The Centre and boardwalk all have wheelchair access. A **free tour** is available for teachers who would like to assess the venue before their excursion.

## Risk Assessment and Risk Minimisation

In the 32 years (since 1984) that the WA Gould League has operated the Herdsman Lake Wildlife Centre and conducted school excursions, there has never been any incident, serious injury or death resulting from the Centre's educational activities.

The WA Gould league has completed a full risk analysis of the Herdsman Lake Wildlife Centre and the educational activities it conducts, at or near the Centre, in compliance with Department of Education - Risk Minimisation Policy. Risks identified included snake bite, allergic reaction to insect bites, poisoning or allergic reaction from ingestion/handling water contaminated with Blue-Green Algae, drowning, exposure to the sun, dehydration, fire/smoke inhalation, infection and risk from members of the public.

Risk Minimisation through Education Staff training, teacher and student safety induction, student supervision, emergency response procedures and design of student activities specific to age levels, as per this policy document has reduced the above risks to a NIL to VERY LOW rating.

## Students' Skills

Herdsman Lake Wildlife Centre is suitable for all school ages, from kindergarten through to university. Activities are designed to take student age into consideration. Most activities have been designed so that the users of wheelchair can access them.

## Supervision

Herdsman Lake Wildlife Centre requires that all schools provide an adult supervisor to student ratio, as follows:

Years K - 4: 1 adult to 5 student ratio

Years 5-12: 1 adult to 30 students

If a school is not able to meet these supervision requirements, the organising teacher may call the Centre's office to explore the possibility of guides (volunteers who regularly assist at Herdsman Lake Wildlife Centre) assisting them with the adult : student ratio.

Supervision of students is mandatory at all times. Supervising adults are requested to keep their students in their groups and well behaved during their visit, avoid disruption to wildlife, to maximise the student's educational experience and for the comfort of other visitors using the Centre. The following requirements are general mandatory safety rules to be enforced by the supervising adults. The Excursion Coordinator must ensure all supervising adults are aware of the following simple safety rules:

### **Herdsman Lake Wildlife Centre Safety Rules**

- Supervision of students is mandatory at all times, both inside and outside the centre.
- Students are to remain in their class groups.
- Areas of long-grass (signposted with 'Snake Risk Area') are out-of-bounds.
- Hands must be washed thoroughly before meals (especially after contact with lake water or after handling animals).
- Students will not run on the short grassed, limestone path and boardwalk areas.
- Students to remain behind excursion leader on guided tours.
- Supervising adults to supervise toilet breaks.
- All school staff are required to wear an identifying badge and accompanying adults (parents/carers) require a name badge/sticker that identifies them as a member of that school group (e.g. Rod - Herdsman PS), so as to differentiate them from a member of the general public.

These safety requirements and other specifics relating to the excursion events will be reinforced and explained fully during a safety induction talk, by Centre staff, upon arrival.

### **Herdsman Lake Wildlife Centre Staff**

On arrival, a trained Herdsman Lake Wildlife Centre staff member will greet students and staff and will explain your programmed visit, safety instructions and what to do in an emergency. It is the schools responsibility that all supervising adults are clearly identifiable. Supervising adults are reminded that the Wildlife Centre foyer and toilets are open to the public. All excursion activities are carried out in designated areas with minimal contact with members of the public and there are planned toilet breaks during the teaching sessions. It is the sole responsibility of teachers/supervising adults to monitor toilet breaks.

Herdsman Lake Wildlife Centre staff are responsible for providing a safe and enjoyable learning environment for your students. The Herdsman Lake Wildlife Centre facilities and equipment are maintained and operated at a high level to ensure visitor safety. We ask that school adult supervisors ensure that students are well supervised and their behaviour is appropriate. Staff should conduct regular head counts of children in their care. Any hazards, incidents or accidents must be reported immediately to Centre staff so that appropriate remedial action can be taken.

### **Federal Police and Working with Children (WWC) Clearance**

All Department of Education staff at Herdsman Lake Wildlife Centre have WWC clearance and Federal Police Clearance. All other presenters, volunteers and work experience workers have WWC clearance. In addition, any staff member waiting for WWC clearance, needs to complete a Department of Education - **Confidential Declaration** form whilst their WWC clearance is being processed. Schools are responsible for ensuring any staff and supervising adults with the school group have appropriate WWC clearances. (Please note: school parent volunteers and volunteers who work less than 5 days/yr with children are exempt from WWC documentation requirements)

## **Public Liability Insurance Cover**

The Herdsman Lake Wildlife Centre is classified as a Category 2 Active external provider with a public liability insurance cover of \$20 million.

## **Emergency Response Planning**

Herdsman Lake Wildlife Centre has an evacuation procedure in place.

### **Emergency Procedure:**

In the event that an evacuation is required while you are at the Centre, notice will be given by the Centre Manager. It is essential that all school visitors take directions from our Centre staff, who can be identified by their name badges. Staff will direct school groups to the Emergency Assembly Area, which is clearly marked by a sign on the grassed area outside the front door of Centre. From this area teachers can then check the attendance of their students.

The Centre is fitted with emergency EXIT signs, smoke detectors and fire extinguishers are located inside the building. Pressure bandages to be applied in the event of snakebite are located inside the front door of the Wildlife Centre and the Centre has a first aid kit.

### **Communication Strategies**

Herdsman Lake Wildlife Centre has three telephones, one in the shop and one in each office. The Administration Officer will be on duty to assist if required and is the contact person in the case of a first-aid emergency. Excursions are all within 100m of the Centre.

**Herdsman Lake Wildlife Centre Manager has Emergency Care First Aid training and basic First Aid equipment is on hand in an emergency.**

**The nearest Doctor's Surgery is 89 Essex St, Wembley (corner of Grantham St.)  
Phone: 9387 2000.**

**Sir Charles Gardner Hospital, Hospital Ave, Nedlands, phone 9346 3333, is the closest hospital with an emergency department.**

**St John Ambulance, phone 000. It is the policy of WA Gould League that an ambulance must be called immediately for any medical emergency that occurs at Herdsman Lake Wildlife Centre and the School Excursion Coordinator must have a mobile phone for emergency contact.**

Teachers can increase safety by always ensuring that they meet the minimum supervision requirements (see above) and by strongly encouraging students to stay in their groups with their adult supervisors whilst at Herdsman Lake Wildlife Centre. Any unauthorised or suspicious persons encountered by groups must be reported to the Centre staff immediately.

Once evacuation from the building occurs, all visitors will be assembled at a common point away from the building and so as not to obstruct emergency vehicles. Teachers will be able to do a roll call there and need to immediately alert Herdsman Lake Wildlife Centre staff if any students are missing.

**I DECLARE I HAVE READ, UNDERSTOOD AND AGREE TO COMPLY WITH THE  
WA GOULD LEAGUE'S EXCURSION SAFETY POLICY:**

**NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_ **(Please Print)**

**SIGNED:** \_\_\_\_\_ **(EXCURSION COORDINATOR)**

If in doubt about any aspects of an excursion, please do not hesitate to call our booking staff:  
Phone 9387 6079 E-mail: [admin@wagouldleague.com.au](mailto:admin@wagouldleague.com.au)

**PLEASE PRINT AND FAX TO WA GOULD LEAGUE ON 9387 3492**