

Travel policy decision making for children in care

This flowchart guides decision making about travel for children in care while supporting school attendance requirements. It applies where the CEO holds sole or shared parental responsibility for the child and that child is of compulsory school age (6-17 years).

The policy does not prohibit travel. Children in care may need to travel for a range of legitimate reasons. Wherever possible, travel should be planned outside school terms. Where this is not possible, requests for travel during school term must be assessed on the child's individual circumstances and in line with the Travel for Children in Care Policy, including consultation with the school principal in all cases.

REASON FOR REQUEST

CONSIDERATIONS FOR APPROVAL

Court
direction

If travel cannot occur during school holidays or the court order cannot be varied.

Medical

Short absences should be considered in consultation with principal. Longer absences may require flexible/individual learning plans from the school.

Funeral or
Sorry Business

Consult with family **and** significant others to confirm who the cultural authority is. Cultural authority confirms cultural obligation for the child. Consider the child's connection with family, community, culture and traditions outlined in the *Care and Protection of Children Act*.

Connection to
family, Country
or other cultural
obligations

Travel should minimise disruption to education. Where possible, use alternatives such as virtual contact or having family travel to the child. Where family are already travelling to the child's location, consider bringing the child and family together. Consider the child's connection with family, community, culture and traditions outlined in the *Care and Protection of Children Act*.

Reunification
efforts

If arrangements cannot be made during school holidays or after school, confirm Principal support and consider dual enrolment or flexible learning plans.

Activities related
to learning and/or
career

Activities include school excursions, sports academies, national events and opportunities to represent the NT/ Region or Australia.

Planned or
family holiday

Carers should support travel during school holidays where possible. Work with the principal and care team to align travel with school term start or end, or where there are learning benefits.

Exceptional
circumstances

Exceptional circumstances may include where:

- the child's specialised needs limit placement options
- their wellbeing may be at risk in an unfamiliar placement
- a stable placement may be disrupted, or non-approval may affect their connection to carers or education.