

Excursions

Policy introduction

Excursions are a valuable experience for children, families and staff of education and care settings. Excursions provide the opportunity to expand and enhance children's experiences, explore different environments and engage in meaningful ways with their communities. Excursions require appropriate planning and risk management to ensure the best experience and enjoyment for all. Our programs are committed to providing excursions that are well considered and planned, provide meaningful experiences and ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of children at all times.

Our policy in action

We will:

- Make excursions a part of our programs
- Plan for excursions with careful consideration of the safety of children and adults
- Carry out excursions only where full documentation and permissions have been completed and obtained
- Undertake full risk assessments, consideration of value of educational excursions, and plan for first aid requirements

Statutory legislation and considerations

- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- The Work Health and Safety (WHS) Act 2011
- The Work Health and Safety (WHS) Regulation

Strategies for policy implementation

Planning and preparations

All excursions will be planned in advance to:

- Maximise both children's developmental experiences and their safety
- Reflect the age, capacity and interests of the children
- Ensure they are properly supervised and conducted in a safe manner; and
- Are conducted with fully informed written parental permission

All excursions will be thoroughly researched to ensure:

- Supervision is adequate so children cannot be separated from the group
- Access to hazardous equipment and environments are minimised
- There is adequate access to food, drink and other facilities (toilets, hand washing etc)
- Consideration is given to the mobility and supervision requirements of children with special rights
- That adequate sun and shade protection is available

When planning for excursions program staff will:

- Assess the requirements for the excursion
- Conduct a risk assessment
- Book transport and venues
- Make alternative arrangements for adverse weather conditions
- Inform families of the details of the excursion including destination, objectives and outcomes, and what the child should bring
- Provide parents or legal guardians with an excursion permission form to complete to authorise their child to participate on the excursion
- Collect completed permission forms for each child attending the excursion
- Request additional adult participation on the excursion where required
- Arrange for a suitably equipped first aid kit (including EpiPen) and mobile phone to be taken on the excursion

In addition:

- Our Educators will make alternate arrangements for any children who are not attending the excursion, and ensure that any dialogue or pre-planning for the excursion does not alienate such children from social networks
- Additional factors need to be considered in the planning of excursions for children with additional needs. Where possible, our service will uphold the right for all children to access all excursions and engage in meaningful ways while on excursions

Risk Assessment

The nominated supervisor will:

- Ensure a risk assessment is conducted prior to any excursion to identify and assess the risk the excursion may pose to the safety, health and wellbeing of any child whilst on the excursion, and will specify how the service will manage any risks identified.
- The risk assessment conducted will consider:
 - destination and duration of the excursion;
 - potential water hazards or any hazard associated with water based activities;
 - transport to and from destination;
 - number of educators, responsible persons, and children involved;
 - proposed activities; and
 - items to be taken on the excursion e.g. mobile phone, emergency contact numbers etc.
- If the excursion is a regular occurrence a risk assessment will only be carried out once, provided the circumstances around the excursion have not changed in any way since the initial risk assessment was conducted

Our nominated supervisor will also:

- Appoint a certified supervisor/responsible person to be in charge of the excursion

Authorisation for Excursions

Our Nominated Supervisor will ensure that:

- For all excursions parents or legal guardians will be given an excursion permission form with full details of the excursion including:
 - date, description, duration and destination of proposed excursion
 - method of transport to be used
 - reason for the excursion, and proposed activities to be conducted on the excursion
 - the anticipated adult: child ratio – outlining number of educators and staff and other adults attending
 - a statement that a risk assessment has been prepared and is available at the service for parents to view
- If the excursion is a regular outing, authorisation is required once in a 12month period. All parents or legal guardians will be asked to sign permission forms for regular excursions on enrolment and at the beginning of each subsequent year

No child will be taken on an excursion unless written permission from parents or legal guardian has been received

Families and Volunteers

- Families will be encouraged to participate in excursions to assist in maintaining suitable child/staff ratios. If the parent needs to bring their child's sibling because they cannot find suitable care, the siblings must be included in ratios
- If additional adults are required volunteers will be invited. Volunteers will be mature, responsible people who are aware of the hazards and responsibilities of taking a group of children out of the service
- Family members/volunteers will not to be left in sole charge of children and must be supervised by an educator at all times
- All volunteers/family members' details will be entered into the appropriate staff record for that day

Transport and Traffic

- Safety of children will be considered in the choice of route and mode of transport. Our programs will follow all applicable NSW road rules as well as the Kids and Traffic best practice recommendations for transporting young children safely in buses. Every reasonable precaution will be taken to protect children from harm and any hazard likely to cause injury
- Educators will ensure children obey road rules and cross roads at a crossing or lights where available. Educators will remain vigilant to ensure no child runs ahead or lags behind the group

Supervision

- Supervision on excursions will ensure the safety and wellbeing of all children for the duration of the excursion, taking into account ratios and all risks and hazards likely to be encountered
- The venue will be assessed as safe for all children and adults on the excursion and will be easily supervised and accessible

Water Hazards

- Where excursions are conducted to swimming pools or other water related activities where there are significant water hazards (such as rivers, lakes or beaches), risk management strategies will be identified and implemented

Conducting the Excursion

- All educators, volunteers and children attending will be informed of excursion timetable/itinerary, special requirements, safety procedures, grouping of children and responsibilities.
- A list of children on the excursion will be left at the program and a copy carried by the delegated certified supervisor/responsible person
- Before leaving on the excursion, a notice will be prominently displayed at our program, which includes:
 - itinerary and timetable
 - mobile contact phone number
- Items to be taken on excursions include:
 - a suitable stocked first-aid kit including EpiPen
 - a mobile phone
 - children's emergency contact numbers
 - children's medication, if required
 - other items as required e.g. sunscreen, drinking cups, jackets etc.

If a child is lost on an excursion, we will always leave a staff member behind to look, while the other group leaders escort the children back to the program or venue arrival/departure location

Evaluation

All excursions are conducted in a safe manner and evaluated. Any improvements identified in the risk assessment prior to conducting the excursion or the evaluation of the excursion are to be addressed and acted on to ensure children's safety

National Quality Framework

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010

Education and Care Services National Regulations: 99,100,101,102,161, 168 (2) (g)

National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and Care and School Age Care

QA 2-Standard 2.1 Element 2.1.2 Standard 2.2 Element, 2.2.1, 2.2.2

QA 7 -Standard 7.1 Element 7.1.3

Procedures

Weldon procedures that support the implementation of this policy:

- Risk Assessment – Excursions
- Risk Assessment – Bus Journey

Links to other policies

- [Family Communication and Participation](#)
- [Interactions with Children](#)
- [Medical Conditions](#)
- [Record Keeping](#)

Sources

- Community Child Care NSW NQF in a Box – policies
- Guide to National Quality Standard 2011
- Kids Safe NSW