

EXCURSION POLICY

2020

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY		
2.2	Safety	Each child is protected.
2.2.1	Supervision	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard.
2.2.2	Incident and emergency management	Plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are developed in consultation with relevant authorities, practiced and implemented.

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS	
99	Children leaving the education and care service premises
100	Risk assessment must be conducted before excursion.
101	Conduct of risk assessment for excursion.
102	Authorisation for excursion.
168	Policies and Procedures are required

Purpose

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.

It is our aim to ensure that all excursions and incursions undertaken by the Service are planned and conducted in a safe manner, always maintaining children's wellbeing in accordance with National Legislation AND National Regulation.

Planning

- Assess the requirements for the excursion.
- Conduct a risk assessment **Regulation 100**.
- Book transport 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 **Regulation 102**.
- 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.
- Educators must 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 by Nominated Supervisor

- 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.
- Appoint a responsible person to be in charge of the excursion. This person will be in charge of keeping track of children, educators, volunteers and guiding people where to go and what to do. They will carry the attendance list of all children and others attending, the emergency contact lists for everyone attending and do regular head counts.

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
- items to be taken on the excursion eg: mobile phone, emergency contact numbers.

NB: 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.

Authorisations

- For all excursions parents or legal guardians will be given an excursion permission form with full details of the excursion including **(National Regulation 102)**:
 - 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 12 month period **(National Regulation 102(5))**. 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.

Travel Arrangements

- Travel arrangements are made on the basis of individual excursion requirements. Every reasonable precaution will be taken to protect children from harm and any hazard likely to cause injury.
- Walking - 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.
- Public Transport (trains, buses) – Wherever possible we use transport with proper child restraints.

1. Children up to the age of six months must be secured in an approved rearward facing restraint
2. Children aged from six months old but under four years old must be secured in either a rear or forward facing approved child restraint with an inbuilt harness
3. Children under four years old cannot travel in the front seat of a vehicle with two or more rows
4. Children aged from four years old but under seven years old must be secured in a forward facing approved child restraint with an inbuilt harness or an approved booster seat
5. Children aged from four years old but under seven years old cannot travel in the front seat of a vehicle with two or more rows, unless all other back seats are occupied by children younger than seven years in an approved child restraint or booster seat
6. Children aged from seven years old but under 16 years old who are too small to be restrained by a seatbelt properly adjusted and fastened are strongly recommended to use an approved booster seat
7. Children in booster seats must be restrained by a suitable lap and sash type approved seatbelt that is properly adjusted and fastened, or by a suitable approved child safety harness that is properly adjusted and fastened.

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.

Ratios

- According to the NSW Department of Education and Training, minimum ratio requirements (National Regulation 123 and National Regulation 271) must be maintained while on excursions as you would in a centre-based service.

“While on excursion, the minimum educator to child ratios as prescribed in Regulation 123 and 271 must be maintained both at the service premises and the place where the excursion is being conducted. One of the primary objectives of the National Law and Regulations is to ensure the safety, health and wellbeing of children. The minimum educator ratios are designed as a basic safety net to help meet this objective”

“Through the completion of a risk assessment, approved providers should be able to come to a determination of whether the minimum ratios are sufficient in providing adequate supervision while attending an excursion. Examples of factors that could be considered in the risk assessment may include staffing arrangements when a child falls ill/suffers injury and needs to be taken away from the venue by an educator, or if an educator is driving from the service to the excursion venue and cannot meet the adequate supervision requirement during that time.”

Water Hazards

- No excursions will be conducted to a swimming pool or other water related activity.
- Where there are significant water hazards (such as rivers, lakes or beaches), risk management strategies will be identified and implemented such as high adult to child ratios

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 service and a copy carried by the delegated **Responsible Person/Nominated Supervisor**.
- Before leaving on the excursion, a notice will be prominently displayed at the service 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.

Responsibilities of the Approved Provider

- Ensuring that a child does not leave the service premises on an excursion unless prior written authorisation has been provided by the parent/guardian or person named in the child's enrolment record, and that the authorisation includes all details required under **Regulation 102(4)**.
- Ensuring that educator-to-child ratios are maintained at all times, including during excursions.
- Ensuring that parents/guardians, volunteers, students and all adults participating in an excursion are adequately supervised at all times and are not left with sole supervision of individual children or groups of children.
- Ensuring the risk assessment identifies and assesses the risks, specifies how these will be managed and/or minimised, and includes all details required by **Regulation 101**.

Responsibilities of the Nominated Supervisor

- Implementing Approved Provider responsibilities as delegate.
- Ensuring that each child's personal medication and current medical management plan is taken on excursions and other off-site activities.
- Ensuring that a portable first aid kit (including required medication for dealing with medical conditions) is taken on excursions and other off-site activities.
- Ensuring a mobile phone, the emergency contact details for each child and the contact details of their medical practitioner are taken on excursions for notification in the event of an incident, injury, trauma or illness.

Responsibilities of the Educators

- Adhering to this policy.
- Checking that a parent/guardian or person named in the child's enrolment record has completed, signed and dated the excursion/service event authorisation form prior to the excursion.
- Allowing a child to participate in an excursion or service event only with the written authorisation of a parent/ guardian or person named in the child's enrolment record.
- Maintaining the required educator-to-child ratios at all times, and adequately supervising children during excursions and service events.
- Adequately supervising parents/guardians, volunteers, students and all adults participating in an excursion, and ensuring that they are not left with sole supervision of individual children or groups of children.
- Undertaking a risk assessment for an excursion prior to obtaining written authorisation from parents/guardians.
- Ensuring the risk assessment identifies and assesses the risks, specifies how they will be managed and/or minimised, and includes all details required by **Regulation 101**.
- Including all children in excursions and service events regardless of their abilities, additional needs or medical conditions.
- Taking each child's personal medication and current medical management plan on excursions and other off-site activities.
- Taking a portable first aid kit (including required medication for dealing with medical conditions) on excursions and other off-site activities.

Responsibilities of the Families

- 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.
- Completing, signing and dating excursion/service event authorisation forms.
- Providing written authorisation for their child to leave the service premises on routine outings.
- Reading the details of the excursion or service event provided by the service and asking for additional information if required.
- Understanding that, if they participate in an excursion or service event as a volunteer, they will be under the immediate supervision of the Responsible Person at all times.

Related Statutory Obligations & Considerations

Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority	http://www.acecqa.gov.au/
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(ACECQA)	
Department of Education	http://www.dec.nsw.gov.au/what-we-offer/regulation-and-accreditation/early-childhood-education-care
Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF)	http://files.acecqa.gov.au/files/National-Quality-Framework-Resources-Kit/belonging_being_and_becoming_the_early_years_learning_framework_for_australia.pdf
Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011	http://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/#/view/regulation/2011/653
Kids and Traffic - National Quality Framework (NQF)	http://www.kidsandtraffic.mq.edu.au/ http://acecqa.gov.au/national-quality-framework/
NSW Government Transport for NSW	http://roadsafety.transport.nsw.gov.au/stayingsafe/children/childcarseats/index.html
Work Health and Safety (WHS) Act 2011	

Related Telephone Numbers

- Early Childhood Directorate - 1800 619 113
- Department of Health - 1800 020 103
- Emergency Services - 000
- Roads and Maritime Services – 13 22 13

Amendment History

Version	Amendment	Date
002	Additional Points added Irrelevant information deleted Grammar errors fixed Formatting NQS & Regulations Added	October 2019

This policy will be updated to ensure compliance with all relevant legal requirements every year. Appropriate consultation of all stakeholders (including staff and families) will be conducted on a timely basis. In accordance with Regulation 172 of the *Education and Care Services National Regulation*, families of children enrolled will be notified at least 14 days and their input considered prior to any amendment of policies and procedures that have any impact on their children or family.

Date: March 2020
Version: 002
Last Amended By: Susan Chahwan
Next Review: 2021
Position: Approved Provider
