

Montessori Works

Background

Excursions enhance children's experiences by allowing them to explore different environments and to engage in meaningful ways with their communities, as do incursions where organisations or community members visit the Service with the express purpose of interacting with the children.

Policy statement

This Policy sets out how the Service ensures excursions and incursions provide meaningful learning experiences for children while upholding their health, safety and wellbeing at all times.

Strategies and practices

- When appropriate, excursions and incursions are included in the program to provide children with opportunities to learn about their local community.
- The Nominated Supervisor completes the Excursion Risk Management Plan for every excursion. The purpose of the risk assessment is to identify, assess and manage and/or minimise any risks posed to the safety, health and wellbeing of any child being taken on the excursion. The risk assessment takes into account:
 - the proposed route and destination;
 - any water hazards and/or risks associated with water-based activities;
 - transportation to and from the destination;
 - the number of adults and children involved;
 - given the risks associated with the excursion, the number of educators and/or other responsible adults needed to provide adequate supervision, including the need for any adults with specialised skills;
 - the management of the specific health needs or other needs for any child;
 - the proposed activities;
 - the proposed duration of the excursion; and,
 - the items necessary for the excursion (e.g. mobile phone, Excursion Bag {which contains a mini first-aid kit}, list of emergency contact numbers for children on the excursion). Refer to the Excursion Bag Checklist for the contents required in the mini first aid kit.
- Excursion Risk Management Plans for regular outings are only completed once providing the circumstances remain unchanged (e.g. time of day, route).

Excursions and Incursions

- Prior to any child being taken on an excursion, the Nominated Supervisor will ensure that the parent or authorised nominee has completed, signed and returned the Excursion Form – Parent Authorisation to the Service. The Form contains:
 - the child's full name;
 - the reason the child is to be taken outside the premises;
 - the date the child is to be taken on the excursion;
 - a description of the proposed destination for the excursion;
 - the method of transport to be used for the excursion;
 - the proposed activities to be undertaken by the child during the excursion;
 - the period the child will be away from the premises;
 - the number of children likely to be attending the excursion;
 - the anticipated ratio of the number of educators to the number of children attending the excursion;
 - the anticipated number of staff members and any other adults who will accompany and supervise the children on the excursion; and,
 - a statement that a risk assessment has been prepared and is available at the Service for parents to inspect.
- No child will be taken on an excursion without a completed and signed Excursion Form – Parent Authorisation.
- If the excursion is a regular outing, the authorisation need only be obtained once Every 12 months. All parents are asked to sign permission forms for regular outings at enrolment and parents or authorised nominees at the beginning of each subsequent year.
- A regular outing is considered a walk to and from a destination that is regularly visited as part of the educational program and the risk assessment for the excursion remains relevant and substantially the same each time.
- The Nominated Supervisor will appoint an educator to take charge of the excursion, and ensure that the qualifications, training and number of the educators involved in the excursion meet regulatory requirements. The educator in charge of the excursion will also be responsible for developing a specific list of items required for the excursion using the Excursion Checklist as a guide.
- An educator caring for children while on excursion must hold current first aid, asthma and anaphylaxis training. Similarly, an educator caring for children who remain at the service, must also have the same qualifications.
- Families are encouraged to participate in excursions. If parents bring their child's sibling, the sibling is included in the ratios. This will need to be considered when writing the risk assessment responsibilities given to this parent will need to be adjusted accordingly.

Excursions and Incursions

- Students and volunteers who attend excursions must hold a Working with Children Check (WWCC), and complete the Students and Volunteers Sign-In Sheet. Details to be provided in the book are printed name, date of birth, address and phone number, WWCC number and expiry date, visit date, brief reason for visiting, time in and signature, time out and signature, and total hours in the Service.
- Students and volunteers are to remain within sight and sound of an educator at all times during the excursion, and are never left alone at any time with a child.
- Educators must make alternate arrangements at the Service for any children not attending the excursion, and ensure that discussions about the excursions do not exclude the non-attendees.
- No excursions will be conducted to a swimming pool or other water-based activities.
- All educators, students, parents and volunteers will be provided with sufficient information to ensure the health and safety of children (e.g. itinerary, special requirements, safety procedures, grouping of children and responsibilities, mobile phone number of the educator in charge of the excursion).
- All excursions are subject to the *Service's Sun Protection Policy*.
- Every child will wear an Excursion Wrist Band with the Service's name, address, and telephone number, and the mobile number of the educator in charge of the excursion. No child's name will appear on the wrist identification tag.
- Contingency plans for events such as medical emergency, accident or a lost child are carefully considered and these plans clearly communicated to all adults attending the excursion.
- All excursions continue to be subject to the *Service's Tobacco, Drug and AlcoholFree Environment Policy*.
- The educator in charge of the excursion will complete an Excursion Evaluation Form, and any issues identified become a part of the considerations for any future excursions.
- Incursions are managed similarly, and the educator in charge of the incursion will complete the Incursion Evaluation Form.
- **All** incursion providers visiting the Service MUST have obtained a Working with Children's Check prior to visiting the Service.
- Incursion providers visiting the Service must have clearance before providing their services within care environment.

Additional safe practices for babies

- No additional practices required.

Responsibilities of parents

- To complete the Excursion Form – Parent Authorisation accurately, with specific attention to the accuracy of the contact details.

Excursions and Incursions

- To carefully consider the contents of the Excursion Risk Management Plan and to comment if required.
- To ensure the child wears/brings (e.g. hat, suitable shoes, water) all items requested by the Service on the day of the excursion.
- To talk about the excursion with the child prior to the day (e.g. road safety, remaining in view of adults).

Procedure and forms

- Excursion Bag Checklist
- Excursion Evaluation Form
- Excursion Form – Parent Authorisation
- Excursion Risk Management Plan
- Excursion Wrist Band
- Incursion Evaluation Form
- Students and Volunteers Sign-In Sheet

Links to other policies

- Incident, Injury, First Aid and Trauma Policy
- Staffing Policy
- Students, Volunteers and Visitors Policy
- Sun Protection Policy
- Tobacco, Drug and Alcohol-Free Environment Policy
- Water Policy

Links: Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, National Quality Standard 2011

Regulation	82	Tobacco, drug and alcohol-free environment
Regulation	89	First aid kits
Regulation	100	Risk assessment must be conducted before excursion
Regulation	101	Conduct of risk assessment for excursion
Regulation	102	Authorisation for excursion
Regulation	168	Education and care services must have policies and procedures

NQS	QA1.1.1	Curriculum decision-making contributes to each child's learning and development outcomes in relation to their identity, connection with community, wellbeing, confidence as learners and effectiveness as communicators
NQS	QA 1.2.2	Educators respond to children's ideas and play and extend children's learning through open-ended questions, interactions and feedback
NQS	QA 2.1.1	Each child's wellbeing and comfort is provided for, including appropriate opportunities to meet each child's need for sleep, rest and relaxation
NQS	QA 2.2.1	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard
NQS	QA 2.2.2	Plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are developed in consultation with relevant authorities, practised and implemented

Excursions and Incursions

NQS	QA 6.1.1	Families are supported from enrolment to be involved in the services and contribute to service decisions
NQS	QA 7.1.3	Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, and understood, and support effective decision-making and operation of the service

Sources

- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- Guide to the National Quality Framework 2018 (September 2020 Update): Section 4 – Operational Requirements <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-09/Guide-to-the-NQF-September-2020.pdf>
- Kidsafe – <http://www.kidsafe.com.au>
- Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012 No 51
- OCG *Who Needs a Check* - <https://ocg.nsw.gov.au/working-children-check/who-needs-check>

Further reading and useful websites (Consistent with the approach of the National Quality Framework, the following references have prioritised efficacy and appropriateness to inform best practice, and legislative compliance over state or territory preferences.)

- Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. *We hear you. 'It takes a village to raise a child': The role of community – Part 5.* <https://wehearyou.acecqa.gov.au/2018/07/31/it-takes-a-village-to-raise-a-child-the-role-of-community-part-5/>
- Education NSW - <https://education.nsw.gov.au/early-childhood-education/whats-happening-in-the-early-childhood-education-sector/resource-library/unpacking-excursions>

Policy review

The Service encourages staff and parents to be actively involved in the annual review of each of its policies and procedures. In addition, the Service will accommodate any new legislative changes as they occur and any issues identified as part the Service's commitment to quality improvement. The Service consults with relevant recognised authorities as part of the annual review to ensure the policy contents are consistent with current research and contemporary views on best practice.

Version Control

Version	Date Reviewed	Approved By	Comments/Amendments	Next Review Date
1	8 January 2018	Dr Brenda Abbey (Author)	Updated to changed NQF requirements 1 February 2018. Service to modify policies to its specific needs.	
2	6 September 2019	Dr Brenda Abbey (Author)	Updated references.	
3	29 November 2020	Dr Brenda Abbey (Author)	Updated references.	
4	30 December 2020	Dr Brenda Abbey (Author)	Updated references.	
5	May 2022	ACA NSW	Updated references Added points regarding WWCC Added points regarding regulation requirements surrounding first aid	
6	August 2022	Susan Chahwan	Adapted ACA NSW policy	