

JUNEE PRESCHOOL POLICIES

Excursions Policy

Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety

Policy Statement

Our education and care service is 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.

Goals / What are we going to do?

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.

Strategies / How will it be done?

Planning

When planning for an excursion staff will:

- ◀ Assess the requirements for the excursion.
- ◀ Conduct a risk assessment.
- ◀ 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.
- ◀ Collect completed permission forms for each child attending the excursion.
- ◀ Request additional adult participation on the excursion where required.

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- ◁ Arrange for a suitably equipped first aid kit (including ventolin inhaler) 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

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.
- ◁ Appoint a Responsible Person to be in charge of the excursion. 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 eg: mobile phone, emergency contact numbers etc.

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.

Authorisation for Excursions

The 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;

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- » 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. 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.

The following forms of transport are used:

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)

- ◁ We will, where possible, only use buses that are fitted with seat belts.

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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

- ◁ 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.
- ◁ In the event that there is no one at the Preschool during the excursion, the President of the Committee will be notified of the excursion and made aware of where the list of children and staff attending the excursion may be found, and where family contact information is located. The President will hold a key to the Preschool for this reason.
- ◁ Before leaving on the excursion, a notice will be prominently displayed at the service which includes:
 - » itinerary and timetable; and
 - » mobile contact phone number.
- ◁ Items to be taken on excursions include:
 - » a suitable stocked first-aid kit including ventolin inhaler and spacer;
 - » a mobile phone;
- ◁ children's emergency contact numbers;
- ◁ children's medication, if required; and
- ◁ other items as required e.g. sunscreen, drinking cups, jackets etc.

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Roles and Responsibilities

Approved Provider

- ◀ Ensuring that a child does not leave the service premises on an excursion unless prior written/verbal 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.

Nominated Supervisor/Responsible Person

- ◀ 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.

Early Childhood 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.

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- ◁ 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 in consultation with their families.
- ◁ 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.

Families

- ◁ 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.

RESOURCES/USEFUL LINKS

- ◁ ACECQA's sample Excursion Risk Management Plan – www.cecqa.gov.au

SOURCES

- ◁ Belonging, Being & Becoming – The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia
- ◁ Guide to the National Quality Standard, ACECQA
- ◁ Kidsafe NSW – www.kidsafensw.org.au
- ◁ Kids and Traffic – www.kidsandtraffic.mq.edu.au

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Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

This policy will be monitored to ensure compliance with legislative requirements and unless deemed necessary through the identification of practice gaps, the service will review this Policy every two years.

Families and staff are essential stakeholders in the policy review process and will be given opportunity and encouragement to be actively involved.

In accordance with R. 172 of the Education and Care Services National Regulations, the service will ensure that families of children enrolled at the service are notified at least 14 days before making any change to a policy or procedure that may have significant impact on the provision of education and care to any child enrolled at the service; a family's ability to utilise the service; the fees charged or the way in which fees are collected.

Related Legislation

- ◁ Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- ◁ Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: Regulations 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 123, 355, 357, 360
- ◁ Work Health and Safety (WHS) Act 2011
- ◁ Work Health and Safety (WHS) Regulation