

EXCURSION POLICY

Excursions offer many benefits for our children, families and educators, as well as the communities they visit. When children are ‘out and about’ they visibly contribute to the world around them by creating and effecting relationships with people, places and things. When excursions are well planned and meaningful children and adults have the opportunity to experience, question, wonder and learn together.

The National Law requires Guardian to ensure that:

- all children are adequately supervised at all times (section 165)
- every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from any harm or hazard likely to cause injury (section 167)
- the relevant number of educators educating and caring for the children is no less than the number prescribed for this purpose (section 169).
- The maximum number of approved places for children who can be educated and cared for by the service at any one time must not be exceeded (section 52(g)). This means that the centre will need to consider all the children being educated and cared for by the centre at any one time, including the children at the education and care premises and those on the excursion.

All excursions will:

- follow the steps below for planning, risk management and authorisation
- ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of all children and adults at all times
- relate to the weekly program, be meaningful and demonstrate how children’s thinking and learning can be expanded and enhanced
- be documented by children (if appropriate) and adults (e.g. photo, video, jottings etc)

STEPS REQUIRED TO UNDERTAKE AN EXCURSION:

Planning

When planning for an excursion, educators will:

- consider children’s interests, ideas, abilities, knowledge, strengths, culture and use documentation taken to determine why, where, how and who will benefit from participating
- conduct a thorough 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/ 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 (prior to the excursion taking place)
- request additional adult participation on the excursion where required
- educators must hold a current and approved first aid certificate to participate in the excursion.
- 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 requirements or medical conditions.
- where possible, our centre will uphold the right for all children to access all excursions and engage in meaningful ways while on excursions.
- The centre will remain compliant with ratios, person in day to day charge will be presents etc.

AUTHORISATION FOR EXCURSIONS

A child must not be taken outside the centre, unless written authorisation is given by the child’s parent or authorised nominee identified on the enrolment form.

The authorisation must state:

- the child’s 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 anticipated number of children likely to be attending the excursion
- the anticipated ratio of educators to the anticipated 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
- that a risk assessment has been prepared and is available at the centre

Authorisation for an excursion that is a regular outing

If an excursion is a regular outing, the authorisation is required to be obtained once in every 12 month period. However obtaining authorisation in these circumstances more regularly is advisable.

RISK ASSESSMENT

The purpose of a risk assessment is to identify possible risks of harm to children prior to an excursion, to ensure risks to children's health, safety and wellbeing are minimised or avoided when taking children outside the centre.

A risk assessment must include strategies for minimising and managing the identified risks (regulation 101).

When taking children outside the centre, every aspect of the environment must be considered at each stage of the excursion to make sure that risks have been identified and addressed. A risk assessment must consider:

- the proposed route and destination for the excursion
- any water hazards
- any risks associated with water-based activities
- the method of transport to and from the proposed destination
- the number of adults and children involved in the excursion
- given the risks posed, the number of educators or other responsible adults that is appropriate to provide supervision and whether any adults with specialised skills are required to ensure children's safety
- the proposed activities
- the proposed duration of the excursion
- the items that should be taken on the excursion.

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*

An analysis of the location, travel arrangements, the group of children, hazards identified in risk assessment, frequency of excursion etc should all be considered when determining the correct ratio for the excursion. The National Regulations do not state what the ratios should be, so it is vital that sound decisions are made to ensure that each child's health, safety and wellbeing is protected. Ratios will continue to comply with the National Regulations, if not lower. For example, ratios will be lower, if this is the first couple of times children have ventured on excursion, as smaller ratios mean that educators can set clear expectations and practise.

The risk assessment should also include strategies for accounting for all children on the excursion, particularly during transition times, such as ensuring all children have been transported to the destination and have been returned to the centre at the conclusion of the excursion.

Families and Volunteers

Families will be encouraged to participate in excursions to share in the experience of the excursion and assist in the supervision of children. If the parent/family member needs to bring their child's sibling because they cannot find suitable care, the siblings must be included in ratios. However, the parent must hold the sole responsibility for this sibling.

If additional adults are required, volunteers will be invited. Volunteers must be mature, responsible people who are aware of the hazards and responsibilities of taking a group of children out of the centre.

Volunteers who are not a known parent of a child on the excursion must hold a volunteer WWCC (or State equivalent)

If a parent is volunteering in an activity in which *their own* child participates, or normally participates, they are not required to hold a WWCC (or State equivalent)

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 visitors record for that day.

Families and volunteers will be briefed before going on the excursion about the expectations of the safety and wellbeing of the children and ensuring we protect each child from harm and hazards and the possible learning opportunities

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.
 - Educators will ensure an adult is always at the front and back of the group at all times
- Public Transport (trains, buses)
 - We will only use buses that are fitted with seat belts.

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. Educators will complete supervision logs and these will be kept on file upon return.

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 there are significant water hazards within the environment (such as rivers, lakes or beaches), risk management strategies will be identified and implemented such as higher adult to child ratios.

Conducting the Excursion

All educators, volunteers, family and children attending will be informed of the excursion timetable/ itinerary, special requirements, safety procedures, grouping of children and responsibilities.

A list of children on the excursion will be left at the centre and a copy carried by the Responsible Person on the excursion.

Before leaving on the excursion, a notice will be prominently displayed at the centre which includes: itinerary and timetable; and mobile contact phone number.

Items to be Taken on Excursions Include:

- a suitable stocked first-aid kit, including Epipen and asthma reliever
- a mobile phone
- phone numbers of centre and emergency services
- children's emergency contact numbers
- attendance role and supervision log
- children's medication, if required
- other items as required e.g. Sunscreen, hats, drinking cups, jackets etc.

LINKS TO THE NATIONAL LAW AND REGULATIONS

Section 165 offence to inadequately supervise children

Section 167 Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards

Regulation 89 First aid kits

- Regulation 98 Telephone or other communication equipment
- Regulation 99 Children leaving the education and care service premises
- Regulation 100 Risk assessment must be conducted before excursion
- Regulation 101 Conduct of risk assessment for excursion
- Regulation 102 Authorisation for excursions
- Regulation 161 Authorisation to be kept in enrolment record
- Regulation 168 Education and care services must have policies and procedures

LINKS TO THE NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD

Standard/ Elements	Concept	Descriptor
1.1	Program	The educational program enhances each child’s learning and development
1.1.1	Child - centred	Each child’s current knowledge, strengths, ideas, culture, abilities and interests are the foundation of the program
1.2	Practice	Educators facilitate and extend each child’s learning and development
1.2.1	Intentional teaching	Educators are deliberate, purposeful, and thoughtful in their decisions and actions
1.2.2	Responsive teaching and scaffolding	Educators respond to children’s ideas and play and extend children’s learning through open ended questions, interactions and feedback
2.2	Safety	Each child is protected
2.2.1	Supervision	At all times, reasonable precaution and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazards
3.2	Use	The service environment is inclusive, promotes competence and support exploration and play based learning
3.2.3	Environmentally responsible	The service cares for the environment and supports children to become environmentally responsible
4.1	Staffing arrangements	Staffing arrangements enhance children’s learning and development
4.1.2	Continuity of staff	Every effort is made for children to experience continuity of educators at the service
6.2	Collaborative partnerships	Collaborative partnership enhance children’s inclusion, learning and wellbeing
6.2.3	Community engagement	The service builds relationships and engages with its community
7.1	Governance	Governance supports the operation of a quality service
7.1.2	Management systems	Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operations of a quality service

REFERENCES

- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010.
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2018
- Guide to the National Quality Framework 2018

EXCURSIONS PROCEDURE

Who?	How?
APPROVED PROVIDER (GUARDIAN EARLY LEARNING GROUP) WILL:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that a child does not leave the centre 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). Ensure that educator-to-child ratios are maintained at all times, including during excursions. Ensure 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. Ensure 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 SUPERVISORS WILL: In the absence of NS, the person in day to day charge WILL:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement Guardian’s responsibilities as delegate. Ensure that each child’s personal medication and current medical management plan is taken on excursions and other off-site activities. Ensure that a portable first aid kit (including required medication for dealing with medical conditions) is taken on excursions and other off-site activities. Ensure 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. Ensure that all documents in relation to excursion are reviewed and approved by centres’ Operations Manager prior to the excursion taking place Ensure that on the day of the excursion, the person in charge of the excursion ensures the proposed route is clear and safe. If not, they must complete an additional risk assessment to ensure a new proposed route is safe to travel. Ensure that on the day of the excursion all authorisations are checked prior to any child leaving the premise. Ensure that the centre remains compliant. For example, correct ratios for children at the centre and person in day to day charge is on the premises. Use the excursion checklist to ensure all requirements are completed
EDUCATORS AND STAFF WILL:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adhere to all relevant policies and procedures (Excursion, Medical Conditions, Health and Nutrition, Sun Safe, Code of Conduct, Administration of First Aid, Adequate Supervision, Incident, injury, trauma and illness and Water Safety) Check that a parent/guardian or person named in the child’s enrolment record has completed, signed, and dated the Excursion Permission Form prior to the excursion Allow a child to participate in an excursion or centre event only with the written authorisation of a parent/guardian or person named in the child’s enrolment record. Maintain the required educator-to-child ratios at all times, and adequately supervise children during excursions and centre events. This will include marking the attendance role every 30 minutes and each time the group leaves/enters a location or accesses transport. Adequately supervise parents/guardians, volunteers, students, and all adults participating in an excursion, and ensure that they are not left with sole supervision of individual children or groups of children. Undertake a risk assessment for an excursion prior to obtaining written authorisation from parents/guardians. Ensure 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. Include all children in excursions and centre events regardless of their abilities, additional requirements, or medical conditions. Take each child’s personal medication and current Medical Management Plan on excursions and other off-site activities. Take a portable first aid kit (including required medication for dealing with medical conditions) on excursions and other off-site activities. On the day of the excursion, ensure the proposed route is clear and safe, if not, educators must complete an additional risk assessment to ensure new proposed route is safe to travel Demonstrate the purpose of the excursion in relation to observations of children’s thinking and learning document the excursion

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY WILL:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete, sign and date excursion/centre event authorisation forms. • Provide written authorisation for their child to leave the centre premises on routine outings. • Read the details of the excursion or centre event provided by the centre and ask for additional information if required. • Understand that, if they participate in an excursion or centre event as a volunteer, they will be under the immediate supervision of the Responsible Person at all times.
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INDICATORS OF UNDERSTANDING:

Indicators of Understanding	Achieved	
1. Explain what you would do if you haven't received written permission from a parent/authorized nominee the morning of a planned excursion?	Yes	No
2. Why is a risk assessment so important to complete thoroughly prior to taking children on an excursion or regular outing?	Yes	No
3. Why are excursions important for children?	Yes	No
4. What do you need to take with you on excursions?	Yes	No
5. Explain what you would do if during an excursion a child was unaccounted for?	Yes	No

Additional Comments – Educator
Additional Comments – Mentor