

REGULAR OUTING and EXCURSION POLICY

Quality Areas: NQS 2 - Children's Health and Safety

Policy Owner: Compliance

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Why this is
important

1.0 Introduction and Purpose

Excursions are a valuable experience for children, families and team members who attend our centres. Excursions provide educators with opportunities to expand and enhance children's experiences, and provide children the opportunity to 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.

Guardian 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.

All excursions and routine outings 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.).

2.0 Who does this policy apply to:

Team Members, Families, Children, Board members, Contractors

3.0 What is our Policy:

3.1 Planning

When preparing for an excursion, ensure you allow enough time to appropriately plan, complete a thorough risk assessment and obtain authorisation from families. Use the excursion checklist and templates to ensure regulatory compliance is met. The following documents are available to support the planning of Excursions or Regular Outings:

- Regular Outing and Excursion Risk Assessment
- Regular Outing and Excursion Authorisation
- Excursion Checklist
- Regular Outing and Excursion Supervision Checklist

When planning for an excursion, the team will:

- Assess the requirements for the excursion and ensure they are considered and provides meaningful experiences.
- Conduct a risk assessment which includes both the time travelling to the destination and any risks at the destination itself. Use the Regular Outings and Excursion Risk Assessment to document all risks.
- If applicable, assess and Book transport/venues.

- Visit the destination and travel the proposed route beforehand to conduct the risk assessment and to ascertain ratio requirements, suitable to the activity being undertaken and in line with the National Law.
- 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 a Regular Outing and Excursion Authorisation form to complete to authorise their child to participate in the excursion or the Regular outing.
- Collect completed Regular Outing and Excursion Authorisation forms for each child attending the excursion or the Regular Outing.
- Request additional adult participation on the excursion where required.
- Ensure that Team members participating in the excursion hold a current and approved First Aid certificate.
- Arrange for a suitably equipped First Aid kit, Medical Management Plans and medication and mobile phone to be taken on the excursion; including emergency contact numbers for all children and adults present.
- Make alternative 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.
- Consider additional factors in the planning of excursions for children with additional needs or medical conditions.
- Uphold the right for all children to access all excursions and engage in meaningful ways while on excursions (where possible).

3.2 Safe Transportation of Children

Travel arrangements are made based on individual excursion requirements. Every reasonable precaution will be taken to protect children from harm and any hazard likely to cause injury. All risks identified with the follow methods of transportation will be considered and outlined in the Risk Assessment.

- There are two types of transportation models involving children that occur:
- Operating a bus to and from the centre as a regular outing. This is a scheduled occurrence with set times and days and arranged in advance at the centre. This would include before and after school. care or a regular outing to a library or regular visitation to an aged care facility to promote intergeneration learning. Refer to Bus & Transportation Policy.
- Transporting children as part of an excursion. An excursion is defined as one off event or a non-regular occurrence such as to the museum or zoo.

The purchasing, hire or regular use of buses to transport children to and from the centre from home, school or kindergarten must be approved by notifying compliance who will gain approval from the Executive Leadership Team. This must be approved before the commencement of this transport so it can be notified through NQAITS.

The following forms of transport may be used for an Excursion or Regular outing:

- Walking
- Public Transport (trains, trams, ferries and buses etc.)
 - Refer to and follow all requirements as outlined in Bus and Transportation Policy & Procedure
 - Prams (including Octopram).
- When using a pram ensure that:
 - Consideration for the use of the prams (Octopram) must be included in the risk assessment.
 - Team members will check that the prams (Octopram) are fully functioning and in good repair prior to leaving the centre.
 - Ensure the pram can easily pass through the travel path to the destination, i.e. elevators, doorways, tight corners, damaged footpaths etc.

Transportation via an Uber, or personal vehicle is not permitted under any circumstances.

3.3 Risk Assessment



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

A thorough risk assessment must be completed prior to seeking authorisation from families. Regular Outing & Excursion Risk Assessment **MUST** be completed.

A risk assessment must include strategies for minimising and managing the identified risks.

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, including a map of the Route intended.
- Any water hazards.
- Any risks associated with water-based activities.
- The method of transport to and from the proposed destination (please reference Bus and Transportation Policy).
- The number of adults and children involved in the excursion.
- The number of Team members or other responsible adults that are necessary to provide appropriate supervision and whether any adults with specialised skills are required to ensure children's safety (given the risks posed).
- The proposed activities.
- The proposed duration of the excursion.
- The items that should be taken on the excursion.

Please Note: If the excursion is a regular occurrence, a written 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. The proposed route will be reviewed each time before leaving to ensure the proposed route is safe. The risk assessment will be made available to families each excursion opportunity.

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 prescribe specific team member child ratios for excursions. Ratios for excursions will be based on identified risks and minimising hazards and harm to children as well ensuring that their health, safety and wellbeing is protected. Team member to child ratio will, at a minimum, meet National Law requirements or higher team member child ratios will be implemented. Ratios will reflect the team member knowledge of the children as well as the individual factors of the excursion such as skills and experience. Smaller group sizes and increased ratios will also be applied where children are inexperienced at excursion attendance.

The risk assessment should also include strategies for accounting for all children on the excursion, particularly during transition times, such as ensuring that all children have been transported to the destination and have been returned to the centre at the conclusion of the excursion. The risk assessment should also identify Emergency situations and evacuation procedures and practiced where possible.

The Risk Assessment will be reviewed at least every 6 months or more frequently if necessary.

3.4 Authorisation for Excursions

A child must not be taken outside the centre premises unless written authorisation is given by the child's parent or authorised nominee identified on the Form Enrolment form.

The authorisation must state:

- The child's name.
- The reason the child is to be taken outside the premises.
- The date and time 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 team members to the anticipated number of children attending the excursion.
- The anticipated number of team members and any other adults who will accompany and supervise the children on the excursion.
- Identified water hazards.
- That a risk assessment has been prepared and available at the centre

3.5 Authorisation for An Excursion That is A Regular Outing

The meaning of 'regular outing' has been amended to align with the definition of 'regular transportation'. A regular outing means a walk, drive or trip to and from a destination–

- a. that the service visits regularly as part of its educational program; and
- b. where the circumstances relevant to the risk assessment are substantially the same on each outing.

A Regular Outing that requires regular use of Transport via a Guardian owned and operated vehicle/Bus, please refer to the *Transportation Policy* and follow all requirements as outlined in this policy.

Emergency Evacuation strategies as identified in the Regular Outing and Excursion Risk Assessment will be rehearsed at least every 3 months in line with National Law & Regulations and will be documented.

3.6 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.

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

Volunteers who are not a known parent of a child on the excursion must hold a volunteer WWCC (or State-based equivalent). A copy of the WWCC will be gained before the commencement of the excursion.

Volunteers/family member's will not to be left in sole charge of children and must be supervised by a team member 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 all children. Ensuring that each adult in attendance protects each child from hazard and harm and support all possible learning opportunities that the Regular outing may provide.

3.7 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. Team members will complete supervision checks and head counts, at interval of no more than 10-15 minutes. This will be recorded on the Regular Outing and Excursion Supervision checklist by the Responsible Person. The Venue will be assessed as safe for all children and adults on the Regular Outing or Excursion and will be easily supervised and accessible.

3.8 Water Hazards

Where there are water hazards within the environment (such as rivers, lakes or beaches), risk management strategies will be identified to manage the water hazards to ensure children are safe (e.g. higher adult to child ratios). Refer to the Waster Safety Policy.

3.9 Conducting the Excursion

All Team members, volunteers, family members and children attending will be informed of the excursion timetable/ itinerary, special requirements, safety procedures, grouping of children and responsibilities for all involved.

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 the timetable/ itinerary, Responsible Person on the excursion and mobile contact phone number.

3.10 Items to be Taken on Excursions Include:

- A suitable, fully stocked First Aid kit.
- A charged mobile phone.
- Phone numbers of centre and emergency services.
- Children's emergency contact numbers.
- Team members emergency contact numbers.
- Attendance roll and supervision log.
- Children's medication and Medical Management Plans (if required).
- Other items as required e.g. sunscreen, hats, drinking cups, jackets etc.

5.0 Responsibilities:

5.1 The Approved Provider will:

1. Ensure that an excursion or outing does not occur 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 required detail.
2. Ensure that, as a minimum team member to child ratios are maintained, including excursions and routine outings.
3. Ensure the Regular Outing and Excursion Risk Assessment document assesses the risks and specifies how these will be managed and/or minimised.

5.2 The Centre Manager / Nominated Supervisor will:

1. Ensure that Regular Outing and Excursion Risk Assessment for excursions are conducted before authorisation is sought from families.
2. Ensure that when communicating with families about an upcoming excursion or outing that they are provided with an option and information about what their child will be doing if they do not want them to attend.
3. Ensure that each child's personal medication and current medical management plan is taken on excursions and other off-site activities.
4. Ensure that there is at least one team member in attendance at the excursion with current first-aid qualifications.
5. Ensure that a portable First Aid kit (including the required medication for dealing with medical conditions) is taken on excursions and other off-site activities.
6. Ensure a mobile phone, the emergency contact details for each Team member and emergency contacts 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.
7. Ensure that all documents in relation to excursions are reviewed and approved by the centres Portfolio Manager prior to the excursion taking place.

8. Ensure that an appointed Responsible Person attends the excursion.
9. 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.
10. Ensure that on the day of the excursion the proposed route is clear and safe. If not, the NS/RP must complete an additional risk assessment to ensure a new proposed route is safe to travel.
11. Ensure that on the day of the excursion all authorisations are checked prior to any child leaving the premises.
12. Ensure that the centre remains compliant during the excursion. For example, correct ratios for children at the centre and RP is on the premises.
13. Use the Regular Outing and Excursion Checklist to ensure all requirements are completed. Ensure that the is updated six monthly or if there is change to the details of the routine outing.
14. Ensure that the Regular Outing and Excursion Risk Assessment will be reviewed every six months or where there are changes to any part of the routine.
15. Identify skills of team members and provide opportunities for enhanced knowledge and training. This may include training in risk management, emergency management, training by third parties in relation to Road safety laws etc.
16. Ensure that quarterly emergency drills will be conducted for all regular outings; simulating an emergency as identified in the risk assessment. This will be documented and recorded on the Regular Outing and Excursion Risk Assessment.

5.3 Team Members will:

1. Adhere to all relevant policies and procedures (Regular Outing and Excursion, Medical Conditions, Nutrition, Sun Protection, Code of Conduct, First Aid, Adequate Supervision, Incident, Injury and Trauma, Illness and Water Safety)
2. Check that a parent/guardian or person named in the child's enrolment record has completed, signed, and dated the Routine Outing and Excursion Authorisation Form prior to leaving for the excursion.
3. 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.
4. Maintain adequate supervision and required ratios as identified in the risk assessment during excursions and centre events. This will include marking the attendance role every 10 minutes and each time the group leaves/enters a location or accesses transport.
5. 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.
6. Undertake a risk assessment for an excursion prior to obtaining written authorisation from parents/ guardians.
7. Ensure the risk assessment identifies and assesses the risks, specifies how they will be managed and/ or minimised.
8. Include all children in excursions and centre events regardless of their abilities, additional requirements, or medical conditions.
9. Take each child's personal medication and current Medical Management Plan on excursions and other off-site activities.
10. Take a portable First Aid kit (including required medication for dealing with medical conditions) on excursions and other off-site activities.
11. On the day of the excursion, ensure the proposed route is clear and safe, and if not, team members must complete an additional risk assessment to ensure a new proposed route is safe to travel.
12. Demonstrate the purpose of the excursion in relation to observations of children's thinking and learning.
13. Document the excursion.
14. They will use the Excursion Checklist and the Regular Outing and Excursion Supervision Checklist to ensure that the excursion meets requirements, and the children are accounted for.
15. Communicate with families upon return from an excursion or outing that the children have returned.

5.4 Families and Community members will:



1. Complete, sign and date excursion/centre event Regular Outing and Excursion Authorisation Form if they want their child to participate in an excursion or outing.
2. Provide written authorisation for their child to leave the centre premises on routine outings.
3. Read the details of the excursion or centre event provided by the centre and ask for additional information if required.
4. Understand that if they participate in an excursion or centre event as a volunteer, they will be under the direct supervision of a team member at all times.

6.0 Definitions

Excursion: An excursion is an event where the children leave the centre for a one-off planned occurrence. This is planned in advance and is undertaken with the written authorisation and a risk assessment in place. This could include a visit to the park or the library.

Regular Outing: This is an event that occurs on the same day at the same time regularly. For example, a visit to the library every Tuesday at 11:00am or a walk to the park on Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 2:00 pm. It must include a specific destination and time. A km radius or days without times is insufficient to meet this definition.

7.0 Tools and Resources

<p>The most important documents I need are: Regular Outing and Excursion Risk Assessment Regular Outing and Excursion Parent Authorisation Regular Outing and Excursion Supervision Checklist</p>	<p>Other supporting documents will include: Excursion Checklist</p>
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8.0 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.

9.0 References

- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- Guide to the National Quality Framework 2018

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