

REGULAR OUTING, EXCURSION and INCURSION POLICY

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

Policy Owner: Safety and Compliance

1.0 Introduction and Purpose

Routine outings, excursions, and incursions are an integral part of our educational program, providing children with meaningful, real-world learning experiences that support holistic development and strengthen connections with their community and environment. All experiences are intentionally planned to be inclusive, age-appropriate, and responsive to children's interests, and are aligned with the Early Years Learning Framework and our educational objectives.

The rights, safety, wellbeing, and protection of every child are our paramount consideration. All outings, excursions, and incursions are planned and delivered in accordance with our duty of care and relevant legislative and regulatory requirements. Robust procedures are in place to ensure thorough risk assessment, appropriate supervision, and clear communication with families and team members. Children are always supported in environments that promote their safety, dignity, and best interests, while enabling rich, engaging, and meaningful learning opportunities.

2.0 Who does this policy apply to:

This policy applies to all team members, families, children, and volunteers participating in excursions, routine outings, incursions, or special events conducted by the service. It also applies to contractors, consultants, or community members engaged to deliver incursions or activities within the centre premises.

3.0 What is our Policy:

3.1 Planning

All excursions, routine outings, and incursions must be carefully planned to ensure they provide meaningful, safe, and inclusive experiences for all children. Planning must begin with a detailed risk assessment, allowing adequate time to identify and mitigate potential hazards before seeking family authorisation.

The following documents must be used to support planning and ensure regulatory compliance:

- *Excursion/Routine Outing & Incursion Risk Assessment*
- *Excursion/Routine Outing & Incursion Authorisation Form*
- *Supervision Checklist*
- *Excursion Checklist*

Planning will include assessing the purpose and educational value of the activity, visiting the destination (where possible), and confirming supervision ratios in line with National Law and identified risks. Alternative arrangements must be in place for children who do not attend the outing or incursion, ensuring they remain engaged in safe, meaningful activities at the centre.

Families must be informed in writing of the destination or nature of the activity, objectives, outcomes, transport methods, required clothing or equipment, and any costs involved. A signed authorisation form must be received for each child before participation.

3.2 Volunteer and Family Participation

Volunteers, including parents, play an important role in supporting supervision and engagement during excursions, outings, and incursions. To ensure safety and compliance:

- Volunteers are defined as parent / guardians of children who are currently enrolled in the centre and can attend excursions, routine outings or incursions in accordance with the *Student and Volunteer Policy*
- All volunteers, including parents, must provide a valid Working with Children Check (WWCC) or state equivalent to the centre prior to the event. This documentation must be sighted and recorded by the centre
- Volunteers must never be left alone with children and must always be supervised by a team member
- Volunteers may only attend with the group that their child is in and are not permitted to supervise children from other groups.
- The use of personal mobile phones is prohibited, except when taking a photo of their own child
- All volunteers and family participants must be entered into the visitor register on the day of the event
- A pre-event briefing must be conducted for all volunteers (parent / guardians of currently enrolled children), outlining supervision responsibilities, emergency procedures, child protection obligations, and the importance of supporting every child's safety and wellbeing

For further information about photos and recordings of images at centre events refer to the *Digital Device Policy*.

If a parent brings a sibling who is not enrolled in the centre, the parent is solely responsible for the supervision of that child, and they must be included in ratio calculations if they participate in the group.

3.3 Authorisation for Excursions, Incursions or Outings

Children will not be taken outside the centre premises for excursions, routine outings, or involving external providers without prior written authorisation from the child's parent or an authorised nominee listed on the enrolment form. Supervised drills off centre premises are considered excursions or routine outings. For more information review the *Emergency Management Policy*.

Without written authorisation, a child will not be permitted to participate in the excursion, outing, or incursion involving external providers.

3.4 Special Events and Incursions (Centre-Based)

Special events, such as open days, graduations, or community celebrations, are an important part of building partnerships with families. Prior to any special event, families will be informed of the arrangements in place for supervision, safety, and the centres photography and videography practices.

Incursions are where external providers or activities are part of the event at the centre. Incursions will include the development of a risk assessment and parent authorisation as per an outing or excursion. Parents who wish to volunteer for an incursion must meet WWCC requirements. Team members will ensure the environment remains safe, supervised, and inclusive for all children and families in attendance.

3.5 Transportation

Transportation arrangements will be based on the specific requirements of the excursion or outing. Methods may include walking, public transport, or the use of approved buses in accordance with the *Bus & Transportation Policy*.

All routes and vehicles must be checked for safety and accessibility. Transportation via private vehicles, including ride-share services such as Uber, is not permitted under any circumstances. Prams, including Octopram models, may be used when risk-assessed and checked for safety prior to departure.

Where transport involves buses, prior approval must be obtained from Compliance before commencement. This approval must also be lodged in NQAITS where required.

3.6 Supervision

Supervision will be active, vigilant, and responsive to the needs of the children at all times during excursions, outings, incursions, and special events. Supervision strategies will be planned in advance, considering the physical environment, number of children, team members and volunteers in attendance, nature of the activity, and any identified hazards.

Head counts and supervision checks will be conducted at intervals of no more than 10–15 minutes and recorded on the relevant supervision checklist. Smaller group sizes and increased ratios will be applied when working with children who are inexperienced with outings or where additional needs have been identified.

Supervision ratios for excursions are not prescribed under the National Regulations; instead, ratios will be determined by the identified risks and the need to protect children’s health, safety, and wellbeing. Ratios will, at a minimum, meet National Law requirements, and higher ratios will be implemented where required. Considerations will include:

- The nature of the location and activities.
- The experience and capabilities of the children.
- The skills, knowledge, and experience of team members.
- The frequency of excursions and familiarity with the destination.

Smaller groups and increased supervision will be arranged for children inexperienced in attending excursions or where additional needs are identified.

3.7 Risk Assessments

The purpose of a risk assessment is to identify and manage any potential risks to children’s health, safety, and wellbeing prior to an excursion or routine outing. This process ensures hazards are minimised or eliminated, and appropriate strategies are in place to protect children when participating in activities outside the centre.

A comprehensive *Regular Outing & Excursion Risk Assessment* must be completed before seeking authorisation from families. The assessment must detail specific strategies to manage and reduce identified risks, with every stage of the excursion considered, including the journey, activities, supervision, and return to the centre.

Consideration will also be given to the use of mobile phones at these events/outings. All Responsible Persons will be permitted to take their mobile phone, and it must only be used for communication and emergencies. The taking of photos will be undertaken on the centre iPad only. Those team members taking their phone must be documented on the *Risk Assessment*.

A risk assessment must address, at a minimum:

- a. The proposed route and destination (including a route map).
- b. Water hazards and risks associated with water-based activities.
- c. The method of transport (refer to Bus and Transportation Policy).
- d. The number of adults and children involved.
- e. The number of educators and/or other responsible adults required for adequate supervision, including any specialist skills needed for safety.
- f. Proposed activities and their associated risks.
- g. Duration of the excursion.
- h. Items required to be taken on the excursion (e.g., first aid kit, emergency contacts, medication).

Where the excursion is a regular occurrence, the written risk assessment will only be completed once, provided the circumstances have not changed. However, the proposed route and conditions will be reviewed each time before departure to ensure safety.

When determining ratios for excursions, an analysis of location, travel arrangements, group composition, identified hazards, and the children’s experience levels will be undertaken. Ratios will always meet or exceed National Law requirements and will be adjusted to ensure optimum safety, with smaller groups or higher educator-to-child ratios applied where necessary.

The risk assessment must also include clear strategies for:

- a. Accounting for all children at all times, particularly during transitions.
- b. Confirming all children have been transported to and from the destination.
- c. Managing emergency situations, including evacuation procedures (to be practiced where possible).

All excursion risk assessments will be reviewed at least every six months, or more frequently where circumstances require.

3.8 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 centre 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.

3.9 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). For excursion or outings to water-based activities such as swimming lessons refer to *the Water Safety Policy*.

3.10 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.

4.0 Responsibilities:

4.1 The Approved Provider will:

1. Provide all documents, tools and resources to promote safe planning of centre events
2. Notify ACECQA ahead of time of the purchase and use of a bus for the regular transportation of children

4.2 The Centre Manager / Nominated Supervisor will:

1. Maintain, at all times, at a minimum the required educator-to-child ratios during excursions or routine outings
2. Ensure no excursion, outing or incursion occurs without prior written authorisation from the parent/guardian or person named on the child's enrolment record, including all required details
3. Confirm that a comprehensive *Regular Outing and Excursion/Incursion Risk Assessment* is completed before seeking authorisation from families
4. Provide families with clear information about alternative arrangements for children who are not attending the excursion or outing
5. Ensure each child's personal medication and current Medical Management Plan is taken on all excursions/outings and off-site activities
6. Ensure at least one team member attending the excursion holds current first-aid qualifications.
7. Provide and ensure a portable First Aid kit, including relevant medication for managing medical conditions, is taken on all excursions/outings
8. Ensure a mobile phone, emergency contact details for all team members, and emergency and medical practitioner contact details for each child are taken on excursions/outings

9. Appoint a Responsible Person to attend the excursion/outing
10. Ensure parents, volunteers, students, and all participating adults are always supervised and are never left in sole supervision of individual children or groups
11. Ensure that all volunteers hold a current WWCC and that this check is sighted and WWCC number recorded in the visitor's log
12. Confirm that the proposed route is checked for safety on the day of the excursion, and where unsafe, require an additional risk assessment before travel
13. Ensure all authorisations are verified before any child leaves the premises.
14. Use and regularly update the *Regular Outing and Excursion Checklist* every six months or whenever outing details change
15. Review the *Regular Outing and Excursion Risk Assessment* every six months or when routine details change
16. Where an excursion is required to be postponed due to bad weather or inadequate staffing the centre can notify the family of the new date and use the existing forms. The communication outline the new date must be attached to

4.2 The Centre Manager / Nominated Supervisor is recommended to:

1. Provide training opportunities to team members in risk management, emergency management, road safety laws, and related skills.
2. Ensure quarterly emergency drills are conducted for all regular outings, as identified in the risk assessment, and document outcomes on the *Regular Outing and Excursion Risk Assessment*.

4.3 Team Members will:

1. Ensure that you are aware of the risk assessments and strategies in place so that the outing/event occurs safely. Follow all directions of the Responsible Person on duty
2. Ensure that you only take your personal mobile phone on an excursion or outing if you are a Responsible Person, you hold a valid exemption or are advised by the Centre Manager that this is required
3. Maintain adequate supervision and required ratios during excursions or outings, marking the attendance roll every 10 minutes and whenever the group changes location or uses transport.
4. Supervise parents, guardians, volunteers, students, and other participating adults to ensure they are not left in sole supervision of children
5. Conduct and/or participate in the development of risk assessments prior to obtaining written authorisation from families, ensuring all risks are identified and appropriately managed
6. Ensure inclusion of all children in excursions, incursions or outings regardless of abilities, additional requirements, or medical conditions
7. Take each child's personal medication and current *Medical Management Plan* on all excursions and outings
8. Carry a portable First Aid kit, including relevant medication, on all excursions and outings
9. Check the proposed route for safety on the day of the excursion/outing, and if unsafe, complete an additional risk assessment before travel
10. Link excursion, incursions and outings to children's learning and development, demonstrating educational purpose. Document the excursion, incursion or outing and related learning outcomes
11. Use the *Excursion Checklist* and *Regular Outing and Excursion Supervision Checklist* to ensure all requirements are met and children are accounted for

4.4 Team Members are recommended to:

1. Participate in the development of risk assessments prior to obtaining written authorisation from families, ensuring all risks are identified and appropriately managed

2. Confirm with families that children have returned safely from an excursion or outing.

4.5 Families and Community members will:

1. Complete, sign, and date the Regular Outing and Excursion/ Incursion Authorisation Form to permit their child’s participation.
2. Review excursion or event details provided by the centre and request further information if needed.
3. Understand that if participating as a volunteer, they will always be under direct supervision of a team member.
4. Provide a WWCC if attending an excursion, outing or incursion as a volunteer before the event.
5. Refrain from taking photographs on your personal phone of other children in attendance, unless you have written permission from the parent or verbal permission if the parent is in attendance.

5.0 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 undertaken with 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 time is insufficient to meet this definition.

Incursion: An incursion is a special event that occurs at the service where an external group or persons attend the centre with the specific intention to educate the children as part of the program. This can include weekly sports programs, one-off music or drama groups or a story time.

Special Event: Centre-based occasions where families are invited to participate, such as open days, graduations, or seasonal celebrations.

6.0 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 Medical Conditions Policy Responsible Persons Policy Student and Volunteers Policy</p>
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7.0 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.

8.0 References

- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011



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