



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.

To ensure that all excursions and incursions undertaken by Orchard Early Learning Centre are conducted in a safe manner, maintaining children's wellbeing at all times in accordance with National Legislation. We believe excursions/incursions provide the children with the opportunity to expand and enhance their skills and knowledge gaining insight into their local and the wider community.

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:

- Check current Government advice and restrictions and consider how this may impact excursion planning.
- Assess the requirements for the excursion.
- Conduct a risk assessment.
- Book transport and 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.
- 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 needs. Where possible, our service will uphold the right for all children to access all excursions and engage in meaningful ways while on excursions.





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Excursion Risk Assessment

- Management must approve a risk assessment that reflects National Regulation 101 before an excursion is scheduled. Under regulation 102 Orchard Early Learning Centre will determine the safety and appropriateness of the excursion/incursion.
- Orchard Early Learning Centre will use an Excursion/Incursion Risk Assessment.
- Orchard Early Learning Centre will notify families about the excursion using an Authorisation Permission Excursion Letter if an excursion is outside the 5km radius of a signed regular excursion form
- Families have a right to view the risk assessment prior to the excursion/incursion upon request in which the Service must comply with ensuring all information is available.
- A risk assessment must
 - Identify and assess risks that the excursion/incursion may pose to the safety, health, and wellbeing of any child being taken on the excursion.
 - Specify how the identified risks will be managed and minimised.
 - Consider the proposed route and destination for the excursion and any water hazards.
 - Reflect on any risks associated with water-based activities.
 - Consider the transport to and from the proposed destination for the excursion.
 - Consider the ratio of adults to children involved in the excursion.
 - Consider the risks posed by the excursion/incursion, the number of educators or other responsible adults required to provide supervision, and whether any adults with specialised skills are required (e.g. life-saving skills).
 - Consider the planned activities.
 - Determine the duration of the excursion.
 - Consider items that should be taken on the excursion (mobile phone, emergency contacts, first aid kit, medical plans, etc.).

The Nominated Supervisor will ensure that:

- A responsible person is appointed for the excursion.
- 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.
- Once risks have been identified, they will be categorised as high, medium or low and management of the risks will be detailed.
- Educators and any responsible adults attending the excursion are aware of the service's policy and procedures that set out the instructions for what must be done in the event of an emergency (regulation 97(1)(a)) and are aware of the risk assessment for the excursion.
- Before departing for the excursion, risks are checked including the weather to assess any increases to the level of risk and whether the excursion can proceed.

The risk assessment conducted will consider:

- proposed route and destination for the excursion
- any water hazards
- any risks associated with water based activities
- method of transport to and from the proposed destination, including:





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- the means of transport and any requirements for seatbelts or safety restraints under a law of each jurisdiction in which the children are being transported;
 - the process for entering and exiting the education and care service premises and the pick up location or destination; and
 - procedures for embarking and disembarking the means of transport, including how each child is to be accounted for on embarking and disembarking.
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- 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
 - proposed activities
 - proposed duration of the excursion
 - items that should be taken on the excursion
 - access for emergency services
 - availability of toilets, hand washing and shade
 - adequate mobile phone coverage
 - 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 service at the conclusion of the excursion.
 - If the excursion is a regular occurrence a risk assessment will only be carried out once in a 12 month period, where the circumstances relevant to the risk assessment are substantially the same on each outing.

Regular Outing

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.

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:
 - the child's name;
 - date the child is to be taken on the excursion, description, duration and destination of proposed excursion;
 - If the excursion involves transporting children the means of transport and any requirements for seatbelts or safety restraints under a law of each jurisdiction in which the children are being transported;
 - 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;





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- 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. This permission form will include a description of when the child is to be taken on the regular outings.
- No child will be taken on an excursion unless written permission from parents or legal guardian has been received.

Staffing Arrangements

- Educators attending the excursion will be no less than the number prescribed in the Education and Care Services National Regulations, and depending on the supervision requirements and additional hygiene procedures, may need to be higher to ensure adequate supervision.
- The number of educators will also be adequate to supervise any responsible adults who volunteer to assist with the excursion.
- Consideration will be given to the number of educators who have required first aid qualifications and the number of educators required to educate and care for children who remain at the service.
- Where a group of children are taken on an excursion while a number of children remain at the service, at least one educator who holds the following qualifications must be in attendance at both the excursion and at the service where children are being educated and cared for, and must be immediately available in an emergency. At least:
 - staff member or one nominated supervisor of the service who holds a current approved first aid qualification
 - staff member or one nominated supervisor of the service who has undertaken current approved anaphylaxis management training
 - staff member or one nominated supervisor of the service who has undertaken approved emergency asthma management training (regulation 136(1)).
- All educators attending the excursion will be made aware of the service's policy and procedures that set out the instructions for what must be done in the event of an emergency (regulation 97(1)(a)) and are aware of the risk assessment for the excursion.

Families and Volunteers

- Families will be encouraged to participate in excursions to increase the number of responsible adults and assist in ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of children.
- Families and volunteers cannot be counted in order to meet ratio requirements under the Education and Care Services National Regulations.
- Family members wishing to attend will be mature, responsible people who are aware of the hazards and responsibilities of taking a group of children out of the service. If the responsible adult needs to bring their child's sibling because they cannot find suitable care, the responsibility provided to this adult will be adjusted accordingly and considered in the risk assessment.
- Family members/volunteers will not be left in sole charge of children (including their children) and must be supervised by an educator at all times.





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- All responsible adults attending the excursion will be made aware of the service's policy and procedures that set out the instructions for what must be done in the event of an emergency (regulation 97(1)(a)) and are aware of the risk assessment for the excursion.

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)

- All requirements for seatbelts or safety restraints under a law of each jurisdiction in which the children are being transported will be checked and followed for any transport being used.
- Every child will wear a seatbelt where one is fitted.

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.
- 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 EpiPen;
 - hand sanitizer and any items required to support hygiene practices;
 - an operating mobile phone with an appropriate telephone network;
 - children's emergency contact numbers and the child's registered medical practitioner or medical service;
 - children's medication, if required; and
 - other items as required e.g. sunscreen, drinking cups, jackets, hats etc.

Insurance

- Management must review their insurance policy prior to the excursion/incursion to ensure liability is protected by the Service.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES





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The Approved Provider is responsible for:

- Ensuring that a child does not leave the service 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).
- 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.

The Nominated Supervisor is responsible for:

- Implementing Approved Provider responsibilities as delegate (see above).
- 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.
- Ensuring an accurate roll of attendance is taken and checked regularly.
- Ensuring that national child restraint laws for vehicles is adhered to when transporting children

Educators are responsible for:

- 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.
- Ensuring an accurate roll of attendance is taken and checked regularly, including embarking and disembarking any means of transport.
- Maintaining the required educator-to-child ratios at all times, and adequately supervising children during excursions and service events.
- 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





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- 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.
- 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.
- Taking an anaphylaxis EpiPen and asthma kit.

Families are responsible for:

- 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.

EVALUATION

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 18 months.

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, GUIDELINES, STANDARDS, FRAMEWORK

- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations: Regulations 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 123, 168(2)(g)
- Work Health and Safety (WHS) Act 2011
- Work Health and Safety (WHS) Regulation 2011
- Education and Care Services National Amendment Regulations 2020 under the Education and Care Services National Law





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RESOURCES / USEFUL LINKS

- ACECQA's sample Excursion Risk Management Plan – www.acecqa.gov.au/resources/applications/sample-forms-and-templates
- SOURCES
- Belonging, Being & Becoming – The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia
- My Time, Our Place: Framework for School Age Care in Australia
- Guide to the National Quality Framework, ACECQA
- Kidsafe Australia – www.kidsafe.com.au
- Kids and Traffic – www.kidsandtraffic.mq.edu.au
- Excursions and regular outings: Victoria State Government - www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/regulation/Pages/excursions.aspx

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.

Date(s) reviewed: June 2021 / February 2022

