

Excursion Policy



Document Title	NQS2.90 Excursion Policy	Version	3a
Date Approved	January 2024	Date for Review	December 2023
Warning - Ensure you are using the latest version of this policy.			
DCC Network/All Organisation Information/DCC Policies/Quality Area 2 – Childrens Health & Safety			

1. 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.

2. Rationale

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.

The service views excursions to be meaningful to children's development and learning. A minimum of 4 excursions will be undertaken each year (Mobile Children's Service an exception), and a minimum of 2 incursions per year.

Note: This policy only applies when taking children from River Region Early Education grounds. If children are visiting another River Region Early Education service, authorisation has already been sought via the child's enrolment form. Authorisation via the enrolment form is obtained once in a 12-month period.

3. Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the Approved Provider to:

- Ensure 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).
- 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.

It is the responsibility of Nominated Supervisors or Responsible Persons to:

- Implement Approved Provider responsibilities as delegate (see above).
- Ensure that each child's personal medication and current medical management plan is taken on excursions and other off-site activities.

Excursion Policy

- 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 an accurate roll of attendance is taken and checked regularly,

It is the responsibility of educators to:

- Adhere to this policy.
- Check 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.
- Allow 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.
- Ensure an accurate roll of attendance is taken and checked regularly, including embarking and disembarking any means of transport.
- Maintain the required educator-to-child ratios at all times, and adequately supervise children during excursions and service events.
- Adequately supervise 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.
- 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.
- Including all children in excursions and service events regardless of their abilities, additional needs 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.
- Take an anaphylaxis EpiPen and asthma kit.

It is the responsibility of families to:

- Complete, sign and date excursion/service event authorisation forms.
- Provide written authorisation for their child to leave the service premises on routine outings.
- Read the details of the excursion or service event provided by the service and ask for additional information if required.
- Understand 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.

4. Definitions

Nil

5. Guidelines

a) Regular Outing

A regular outing means a walk, drive or trip to and from a destination:

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

River Region Early Education also considers a regular outing as within the precinct of the block in which the service resides- inclusive of Whitelock, Napier, Hardinge and Poitiers Streets. A risk assessment will be conducted for the precinct; however, it is imperative that the *Excursion checklist* is completed prior to all excursions.

- 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.

b) 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(a)) and are aware of the risk assessment for the excursion.

c) 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.

Excursion Policy

- 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.
- 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(a)) and are aware of the risk assessment for the excursion.
- Families and volunteers will require a current working with children check
- The Working with Children Check will be kept on file in both service and administration.

d) 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.

e) 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 and emergency asthma medication and Buddy bags including children's medical management plans and children's medication
- Excursion bag (emergency kit) inclusive of:
 - current emergency contact details for each child
 - employee and next of kin contact details
 - emergency service telephone numbers
 - fully stocked first aid kit

Excursion Policy

- administration of medication records and medical management plans
- mobile phone with sufficient credit and charger
- drinking water
- gloves
- smoke mask/goggles
- portable radio and torches - battery-powered, solar or wind-up
- spare batteries
- whistle
- pen and paper
- alcohol based hand sanitiser
- sunscreen
- insect repellent
- Toilet paper
- nappies/wipes/change mat
- infant bottles and formula

f) 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.

6. Procedure

a) Planning

When planning for an excursion, educators 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.

Excursion Policy

- An **excursion planning proposal form** must be completed and approved by the Nominated Supervisor before any excursions are confirmed. (NQS 2.9 A 1 Excursion *planning proposal excursion form* is attached)

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.

b) Risk Assessment

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(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:
- 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 pickup 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.
- 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

Excursion Policy

- 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.

c) 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;
- a statement that a risk assessment has been prepared and is available at the service for parents to view.

7. Resources and references

- ACECQA's sample Excursion Risk Management Plan – www.acecqa.gov.au/resources/applications/sample-forms-and-templates
- Belonging, Being & Becoming – The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia
- Guide to the National Quality Standard, ACECQA
- Kidsafe NSW – www.kidsafensw.org
- 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

8. Relevant Legislation, Regulations and Standards

Legislation	
Education and Care Services National Regulation	
4	Definitions (Regular Outing)
99	Children leaving the education and care service premises
100	Risk assessment must be conducted before excursion
101	Conduct of risk assessment for excursion
102	Authorisation for excursions

Excursion Policy

National Quality Standards	
2.2.1	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard.
Child Safe Standards	
3	Families and communities are informed and involved
5	People working with children are suitable and supported
8	Physical and online environments minimise the opportunity for abuse or other kinds of harm to occur
Early Years Learning Framework Learning Outcomes	
2	Children are connected with and contribute to their world
Early Years Learning Framework Principles	
Early Years Learning Framework Practices	

9. Related Documents

Doc #	Attachments
NQS2.9 A1	Planning Proposal Excursion Form
NQS2.9 A2	Parent/Guardian Information Form for Excursions
NQS2.9 A3	Risk Assessment
NQS2.9 A4	Excursion Checklist
NQS2.9 A5	Post Excursion Evaluation

Doc #	Intersections with other key documents

10. Document Control

Doc #	Doc Title	Version	Approved	Next Review
NQS2.90	Excursion Policy	1	April 2013	April 2015
NQS2.90	Excursion Policy	2	April 2018	April 2020
NQS2.90	Excursion Policy	3	December 2020	December 2023
NQS2.90	Excursion Policy (minor changes due name change and new policy document format)	3a	January 2024	December 2023