



Excursion and Transport Policy

Policy Number: 16

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Rationale and Policy Considerations

Conducting excursions or inviting visitors to the service can build valuable links between the service and the community, particularly when these are more than one off experiences. Linking excursions and visits to other experiences for children reinforces children's learning outcomes and strengthens their connections with, and understanding of their community.

The Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 requires that approved provider/educator/coordinators take reasonable care to protect children from foreseeable risk of harm, injury and illness. Extra diligence is required by educators to ensure children are closely supervised during excursions. The regulations require that services conduct a risk assessment for each excursion undertaken by the service.

Traffic related injuries remain one of the leading preventable causes of death or serious injury for young children. The most critical times of the day for road safety in education and care services occur during children's arrival and departure times. The service will promote road safety in discussions with families and children. Excursions provide young children with the opportunity to practice walking safely with adults in real traffic environments.

Legislation and Government Requirements

- Education and Care Services National Law (WA) Act 2012.
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2012.
- Federal and State Occupational Safety & Health Legislation (Check your State or Territory legislation)
- State and Territory Road Traffic and Transport Licensing legislation (including child car restraint laws)

Needs

Children's

Safe stimulating environment in which to play and learn; wide range of experiences; safety whilst travelling in a vehicle, or on excursion outside the education and care setting.

Families'

Reassurance that safety standards are maintained and their children's safety is assured when on outings/excursions or being transported by the service for any other reason; to be fully informed about their child's excursions; to be able to withdraw their child from an excursion if they wish.

Educators

Clear guidelines for excursions; appropriate educator to child ratios; support from families; excursions to complement children's learning programs; adequate staffing levels to transport or escort children safely; clear procedures for transporting children; close liaison with bus drivers; family cooperation re: children's attendance and behaviour whilst travelling.

Management

To ensure parental permission is obtained in writing; excursions are conducted safely, and in accordance with legislative requirements; reliable transport system.

Scope

This policy is written for children, families, staff and visitors of Merino Court Childcare Centre

Policy Statement

Excursions are considered to be an integral part of the children's program and will be arranged accordingly to provide a broad range of learning experiences, including opportunities for children to expand their understanding of the arts i.e. theatre, music, dance, drama, art exhibitions etc. and to strengthen their connections with and understanding of their community.

Educators will closely supervise children whilst they are on excursions or out of the service for any other reason, as the potential for harm is greater outside of the safety of the education and care environment. The service will conduct a risk assessment before taking children on an excursion. Permission for children to attend will be sought from a parent/guardian or other authorised person for all excursions in compliance with the Education and Care Services National Regulations.

The service is committed to ensuring children are carefully supervised to protect their wellbeing and safety during any excursion or journey from or to the service that involves travel in a vehicle organised by the service.

Policy Principles

Excursions

- On excursions from the service children will at all times be in the charge of a responsible educator. The nominated supervisor will appoint a person in charge for each outing.
- The educator to child ratios will be maintained in accordance with the Education and Care Services National Regulations. Additional responsible adults may accompany children on an excursion. In determining the required adult to child ratio for each outing the following will be considered:
 - the age and abilities of the children;
 - the destination and length of the excursion;
 - the methods of transport;
 - the previous experience of the accompanying adults;
 - the type of activities.
- The nominated supervisor/educator will complete an excursion plan which includes a risk assessment for each excursion that will identify and assess risks that the excursion may pose to the health and safety or wellbeing of any child, and will specify how identified risks will be managed and minimised. The assessment will consider:
 - the proposed route and destination;
 - transport to and from the destination;
 - proposed times of departure and return;
 - the number of adults and children involved;
 - the educator to child ratio required under regulations;
 - an assessment on whether additional responsible adults are required to provide appropriate supervision;
 - any water hazards;
 - the proposed activities;
 - items that should be taken on the excursion i.e. mobile phone; emergency contact list, portable first aid kit etc;
 - contingencies for possible changes in weather and temperature;
 - sufficient shaded areas for protection from the sun;
 - safety measures and emergency plans;
- The emergency plan will identify: who will deal with the emergency; who will supervise the remaining children; how parents will be contacted; and how children will be returned to the service in the event of an emergency.
- All excursions will be publicised to all parents/guardians with full details of destination, times of departure and return, educators and volunteers attending, any special items children are required to bring. There will be no change to the publicised itinerary unless the person in charge of the excursion decides it is necessary for the safety and well-being of the children.

- Some excursions will attract a fee to help cover the cost of entry etc. All children will be charged the same fee regardless of their age.
- Children who do not have a signed form or have not paid any due monies, will remain at the centre on excursion days with other groups or management if the whole centre is attending the excursion. At no time can we take children out of the centre without signed permission slips.
- Children may be taken on regular outings within the community. These outings may be a walk, or a trip to a destination that the service regularly visits as part of its education program. On these outings, depending on their age, children will be restrained where appropriate in a pram or stroller, or by other suitable means. The parent/guardian or other authorised person's authorisation for this type of outing is only required once in every 12 month period, provided that the circumstances relevant to the risk assessment are the same in each outing.
- On walking outings educators will talk to young children about traffic and road safety including:
 - what they are doing when they cross the road;
 - why they've stopped at the kerb;
 - what they're looking for when crossing the road;
 - what sounds they're listening for when crossing the road;
 - when it is safe to cross;
 - why they have to keep checking until they're safely on the other side.
- The educator in charge of the excursion will have a list of the children on the excursion and the emergency contact details that have been provided by families on the Parent/Guardian Excursion Authority.
- The educator in charge of the excursion will have a mobile telephone, which is turned on, and on which he/she may be contacted at all times during the excursion.
- Guidelines for each excursion will ensure all adults attending the excursion are advised of their responsibilities which will include:
 - advising the educator in charge of the excursion immediately of any incident, emergency or identified risk;
 - remaining calm in the event of an emergency and signalling for immediate assistance, including what signals will be used;
 - the name of the person who will have charge of the First Aid Kit during the excursion, and which educators are qualified to administer first aid;
 - ensuring the children they are assigned stay with them at all times;
 - making regular head-counts of the children they are supervising in order to account for children at all times.
- Adult volunteers may be used to augment adult to child ratios on outings. Family members may be invited to assist in this regard.
- Adult volunteers should be in possession of a Working with Children Check or be able to produce a form confirming their application for one.
- A fully equipped and properly maintained First Aid Kit will be taken on all excursions from the premises.
- All excursions are non-compulsory. Should you wish for your child to remain behind, prior warning will need to be given so a staff member can be organised to stay with your child.
- Parents/guardians are requested not to send their child on an excursion if they display any signs of being unwell. This is in the interests of everyone concerned.
- Educators will strictly follow the services excursion guidelines.
- From time to time, the centre will also host incursions where a performer or service will visit us. On these days, children who are not booked in will be invited to attend provided they have an adult to supervise them.
- A record of each excursion will be retained for a minimum of 3 months
- Children are required to behave appropriately when out of the centre to ensure the safety of the other children is maintained at all times. Inappropriate behaviour that is impacting the rest of the group may result in the child being taken back to the centre early. Ratios will be maintained should this be necessary.
- Children who misbehave may be excluded from the next excursion at the nominated supervisor's discretion.

Water Safety

- **Where children are taken on an excursion that is close to a body of water additional adult supervision will be organised to ensure children's safety. Direct and constant supervision is required at all times children are in or near water. Educators/staff will have constant visual contact and be in close proximity to all children at all times.**
- Wading or paddling pools will only be used under the direct supervision of an educator. When not in use this equipment will be emptied and stored in such a manner that it cannot collect water. Wading and paddling pools must be of a size that can be emptied by one person.

Motor Vehicle Transport

- Children will not be transported in a motor vehicle without the written authorisation of the parent/guardian of the child. Parents/Guardians will provide their permission for their child to be transported on the service's bus or private cars at the time of enrolment if relevant.
- If their child is to be picked up from school, families are required to contact the service to advise of their child's inability to attend as soon as this is known so that their name can be withdrawn from the pick-up list for that day.
- Pre-school age children will be walked to and from the vehicle in groups of no more than 4 children and carefully supervised by an educator. Educators will be aware of the possible dangers and risks involved in escorting children to and from vehicles, and will take appropriate precautions including being watchful and alerting the children to the dangers
- School age children will be required to walk in an orderly manner to and from the vehicle under the supervision of an educator who will ensure a safe route is chosen. Educators will be aware of the possible dangers and risks involved in escorting children to and from vehicles, and will take appropriate precautions including being watchful and alerting the children to the dangers.
- Children travelling in a private vehicle that is fitted with seat belts must be restrained by a seat belt or safety capsule at all times in compliance with relevant state laws.
- Children travelling on a bus will be required to remain seated at all times the vehicle is in motion and use seatbelts if they are fitted.
- Appropriate educator to child ratios will be maintained during journeys in vehicles. Additional adult supervisors may be included depending on the developmental or other needs of the group.
- The service will develop behaviour rules for the collection and transport of children. School age children will be involved in the development of these rules, which will focus on safety issues and courtesy to other travellers and the driver. Unacceptable behaviour will be dealt with immediately by a supervising educator. Reoccurring behaviour management issues will be dealt with in accordance with the Guiding Children's Behaviour Policy.
- Educators who supervise children in the vehicle will involve them in activities that will encourage compliance with the behaviour rules, and make the journey a pleasant experience for all.
- All staff transporting children will have a valid driver's license, a copy of which will be kept on their file.
- Some excursions may involve the use of public transport. Staff will supervise children at all times and ensure they are seated in an appropriate seat.
- Volunteers transporting children will be over 21 years and have a valid driver's license. Wherever possible, they will be support staff rather than drivers.
- Children up to six months will be in a rearward facing child restraint or capsule, children up to four will sit in an approved restraint with an inbuilt harness while children between four and seven, or until they are 145cm tall (whichever is later), will sit in a high backed booster seat as per current legislation.
- Front seats will only be used when all available back seats are full. The oldest children will sit in the front if necessary.
- The driver of the vehicle will be over the age of 21 years.
- When there are two staff, all children will walk behind the front caregiver and in front of the back caregiver. Children will not be permitted to run except in a fenced off area.
- Staff will carry a mobile phone and their driver's license when in the bus.

- In the event of a breakdown, the staff will contact the centre to arrange for alternate transport and to contact RAC.
- In the event of an accident, contact details for the centre will be kept on the bus to be used by staff or emergency services.
- If staff or children are injured, the centre will be contacted and they will notify families as to the situation.
- The other children and staff will be collected and returned to the centre.
- Children will be required to sit properly in their seats and talk in a quiet manner.
- Children are not permitted to have any part of their body protruding out a vehicle window at any time.
- School children who do not follow the transport limits, will walk holding the carer's hand and sit next to them on the bus.
- The safety of children and staff will always be first priority when traveling out of the centre.

Public Transport

- Journeys by public transport will be carefully planned, and the transport authority advised (if required under State law) of the proposed journey, including numbers of children and supervising adults, ahead of time, so that appropriate additional staff and/or bookings can be arranged, to ensure children's safety and comfort during the journey.
- Children will be given clear guidelines in regard to expected behaviour during the journey, including the need to stay in their group and follow the instructions of their group supervisor at all times.
- Each supervising adult will be given responsibility for a group of children during the journey, and will sit with and supervise that group for the duration of the journey, including walking to and from the vehicle.

Related Documents

- **Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010(Vic)** - Section 3(2)(a); 165; 167; 169; 74
- **Education and Care Services National Regulations** -99; 100-102; 136
- **National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and Care and School Age Care (Nov 2010)** - Element 1.1.1; Element 1.1.2; Element 2.3.1; Element 2.3.2; Element 4.1.1; Element 4.2.1; Element 6.1.2; Element 6.2.1; Element 6.3.4
- **Early Years Learning Framework for Australia** - Practice: Holistic approaches; Responsiveness to children; Intentional teaching; Learning environments - Outcomes: 2, 3, 4
- **Framework for School Age Care in Australia** - Practice: Holistic approaches; Collaboration with children; Intentionality; Environments - Outcomes: 2, 3, 4
- National Law and Regulations (template p172)

Links to other policies

- Accidents, Emergencies and First Aid
- Delivery and Collection of Children
- Educational Programs
- Enrolment and Orientation
- Establishing a Protective Environment
- Guiding Children's Behaviour
- Illness
- Interactions with Children
- Medication and Medical Conditions
- Maintenance of a Safe Environment
- Partnerships and Communication with Families
- Sun Protection
- Supervision

Sources

Kidsafe Child Car Restraints www.kidesafewa.com.au/childcarrestraints.html

www.ors.wa.gov.au/

www.pscalliance.org.au

Further Sources

Harrison, L - **Promoting road safety in child care services** - extract from *Putting Children First*, the Newsletter of the National Childcare Accreditation Council - Issue 23, September 2007

Kids and Traffic - **Key road safety messages for children** - Retrieved 7 June 2011, from <http://www.kidsandtraffic.mq.edu.au/fsheets/fact5.pdf>

Kids and Traffic - **Key road safety messages for adults who care for young children** - Retrieved 7 June 2011, from <http://www.kidsandtraffic.mq.edu.au/fsheets/fact6.pdf>

Kid Safe Fact Sheets - **Bicycle safety; Pedestrian safety; Safety in the driveway** - Retrieved 7 June 2011, from <http://www.kidsafewa.com.au/factsheets.htm>

Tansey, S - **Supervision in children's services** - extract from *Putting Children First*, the Newsletter of the National Childcare Accreditation Council - Issue 15, September 2005

Document History

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