

Policy Statement

This policy acts to ensure that:

- Our Education and Care Service is committed to providing regular outings and excursions that are well considered and planned, provide meaningful experiences and ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of children at all times

Goals

Regular outings and excursions are a valuable experience for children, families and staff of Education and Care settings.

Regular outings and excursions provide the opportunity to expand and enhance children's experiences, explore different environments and engage in meaningful ways with their communities. Regular outings and excursions require appropriate planning and risk management to ensure the best experience and enjoyment for all.

Country Children's Early Learning is committed to compliance with the requirements of legislation to ensure regular outings and excursions are conducted in a safe manner.

For Family Day Care Educators, they will often take children on regular outings and excursions of varying types.

Some may be regular outings such as walking children to and from school on a daily basis. Others may be excursions that may require more preparation to ensure the environment where the children are going is safe. It is important for parents to sight risk assessments, outing details and provide authority for all outings their children are participating in, and that Educators use the correct paperwork for each excursion.

All outings must be for the purpose of Country Children's Early Learning and suitable for the children in care.

Definitions

Regular Outing

A regular outing is an outing that the service visits regularly as a part of its educational program and where the circumstances relevant to the risk assessment are substantially the same on each outing.

Excursion

An excursion is an outing that does not occur on a regular basis.

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Incursion

An incursion is when a planned activity occurs on the service premises. The incursion can be delivered by an external company or implemented by service staff

- Incursions usually occur within our services that offer Vacation Care programs
- Incursions do not require permission forms as they are conducted on the service premises
- Incursions will have Risk Assessments completed for the activity that will take place
- Risk Assessments for Incursions will be kept in Dropbox
- Incursion Risk Assessments will be emailed out to families prior to the Incursion occurring, and can also be sighted at the service when requested
- Any external companies providing an incursion to the service will be required to provide evidence of their current Public Liability Insurance and all their staff entering the premises will be required to provide current Working with Children Checks

Strategies

Planning

All Regular outings and excursions must be planned, have a current Risk Assessment, been approved by CCEL and authorised by guardians prior to occurring.

When planning for a regular outing or excursion Educators will:

- Check current Government advice and restrictions and consider how this may impact the regular outing or excursion planning
- Assess the requirements for the regular outing or excursion
- Consider the purpose and suitability of the regular outing or excursion to the children in care
- Check and decide upon the route and destination of the outing or excursion
- Visit the location or venue of the planned outing prior to the completion of the plan and risk assessment
- Conduct a risk assessment
- Book transport and venues if required
- Make alternative arrangements for adverse weather conditions
- Consider and be respectful of the wishes of any families who do not wish for their child to participate in the excursion or regular outing and make alternate arrangements to suit the families' care needs

- Inform families of the details of the regular outing or excursion including destination, objectives and outcomes and what the child should bring
- Provide parents or legal guardians with a regular outing or excursion permission form to complete to authorise their child to participate in the regular outing or excursion
- Collect completed permission forms for each child attending the regular outing or excursion
- Request additional adult participation where required
- Arrange for a suitably equipped first aid kit and mobile phone to be taken on the regular outing or excursion
- Educators must make alternate arrangements for any children not attending the regular outing or excursion
- Additional factors need to be considered in the planning of regular outings and excursions for children with additional needs. Where possible our service will uphold the right for all children to access all regular outings and excursion and engage in meaningful ways while on the regular outing or excursion
- Completion of a Regular Outing or Excursion Details and Risk Assessment Form and Safe Transportation of Children Details and Risk Assessment is required to be completed by Educators and submitted to CCEL for Approval at least 7 days prior to the outing occurring

Risk Assessment

The Nominated Supervisor ensure that:

- A Responsible Person is nominated for the regular outing or excursion
- A risk assessment is conducted prior to any regular outing or excursion to identify and assess the risk the outing may pose to the safety, health and wellbeing of any child whilst on the regular outing or excursion, and will specify how the service will manage any risk identified
- Once risks have been identified, they will be categorised as Critical, High, Moderate, Low or Very Low and management of the risk will be detailed
- Educators and any responsible adults attending the excursion are aware of the services policy and procedures that set out instructions for what must be done in the event of an emergency and are aware of the risk assessment for the regular outing or excursion
- Before departing for the regular outing or excursion risks are checked including the weather to assess any increases to the level of risk and whether the outing can proceed

The risk assessment conducted will consider:

- Estimated departure and arrival times and duration of the outing
- Proposed route and destination
- Any water hazards
- Any risk 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 the each jurisdictional which the child is being transported
 - The process for entering and exiting the education and care service premises and the pick-up location or destination
 - Procedures for embarking and disembarking the means of transport, including how a child is to be accounted for on embarking and disembarking
- Number of and full names of each adult involved in the excursion
- The number of educators/responsible adults, appropriate to provide supervision, and whether any adults with specialised skills are required
- Number of children involved in the outing
- Number of adults and children involved in the outing
- Educator to child ratio, including whether this excursion warrants a higher ratio
- 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
- Completed checklist of Items that should be taken on the excursion
- Access for emergency services
- Availability of toilets, handwashing and shade
- Adequate mobile phone coverage
- Mobile phones to only be used for the purposes of emergencies to ensure adequate supervision is maintained throughout the outing
- Map of proposed route
- Strategies for accounting for all children on the excursion, particularly during transitions, 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 outing 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

Authorisation for Excursions and Regular Outings

- All Excursion and Regular Outing Details Forms and Risk Assessment including a map of the routes to be taken must be approved by CCEL prior to the forms being presented to an authorised guardian for authority and going ahead with the Regular Outing or Excursion
- All approved Regular Outing and Excursion Detail and risk Assessments will be kept on the child's file by CCEL
- For all excursions parents or legal guardians will be given an excursion permission form with full details of the excursion or regular outing including:
 - The child's name
 - Date the child is to be taken on the excursion or regular outing, description, duration and destination
 - If the excursion or regular outing involves transportation of children, the means of transport and any requirements for seatbelts or safety restraints under the law of each jurisdiction in which the children are being transported
 - Reason for the excursion or regular outing, and proposed activities to be conducted
 - The anticipated adult to child ration, outlining number of educators, staff and other adults attending
 - A statement that a risk assessment has been prepared and is available at the service for parents to view
 - That written policies and procedures for Regular Outings and Excursions are available at the education and care service
- If the excursion is a regular outing, authorisation is required once in a 12-month period, unless the circumstances of the outing change
- No child will be taken on an excursion or regular outing unless written permission from parents or legal guardian has been received

Staffing Arrangements

- Educators attending the excursion or regular outing will be no less than the number prescribed in the Education and Care Services National Regulations, and depending on the supervision requirements 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 or regular outing
- Consideration will be given to the number of Educators who have 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 or regular outing transportation while a number of children remain at the service, at least one Educator who holds the following qualifications must be in attendance on both the transportation and at the service where children are being educated and cared for:
 - Current approved first aid qualification, including anaphylaxis management and emergency asthma management training
- All Educators attending the transportation will be made aware of the services policies and procedures in relation to what must be done in the event of an emergency, and are aware of the risk assessment for the transportation

Families and Volunteers

- Families will be encouraged to participate in the excursion or regular outing 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
- All responsible adults attending the excursion will be made aware of the services policies and procedures that set out the instructions for what must be done in the event of an emergency and are aware of the risk assessment for the excursion
- Family members/volunteers will not be left in sole charge of children (including their own children) and must be supervised by an Educator at all times

Travel Arrangements

Travel arrangements are made on the basis of individual excursion or regular outing 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, safety island 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 a Regular Outing or Excursion

- All Educators, volunteers and children using the transportation will be informed of transportation timetable/itinerary, special requirements, safety procedures, grouping of children and responsibilities
- A list of children using the transportation will be left at the service, and a copy carried by the delegated Responsible Person
- Before leaving the service a notice will be prominently displayed which includes the itinerary, timetable and a mobile phone contact number
- Items to be readily available when transporting children include:
 - A suitably stocked first aid kit
 - Hand sanitiser and any items required to support hygiene practices
 - A list of adults attending, including their contact information
 - An operating mobile phone
 - A list of children involved, including children's emergency contact numbers
 - Children's medication and health plans
 - Other items as required e.g. sunscreen, drink bottles
- The Country Children's Early Learning Responsible Person or FDC Educator will notify CCEL prior to leaving for a Regular Outing or Excursion via text to 0410 529 392
- The Roll Call function in the Software will be used regularly throughout the Regular Outing or Excursion to check that all children are accounted for
- The Country Children's Early Learning Responsible Person or FDC Educator is to notify CCEL as soon as it is identified that a regular Outing or Excursion will go over the intended timeframe
- The Country Children's Early Learning Responsible Person or FDC Educator is to notify CCEL at the earliest available time if there is an incident or emergency situation during the course of the Regular Outing or Excursion

Roles and Responsibilities

Approved Provider

- Ensure that a child does not leave the service premises on an excursion or regular outing unless prior written authorisation has been provided by the parent/guardian or person named in the child's enrolment record
- Ensure Educator to child ratios are maintained at all times
- Ensure that an Educator at the service accounts for all children as they embark and disembark at the service and keep a record of how each child was accounted for
- Ensure a check of the interior of the vehicle to ensure that there are no children left behind
- Ensure that parents/guardians, volunteers, students and all adults participating in the excursion or regular outing 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, specifics how these will be managed/minimised and includes all details required by Regulation 101

Coordinator/Responsible Person/FDC Educator

- Implement Approved Provider responsibilities as delegate (see above)
- Be present when children embark and disembark a vehicle at the service premises
- Account for each child when they embark and disembark a vehicle at the service premises
- Complete a check of the interior of the vehicle after all children have disembarked at the service premises to ensure no children are left on the vehicle
- Undertake a risk assessment for an excursion or regular outing prior to seeking written permission from parents/guardians
- Check that a parent/guardian or person names in the child's enrolment record has completed, signed and dated the excursion/regular outing authorisation form prior to the outing
- Ensure that each child's personal medication and current medical management plan is taken on excursions and regular outings
- Ensure that a First Aid Kit, including an EpiPen, Ventolin and Children's Medication is taken on excursions and regular outings
- Ensure a mobile phone, emergency contact details for each child and the contact details of their medical practitioner are taken on excursions and regular outings
- Ensure an accurate roll of attendance is taken and roll calls on the provider software are regularly completed

- Ensure the risk assessment identifies and assesses the risks, specifics how these will be managed/minimised and includes all details required by Regulation 101
- Include all children in excursions and regular outings regardless of their abilities, additional needs or medical conditions
- Before leaving the service, the Responsible Person or FDC Educator will notify the Service Coordinator or Approved Provider that they are departing the service
- Notify the Service Coordinator or Approved Provider as soon as it is identified that a regular outing or excursion will go over the intended timeframe
- Notify the Service Coordinator or Approved Provider at the earliest possible time if there is an incident or emergency during the regular outing or excursion

Educators

- Allowing a child to participate only with written authorisation of a parent/guardian or named person in the child's enrolment record
- Maintaining the required Educator to child ratios at all times, and adequately supervising children at all times
- Adequately supervising parents/guardians, volunteers, students and all adults participating in the excursion or regular outing are adequately supervised at all times and are not left with sole supervision of individual children or groups of children

Families

- Completing, signing and dating excursion authorisation forms
- Providing written authorisations for their child to leave the service premises for a regular outing
- Reading the details of the excursion or regular outing provided by the service and asking for additional information if required
- Understanding that if they participate in an excursion or regular outing as a volunteer they will be under the immediate supervision of the Responsible Person at all times

LINKS TO:

- **Education & Care Services National Law**
Section 165
- **Education & Care Services National Regulations**
89, 90, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 122, 123, 124, 136, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172
- **National Quality Standards/Elements:**
2.1, 2.2, 3.2.1, 4.1, 5.1, 5.2, 6.1, 6.2, 7.1, 7.1.2
- **Child Safe Standards**
1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10

Continual Monitoring and Improvement

Continual improvement and monitoring will occur in the following ways:

- Incidental and planned consultation with families
- Approved Provider and Coordinators accessing current relevant information
- Approved Provider, Coordinators and Educators accessing current and relevant training
- Internal evaluation of incidences and the improvement of systems

SOURCES

- Education and Care Services National Regulations - December 2021
- Education and Care Services National Law - January 2022
- Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations - October 2017
- Guide to the National Quality Standard - January 2020
- Implementing the Child Safe Standards: A Guide for Early Education and Outside School Hours Care Services, NSW Department of Education, 2021
- A Guide to the Child Safe Standards, NSW Office of the Children's Guardian, 2020
- ACECQA – FDC Approved Provider compliance responsibilities – October 2017
- Be You
- My Time Our Place: Framework for School Age Care in Australia
- The Early Years Learning Framework
- ECA Code of Ethics
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Kidsafe Australia
- Kids and Traffic
- ACECQA – Sample Excursion Risk Management Plan

LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES:

- Acceptance & Refusal of Authorisations
- Administration of First Aid
- Administration of Medication
- Child-Safe Environment
- Delivery & Collection of Children
- Emergency & Evacuation
- Enrolment & Orientation
- Incident, Injury, Trauma & Illness
- Safe Transportation of Children
- Sunsmart
- Water Safety