

# Outside School Hours Care

## Excursion Policy

### Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety

#### **Rationale:**

The school will provide well planned and documented excursions which provide a valuable part of the program.

#### **Policy Statement:**

##### **Background**

Excursions are a valuable experience for children, families and staff within the OSHC 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. Our OSHC is committed to:

- Providing excursions that are well considered and planned.
- Providing Meaningful experiences.
- Ensuring the health, safety, and wellbeing of children at all times.

##### **Goals**

We will:

- Make excursions a part of the program of education and care;
- Plan for excursions with careful consideration of the safety of children and adults;
- Carry out excursions only where full documentation and permissions have been completed and obtained;
- Undertake full risk assessments, consideration of value of educational excursions, and plan for first aid requirements.

##### **Procedures**

***Planning and Preparations for all excursions will be completed well in advance to:***

- Maximise both children's developmental experiences and their safety.
- Reflect the age, capacity and interests of the children.
- Ensure appropriate supervision is provided.
- Collect written parental permission.

***All excursions will be thoroughly researched to ensure:***

- supervision is adequate so children cannot be separated from the group;
- Access to hazardous equipment and environments are minimised;
- There is adequate access to food, drink and other facilities (toilets, handwashing etc.);
- Consideration is given to the mobility and supervision requirements of children with additional needs;
- That adequate sun and shade protection is available.

***When planning for an excursion staff will:***

- 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 asthma medication, EpiPen if required) 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.

## **Risk Assessment**

The Nominated Supervisor will ensure 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. The Nominated Supervisor will specify how the service will manage any risks identified.

The risk assessment conducted will consider:

- Proposed route, destination and duration of the excursion.
- Potential water hazards or any hazard associated with water based activities.
- Transport to and from destination.
- Number of educators, responsible persons, and children involved.
- Specialised skills that are required.
- Proposed activities.
- Items to be taken on the excursion e.g. mobile phone, emergency contact numbers etc.

If the excursion is a regular occurrence a risk assessment will only be carried out once, provided the circumstances around the excursion have not changed in any way since the initial risk assessment was conducted.

The Nominated Supervisor will also appoint an Educator to be in charge of the excursion.

## **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:
  - Child's name.
  - Date, description, duration and destination of proposed excursion.
  - Method of transport to be used.
  - 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.
- 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. No child will be taken on an excursion unless written permission from parents or legal guardian has been received.

## **Families and Volunteers**

- Families will be encouraged to participate in excursions to assist in maintaining suitable child/ staff ratios. If additional adults are required, volunteers will be invited. Volunteers will be mature, responsible people who are aware of the hazards and responsibilities of taking a group of children out the service. Family members/volunteers will not to be left in sole charge of children and must always be supervised by an educator.
- All volunteers/family members' details will be entered into the Appropriate staff record for that day.
- All Volunteers must hold a current valid Working With Children's Check.

## **Transport and Traffic**

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- Safety of children will be considered in the choice of route and mode of transport. Our service will follow all applicable VIC road rules as well as the Kids and Traffic best practice recommendations for transporting young children safely in buses. Every reasonable precaution will be taken to protect children from harm and any hazard likely to cause injury.
- 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.
- Buses used for excursions must be fitted with suitable child restraints within the meaning of the Regulation 110G of the Motor Traffic Regulations 1935 (seat belts). Educators will ensure Children's seat belts are buckled up. . Keep children occupied when travelling in vehicles to help prevent children unbuckling their seatbelt.
- Ensure as far as practicable child passengers enter and exit the bus by the 'safety door', which is the front/rear, left hand side door of the bus.
- When getting on and off the bus, educators are to arrange themselves so that one educators member is first on/last off to ensure no child is left behind.
- Ensure there are no loose or sharp objects inside the bus that could cause injury if an accident occurs.

## **Supervision**

- Supervision on excursions will ensure the safety and wellbeing of all children for the duration of the excursion, taking into account ratios and all risks and hazards likely to be encountered.
- The venue will be assessed as safe for all children and adults on the excursion and will be easily supervised and accessible.
- Work experience, TAFE, and University students may assist educators but are not included in the adult/child ratio.
- When it is not possible or appropriate for the whole group to move together, smaller groups will be organized to include at least one staff member.
- All volunteer adults attending an excursion are required to have and provide a Working with Children Check prior to the excursion.
- The children will be organised into small groups in the care of a particular adult. Adults are responsible for the careful supervision of their own group of children and should count them regularly.
- Children must be supervised when going to the toilet (toilets are to be checked before child goes in).

## **Water Hazards**

- No excursions will be conducted to a swimming pool or other water related activity. Where there are significant water hazards (such as rivers, lakes or beaches), risk management strategies will be identified and implemented.

## **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 Educator
- 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 asthma medication and EpiPen (if required);
  - a mobile phone;
  - children's emergency contact numbers;
  - children's medication, if required; and
  - other items as required e.g. sunscreen, drinking cups, jackets etc.
- If a child is lost on an excursion, we will always leave a staff member behind to look, while the other group leaders escort the children back.
- When planning excursions, consideration should be given to the cost. Cost should not preclude any child from attending. If costs are high the excursion may be partly subsidised by the OSHC so that all children are able to attend.

## **Evaluation**

- All excursions are conducted in a safe manner and evaluated. Any improvements identified in the risk assessment prior to conducting the excursion or the evaluation of the excursion is addressed and actioned to ensure children's safety.

## **Additional and Relevant Documents:**

### **Sources & Legislative References**

- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 101, 102

Link to National Quality Standard:

- 2.3.2 Every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and any hazard likely to cause injury.
- 7.3.5 Service practices are based on effectively documented policies and procedures that are available at the service and reviewed regularly.

## **Policy evaluation and review**

This policy will be reviewed as part of the School's three-year review cycle

**This policy was ratified by School Council in Feb 2021.**

**This policy will be reviewed by School Council in Feb 2023.**