

Excursions

QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY

Policy Statement

Pacific Hills Early Learning Centre 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.

It is important that service providers make the necessary considerations to ensure that excursions and transportation are compliant with the National Law and Regulations and policies and procedures implemented to guide service practice.

Related Education and Care National Law and Regulations

Section 2A	Paramount consideration – safety, rights and best interests of children
Section 3A	Paramount consideration
Section 13	Matters to be taken into account in assessing whether fit and proper person
Section 14	Regulatory Authority may seek further information
Section 21	Reassessment of fitness and propriety
Section 51	Conditions on service approval
Section 162	Offence to operate education and care service unless responsible person is present
Section 166A	Offence to subject child to inappropriate conduct Offence relating to inappropriate conduct
Section 172	Offence to fail to display prescribed information
Section 173	Offence to fail to notify certain circumstances to Regulatory Authority
Section 174	Offence to fail to notify certain information to Regulatory Authority
Section 175	Offence relating to requirement to keep enrolment and other documents
Section 188	Offence to engage person to whom prohibition notice applies
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Goals

To ensure that all excursions and incursions undertaken by the Service are carefully planned and conducted in a safe manner, maintaining children's health, safety and wellbeing at all times in accordance with Education and Care National Regulations. We believe excursions/incursions provide the children with the opportunity to expand and enhance their skills and knowledge gaining insight into their local and wider community. We are committed to complying with all relevant legislation to support the planning, authorisation, supervision and risk management of all excursions and incursions to ensure children's safety, rights and best interests are the paramount consideration. This includes ensuring the safe use of digital technologies and online environments during excursions and incursions, in line with our policies to protect children's privacy, safety and wellbeing.

Strategies

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. (See: ACECQA risk assessment and management template – Excursions as a guide)
- Book transport and venues.
- Time away from the service
- Availability of toilet and washing facilities
- Access to safe drinking water
- Cost
- Water hazards
- Transitions between areas of the venue
- 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.

Risk Assessment

Consult ACECQA risk assessment and management - Safe transportation of children safety checklist and regular transportation record form (DOCX 56 KB). As a guide only.

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
- Identify and assess possible risks that the excursion may pose to the health, safety and wellbeing of any child being taken on the excursion
- any water hazards
- any risks associated with water based activities
- The duration of the transportation
- current drivers licence
- 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 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.
- 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 to service-issued devices are sufficient to meet safety and education and care requirements without routine reliance on personal devices
- access for emergency services
- availability of toilets, hand washing and shade

- 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 - refer to (regulation 102(e)(f) pages 2-5). It is good practice for every approved provider, nominated supervisor and educator to apply the new safety requirements for regular transportation to all periods of transportation including single trips
- 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;
 - a statement that a risk assessment has been prepared and is available at the service for parents to view.

Please note in the event an authorisation is given that authorisation must be given by a parent or other person named in the child's enrolment record as having authority given by a parent to authorise a child to participate in the excursion and/or transportation. The child's enrolment record must include this other person's name, address and contact details (regulations 102, 102D, 160).

- 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 responsible person of the service who holds a current approved first aid qualification (Regulation 136).
 - staff member or one responsible person of the service who has undertaken current approved anaphylaxis management training.
 - staff member or one responsible person of the service who has undertaken approved emergency asthma management training.
- 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.

- 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
 - 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;
 - Children's attendance records
 - 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, medical communication and medical action plan;
 - other items as required e.g. sunscreen, drinking cups, jackets, food and beverage, etc.

Roles and Responsibilities

Approved Provider with ensure that:

- 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)(a-k).
- Ensuring that educator-to-child ratios are maintained at all times, including during excursions.
- Ensuring a staff member, nominated supervisor or responsible person (other than the driver) being present at the service to account for all children as they embark and disembark at the service premises and keep a record of how each child was accounted for.
- Ensuring a check of the interior of the vehicle to ensure there are no children left behind and witnessed by a second check by driver.
- 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.

Management / Nominated Supervisor/Responsible Person will ensure that:

- Implementing approved provider responsibilities as delegate (see above).
- A nominated supervisor or a staff member (other than the driver) must:
 - 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 there are no children left on the vehicle.
- Ensuring that each child's personal medication and current medical management and communication 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.

Educators will:

- 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.
- Ensure records must be made immediately and include the time, date, full name and signature of the person/s responsible for:

- accounting for the children during embarking and disembarking of the vehicle
 - conducting the vehicle check after children have disembarked.
- Maintain the required educator-to-child ratios at all times, and adequately supervising 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.
- Include 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.

Families will:

- 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.

Related Legislation

- 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
- Early Childhood Legislation Amendment Act 2022

Relevant references

ACECQA's sample Excursion Risk Management Plan –
www.acecqa.gov.au/resources/applications/sample-forms-and-templates

ACECQA's sample Excursion Risk Management Plan –
www.acecqa.gov.au/resources/applications/sample-forms-and-templates

ACECQA information sheet - Changes to regular transportation of children

www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-02/Info_Fact_Sheet_ChangesToRegularTransportationOfChildren_March2023%20%283%29.pdf

ACECQA Active Supervisions ensuring safety and promoting learning -

www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-01/QA2_ActiveSupervision_EnsuringSafetyAndPromotingLearning.pdf

ACECQA Minimising the risk of children being left behind in vehicles -

www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-01/InfoSheet_MinimisingTheRiskOfChildrenBeingLeftBehindInVehicles_0.pdf

ACECQA Safe transportation of children - www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-01/InfoSheet_SafeTransportationOfChildren.pdf

NSW Office of the Children's Guardian - <https://ocg.nsw.gov.au/working-children-check/who-needs-check>

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

Review

POLICY REVIEWED: July 2026

POLICY REVIEWED BY: Suzi Scott

NEXT REVIEW DATE: July 2027

MODIFICATIONS: July 2026 – Updated regs and law, updated information for roles and responsibilities, updated information on the use of service-issued devices