

EXCURSIONS AND OUTINGS POLICY

AIM

To provide safe learning experiences based on children's interests.

To extend and enhance the learning opportunities for children.

To enable the children to experience more of the immediate and extended community.

To foster creativity when children explore the new avenues opened to them from observations during an excursion.

To provide guidelines which will guide staff in the event of a child being lost whilst on an outing or an excursion. If a child is lost, staff will instigate a methodical, calm, professional search by following this procedure.

IMPLEMENTATION

Leadership will:

- Oversee and approve applications to conduct excursions and risk assessments.
- Undertake policy and procedural responsibilities in line with the Department for Education's 'camps and excursions procedure'.
- Consult the Education Director to approve ratio of adults to children if excursion will take place around aquatic hazards.

Educators will:

- Plan excursions that are accessible for all children and families. This includes consideration of disabilities, medical conditions, cultural background and financial barriers.
- Complete a Department 'application to conduct excursion' before each excursion.
- Complete an 'application to conduct excursion' prior to regular planned outings and review every 12 months.
- Complete a risk assessment before every excursion and must consider:
 - The proposed route and destination.
 - Any water hazards and risk associated with any water based activities.
 - The method of transport.
 - The number of adults and children involved in the excursion.
 - Given the risk/s posed, the number of educators or responsible adults appropriate to provide supervision and whether any specialised skills are required to ensure children's safety.
 - Proposed activities.
 - Likely length of time of the excursion.
 - The items that should be taken on the excursion including if sunscreen will have to be applied/taken if the UV rating is higher than 3.
 - Access to toilets, nappy change, shelter, food and water.
- If any excursion is a regular outing, a new risk assessment must be done every 12 months to monitor ongoing risks or any new circumstances.
- Complete a risk management plan for every excursion with specific strategies to deal with emergencies including injury or illness. The risk assessment should also take into consideration known health conditions of any children or staff attending the excursion.
- Email DHS prior to sending out information about excursions to check if the excursion location or activity has a child safe environments compliance plan (see DfE 'camps and excursions procedure' for further details).
- Gain permission for local walks and contact families should they not have given consent to see if their child can participate.
- Provide families with advance notice of any other excursion with details of **date, destination and purpose of excursion, educators/adult ratio, group size, times, cost, transport, site-based contact person (refer to Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations policy for further information)**.
- Adhere to minimum required ratios of children to teachers for excursions (1 adult to 6 children). If the risk assessment undertaken for a preschool's routine outing indicates a 1:6 adult to child ratio

may not be required (for example a preschool visiting an adjacent school site), the site leader may, with the education director's approval, implement an alternative ratio that ensures all children's safety.

- Obtain written parental consent for each child participating and store returned consent forms in the children's files.
- If obtaining consent digitally, ensure information is being sent to families' correct email addresses and are sent individually for each child.
- Plan excursions with the knowledge and support of the Director and give Director written plan of excursion including risk assessment.
- Arrange for there to be at least two adults on every excursion for safety reasons unless negotiated with Director/Assistant Director e.g. walk to the shops with small group or regular excursions that have been risk assessed. While an increased educator to child ratio is not specified in the National Regulations, there is a requirement to adequately supervise children at all times. A thorough risk assessment should determine whether minimum ratios are sufficient to provide adequate supervision while attending the excursion. In all cases a qualified educator must accompany children on outings.
- If hiring a private bus/coach, must receive a firm price quotation in advance and inspect the bus prior to boarding with attention paid to: luggage storage, seat comfort, seating capacity, cleanliness and the company's ability to provide back-up service or assistance in the case of breakdowns and ensuring the bus is fitted with a current safety label (commonly known as a "safety triangle").
- Ensure any transport used meets safety guidelines outlined in the Department for Education's 'Camps and excursions policy'.
- Will call or mark names in a roll call rather than count heads. To ensure that all children are accounted for, this procedure should be followed:
 - On leaving the Centre.
 - On arrival at each destination, including leaving any transportation (buses, coaches etc.).
 - At regular intervals at the destination (this may be done by each small group).
 - Leaving each destination, including boarding any transportation (buses, coaches etc.).
 - On return to the Centre.
- Take the Centre phone and children's emergency contacts on excursions.
- Be responsible for the Excursion kit which must be carried at all times during the excursion. This should be carried by the most senior educator.
- Ensure first aid kit and medication for children is brought along to each excursion/outing. Educators must also be aware of emergency procedures in case of illness or injury.
- Remind other educators, students and volunteers of their role modelling responsibilities.
- Write a brief evaluation/info sheet for portfolios upon conclusion of the excursion and keep within programming records.
- Record excursion (photographically) and incorporate learning concepts related to the excursion into the curriculum before and after to enhance children's learning and promote discussion.
- In all cases where children go offsite, a qualified educator must accompany children unless negotiated with the Director/Assistant Director and a risk assessment has been completed.
- Label any strollers with the Centre's name, phone number and a mobile number (Director/Assistant Director or Administration) before leaving site.
- When a service is provided at a school site, it is not considered an excursion if child/ren leave the Children's Centre accompanied by an educator but do not leave the school site.
- If there is an incident during an excursion, the most senior educator will coordinate action. Director will be informed as soon as possible. If the incident is regarding a lost child, the Lost Child instructions outlined below are to be followed and will be put into practice.

- Ensure a site based contact person has been nominated. This person should have access to all paperwork surrounding the excursion/outing and be contactable by families and educators at all times during excursion.

Families will:

- Be asked to give written general permission at the time of enrolment for educators to take their child for walks within the local area. Such outings may be organised spontaneously.
- Give written consent if they wish for their child to participate in an excursion.
- Have the option of declining any offer for children to be involved in an excursion and alternative arrangements will be made.
- Be asked and given the choice to participate in excursions. If they choose to do so, they must comply with the Department's volunteer guidelines and complete appropriate documentation.

In the case of a lost child:

The most senior Educator on excursion will:

- Check attendance sheet and talk with other educators to establish if the child has been collected by a parent/guardian.
- If a child cannot be accounted for, ensure that all other children are kept calm, safe and adequately supervised.
- Delegate an educator to notify the Director of the situation while another educator commences the search procedures outlined below.
- Assign an educator to retrace the group's steps and to confirm the child is lost/missing.
- Phone parents and the police if the child is not located after retracing steps and searching immediate area.
- Decide, in consultation with the Director/Assistant Director, whether arrangements will be made for the remaining children to return to the Centre accompanied by a qualified member of staff or to continue with the planned activity.
- Maintain telephone contact with the Centre and Director, if possible.
- The Director is the **only** Centre staff who may liaise with the media.
- An educator will remain in the area to assist the Police with the search.

Leadership will:

- Ensure a search is conducted.
- Ensure the police and parents/guardians are notified as soon as possible.
- Provide any assistance possible to authorities.
- Seek advice and support from Department of Education and Child Development (DECD) using the Extreme Severity and Serious Critical Incident Reporting Process.
- Notify the regulatory authority of the incident, as per National Law, on **8226 1815** and report the incident on IRMS.
- Arrange for counselling for parents, educators and children by contacting and seeking advice from the Family Practitioner.
- Liaise with media following advice from Police and DECD.
- Fill out a detailed incident report.
- Instigate a risk analysis of care procedures to prevent a reoccurrence and coordinate the information to be included in a written report.

EVALUATION:

This policy is viewed to be working effectively when:

- The children's knowledge and interests are extended by visits outside the Centre.
- Excursions are well organised and documented, utilising risk assessment and evaluations.
- Accurate records are completed and stored at the Centre.
- Excursions are a regular part of the program.
- All children return safely.

- Administrative records of excursions are kept, in case of further legal action.
- Educators are aware of procedures to follow in the event of a missing child.
- Educators act in a calm, methodical, professional manner by following procedures.
- Adequate support and guidance is available for educators and families.

National Quality Standards:

6. Collaborative Partnership with families and communities

6.2.3 The service builds relationships and engages with the community.

2.2.1 At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard

Record of Policy Adoption and Amendment:

Version	Date	Details	Author	Approver
1.0	January 2011	Policy adopted.	Ocean View Policies	Governing Council
1.1	August 2012	Policy circulated to Policy Review Committee and staff for review and suggested amendments identified, including; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk assessment / ratios • NQS • Regulatory authority notification 	K Cook	
2.0	November 2012	Suggested amendments put to Policy Review Committee and adopted, including; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As above and reference to Acceptance and refusal of authorisations policy in regards to excursion requirements 	K Cook	Policy Review Committee
2.1	March 2014 March 2015 Feb 2018 Aug 2021 Apr 2022	Reformatted Fee information added Removed references to half days Updated to include digital consent conditions as per Department procedure update Updated to include child safe environments compliance as per DfE guidelines	P Murray	Policy Review Committee

Review: To be reviewed bi- annually/ **Last Reviewed:** April 2022

Source: ACECQA- National Quality Framework

Education and Early Childhood Services (Registration and Standards) Act 2011

Camps and Excursions Policy, Department for Education, updated December 2019