



Excursions Policy

Policy Number	QA 2/12	Title	Excursions Policy
Revision	2.0	Written By	Vacation Care Coordinator / Nominated Supervisor
Reviewed By	EHOOSH Management Committee	Approved By	EHOOSH Management Committee
Supersedes	Version 1.2	Effective Date	March 2024

1. Policy Statement

Eastwood Heights OOSH (the Service) will conduct excursions to extend the educational programming at the Service. Excursions are designed to allow children to explore their physical and social environment, including their local community, away from the Service’s premises (*‘My Time, Our Place’* Outcome 2.1).

When planning excursions, educators will take into consideration experiences that encourage children to investigate ideas, solve problems and use complex concepts and thinking, reasoning and hypothesising, and to transfer and adapt what they have learned from one context to another (*‘My Time, Our Place’* Outcomes 4.2 and 4.3). All excursions will be carefully planned with a risk assessment undertaken beforehand and parental permission sought for all excursions. The number of children that can attend an excursion is capped at 60 to ensure that all children and staff are safe throughout the excursion.

2. Procedure

Planned excursions will take into account:

- Children's ages, abilities and interests
- Ways to maximise the children's developmental experiences and opportunities to practice new skills
- Suitability of the venue
- Clothing and equipment required
- Travel arrangements

To ensure the safety and comfort for children on excursions:

- Parents are expected to arrive at least 30 minutes prior to the excursion departure time, this is communicated to parents through the booking forms
- Buses will depart on time, unless in an emergency, and children who are late will not be able to attend the program as the service is closed during excursion times

Parents will be asked to ensure that their children have appropriate:

- Clothing (including activity and weather appropriate)
- Footwear (enclosed shoes, and activity and weather appropriate)
- Lunch, water bottle and snacks (morning tea)

Children who are unable to attend excursions will not be offered care on excursion days as the service will be closed for the duration of the excursion. All educators are required on the excursion to maintain safe and appropriate ratios, qualifications and communication to accommodate breaking into smaller activity groups.

2.1. Departure from the Service

The Service will comply with Australian Government requirements to be an approved Education and Care Service for the purposes of Child Care Subsidy and assistance payments. We will comply with the online Child Care Management System (CCMS) reporting requirements and any other requirements for claiming and administering CCS. It is a family's responsibility to register with the Family Assistance Office for CCS.

Families will only be eligible for CCS if child care attendance records are accurately completed and signed by the parent/guardian or other responsible adult, and other eligibility requirements are met. Families are entitled to 42 absence days for each registered child in each financial year. CCS is paid for these days provided that the child would normally have attended on that day and fees have been charged. Additional absences can be claimed when the first 42 days have been used, however supporting documentation may be required for approval of such. All documentation pertaining to CCS will be kept for the specified period of time and made available to Australian Government officers on request.

2.2. Risk Management

The educator in charge of planning the activity must ensure a risk assessment is carried out prior to the excursion to determine the safety and appropriateness of any excursion. The risk assessment must:

- Identify and assess risks that the excursion may pose to the safety, health or well-being of any child being taken on the excursion, and
- Specify how the identified risks will be managed and minimised.

The responsible person in charge on the excursions will conduct a quick risk assessment of activities undertaken once already on the excursions such as:

- Bathrooms – ensuring they are tidy and are appropriate for EHOOSH children to use
- Routes taken on the excursion – if groups will split up or stay together whilst on the excursion

As part of the risk assessment process, a Risk Management Plan will be prepared for each excursion. The Plan will include:

- The proposed route and destination for the excursion
- Any water hazards that may be present
- Any risks associated with water-based activities
- The method of transport to and from the proposed destination for the excursion
- The number of adults and children involved in the excursion
- The number of educators or other responsible adults required to ensure appropriate supervision. This number will be determined by taking into consideration the risks posed by the excursion and whether any adults with

specialised skills (staff with swimming qualifications etc.) are required

- The responsible person in charge on the excursion
- The proposed activities to take place on the excursion
- The proposed duration of the excursion
- Items that should be taken on the excursion, eg first aid kit, Medical EHOOSH mobile phone and a list of emergency contact numbers
- Strategies for accounting for all children on the excursion, such as transition times that ensure all children have been transported to the destination and have been returned to the service at the conclusion of the excursion.

2.3. Authorisation

Written permission from families must be obtained before any child is taken outside of the Service. By signing the Authorisation Form for Excursions, the family member is authorising their child to attend the stated excursion. The written authorisation must state:

- The child's name
- The reason the child is to be taken outside the Service's premises
- The date the child is to be taken on the excursion
- A description of the proposed destination for the excursion
- The method of transport to be used for the excursion
- The proposed activities to be undertaken by the child during the excursion
- The period the child will be away from the service
- The anticipated number of children likely to be attending the excursion
- The anticipated ratio of educators attending the excursion to the anticipated number of children attending the excursion
- The anticipated number of any other adults who will accompany and supervise the children on the excursion
- That a risk assessment has been prepared and is available at the service upon request

Excursions to locations that are visited on a regular basis including local parks may be undertaken without prior notice as long as children have been given excursion permission by parents. If the excursion is a regular outing, written permission is only required to be obtained once in a 12-month period.

2.4. Supervision

Children will discuss the risk elements and procedures prior to attending any excursion. This will include elements such as what to do if they become separated from the group, toilet procedures, talking to strangers etc. All children and adults are to follow the Service's Sun Safety Policy while on excursions.

An adequate number of educators are required to effectively supervise the children and must be rostered on for excursions. The numbers of educators must take into consideration the ages and developmental stage of the children attending the excursion and be based on a risk assessment of the excursion. An educator with an approved first aid qualification and an approved child protection certificate must be present on the excursion.

Head counts must be conducted regularly throughout the duration of the excursion. An educator must inspect all public toilets before allowing children to use them. An educator and at least one other child must accompany any child when using a public toilet.

When walking the children, one educator must lead the group and another is to follow at the back, with all remaining educators spaced along the group, walking on the road side of the footpath. When crossing a road, a pedestrian crossing should be used if possible. If there is no pedestrian crossing, the safest way to cross the road must be determined by the responsible person on the excursion. One educator must step out onto the road and, if necessary, stop traffic from both directions. The remaining educators can then lead children across the road once the traffic has been stopped.

2.5. Non-negotiable and Unsafe Behaviour on Excursions

The service will endeavour to support children with challenging behaviour and their families as best they can. However, EHOOSH has a duty of care to provide a safe environment for all children and educators. In the case of any behaviour that causes harm or ongoing acute stress to other children or educators, when a child leaves the excursion venue or when there is physical conflict between children, the family will be called, and someone may need to come and collect the child immediately from the excursion venue. A risk assessment will be written to determine if any future attendance at an excursion will be possible.

2.6. Information and Equipment

Information and equipment to be taken on excursions will include:

- A list of all children with relevant personal details and family contact phone numbers
- A list of any special needs of children such as food allergies, health conditions, additional needs etc.
- A list of emergency procedures and contact numbers
- A first aid kit, including SPF 30+ broad spectrum water-resistant sunscreen
- Any medication for children attending the excursion
- Any Medical Management Plans and Risk Minimisation Plans for children with medical conditions
- A fully charged mobile phone
- Other information / equipment noted on the Risk Management Plan.

2.7. Lost Child

In the event that a child is lost during an excursion, the well-being and safety of the other children in the group will be considered and at least one educator will remain with the group. An educator will:

- Inform other educators in the group
- Ask the children if they have seen the missing child recently
- Reassure any child who appears upset
- Search the premises
- Check the meeting points
- Ask the venue staff to begin a search and make an announcement over a loudspeaker
- Once initial checks have been undertaken, and if the child has not been found the educator or Nominated Supervisor (or other responsible person present) will notify the Police and the child's family.

2.8. Transporting Children to/from an Excursion

Children are only permitted to travel to an excursion on any form of transport with written permission from their families. In circumstances where the site of the excursion is close to the service, it will be appropriate for children and educators to walk to the site. The decision to walk should be preceded by a risk assessment and the route should be determined by the objective of ensuring the safety of educators and children.

If using public transport (such as bus, ferry, taxi, train etc.) children must be effectively supervised at all times and never left unattended. When using public or private transport, it is important that each journey is risk assessed, for example, when travelling by bus:

- Ensure all bus operators hold appropriate licenses and insurance
- Ensure they provide correct facilities i.e., wheelchair access if applicable
- Know where toilet / emergency stops are located along the route
- Ensure children display appropriate behaviour

2.9. Traveling by Bus

When hiring a bus for short journeys, less than 30 minutes, seat belts may not be requested, however for a long journey, over 30 minutes, seat belts must always be fitted in the bus. Whilst on the bus, children are reminded and expected to stay in their seats at all times unless instructed otherwise by a staff member once the bus has stopped. Children are not to be left alone in the custody of bus drivers or others and are not to be left unsupervised in vehicles.

Contracted bus operators will be required to ensure:

- The driver holds a current driver's license with the appropriate conditions
- The driver operates the vehicle in accordance with the road rules of NSW
- The vehicle is registered and is insured
- The vehicle is not driven in an unsafe or damaged condition
- The vehicle is kept in roadworthy conditions as determined by the road rules of NSW

In the event that the bus breaks down:

- The responsible person is to contact the nominated supervisor / educator
- The nominated supervisor / educator will work with the bus company to arrange alternative transport for the children and staff. If the breakdown occurs on route to the excursion, the venue will be contacted

- The nominated supervisor / educator will arrange for families to be notified if there is a delay in returning to the venue

2.10. Walking

- If walking, the risk assessment will include strategies to include risks associated with walking in the excursion environment
- When walking during outings, educators will talk to children about traffic and road safety including:
 - What they are doing when they cross the road
 - Why they have stopped at the curb
 - What they are looking for when they are crossing the road
 - When it is safe to cross the road
 - Why they have to keep checking until they're safely on the other side

2.11. Water Safety

Eastwood Heights OOSH recognises the particular risks posed by bodies of water. The Service will ensure that every precaution is taken so that children are able to enjoy water-based activities safely. Risk assessments will be carried out for programmed water-based activities.

Should a pool visit be programmed for the day, parents are responsible for making sure that their child is able to swim adequately. Eastwood Heights OOSH staff are not responsible for teaching children how to swim but are responsible in ensuring all children are safe at all times. If a child cannot swim, they will need to sit out of the pool with educators.

The Regulations do not specify a specific educator to child ratio for activities where water is a feature, however they recommend an excursion ratio of 1:8 for safety. This may need to be adjusted should the water be risk assessed to pose a higher hazard such as unfenced water areas where there will be a large group of children. A ratio of 1:5 is recommended for excursions where children are swimming. Within the sections 165, 167 and 169 of the National Law, there are clear statements about adequate supervision. A range of factors shall determine the adequacy of supervision including:

- Numbers, ages and abilities of the children
- Number and positioning of educators
- Each child's current activity

- Areas where children are playing, and in particular the visibility and accessibility of areas
- Risks in the environment and experiences provided to children
- Educators' knowledge of each child and each group of children, and
- The experience, knowledge and skill of each educator

The definition of a body of water includes:

- Swimming pools and / or water fun parks
- Wading pools
- Lakes
- Ponds
- The sea / ocean
- Creeks
- Dams
- Rivers
- Equipment used by the service that could contain 5cm or more of water and would allow a child to submerge both nose and mouth at the same time

2.12. Sick and Injured Children During an Excursion

If a child becomes unwell during an excursion, educators are to follow the Service's Illness and Infectious Disease Policy and/or the Administration of First Aid Policy.

If the illness is deemed to be serious (i.e., if immediate medical aid or hospitalisation is required), then educators are to follow the emergency procedures detailed in the Incident, Injury and Trauma Policy.

The responsible person on shift is to ensure that the first aid kit is always accessible during the excursion periods, including during transportation methods.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

Approved Provider

- Ensure that obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations are met
- Ensure the appropriate risk assessments are completed and all relevant actions are undertaken prior to the excursion
- Ensure all children have written authorisation from families to leave the service on an excursion
- Ensure educator to child ratios are maintained during the excursion and address the risks identified (if applicable)
- Ensure family members and volunteers attending the excursion are not left alone with any child or group of children
- Take reasonable steps to ensure that nominated supervisors, educators, staff and volunteers follow the policy and procedures
- Ensure copies of the policy and procedures are readily accessible to nominated supervisors, educators, staff, volunteers and families, and available for inspection
- Notify families at least 14 days before changing the policy or procedures if the changes will:
 - Affect the fees charged or the way they are collected or
 - Significantly impact the service's education and care of children or
 - Significantly impact the family's ability to utilise the service

Nominated Supervisor

- Conduct a risk assessment for an excursion, ensuring any risks are managed (prior to obtaining written authorisation from families)
- Ensure a new risk assessment is completed when circumstances change for regular outings
- Ensure all children attending the excursion have written authorisation from families to attend prior to the excursion
- Ensure volunteers understand the details of the excursion, the expectations, and their supervision responsibilities
- Verify that all the required equipment and/or items are taken on the excursion (first aid kit, personal medication, medical

	management plans, mobile phone, emergency contact lists, etc.).
Educators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the excursion is carried out in line with <i>Excursions Policy and Procedures</i> • Ensure all children attending the excursion have written authorisation from families to attend prior to the excursion • Conduct a risk assessment for an excursion, ensuring any risks are managed (prior to obtaining written authorisation from families) • Ensure a new risk assessment is completed when circumstances change for regular outings • Ensure the required educator to child ratios are in place and children are supervised at all times • Undertake regular attendance checks to account for all children • Ensure family members and volunteers attending the excursion understand your expectations and are not left alone with any child or group of children • Ensure all children’s health and medical needs are taken on the excursion (first aid kit, personal medication, medical managements, etc.).
Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sign the authorisation forms for their child to attend the excursion and ensure all information required is up-to-date • Provide written authorisation for their child to leave the service premises on regular outings • Be aware of all the information about the excursion – ask questions if needed • If volunteering on excursions, understand the details of the excursion and the expectations and supervision responsibilities • Ensure required medication for their child is in date and available to take on an excursion

4. References

4.1. Statutory Authority

- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 (Section 165, 167; Regulation 99, 100-103)
- National Quality Standard (Standard 2.1, 2.2, 2.3)

5. Relevant Service Policies

- *Supervision Policy*
- *Educational Program Policy*
- *Incident Injury and Trauma Policy*
- *Supervision Policy*
- *Medical Conditions and Allergies Policy*
- *Service Access Policy*

6. Legislative Requirements

Regulation 165	Offence to inadequately supervise children
Regulation 89	First aid kits
Regulation 90	Medical conditions policy
Regulation 99	Children leaving the education and care service premises
Regulation 100	Risk assessment must be conducted before excursion
Regulation 101	Conduct of risk assessment for excursion
Regulation 102	Authorisation for excursion
Regulation 122	Educators must be working directly with children to be included in ratios

Regulation 123	Educator to child ratios – centre-based services
Regulation 123A	Family day care co-ordinator to educator ratios – family day care service
Regulation 124	Number of children who can be educated and cared for – family day care educator
Regulation 136	First aid qualifications
Regulation 168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures
Regulation 169	Additional policies and procedures – family day care service
Regulation 170	Policies and procedures to be followed
Regulation 171	Policies and procedures to be kept available
Regulation 172	Notification of change to policies or procedures

7. National Frameworks

Framework for School Age Care in Australia, “My Time, Our Place” (2.1, 4.2, 4.3)
http://files.acecqa.gov.au/files/National-Quality-Framework-Resources-Kit/my_time_our_place_framework_for_school_age_care_in_australia.pdf

Revision Chronology

Version Number	Date	Reason for Change
1.0	24 October 2018	Endorsed by OOSH executive committee
1.1	May 2020	Review and evaluation
1.2	December 2021	Addition of 3.5 non-negotiable and unsafe behaviour on excursions
2.0	March 2024	Updated policy