

Excursion Policy and Procedure

Title:	Excursion Policy and Procedure		
Last Reviewed:	October 2015	Next review due:	March 2018
NQF Reference:	National Law section 167 National Regulations 4, 99 - 102, 168 NQS 2.2; 3.2; 4.1		

Rationale

Excursions, including regular outings, provide valuable opportunities, as an extension of the educational program, for children to experience the wider community. Blackmans Bay Childrens Services encourages children to participate in stimulating and enjoyable external activities to reinforce their developmental experiences, assisting children to develop in all aspects of life and benefit from a diversity of learning experiences.

Policy

Excursions are an integral part of the children's program at Blackmans Bay Childrens Services and will be arranged to provide a broad range of experiences for children.

Excursions will be organised to comply with the *Education and Care Services National Law* (National Law) and the *Education and Care Services National Regulations* (National Regulations), including parental permission being sought for all excursions.

Procedure

- A child must not be taken outside the service on an excursion, unless the parent's¹ written authorisation² is given. The authorisation must include the child's name and:
 - reason, length and proposed activity of the excursion;
 - proposed date;
 - destination;
 - transport arrangements;
 - anticipated number of children and staff to accompany and supervise;
 - proposed ratios.
- A risk assessment must be completed before the excursion occurs or seeking permission from the parent¹ (Refer to the *Risk Assessment* section below for further details).
- Parents¹ are requested not to send their child on an excursion if the child has any signs of being unwell. This is in everyone's interests.
- Alternative arrangements will be made for children attending the service but not attending the excursion.
- The service's *Sun Protection Policy and Procedure* will be implemented on all excursions.

Regular Outings

- The specific details for the regular outing will be contained within the Parent Handbook.
- Children may take part in a regular outing where:
 - written permission has been granted by a parent¹;
 - a risk assessment has been completed prior to a regular outing occurring and is reviewed at least annually.
- Where a parent¹ signs the relevant section of the enrolment form, this will be taken as permission for the child(ren) to partake in any associated regular outings.

Planning the Excursion

- The service's Sun Protection Policy and Procedure are to be implemented on excursions. When excursions are planned, potential changes in weather and temperature are to be taken into account. Educators are to ensure the availability of adequate undercover or enclosed areas to protect children from the sun or inclement weather.
- Excursions are to be publicised to parents¹ including details of destination, travel arrangements, anticipated number of children and adults attending, times of departure and return (duration of excursion) and any special items children are required to bring. No changes are to occur to the publicised itinerary unless the excursion co-ordinator decides it is necessary for the safety and wellbeing of the children and those involved.
- Volunteers over the age of 18, may be used to support adult:child ratios on excursions. All volunteers⁴ (including parents that hold this role) are to hold a valid safety screening clearance or current working with children check (WWCC) and are to be supervised by an educator at all times.
- In line with the *Excursion Risk Assessment Form*, staff will ensure the following items are readily available during any excursion or regular outing:
 - an appropriate number of currently stocked first-aid kits;
 - any required life threatening medication (including asmol, anapen /epipen); educators are to ensure medication is signed both in and out as per the service's *Medication Policy and Procedure*;
 - if a child attending the excursion has a specific health care need, a risk management plan must be developed and available;
 - an operating mobile phone;
 - sunscreen (as required by the service's *Sun Protection Policy*);
 - a list of all children and adults attending the excursion;
 - a completed excursion form signed by parent¹ ensuring that current emergency contact details are listed;
 - any equipment specific to the excursion (e.g. sporting equipment);
 - appropriate clothing for protection against the sun or other weather conditions.
- Before the excursion, parents¹ will be provided with the following details:
 - the reason and proposed activity of the excursion;
 - the date of the excursion (unless it is a regular outing);
 - a description of the proposed destination for the excursion;
 - departure and arrival times (length of the excursion);
 - transport arrangements/details;
 - anticipated number of children, staff or other adults on the excursion;
 - risk assessment has been prepared and is available at the service.

As well as:

- costs;
- snack and lunch arrangements;
- other requirements specific to the excursion (e.g. towel, change of clothes).

Ratios

- The Director will ensure a senior³ staff member is in charge of an excursion.
- The Educator:child ratios contained in the *Education and Care Services National Regulations* and relevant service policies and procedures will be adhered to.
- In determining the ratio for an excursion, the following will also be considered:
 - the proposed activity and associated risks;
 - the age and ability of the children;
 - the destination and duration of the excursion;
 - the transport method to be used;

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- the previous experience of the accompanying adults.
- A minimum of two adults must accompany children on excursions, unless signed permission has been granted by the Senior Management Team on review of the current risk assessment.

Risk Assessments

- A risk assessment must occur before authorisation for an excursion is sought from parents¹.
- Parents¹ are to be notified that a risk assessment has been prepared and is available at the service.
- A risk assessment, including risk management strategies, is to be conducted before seeking approval for any excursion using the *Excursion Risk Assessment Form*.

What is the purpose of a risk assessment

A risk assessment is the process undertaken by a service to identify and assess any risks that an excursion may pose to the health, safety or wellbeing of a child. A risk assessment involves identifying and addressing the risks; including strategies for minimising and managing the identified risks.

What may be considered in a risk assessment

- The proposed route and destination of the excursion;
- Any water hazards, including any risks associated with water based activities;
- Transport details;
- Number of children and adults involved in the excursion;
- Any specific risks associated with the excursion (including any specific skills that may be required);
- Proposed activity;
- Proposed duration of the excursion;
- Items that are required to be taken on the excursion.

Supervision while on excursions

- Ratios are to be maintained at all times.
- Where children use public toilets while on an excursion, the toilets must be checked prior to use as per the risk assessment and excursion checklists. An educator will accompany and supervise children appropriately.
- All adults⁴ accompanying the excursion must hold a valid safety screening clearance or a current working with children check. Educators must ensure adults involved in the excursion are appropriately supervised and understand their role and responsibilities.
- Children under school age must be in sight of an educator at all times.
- School age children must be in sight or sound of an educator at all times.

Medication on Excursions

Where a child requires medication during an excursion, the procedures outlined in the *Medical Conditions Policy and Procedures* are to be implemented.

Transport

See *Transport Policy and Procedure*.

Links to other policies or documents

- Administration of First Aid Policy and Procedure
- Delivery and Collection Policy and Procedure
- Medical Conditions Policy and Procedure
- Sun Protection Policy and Procedure
- Supervision Policy and Procedure

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- Transport Policy and Procedure
- Water Safety Policy and Procedure

Sources

- *Passenger Transport Services Act 2011*
- www.justice.tas.gov.au
- www.education.tas.gov.au
- *Education and Care Services National Law*
- *Education and Care Services National Regulations*

¹Parent or other person named in the child's enrolment record as having authority to authorise taking the child outside the education and care service premises.

² Written authorisation may include written documentation, email, fax or text message. Verbal confirmation only will not be accepted.

³ Senior Staff Member as outlined in the *Fair Work Act*.

⁴ Volunteers may be exempt from holding a valid WWCC if they are '*engaged in a regulated activity (other than an overnight camp for children) for a particular employer and have only incidental physical contact with children; and they are engaged in a regulated activity for a particular employer for not more than 3 days in any 4-week period and for not more than 7 days in a calendar year. Note: Exemption timeframes are based on days not hours. Per day includes one event in a day. (Exemption from Registration information sheet DoJ)*

Education and Care Services National Regulation (Regulation 4) Excursion means an outing organised by an education and care service ... but does not include an outing organised by an education and care service provided on a school site if -

- a) the child or children leave the education and care service premises in the company of an educator; and
- b) the child or children do not leave the school site;

Education and Care Services National Regulation (Regulation 4) Regular outing, in relation to an education and care service, 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 the same on each outing;