

Excursion and Service Events Policy

1. Policy Statement

Values

NERPSA is committed to:

- providing opportunities through the educational program for children to explore and experience the wider environment and broader society
- ensuring that all excursions and service events are accessible, affordable and contribute to children's learning and development
- ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of children at all times, including during excursions and service events
- providing adequate supervision of all children during excursions and service events.

Purpose

This policy will provide guidelines to plan and conduct safe and appropriate excursions and service events.

2. Scope

- This policy applies to NERPSA, individual kindergartens within NERPSA, their committees and staff and parents/guardians who wish to have their children enrolled, or have children already enrolled at NERPSA.

3. Background and Legislation

Excursions and service events are planned to extend the educational program and further develop the current interests of children. "Participating in their communities strengthens children's sense of identity and wellbeing" (Outcome 2: Children are connected with and contribute to their world, *Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework* – refer to *Sources*). The purpose and educational value of each excursion or service event should be clearly communicated to parents/guardians.

When planning excursions and service events, it is important to ensure that they are inclusive of all members of the service community. Consideration must be given to any extra costs involved and the ability of families to pay these costs. Consideration must also be given to ensuring that all children can attend regardless of their abilities, additional needs or medical. Clear procedures must be developed and followed, and these should be communicated to parents/guardians.

A risk assessment must be carried out for each excursion to determine any risks to children's health, safety or wellbeing before permission is sought from parents/guardians (Regulations 100, 101). The risk assessment must identify each risk and specify how the risk will be managed and/or minimised (Regulation 101). Written authorisation for the child to attend the excursion must be obtained from a parent/guardian or person named in the child's enrolment record before the child can be taken outside the service premises. For details regarding information to be included in the written authorisation, refer to Attachment 1.

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010*

- *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*: Regulations 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 123, 355, 357, 360

4. Definitions

Adequate supervision: (In relation to this policy) **supervision** entails all children (individuals and groups) in all areas of the service, being in sight and/or hearing of an educator at all times including during toileting, sleep, rest and transition routines. Services are required to comply with the legislative requirements for educator-to-child ratios at all times. Supervision contributes to protecting children from hazards that may emerge in play, including hazards created by the equipment used.

Adequate supervision refers to constant, active and diligent supervision of every child at the service. Adequate supervision requires that educators are always in a position to observe each child, respond to individual needs and immediately intervene if necessary. Variables affecting supervision levels include:

- number, age and abilities of children
- number and positioning of educators
- current activity of each child
- areas in which the children are engaged in an activity (visibility and accessibility)
- developmental profile of each child and of the group of children
- experience, knowledge and skill of each educator
- need for educators to move between areas (effective communication strategies).

Attendance Record: Kept by the service to record details of each child attending the service including name, time of arrival and departure, signature of person delivering and collecting the child or of the Nominated Supervisor or educator (Regulation 158(1)).

Excursion: An outing organised by the education and care service. The written permission of parents/guardians or a person named on the child's enrolment record as having lawful authority must be obtained before educators/staff take children outside the service premises.

Under the National Regulations, the definition of 'excursion' does not include an outing organised by services operating from a school site, where the child/ren leave the service premises with an educator/staff member, but do not leave the school site.

Risk assessment: (In the context of this policy) a risk assessment must identify and assess any hazard that poses a risk to a child's health, safety and/or wellbeing while on an excursion, and specify how these risks will be managed and/or minimised (Regulation 101). Risk assessments must consider:

- the proposed route and location of the excursion
- any water hazards (refer to *Water Safety Policy*)
- any risks associated with water-based activities (refer to *Water Safety Policy*)
- transport to and from the proposed location of the excursion (refer to *Occupational Health and Safety Policy*)
- the number of adults and children participating in the excursion
- the number of educators or other responsible adults who will be providing supervision given the level of risk, and whether or not specialised skills are required (e.g. lifesaving skills)
- the proposed activities, and the impact of this on children with varying levels of ability, additional needs or medical conditions
- the proposed duration of the excursion, and the impact of this on children with varying levels of ability, additional needs or medical conditions
- any items/information that should be taken on the excursion e.g. first aid kit, emergency contact details for children, medication for children with known medical conditions (such as asthma, anaphylaxis and diabetes) and a mobile phone.

A sample Excursion Risk Management Plan is provided at Attachment 2 or on the ACECQA website at:

www.acecqa.gov.au

Regular outing: (In relation to education and care services) means a walk, drive or trip to/from a location that the service visits regularly as part of its educational program, and where the circumstances covered by the risk assessment are the same on each trip. If the excursion is a regular outing, an authorisation from parents/guardians is only required to be obtained once every 12 months. A new authorisation is required if there is any change to the circumstances of the regular outing.

Service event: A special activity, event, visitor or entertainment organised by the education and care service that may be conducted as part of a regular session at the service premises or as an excursion.

5. Sources and Related NERPSA Policies

- *Belonging, Being & Becoming – The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia:*
<http://education.gov.au/early-years-learning-framework>
- *Guide to the National Quality Standard, ACECQA:* www.acecqa.gov.au
- *Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework:*
www.education.vic.gov.au/earlylearning/eyldf/default.htm

- *Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations Policy*
- *Administration of First Aid Policy*
- *Administration of Medication Policy*
- *Anaphylaxis Policy*
- *Asthma Policy*
- *Code of Conduct Policy*
- *Dealing with Medical Conditions Policy*
- *Delivery and Collection of Children Policy*
- *Diabetes Policy*
- *Emergency and Evacuation Policy*
- *Enrolment and Orientation Policy*
- *Epilepsy Policy*
- *Fees Policy*
- *Food, Oral Health and Nutrition Policy*
- *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy*
- *Inclusion and Equity Policy*
- *Interactions with Children Policy*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Policy*
- *Participation of Volunteers and Students Policy*
- *Sun Protection Policy*
- *Water Safety Policy*

6. Procedures

NERPSA is responsible for:

- 6.1. Ensuring that a risk assessment (refer to *Definitions*) is carried out for an excursion (in accordance with Regulation 101) before authorisation is sought from parents/guardians (Regulation 100)
- 6.2. Ensuring that excursions and service events are based on the educational program and meet the needs and interests of children and families at the service
- 6.3. Ensuring that there is a clear purpose and educational value to each excursion or service event, and that this is communicated to parents/guardians
- 6.4. Ensuring that proposed excursions/service events are inclusive of all children regardless of their abilities, additional needs or medical conditions

Educators are responsible for:

- 6.5. 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) (refer to Attachment 1 – Developing an excursion/service event authorisation form)
- 6.6. Ensuring that children are adequately supervised (refer to *Definitions*) at all times
- 6.7. Ensuring that educator-to-child ratios are maintained at all times, including during excursions and service events

- 6.8. 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
- 6.9. Ensuring that a risk assessment (refer to *Definitions*) is carried out for an excursion (in accordance with Regulation 101) before authorisation is sought from parents/guardians (Regulation 100)
- 6.10. Ensuring that excursions and service events are based on an approved learning framework, the developmental needs, interests and experiences of each child, and take into account the individual differences of each child
- 6.11. Ensuring the purpose and educational value of each excursion or service event is communicated to parents/guardians
- 6.12. Considering the financial ability of families before deciding on an excursion/service event that would require an additional charge
- 6.13. Ensuring that proposed excursions/service events are inclusive of all children regardless of their abilities, additional needs or medical conditions
- 6.14. Ensuring that a portable first aid kit (including required medication for dealing with medical conditions) is taken on excursions and other offsite activities
- 6.15. 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
- 6.16. Displaying a notice at the service indicating that children are on an excursion, and including the location of the excursion and expected time of return to the service

Parents/ guardians are responsible for:

- 6.17. Completing, signing and dating excursion/service event authorisation forms
- 6.18. Providing written authorisation for their child to leave the service premises on routine outings
- 6.19. Understanding that, if they participate in an excursion or service event as a volunteer, they will be under the immediate supervision of an educator at all times
- 6.20. If participating in an excursion or service event, informing an educator immediately if a child appears to be missing from the group
- 6.21. Supervising and caring for siblings and other children in their care who are not enrolled in the program

7. Evaluation

In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, NERPSA will:

- Seek feedback regarding the effectiveness of the policy
- Monitor the implementation, compliance, complaints and incidents in relation to this policy
- Keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy and best practice
- Revise the policy and procedures as part of the service's policy review cycle, or as required.

8. Authorisation

The policy was adopted by NERPSA on 19th March 2013.

9. Review date

The policy will be reviewed every two years from date of adoption.

Attachments

- Attachment 1: Developing an excursion/service event authorisation form
- Attachment 2: Risk Management Plan

ATTACHMENT 1**Developing an excursion/service event authorisation form**

The *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011* (Regulation 102) specify that written authorisations for excursions, given by a parent/guardian or person authorised on the child's enrolment record, must include the following details:

- the child's name
- the reason the child is to be taken outside the service premises
- the date the child is to be taken on the excursion (unless the authorisation is for a regular outing (refer to *Definitions*))
- a description of the proposed location of the excursion
- the method of transport to be used
- proposed activities to be undertaken as part of the excursion
- the period of time that the child will be away from the service premises
- the anticipated number of children attending the excursion
- the anticipated ratio of educators to children attending the excursion
- the anticipated number of staff members, and any other adults who will accompany and supervise children on the excursion
- confirmation that a risk assessment has been prepared and is available at the service.

The authorisation form should require parents/guardians to include contact details for two people and for the child's medical practitioner in the event that the child experiences an incident, injury, trauma or illness while on the excursion. The form must be signed and dated by the parent/guardian or a person authorised on the child's enrolment form.

Services should also include information about:

- additional costs involved, if any, and
- whether parents/guardians/siblings are able to participate in the excursion and, if so, details of the supervision requirements for additional family members.

ATTACHMENT 2

Excursion risk management plan

Excursion details			
Date(s) of excursion		Excursion destination	
Departure and arrival times			
Proposed activities		Water hazards? If yes, detail in risk assessment below.	
Method of transport, including proposed route			
Name of excursion co-ordinator			
Contact number of excursion co-ordinator			
Number of children attending excursion		Number of educators/parents/volunteers	
Educator to child ratio, including whether this excursion warrants a higher ratio? Please provide details.			
Excursion checklist			
<input type="checkbox"/> First aid kit	<input type="checkbox"/> List of adults participating in the excursion		
<input type="checkbox"/> List of children attending the excursion	<input type="checkbox"/> Contact information for each adult		
<input type="checkbox"/> Contact information for each child	<input type="checkbox"/> Mobile phone / other means of communicating with the service & emergency services		
<input type="checkbox"/> Medical information for each child	<input type="checkbox"/> Other items, tissues, hand wipes, kinder asthma pump, individual children's medication(Emma - Epi Pen)		

Risk assessment					
Activity	Hazard identified	Risk assessment (use matrix)	Elimination/control measures	Who	When

Plan prepared by			
Prepared in consultation with			
Communicated to			
Venue and safety information reviewed and attached	Yes / No Comment if needed:		

Reminder: Monitor the effectiveness of controls and change if necessary. Review the risk assessment if an incident or significant change occurs.

KINDERGARTEN STAFF TO SIGN, to acknowledge they have read and understood the plan and their role on the day.

(Signature)	(Signature)
(Signature)	(Signature)

Risk Matrix

		Consequence				
		Insignificant	Minor	Moderate	Major	Catastrophic
Likelihood	Almost certain	Moderate	High	High	Extreme	Extreme
	Likely	Moderate	Moderate	High	Extreme	Extreme
	Possible	Low	Moderate	High	High	Extreme
	Unlikely	Low	Low	Moderate	High	High
	Rare	Low	Low	Low	Moderate	High