

Tocumwal Pre-School

SECTION: 2 – Children’s Health and Safety

POLICY NO: 2.2.0

POLICY: Excursions/Special Events

REVIEW DATE: 20/6/18

DATE OF APPROVAL:

Introduction

Excursions and special events are a valuable experience for children, families and staff of education and care settings. Excursions require appropriate planning and risk management to ensure the best experience and enjoyment for all. Our 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. Opportunities to use local community facilities such as parks and libraries and engage in community projects and events can enhance children’s experiences, their development and understanding of the world around them and allow children to feel part of the community in which they live. Excursions provide the opportunity to expand a child’s experience, explore different environments and engage in meaningful ways with their communities.

Goals – What are we going to do?

We will:

- Make excursions a part of the program of education and care;
- Plan for excursions with careful consideration of the safety of children and adults;
- Carry out excursions only where full documentation and permissions have been completed and obtained;
- Undertake full risk assessments, consideration of value of educational excursions, and plan for first aid requirements.

Children gain so much more information when they engage in experiences first hand. We therefore respond to children’s interests and needs – appropriately arranging special events to meet these needs and reflect:

National Quality Framework, Quality Area 1: Educational program and practice

National Quality Standard, 1.1 Program – The educational program enhances each child’s learning and development .

- 1.1.1 Approved learning framework – Curriculum decision-making contributes to each child’s learning and development outcomes in relation to their identity, connection with community, wellbeing, confidence as learners and effectiveness as communicators.

National Quality Framework Quality Area 2: Children’s Health & Safety

National Quality Standard 2.2 Safety – Each child is protected

- 2.2.1 Supervision – At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard.
- 2.2.2 Incident and emergency management – Plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are developed in consultation with relevant authorities, practiced and implemented.
- 2.2.3 Child protection – Management, educators, and staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities to identify and respond to every child at risk of abuse and neglect

National Quality Framework Quality Area 4 – Staffing Arrangements

National Quality Standard 4.1 Staffing arrangements – Staffing arrangements enhance children’s learning and development

- 4.1.1 Organisation of educators – The organisation of educators across the service supports children’s learning and development

National Quality Framework Quality Area 6 – Collaborative partnerships with families and communities

National Quality Standard 6.2 Collaborative partnerships – Collaborative partnerships enhance children’s inclusion. Learning and wellbeing

- 6.2.3 Community engagement – The service builds relationships and engages with its community

Strategies - How will it be done?

Staff are aware and plan all excursions to ensure they are conducted in a safe manner with the Approved Provider and the nominated supervisor ensuring that a **risk assessment** is conducted, and a risk management plan is completed and available to parents in relation to any excursion, before permission is sought as required by the Education and Care Services National Amended Regulations 2018. (see Section 2, Appendix 2 Excursion Risk Management Plan)

Planning and Preparations

All excursions will be planned in advance to:

- Determine the educational value of an excursion and take account of the needs and resources of the centre, the needs of the children and the total learning program.
- Reflect the duty of care owed to all children whilst on excursions.
- The duty of care owed to children for the duration of an excursion cannot be delegated from the preschool to parents, caregivers, volunteers or employees of external organisations.
- The obligation to report suspected risk of harm to children and young people applies throughout all stages of an excursion, as it does in the centre
- maximise both children's developmental experiences and their safety;
- reflect the age, capacity and interests of the children;
- ensure they are properly supervised and conducted in a safe manner; and
- are conducted with fully informed written parental permission. (See Section 2, Appendix 1)

All excursions will be thoroughly researched to ensure:

- supervision is adequate, so children cannot be separated from the group;
- access to hazardous equipment and environments are minimised;
- there is adequate access to food, drink and other facilities (toilets, hand washing etc);
- Excursions are inclusive, and children are to be given the opportunity to participate with consideration given to the mobility and supervision requirements of 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.
- that adequate sun and shade protection is available. Children will wear hats, sunblock and suitable footwear. Sun block will be reapplied as required.

- Contact phone numbers are obtained and provided to parents

When planning for an excursion staff will:

- Assess the requirements for the excursion;
- Conduct a risk assessment and that a risk management plan is developed in relation to any excursion before the excursion takes place as required by the Education and Care Services National Amended Regulations 2018. (see Section 2, Appendix 2 Excursion Risk Management Plan)
- Book transport venues;
- 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 authorised nominees 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;
- 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.
- Safe transport or a safe walking route is to be organised for excursions.
- 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.
- Arrange for a suitably equipped first aid kit (including EpiPen), qualified first aid officers and mobile phone to be taken on the excursion.

Suggested First Aid Kit contents:

- ✓ A back pack, preferably one that has an external pocket
- ✓ EpiPen, Ventolin dispenser and spacer/masks
- ✓ Roll of tape on a dispenser
- ✓ Eye bath and bottle of normal saline

- ✓ Pair of scissors
- ✓ Pair of tweezers
- ✓ Box of safety pins, various sizes
- ✓ Tube or bottle of sunblock
- ✓ Small notepad and pen
- ✓ Spacer and asthma medication as per asthma policy
- ✓ Two wide gauze bandages
- ✓ 50 band-aids
- ✓ 8 butterfly closures
- ✓ 5 sterile swabs
- ✓ 5 non-stick dressings 5cm x 7.5cm
- ✓ 5 non-stick dressings 7.5cm x 10cm
- ✓ 5 eye pads
- ✓ 1 triangular bandage
- ✓ 1 roll of wool
- ✓ 4 disposable gloves
- ✓ 1 large and medium plastic bag
- ✓ 1 x 5cm crepe bandage 1 x 7.5cm crepe bandage
- ✓ 1 x thermal blanket
- ✓ Any additional medication or equipment required for individual children's medical needs

Prior to every excursion, the back pack should be checked that none of the contents needs replenishing. All staff members should hold a current approved first aid qualification.

Risk Assessment

The Nominated Supervisor will:

- appoint a Certified Supervisor to be in charge of the excursion
- Ensure a risk assessment is conducted prior to any excursion (See Section 2, Appendix 2 Excursion Risk Management Plan) 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.

The risk assessment conducted will consider:

- destination and duration of the excursion;
- potential water hazards or any hazard associated with water-based activities;
- transport to and from destination;
- number of educators, responsible persons, and children involved;
- proposed activities; and
- items to be taken on the excursion e.g.: mobile phone, emergency contact numbers etc.

If the excursion is a regular occurrence a risk assessment will only be carried out once in a 12-month period, provided the circumstances around the excursion have not changed in any way since the initial risk assessment was conducted.

Authorisation for Excursions

The Nominated Supervisor will ensure that:

- For all excursions parents or legal guardians will be given with at least 24 hours' notice, an excursion permission form with full details of the excursion including:
 - date, description, duration and destination of proposed excursion;
 - method of transport to be used;
 - 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.

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.

No child will be taken on an excursion unless written permission from parents or legal guardian has been received.

Families and Volunteers

- Families will be encouraged to participate in excursions to assist in maintaining suitable child/staff ratios. If the parent needs to bring their child's sibling because they cannot find suitable care, the siblings must be included in ratios.
- If additional adults are required volunteers will be invited. Volunteers will be mature, responsible people who have undergone relevant Working with Children Checks and are aware of the hazards and responsibilities of taking a group of children out the service.
- Family members/volunteers will not to be left in sole charge of children and must be supervised by an educator at all times.
- All volunteers/family members' details will be entered into the appropriate staff record for that day.

Travel Arrangements

Travel arrangements are made on the basis of individual excursion requirements. Safety of children will be considered in the choice of route and mode of transport. Our service will follow all applicable NSW road rules as well as the Kids and Traffic best practice recommendations. Every reasonable precaution will be taken to protect children from harm and any hazard likely to cause injury.

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.

Buses

- We will only use buses that are fitted with seat belts

Supervision

- Supervision on excursions will ensure the safety and wellbeing of all children for the duration of the excursion, taking into account ratios and all risks and hazards likely to be encountered.
- The venue will be assessed as safe for all children and adults on the excursion and will be easily supervised and accessible.

- At least two (2) adults, at least one of whom is a primary contact staff member accompany children on any excursion.
- For group excursions, the ratio shall be 1:5 (one adult to five children) unless the children are siblings of the supervising adult.
- If using transport or crossing a major road, the adult to child ratio shall be 1:4.
- If going near water the adult to child ration will be 1:2.

Water Hazards

- No excursions will be conducted to a swimming pool or other water related activity. Where there are significant water hazards (such as rivers, lakes or beaches), risk management strategies will be identified and implemented.

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 Certified Supervisor.
- Before leaving on the excursion, a notice will be prominently displayed at the service which includes:
 - itinerary and timetable; and
 - mobile contact phone number.
- Items to be taken on excursions include:
 - suitable stocked first-aid kit including EpiPen;
 - mobile phone;
 - children's emergency contact numbers;
 - children's medication, if required; and
 - other items as required e.g. sunscreen, drinking cups, jackets etc.

- If a child is lost on an excursion, we will always leave a staff member behind to look, while the other group leaders escort the children back.

Roles and Responsibilities

Approved Provider:

- 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).
- Ensuring that educator-to-child ratios are maintained at all times, including during excursions.
- 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.

Nominated Supervisor

- Implementing Approved Provider responsibilities as delegate.
- Ensuring that each child's personal medication and current medical management 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.

Early Childhood Educators

- Adhering to this policy.

- Checking 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.
- Allowing 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.
- Maintaining the required educator-to-child ratios at all times, and adequately supervising children during excursions and service events.
- Adequately supervising 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.
- Undertaking a risk assessment for an excursion prior to obtaining written authorisation from parents/guardians.
- Ensuring 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.
- Including all children in excursions and service events regardless of their abilities, additional needs or medical conditions.
- Taking each child's personal medication and current medical management plan on excursions and other off-site activities.
- Taking a portable first aid kit (including required medication for dealing with medical conditions) on excursions and other off-site activities.

Families

- 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

Evaluation

All excursions are conducted in a safe manner and an Excursion Evaluation should be completed (See section 2, Appendix 3). Any improvements identified in the risk assessment prior to conducting the excursion or the evaluation of the excursion are addressed and actioned to ensure children's safety.

Risk management process

Risk management is a process consisting of well-defined steps which, when taken in sequence, support better decision making by contributing to a greater insight into risks and their impacts. Risk management processes are used to identify hazards and to assess and eliminate or control risks associated with activities.

Consultation with key stakeholders including staff, parents and external venue providers is a central component of the risk management process.

Although the focus for risk management may differ from centre to centre, the same steps should be followed. These steps are consistent with the principles of risk management outlined in chapter 2 of the *Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011*.

The four essential steps of the risk management process are:

1. Risk identification
2. Risk assessment
3. Risk elimination or control
4. Communicate the risk management plan
5. Monitoring and review.

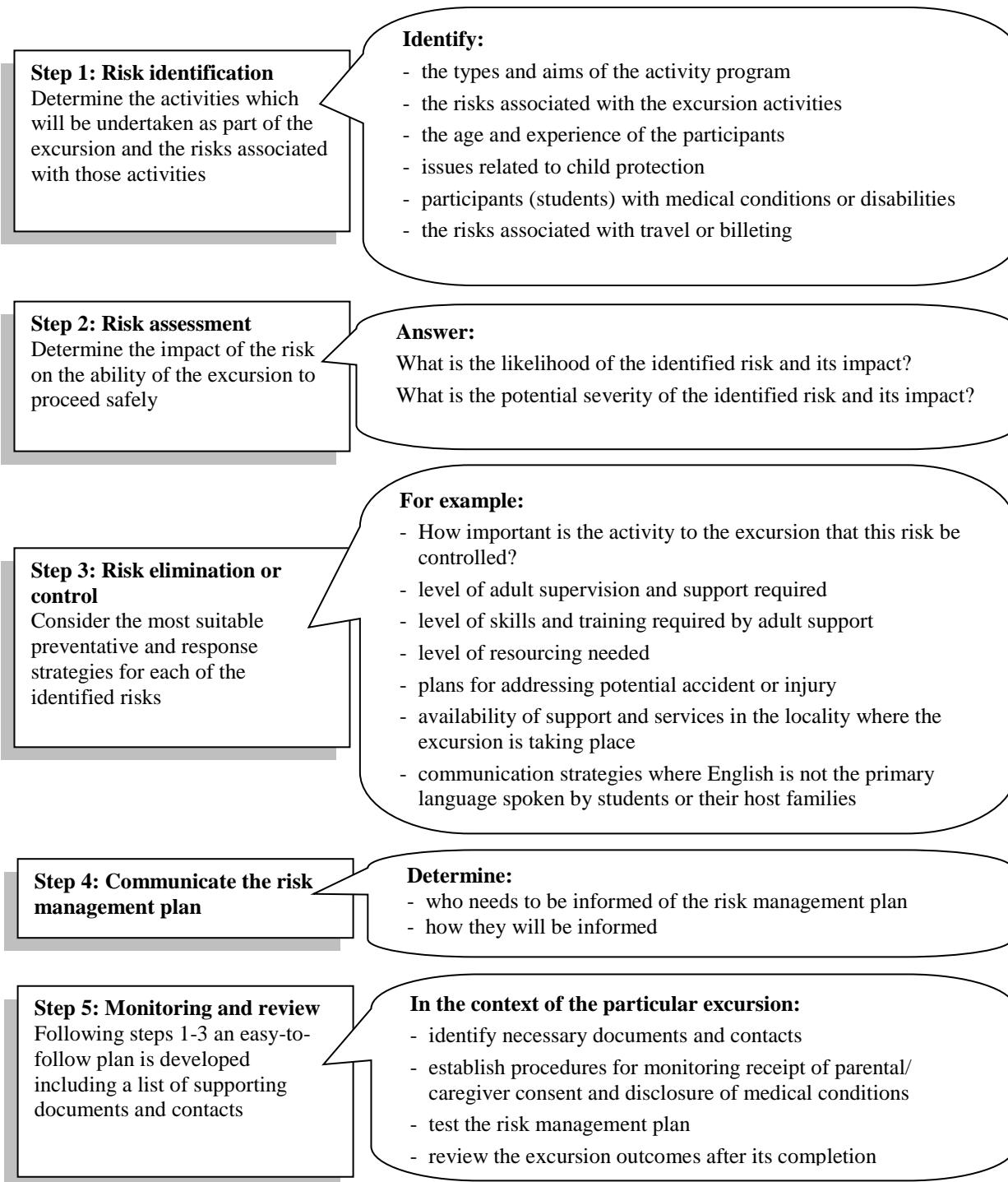
To be effective, the risk management plan must be communicated to stakeholders. Directors should also ensure that plans are documented and retained to assist in future planning of excursions.

In the context of student excursions, the risk management process should examine, but not be limited to, the following:

- type and aims of the activity or program
- child protection issues
- age and experience of the participants
- special factors such as participants with medical conditions or disabilities
- level of adult supervision and support required
- level of skills and training required by adult support
- level of resourcing needed to support the activity
- Centre Policies or procedures relevant to the excursion activity
- type of information required by participants and their families
- method of communication required, e.g. interpreters
- the proposed route and destination for the excursion
- any water hazards
- potential risks and known dangers associated with the activity or program
- potential risks and known dangers associated with travel to the location
- availability of support services in the locality where activity is occurring
- contingency plans for addressing potential accidents or injury
- the venue used has public liability cover
- type of communication required if English is not the primary language spoken or read by students' families.

Information gained from this examination would comprise the first step of the risk management process: risk identification. Risks identified then need to be analysed and evaluated in terms of their potential impact for students and staff undertaking the excursion.

A simple way of representing the risk management process as it applies to excursions is by using the following flow chart:



Statutory Legislation & Considerations

- *National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and Care and School Age Care , Council of Australian Governments February 2018*
- *Education and Care Services National Amended Regulations 2018, Regulations 98 -102, 123, 355,357,360, 168(2)(g)*
- Work Health and Safety (WHS) Act 2011
- Work Health and Safety (WHS) Regulation 2011

Sources

- Early Years Learning Framework
- Community Early Learning Australia
- Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (**ACECQA**),
- New South Wales Department of Education & Communities, Excursions Policy
- Kidsafe NSW www.kidsafensw.org
- Kids and Traffic www.kidsandtraffic.mq.edu.au