

9 – Excursions and Transportation

Children’s Services Procedures

Effective From:	3 February 2021
Contact Officer:	Coordinator of Children’s Services
Next review date:	2 years
File Reference:	1825/29.5
Related Policies/Legislation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010</i>• <i>Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011</i> Cl 4, 99,100,101,102 and 168• National Quality Standard: QA 2.2 & 6.2.3
Related Documents and References:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ACECQA (2018) Guide to National Quality Framework• Kidsafe NSW - www.kidsafensw.org accessed September 2020• Transport for NSW. Centre for Road Safety website - https://roadsafety.transport.nsw.gov.au/ accessed January 2019
Superseded Procedures:	9 – Regular Outings, Excursions and Transport V1.2 21 June 2019

Purpose

Wingecarribee Children’s Services (the Service) encourages excursions and outings which provide valuable opportunities for children to expand their experiences, explore different environments and engage in meaningful ways with their community. Excursion require appropriate planning and risk management to ensure they are safe, adequately supervised and provide and cater to the needs, interests and development of the child. Parents/guardians have the right to know where their children are while in care, and to be involved in assessing the appropriateness of a particular excursion for their child/children. The ultimate decision as to whether a child participates in an excursion belongs to the parent/guardian of that child.

The Service is committed to:

- Ensuring that all excursions, outings and all transportation of children is conducted in accordance with the *Children’s (Education and Care Services National Law Application) Act 2010* and *National Education and Care Services National Regulation 2011*

- Ensuring safe transportation, outings and excursions are conducted to minimise the risk to the safety and wellbeing of child in care.
- A procedure which priorities the safety of children, families, staff and Approved Provider
- To ensure that outings and excursions are primarily focused on the children's interest and the outcomes outlined in the Early Learning Years Framework and My Time Our Place.

Scope

This procedure applies to:

Wingecarribee Children's Services Staff employed by Wingecarribee Shire Council

Wingecarribee Family Day Care Educators as Agents of the Approved Provider – Wingecarribee Shire Council and the adult Household members residing in their premise.

All children and families accessing care with Council's Children's Services

All students and as required; visitors engaged with Wingecarribee Children's Services.

Definitions

Direct Supervision - requires an Educator to be present in the care area with the children at all times, and to be able to maintain visual surveillance. There should be no physical barriers between Educator and children, and the Educator should remain in close proximity to the children

Excursion –

1. Is an **outing** organised by the Service or Family Day Care Educator
2. It does not include an outing organised by the Service 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

An **excursion** means either a **regular outing** or **one off excursion** organised by the Service or Family Day Care Educator that holds educational merit for the children.

Regular Outing (as per regulations) – 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 substantially the same on each outing.

Regular Transportation (as per regulations) – is transport by the Service or arranged by the Service (other than as part of an excursion) of a child being educated and cared for by the Service, where the circumstances relevant to the risk assessment are substantially the same each time the child is transported. An example of a change in circumstances that are substantially different might be when the means of transport or the transportation route or destination(s) have altered or the provider of the transportation services has changed.

Procedure


1 Responsibility, Supervision and Ratio's - All Service Types


- 1.1 A child is considered to be under the care of the Service at the point the Service is taken to assume responsibility for their care and wellbeing.
- 1.2 On all excursions from the Service children will be, at all times, the responsibility of the designated educator/staff.

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- 1.3 The Nominated Supervisor will know about all excursions prior to consent being sought from parents and will ensure that an appropriate responsible person is in charge for each excursion. In the case of Family Day Care the “responsible person” is the Educator.
 - 1.4 Educator to child ratios will be maintained in accordance with the Education and Care Services National Regulations, as a minimum requirement.
 - 1.4.1 As a general rule **Out of School Hours Care** will maintain a minimum ratio of one (1) adult to every eight (8) children on all excursions. However appropriate staff child ratios will be determined for each excursion as a part of the risk assessment process.
 - 1.4.2 **Family Day Care Educators** will ensure there is a minimum of one (1) adult to a maximum of 7 Children on an excursion, with a maximum of four (4) children being under school age. Excursions will be considered and planned in relation to the educator’s knowledge of the children, their age and stage of development and against the risk assessment of the proposed excursion/transportation.
 - 1.4.3 Additional responsible adults may accompany children on an excursion/transportation. In determining the required adult to child ratio for each outing the following will be considered:
 - the age and abilities of the children;
 - the destination/location and length of excursion/transport;
 - the means of transport;
 - the previous experience of the accompanying adults;
 - the type of activities involved and planned.

2. Planning & Risk Assessment – Transport and Excursions – All Service Types


- 2.1 All excursions and transportation of children will be planned in advance to:
 - 2.1.1 Maximise both children’s developmental experiences and their safety;
 - 2.1.2 Reflect the age, capacity and interests of the children
 - 2.1.3 Ensure they are properly supervised and conducted in a safe manner
 - 2.1.4 Are conducted only after parents/guardians are fully informed and have given written authorisation .
- 2.2 All excursions and transport will be thoroughly researched to ensure:
 - 2.2.1 Supervision is adequate
 - 2.2.2 Access to hazardous equipment and environments is assessed and minimised. Including Water Safety – See Water Safety Procedure
 - 2.2.3 Adequate access to food, drink and other facilities are available. E.g. Toilets, hand washing etc.
 - 2.2.4 Consideration is given to the mobility and supervision requirements of children with additional needs.
 - 2.2.5 Adequate sun and shade protection is available.
- 2.3 A Risk Assessment identifying and assessing foreseeable risks that an excursion or transportation may pose to the safety, health or wellbeing of any child and detail strategies for minimising and managing those risks will be carried out for an excursion or transportation prior **to written permission being sought** from a parent/guardian.
- 2.4 The risk assessment for transporting children or engaging in an excursion must consider:

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- 2.4.1 The proposed route, destination, duration of the activity/transportation
 - 2.4.2 The immediate and surrounding environment/s
 - 2.4.3 The means of transport
 - 2.4.4 Requirements for seatbelts or safety restraints
 - 2.4.5 The proposed pick up location and destination.
 - 2.4.6 The process for entering and exiting the Service and the pick -up location or destination (as required)
 - 2.4.7 Procedures for embarking and disembarking the means of transport, including how each child is accounted for on embarking and disembarking.
 - 2.4.8 Any water hazards and risks associated with water based activities (ensuring service water safety procedure is maintained)
 - 2.4.9 The number of adults and children involved
 - 2.4.10 Given the risk/s posed, the number of educators or other responsible adults that is appropriate to provide supervision and whether any specialised skills are required to ensure children's safety
 - 2.4.11 The proposed activities
 - 2.4.12 The items that should be taken on the excursion/transport e.g. mobile phone, emergency contacts, medical management plans etc.
- 2.5 An inspection of the proposed excursion destination is to be conducted prior to the development of the risk assessment to gather important information about the site, by the person responsible for conducting the excursion. For example; toilet and shade availability plus mobile phone coverage and access for emergency services.
 - 2.6 Risk assessments must be monitored for effectiveness of controls and changes made if necessary. Risk assessments are to be reviewed prior to each excursion and a checklist completed confirming that the information in the assessment is relevant and applicable.
 - Family Day Care Educators to submit checklist to Coordination unit prior to each excursion.
 - Out of School Hours Service to maintain with Risk Assessment documentation.
 - 2.7 **Risk Assessments must be received by the Nominated Supervisor or Coordination Unit Delegate for approval prior to written authorisation being sought from parents/guardians.**
 - 2.8 All Risk Assessments for **Out Side School Hours Care** will be directed to Wingecarribee Shire Councils Risk Management Coordinator for approval.
- ### **3 Authorisation for Transportation and Excursions – All Service Types**
- 3.1 Authorisation for a child to be transported must be provided by a parent or other person named in the child's enrolment record as having authority to authorise the transport of a child.
 - 3.2 Children in the care of the Service must not leave a registered education and care premises to participate in an excursion without the written authorisation from a parent or other person named in the child's enrolment record as having authority.
 - 3.3 Parent/guardian Authorisations for children to be transported and / or participate in excursions must include:
 - 3.3.1 the child's name

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- 3.3.2 the reason the child is being transported or taken outside the premises
 - 3.3.2.1 If the authorisation is for regular transport a description of when the child is to be transported
 - 3.3.2.2 If the authorisation is not for regular transport, the date the child is to be transported
 - 3.3.3 the date of the excursion OR
 - 3.3.4 if the authorisation is for a regular outing, a **description** of when the child is to be taken on the regular outing
 - 3.3.5 description of the proposed destination
 - 3.3.6 means and method of transport
 - 3.3.7 proposed activities to be undertaken by the child during the excursion
 - 3.3.8 period the child will be
 - 3.3.8.1 away from the premises on the excursion
 - 3.3.8.2 or time during which they are being transported
 - 3.3.9 anticipated number of children going on the excursion or being transported
 - 3.3.10 anticipated number of staff members and other adults who will accompany and supervise the children on the excursion or during transport– ratio of adults to children
 - 3.3.11 requirements for seatbelts or safety restraints as applicable
 - 3.3.12 that a risk assessment has been prepared and is available at the service.
- 3.4 Written authorisation for a **regular outing** is required to be obtained once in a twelve-month period. Initially when a child is first enrolled at the service or a regular outing is introduced and there after annually at the beginning of each year.
- 3.5 For one off or isolated excursions, written authorisation will be sought after the approval of the risk assessment but prior to the excursion taking place.
- 3.6 **All written Authorisations must be received at the Coordination Unit Office prior to a child being transported or participating in an excursion out of the Service.**
- 3.7 Written authorisations will be retained in the document tab in the Child’s record on the software.

4. Planning, Informing and documenting excursions

- 4.1 All regular outings will be discussed at the enrolment interview by the educator in the case of family day care or Responsible Persons in the case of centre based care.
- 4.2 A list of all regular outings will be displayed at the premise or documented in the Educator Handbook.
- 4.3 Educators and staff have a responsibility to ensure that families are aware of when and where their children are while in care. Information and notification of a regular outing must be provided to families upon the family signing a child into care or prior to leaving the Service premise.
- 4.4 All excursions will be documented as a part of the educational program.
- 4.5 All excursions must be planned in consideration to each child’s developmental needs, strengths and abilities. For example; it would not be appropriate to plan a family day care excursion to a Sydney Zoo.



4.6 Excursions will be documented as a part of the educational program taking into consideration the appropriate Educational Framework.

4.7 A checklist will be completed immediately prior to participating in an excursion as per point 2.6

5. Conducting Excursions

5.1 All educators, volunteers and children attending an excursion will be informed of excursion timetable/itinerary, special requirements, safety procedures, grouping of children and responsibilities as relevant to them.

5.2 A list of all children attending the excursion and their details will be carried on the excursion and the Coordination Unit will have access to a roll call if required.

5.3 Items to be taken on excursions and outings include:

- A suitably stocked first aid kit
- A mobile phone
- Children and family details including emergency contact numbers (can be software on a mobile device)
- Children's medication and management plans (can be software on a mobile device)
- Other items such as: sunscreen, nappies, water, jackets, wipes, service contact detail tags etc as relevant to each service type.

5.4 **Centre Based Care Only** - Before leaving on the excursion, a notice will be displayed at the service which includes:

- itinerary and time table, and
- mobile contact number.

6. Families and Volunteers

6.1 Families will be encouraged to participate in excursions to assist in maintaining suitable child/adult ratios. If the parent needs to bring their child's siblings because they cannot find suitable care, the siblings must be included in ratios.

6.2 If additional adults are required volunteers may be invited. Volunteers must be mature, responsible people who are aware of the hazards and responsibilities of taking a group of children out of the service.

6.3 Family members/volunteers will not be left in sole charge of children and must be supervised by an educator at all times


6.4 All volunteers/family members' details will be recorded in the appropriate record for that day. E.g.: visitor book or Staff Attendance Record.

6.5 The "Visitor, Volunteer and Student" Procedure is to be consulted and incorporated if conducting an excursion with volunteers present.

7 Transport

7.1 Safety of children will be considered in the choice of route and the mode of transport. Every reasonable precaution will be taken to protect children from harm and any hazard likely to cause injury.

7.2 Children are not to be left unattended in a vehicle at any time.

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- 7.3 All vehicles used by Wingecarribee Children's Services will comply with the appropriate road and transport regulations, will be mechanically sound, have regular maintenance and have third party and comprehensive insurance.
 - 7.4 The driver is responsible for ensuring that the fuel level is sufficient to undertake the journey.
 - 7.5 All staff, educators or volunteer drivers will hold the appropriate driver's licence for the vehicle they are driving.
 - 7.6 All transport requires a risk assessment.

7.7 Bus Travel


- 7.7.1 On planned excursions the service will seek private contracted bus services with companies who provide seats with approved seat belting for children.
- 7.7.2 When using a public bus service for transporting children on excursions, staff and educators will ensure each child is seated and within close proximity to educators.
- 7.7.3 Children will be encouraged to remain seated and will be given clear guidelines in regards to expected behaviour prior to leaving the service.
- 7.7.4 Pick up and drop offs will be planned to limit the requirement of children and educators crossing unnecessary roads.
- 7.7.5 Educators and Responsible Persons must be aware of all safety issues when travelling by public transport.

7.8 Car Travel - Family Day Care Only

- 7.8.1 When transporting children by car the Educator must comply with the current Laws and Regulations.
- 7.8.2 Children are required to be in age and size appropriate restraints, correctly fitted and in accordance with state laws.
- 7.8.3 Child restraints must be inspected annually and a certificate obtained, prior to transporting any children on an excursion. Educators must have any new vehicle or additional seating checked and approved before use. This includes any child restraint brought from child's home. A copy of the inspection certificate is to be maintained the coordination unit and the original to be kept in the Educators file.
- 7.8.4 Car seats must be fitted by the educator, ready for inspection at the registered fitting agent so that the authorised personnel can provide feedback on the method of installation.
- 7.8.5 Vehicle servicing and comprehensive car insurance must be maintained on vehicles used to transport children.
- 7.8.6 Educators are to ensure that all vehicles at home are safely parked securely locked and parked in a safe location.

8. Emergencies – Family Day Care

- 8.1 In the event that an Educator is presented with a 'personal emergency' such as; an educator needing to collect their own sick child from school or medical emergency, Educators should take the most appropriate course of action:
 - 8.1.1 Contact the families to collect their child.
 - 8.1.2 If the situation dictates the Educator's urgency, the Coordination Unit Staff may come to the Educator's premises to care of the children until the families arrive to collect them.

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- 8.1.3 Use an approved Educator Assistant as per “Educator Assistant Recruitment and Engagement Procedure”.
 - 8.2 Educators **must not** transport children without prior written authority from parents/guardians.

Approved by:



Danielle Lidgard

Group Manager Corporate and Community
3 February 2021