

3.5 Excursions

Policy Statement

Tewantin State School OSHC includes excursions as a valuable part of its overall program. Excursions aim to provide children with enjoyment, stimulation, challenge, new experiences and a meeting point between the Service and the wider community. Parents and stakeholders are encouraged to contribute ideas and perspectives to the planning of excursions and their activities. The Service will evaluate each excursion to ensure outcomes are meeting intended aims and needs of children and families.

We understand the inherent risk and matters of compliance associated with excursions. Therefore, the following steps will be taken by the service before any child will be permitted to leave the premises:

- Risk assessments will be completed for each excursion, identifying all foreseeable hazards, and ensuring these are appropriately managed/controlled.
- The Approved Provider is to confirm the approval of risk-assessments and activities with significant risk prior to the undertaking of any excursions; and
- Written authorisation from a parent/guardian will be obtained by the Service following the preparation and approval of the risk assessment.

Approved risks assessment developed for excursion will be made available to parent/guardian. We recognise the Regulatory requirements for the conducting of excursion risk assessments. All risk assessment will use documentation that satisfies all the legislated requirements for excursions risk assessments, including the specific elements regarding travel. The Service is committed to ensuring the safety and protection of children is maintained.

Parent/guardian authorisation will be obtained via the vacation care booking forms. These documents will outline excursion details, including all matters set out in the Regulations. All authorisations will be stored in a manner consistent with the Service's record keeping policy.

All travel for excursions will uphold high standards of safety and protection. Travel procedures contained in this policy only apply to excursion-related travel. To remove any doubt, Educators will not be permitted to transport children in their own private vehicle for excursions or otherwise.

The Approved Provider also recognises their duty to comply with *Education and Care Services National Regulations 168 (2)(g), 99, 100-102*.

Procedures

Excursion Planning and Approval

Planning

Children's age, interests and abilities will be taken into consideration when planning excursions. Comments, suggestions and feedback from children and families will also be taken into account. When planning excursions, venue and transport costs will be considered, to ensure that excursions are financially viable and accessible to families.

Alternative arrangements (contingency plans) will be planned in case of changed weather conditions or other unforeseen circumstances.

The Nominated Supervisor is responsible to consult, plan and investigate potential excursion activities prior to the development and approval from the Approved Provider. No excursion is permitted to be facilitated without the endorsement of the Approved Provider.

Each excursion will have a checklist completed (see Excursion Checklist) to record the steps taken to manage all the elements of planning and facilitating the excursion. Please note - aspects of the checklist template should be amended to suit the context of each excursion.

Excursions Risk Assessments

Both the Approved Provider and Nominated Supervisor are to ensure a comprehensive risk assessment has been documented and endorsed prior to families having the opportunity to book and authorise their child/ren to attend the excursion. Likewise, the Approved Provider and Nominated Supervisor will ensure all children have written authorisation (as expressed below) before they will be permitted to leave the Service's premises.

The Nominated Supervisor will be responsible for facilitating the initial risk assessment for approval. Where possible, the risk assessment should be developed in collaboration with Educators to ensure all foreseeable hazards are identified and adequately controlled. All risk assessments will be prepared on a standardised form to ensure all required details are addressed.

Depending on the level of risk and previous experience, it may be necessary to visit the intended excursion site when conducting the risk assessment. Permission from the Approved Provider will need to be sought before staff are permitted to travel to a possible excursion location during work time.

Exceptions for Regular Outings

A newly developed risk assessment is not required for an excursion if

- the excursion is a regular outing; and
- a risk assessment has already been conducted for the excursion; and
- that risk assessment has been conducted not more than 12 months before the excursion is to occur.

All excursion risk assessments will follow the Service's risk assessment policy (10.9 Risk Management).

The risk assessment will:

1. identify and assess risks that the excursion may pose to the safety, health or wellbeing of any child being taken on the excursion; and
2. specify how the identified risks will be managed and minimised.

And consider:

3. the proposed route and destination for the excursion
4. any water hazards
5. any risks associated with water-based activities.

6. the transport to and from the proposed destination for the excursion, including:
 - a. the means of transportation.
 - b. any requirements for seatbelts or safety restrains under Queensland law.
 - c. the process for entering and exiting
 - i. the Service's premises; and
 - ii. the pick location and/or destination
 - d. procedures for embarking and disembarking the means of transport, including how each child is to be accounted for on embarking/disembarking.
7. the number of adults and children involved in the excursion.
8. given the risks posed by the excursion, the number of educators or other responsible adults that is appropriate to provide supervision and whether any adults with specialised skills are required (e.g. lifesaving).
9. the proposed activities
10. the proposed duration of the excursion; and
11. the items that should be taken on the excursion (e.g. mobile phone, emergency contacts).

All risk assessment for excursions will be completed by using the service's *Excursion Risk Assessment Template*.

Endorsement of Risk Assessments

Risk assessments will be required to be endorsed by the Approved Provider. The Nominated Supervisor should make the risk assessment available to the Approved Provider ensuring sufficient time for consideration and approval. Any risk assessments prepared for Vacation Care programs should be submitted to the Approved Provider (P&C Executive) no later than 3 weeks prior.

Authorisation for Each Child's Participation

Written authorisation from a parent/guardian will be held by the Service before the child is to be taken off-site. The Service's booking forms (typically the Vacation Care booking form) will be created in a manner to provide and collect all relevant details from the parent or authorised nominee.

The written authorisation for an excursion must contain:

1. the child's name.
2. the reason the child is to be taken outside the premises.
3. the date the child is to be taken on the excursion (unless the authorisation is for a regular outing);
4. a description of the proposed destination for the excursion
5. the method of transport to be used for the excursion.
6. the proposed activities to be undertaken by the child during the excursion.
7. the period the child will be away from the premises.
8. the anticipated number of children likely to be attending the excursion.
9. the anticipated ratio of educators attending the excursion to the anticipated number of children attending the excursion.
10. the anticipated number of staff members and any other adults who will accompany and supervise the children on the excursion; and

11. that a risk assessment has been prepared and is available at the Service.

Viability of Excursion

Limited bookings impacting viability may result in the excursion being cancelled. Contingency plans should be created for all planned excursions. Communication with impacted families will occur at the earliest possible convenience. Any complaints and feedback can be handled as per the relevant policy.

Excursion Facilitation and Evaluation

Preparation

1. The Nominated Supervisor will ensure the excursion checklist has been reviewed at least one day prior to the excursion.
2. All educators attending the excursion must read and sign off on the relevant and specific excursion risk assessment/s, prior to attending on the day.
3. The Nominated Supervisor will ensure all elements of the excursion checklist have been actioned/addressed prior to departing for the excursion.

During the Excursion

There will be no changes to the notified itinerary except in an emergency and as would ensure the wellbeing and safety of the children.

Educator practices will reflect the actions outlined in the risk assessment, including plans to manage transportation safety.

The following items will always be taken on all excursions and be readily accessible to educators:

- First aid kit, medications and forms, medical management plans and medical devices as required.
- Attendance record/roll
- Emergency contact details and numbers for children and staff; and
- The Service mobile phone.
- The service camera iPad will be taken on the excursion for educators to record and document children's experiences.

Supervision

Unless otherwise specified in the risk assessment the following procedures will be practiced on excursion:

- Head counts will be made at regular intervals and when moving from one area to another.
- educators will provide active supervision, ensuring the appropriate educator to child ratios are maintained at all times.
- toilets and change rooms - where no male (or female) educator is available to supervise the boy's toilets (or girls' toilets), female (or male) educators must satisfy themselves that it is safe for the child/ren to access the toilets and will remain in suitable proximity to the toilet area until all child/ren have returned.
- educators will satisfy themselves that all environments are safe for use before allowing the children access to it.

- children will not be left in the sole care and custody of bus drivers (unless the driver of the Bus is a paid employee/educator of the service) or any other persons during excursions.

In the event of injury occurring during an excursion, procedures as set out in the *4.5 - Incident, Illness, Injury or Trauma Policy* will be followed.

Excursion Evaluation and Reflection

Educators will inform the assessment of the evaluation of the excursion. Typical observations and documentation addressing the children's learning and wellbeing outcomes will be recorded. Additionally, at the next team meeting, the excursion and risk management plans will be evaluated collectively. Where improvements have been identified, these ideas will be recorded and implemented in future plans for excursions.

Transportation/Travel

The following transportation and travel procedures only relate to travel occurring as part of an excursion. Any other travel-related matters are contained in the policy *Transport for Children Other Than Excursions*.

Selecting Transportation

The Service will ensure any transportation of children upholds all relevant legislation and guidelines, including:

- Any vehicles used must be registered for the purpose and in suitable (roadworthy) condition.
- Drivers are to be suitably licensed to carry the required number of passengers.

Seatbelts and Restraints

In the case of children being transported in a bus (or car), the following legislative guidelines will be followed:

- Bus transport with 13 or more seats does not need to be fitted with seatbelts and child restraints are not required, however, where possible the Service will select buses/coaches with seatbelts as a preference.
- Australian Standard (AS/NZS 1754) child restraints are required for four- to seven-year-old when traveling in a car (other than taxi) or a van/bus with 12 or less seats. In these circumstances all passengers must wear seatbelts.
- Public transport - child restraints are not required on buses, trains, or personalised transport services such as taxi, limousine and ride-booking services.

Transitioning Between Transport, Premises and Destinations

- The risk assessment prepared for the excursion will illustrate the specific steps for children:
 - Entering and exiting the service's premises, pick-up location, and destination
 - Embarking and disembarking the means of transport, including how children will be accounted for
- Generally, the service will be a head count or roll to account for children periodically throughout the excursion and for critical points such as transitioning between locations. Specific steps will be developed as per the context of the excursion.

- Locations for travel embarking and disembarking will consider the relevant risks, where possible the safety location will be selected for transitioning.
- Consideration will be made to appointing a particular educator to the role of accounting for children as they transition between the means of transport and relevant locations.

Vehicle Breakdown/Accident

- In the event of an incident occurring during an excursion, procedures as set out in the Incident, Illness, Injury or Trauma Policy be followed.
- In the event of a vehicle breakdown, while waiting for replacement transport/repairs, children will be kept safe, comfortable, and occupied with suitable activities. The Nominated Supervisor or delegate will communicate the situation and remedies to families via relevant communication channels.
- In the event of a late return to the Service, every effort will be made to notify parents e.g. to arrange for a notice to be displayed at the Service or to contact parents individually.

References

- Education and Care Services National Law Act, 2010 and Regulations 2011
- QLD Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act, 1995
- Work Health and Safety Act 2011 and Regulations 2011
- National Quality Standard, Quality Areas: 1 – Educational program and practice; and 2 – Children's health and safety

Related Policies

- 2.2 Statement of Commitment to the Safety and Wellbeing of Children, 2.3 Educator Ratios, 2.4 Arrivals and Departures of Children
- 3.1 Educational Program Design and Implementation
- 4.8 Sun Safety
- 4.9 Children's Toileting
- 4.17 Children with Medical Conditions
- 4.18 Administration of First Aid
- 9.2 Enrolment and Orientation
- 9.6 Community Participation and Engagement
- 9.9 Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations
- 10.1 Managing Compliance with Legal Obligations
- 10.9 Risk Management

Supplementary Documentation and Forms

- Excursion Risk Assessment Template
- Excursion Checklist Template

Date of Development	Reason for Modification	Date Ratified	Date of Review