

EXCURSIONS AND OUTINGS POLICY

AIM

To provide safe learning experiences based on children's interests.

To extend and enhance the learning opportunities for children.

To enable the children to experience more of the immediate and extended community.

To foster creativity when children explore the new avenues opened to them from observations during an excursion.

To provide guidelines which will guide staff in the event of a child being lost whilst on an outing or an excursion. If a child is lost, staff will instigate a methodical, calm, professional search by following this procedure.

IMPLEMENTATION

Leadership will:

- Oversee and approve applications to conduct excursions and risk assessments.

Educators will:

- Plan excursions that are accessible for all children and families. This includes consideration of disabilities, medical conditions, cultural background and financial barriers.
- Complete a Department 'application to conduct excursion' before each excursion.
- Complete an 'application to conduct excursion prior to regular planned outings and review every 12 months.
- Complete a risk assessment before every excursion and must consider:
 - The proposed route and destination.
 - Any water hazards and risk associated with any water based activities.
 - The method of transport.
 - The number of adults and children involved in the excursion.
 - Given the risk/s posed, the number of educators or responsible adults appropriate to provide supervision and whether any specialised skills are required to ensure children's safety.
 - Proposed activities.
 - Likely length of time of the excursion.
 - The items that should be taken on the excursion including if sunscreen will have to be applied/taken if the UV rating is higher than 3.
 - Access to toilets, nappy change, shelter, food and water.
- If any excursion is a regular outing, a new risk assessment must be done every 12 months to monitor ongoing risks or any new circumstances.
- Gain permission for local walks and contact families should they not have given consent to see if their child can participate.
- Provide families with advance notice of any other excursion with details of **date, destination and purpose of excursion, educators/adult ratio, group size, times, cost and transport. (refer to Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations policy for further information).**
- Obtain written parental consent for each child participating.
- Plan excursions with the knowledge and support of the Director and give Director written plan of excursion including risk assessment.
- Arrange for there to be at least two adults on every excursion for safety reasons unless negotiated with Director/Assistant Director e.g. walk to the shops with small group or regular excursions that have been risk assessed. While an increased educator to child ratio is not specified in the National Regulations, there is a requirement to adequately supervise children at all times. A thorough risk assessment should determine whether minimum ratios

are sufficient to provide adequate supervision while attending the excursion. In all cases a qualified educator must accompany children on outings.

- Will call or mark names in a roll call rather than count heads. To ensure that all children are accounted for, this procedure should be followed:
 - On leaving the Centre
 - On arrival at each destination, including when leaving any transportation
 - At regular intervals at the destination
 - Leaving each destination, including boarding any transportation
 - On return to the centre
- Take the Centre phone and children's emergency contacts on excursions.
- Be responsible for the Excursion kit which must be carried at all times during the excursion. This should be carried by the most senior educator.
- Remind other educators, students and volunteers of their role modelling responsibilities.
- Write a brief evaluation/info sheet for portfolios upon conclusion of the excursion and keep within programming records.
- Record excursion (photographically) and incorporate learning concepts related to the excursion into the curriculum before and after to enhance children's learning and promote discussion.
- In all cases where children go offsite, a qualified educator must accompany children unless negotiated with the Director/Assistant Director and a risk assessment has been completed.
- Label any strollers with the Centre's name, phone number and a mobile number (Director/Assistant Director or Administration) before leaving site.
- When a service is provided at a school site, it is not considered an excursion if child/ren leave the Children's Centre accompanied by an educator but do not leave the school site.
- If there is an incident during an excursion, the most senior educator will coordinate action. Director will be informed as soon as possible. If the incident is regarding a lost child, the Lost Child instructions outlined below are to be followed and will be put into practice.

Families will:

- Be asked to give written general permission at the time of enrolment for educators to take their child for walks within the local area. Such outings may be organised spontaneously.
- Give written consent if they wish for their child to participate in an excursion.
- Have the option of declining any offer for children to be involved in an excursion and alternative arrangements will be made.
- Be asked and given the choice to participate in excursions.

In the case of a lost child:

The most senior Educator on excursion will:

- Check attendance sheet and talk with other educators to establish if the child has been collected by a parent/guardian.
- If a child cannot be accounted for, ensure that all other children are kept calm, safe and adequately supervised.
- Delegate an educator to notify the Director of the situation while another educator commences the search procedures outlined below.
- Assign an educator to retrace the group's steps and to confirm the child is lost/missing.
- Phone parents and the police if the child is not located after retracing steps and searching immediate area.
- Decide, in consultation with the Director/Assistant Director, whether arrangements will be made for the remaining children to return to the Centre accompanied by a qualified member of staff or to continue with the planned activity.
- Maintain telephone contact with the Centre and Director, if possible.
- The Director is the **only** Centre staff who may liaise with the media.
- An educator will remain in the area to assist the Police with the search.

Leadership will:

- Ensure a search is conducted.

- Ensure the police and parents/guardians are notified as soon as possible.
- Provide any assistance possible to authorities.
- Seek advice and support from Department of Education and Child Development (DECD) using the Extreme Severity and Serious Critical Incident Reporting Process.
- Notify the regulatory authority of the incident, as per National Law, on **8226 1815** and report the incident on IRMS.
- Arrange for counselling for parents, educators and children by contacting and seeking advice from the Family Practitioner.
- Liaise with media following advice from Police and Department for Education.
- Fill out a detailed incident report.
- Instigate a risk analysis of care procedures to prevent a reoccurrence and coordinate the information to be included in a written report.

EVALUATION:

This policy is viewed to be working effectively when:

- The children's knowledge and interests are extended by visits outside the Centre.
- Excursions are well organised and documented, utilising risk assessment and evaluations.
- Accurate records are completed and stored at the Centre.
- Excursions are a regular part of the program.
- All children return safely.
- Administrative records of excursions are kept, in case of further legal action.
- Educators are aware of procedures to follow in the event of a missing child.
- Educators act in a calm, methodical, professional manner by following procedures.
- Adequate support and guidance is available for educators and families.

National Quality Standards:

- 6. Collaborative Partnership with families and communities
- 6.2.3 The service builds relationships and engages with the community.

Record of Policy Adoption and Amendments:

Policy adopted from Forbes Children's Centre, September 2021.

Approved Governing Council: 9/21

Reviewed:

Date	Amendments	Reviewed by:	Approved by:
09/22			