

EXCURSION POLICY

Excursions are a valuable experience for children, families and staff of education and care settings. Excursions provide the opportunity to expand and enhance children's experiences, explore different environments and engage in meaningful ways with their communities. Excursions require appropriate planning and risk management to ensure the best experience and enjoyment for all. Our service 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.

Aims:

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.

Implementation:

Planning and Preparations

All excursions will be planned in advance to:

- 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.

All excursions will be thoroughly researched to ensure:

- supervision is adequate so children cannot be separated from the group (1:4, or 1:2 if water is present);
- access to hazardous equipment and environments are minimised;
- there is adequate access to food, drink and other facilities (toilets, hand washing etc);
- consideration is given to the mobility and supervision requirements of children with additional needs;
- that adequate sun and shade protection is available

When planning for an excursion staff will:

- Assess the requirements for the excursion;
- Conduct a risk assessment;
- 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 legal guardians 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;
- Arrange for a suitably equipped first aid kit (including EpiPen) and mobile phone to be taken on the excursion.

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.

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.

Risk Assessment

The Nominated Supervisor (Centre Director) will:

Ensure a risk assessment is conducted prior to any excursion to identify and assess the risk the excursion may pose to the safety, health and wellbeing of any child or adult 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 eg: mobile phone, emergency contact numbers

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

The Nominated Supervisor (Centre Director) will also:

- appoint a Certified Supervisor to be in charge of the excursion.

Authorisation for Excursions :

For all excursions parents or legal guardians will be given an excursion permission form (completed by Administration Officer) with full details of the excursion including:

- date, description, duration and destination of proposed excursion;
- method of transport to be used;
- the first aid officer and responsible person accompanying;
- 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.

No child will be taken on an excursion unless written permission has been received.

Insurance

Any planned excursion will be consistent with the requirement of the Centre's Public Liability insurance cover.

Transport and Traffic

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 for transporting young children safely in buses. Every reasonable precaution will be taken to protect children from harm and any hazard likely to cause injury.

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.

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.

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 are aware of the hazards and responsibilities of taking a group of children out of 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.

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.

- a) The adult/child ratio will be maintained.
- b) Parents and volunteers may assist with excursions. The Nominated Supervisor on the excursion must be an adult paid staff member. The supervision will ensure parent and volunteer helpers are properly acquainted with their responsibilities and obligations for the children attending the excursion
- c) A minimum of one staff member attending the excursion is to hold a current first aid certificate. The Nominated Supervisor to ensure that an emergency first aid kit is taken on the excursion.
- d) All supervisors attending the excursion will remain in close proximity to the activity for the purpose of supervision at all times.
- e) To identify the children, nametags will be worn (with name and number of preschool).
- f) Staff are considered "on duty" at all times.

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 copy of the contingency plan will be left at the service which includes:

- itinerary and timetable; and
- mobile contact phone number.

Items to be taken on excursions include:

- a suitable stocked first-aid kit including EpiPen;
- a 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. Notify the Nominated Supervisor who will determine if police or further assistance is required.

Evaluation

All excursions are conducted in a safe manner and evaluated. 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



NARNIA CHRISTIAN PRE-SCHOOL AND EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTRE

ACN 002 919 584

(Administered by St. Philip's Christian Education Foundation Ltd.)



EXCURSION PROCEDURE FOR VOLUNTEERS

Aim:

To ensure all adults volunteering to help with excursions are aware of the important role they play in child safety.

Explanation:

Volunteers need to be aware of their responsibility to care for the safety of children while on excursions. Volunteers need to be aware of what is expected of them during excursions.

Implementation:

- 1) Volunteers need to arrive at least ten minutes prior to departure to ensure smoothness in preparation of children for excursions.
- 2) Volunteers will be asked to carry some necessary items for excursion eg first aid.
- 3) The Nominated Supervisor will ask individual volunteers to stand with particular children, thus ensuring the adults are dispersed evenly through the line of children. This is to allow for the most safety while walking.
- 4) Children are required to stop at roads, while staff briefly discuss what we do when we get to a road. Volunteers are asked to help quiet the children for this time, as most children are very excited.
- 5) Volunteers are asked to remain with the children at all times where there is only just enough for the adult:child ratio. Only staff members to accompany children for toileting.
- 6) Volunteers are asked to stay for the entire duration of the excursion including the return to the Centre.
- 7) Where transportation is used, volunteers are asked to remain with the children when apart from the rest of the group, eg if car arrives at excursion point first.
- 8) Staff will have rendezvous points on transport-required excursions.
- 9) Volunteers are to have signed and completed a Volunteer Helpers Agreement Form on arrival.
- 10) Volunteers are asked to carry a mobile phone and provide their number to the Nominated Supervisor.

This policy links to the following:

National Quality Standards 2.3.1, 2.3.2, 1.2.2, 7.3.5

Education and Care Service National Regulations 2011: 76, 77, 78, 79, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 123, 272, 272