

## Excursions

### POLICY STATEMENT:

Lake Mac Newy OOSH will plan excursions to extend the innovative programming at the service and give children fun experiences in their communities. Excursions are designed to allow children to explore their physical and social environment, including their local community, away from the service's premises ("My Time, Our Place" Outcome 2.1). Parental permission will be sought for all excursions, and each excursion will be carefully planned to ensure potential risks are assessed.

### PROCEDURES:

Planned excursions will consider the following:

- Children's ages, abilities and interests.
- Ways to maximise the children's developmental experiences and opportunities to practice new skills whilst being creative, fun and exciting.
- Suitability of the venue regarding safety.
- Clothing and equipment required.
- Travel arrangements.
- Cost to families.

### Risk Management

- A Risk Management Plan must be prepared before each new excursion in accordance with R100.
- Once an initial risk assessment has been carried out for regular outings, risk assessments are not required for subsequent outings to the same place unless there is a change to the place or venue.
- Risk Management Plans will include:
  - The proposed route and destination for the excursion;
  - Any water hazards;
  - Any risks associated with water-based activities;
  - The transport to and from the proposed destination for the excursion;
  - Transport seatbelt and safety restraints;
  - Procedures for embarking and disembarking the transport;
  - The number of adults and children involved in the excursion;
  - The number of children attending and how many educators or other responsible adults will be required to ensure appropriate supervision. This number will be determined by considering the risks posed by the excursion and whether any adults with specialised skills are required, along with the ratio of 1:15 (unless it is stated differently in the risk assessment).
  - The proposed activities;
  - The likely length of time of the excursion;
  - The items that should be taken on the excursion, for example, first aid kit, mobile phone and a list of emergency contact numbers; and
  - Attending educator's contact and signatures.

### Policies

- Service policies such as Behaviour Guidance, Supervision of Children, Child Protection, Providing a Child Safe Environment, Risk Assessment, Incident, Injury, Illness and Trauma and Water Safety will all be considered whilst planning and attending excursion venues and implemented where appropriate.

## Authorisations

- Families' permission must be obtained before any child is taken outside the service, and specific permission must be required for swimming. By signing the excursion permission form, the family member authorises their child to attend the activities stated.
- The authorised person must sign excursion transport permission forms before their child attends the excursion at the same time when a booking is submitted. Failure to do so may result in the refusal of an excursion booking.
- Authorisation for excursions must include the following:
  - The child's name
  - The reason the child is leaving the premises
  - The date of the excursion (unless a regular outing)
  - A description of the proposed destination
  - The method of transport
  - The proposed activities to be undertaken by the children
  - The period the child will be away
  - The anticipated number of children attending
  - The anticipated ratio
  - The anticipated number of staff members and any other adults attending
  - That a risk assessment has been prepared
- Excursions to locations visited regularly, such as local parks, may be undertaken without prior notice if families of children in the group have given excursion permission. If an excursion is a regular outing, the authorisation is only required to be obtained once in a 12-month period.

## Supervision

- Children will always be supervised outside the service premises.
- Children will be orientated to the risk elements and procedures before attending any excursion. This would include what to do if they become separated from the group, toilet procedures, talking to strangers, etc.
- Adequate numbers of educators must be rostered for excursions to effectively supervise the children. The number of educators must take into consideration the ages and developmental stages of the children attending the excursion and be based on a risk assessment of the excursion.
- Headcounts and roll calls must be conducted regularly throughout the excursion.
- Children will wear coloured identification T-shirts on excursions that clearly state the name of the service and the contact phone number. These are purchased through the centre and must be worn on every excursion attended. If a family forgets to wear the T-shirt, a hire fee will be charged, and a loan will be supplied.
- Children who continuously arrive without their purchased excursion T-shirt will not be accepted to attend the excursion regardless of permission unless families return home with their child to collect the excursion T-shirt. Otherwise, care will be cancelled.
- An educator must inspect all public toilets before children use them. An educator and at least one other child must accompany any child when using a public toilet.
- When walking the children, one educator must lead the group, another to follow at the back, and the remaining educators spaced along the group, walking on the roadside of the footpath.
- If possible, a pedestrian crossing must be used when crossing a road. If there is no pedestrian crossing, the safest way to cross the road must be determined. One educator must step out onto the road and, if necessary, stop traffic from both directions. The remaining educators then lead children across the road.

## Information and Equipment

- Information and equipment to be taken on excursions will include:
  - A list of all children with relevant personal details and family contact phone numbers.



- A list of any special needs of children, such as food allergies, health conditions, additional needs, etc.
- A list of emergency procedures and contact numbers.
- A first aid kit, including SPF 30+ broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen.
- Any medication for children attending the excursion.
- The fully charged service mobile phones.
- The service Walkie Talkies.
- The Risk Assessment signed by all educators attending the excursion.
- Other information/equipment noted on the Risk Management Plan.

### Lost Child

- If a child is lost during an excursion, the well-being and safety of the other children in the group will be considered, and at least one educator will remain with the group.
  - Inform other educators in your group.
  - Ask the children if they have seen the missing child recently.
  - Reassure any child who may be upset.
  - Search the premises.
  - Check the meeting points.
  - Ask the venue staff to begin a search and announce over a loudspeaker if possible.
  - Once initial checks have been undertaken, and if the lost child has not been found, the Coordinator/Nominated Supervisor or another educator will call the Police and the family.

### Transporting Children to/from an excursion:

- Children are only permitted to travel on an excursion on any form of transport with written permission from their families.
- Children are to arrive at least 30 minutes before departure times on excursion days. If you arrive as we are boarding the bus or after the bus has departed, you will be asked to make your own arrangements to meet at the venue.
- If using public transport (such as bus, ferry, taxi, train, etc.), children must be supervised effectively and never left unattended.
- In some circumstances, where the excursion site is close to the service, it will be appropriate for children and educators to walk to the site.
- A risk assessment should precede the decision to walk, and the route should be determined to be consistent to ensure the safety of educators and children.
- When using public or private transport, it is essential that each journey is risk assessed, for example, when travelling by bus:
  - Ensure all bus operators hold appropriate licences and insurance
  - Ensure they provide correct facilities, i.e. wheelchair access if applicable
  - Know where toilet/emergency stops are located along the route
  - Ensure children display appropriate behaviours
- A transport risk assessment must be completed for each excursion that is not regular transport.
- If no changes exist, a regular transport risk assessment may be used for 12 months.

## Water Safety

- The service recognises the risks posed by bodies of water. It will ensure that every precaution is taken so that children can enjoy water-based activities safely. Risk assessments will be carried out for programmed water-based activities.
- Whilst the Regulations do not specify a specific educator-to-child ratio for activities where water is a feature, the recommended excursion ratio of 1:8 will be implemented as best practice; however, it will need to be adjusted should the water be risk assessed to pose a higher hazard such as swimming, in these occasions the ratio of 1:5 will be implemented. It must also be noted that there are clear statements about adequate supervision in sections 165, 167 and 169 of the National Law. A range of factors shall determine the adequacy of supervision, including:
  - Numbers, ages and abilities of the children
  - Number and positioning of educators
  - Each child's current activity
  - Areas where children are playing, the visibility and accessibility of these areas
  - Risks in the environment and experiences provided to children
  - Educators' knowledge of each child and each group of children, as well as the experience, knowledge, and skill of each educator.
- Definition of a body of water:
  - Swimming pools and water fun parks
  - Wading pools
  - Lakes
  - Ponds
  - The sea/ocean
  - Creeks/Dams/Rivers
  - Equipment used by the service that could contain 5cm or more of water and would allow a child to submerge both nose and mouth simultaneously.

### **CONSIDERATIONS:**

<b>Education and Care Services National Law &amp; Regulations</b>	<b>National Quality Standards &amp; Elements</b>	<b>Links to other Service Policies</b>	<b>Other Documentation/ Evidence</b>
S165, 167, 169  R99, 100, 101, 102; 168	Standards 2.2, 6.2, 7.1  Elements 2.2.1, 2.2.2, 2.2.3, 6.2.3, 7.1.2  Child Safe Standards 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 10	- Risk Assessment, Child Protection, Providing a Child Safe Environment, Water Safety, Supervision of Children, Behaviour Guidance Policies	- My Time, Our Place. - Parent Handbook - Risk Assessments - Authorisation forms - Attendance Records - Transport permission forms

### **ENDORSEMENT BY THE SERVICE:**

Approval date: May 2024

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