

Excursions

POLICY STATEMENT:

The Nanyima Centre will plan excursions to extend on 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 take into account:

- 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 in regards to safety.
- Clothing and equipment required.
- Travel arrangements.
- Cost to families.

Risk Management

- A Risk Management Plan must be prepared prior to each new excursion in accordance with R100. A sample Excursion Risk Management Plan can be downloaded from the ACECQA website.
- 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;
 - ✓ 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 taking into consideration the risks posed by the excursion and whether any adults with specialised skills are required, and staffing will be arranged accordingly.
 - ✓ 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.

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 taken into consideration whilst planning and attending excursion venues and implemented where appropriate.

Authorisations

- Families' permission must be obtained before any child is taken outside of the service and specific permission is required for swimming. By signing the excursion permission form, the family member is authorising their child to attend the activities stated.
- 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 of time the child will be away
 - ✓ The anticipated number of children attending
 - ✓ The anticipated ratio of educators attending the excursion and the anticipated number of children attending the excursion
 - ✓ The anticipated number of staff members and any other adults attending
 - ✓ That a risk assessment has been prepared
- Excursions to locations visited on a regular basis 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 be supervised at all times they are outside of the service premises.
- Children will be orientated to the risk elements and procedures prior to attending any excursion. This would include elements such as what to do if they become separated from the group, toilet procedures, talking to strangers etc.
- Adequate numbers of educators to effectively supervise the children must be rostered on for excursions. Numbers of educators must take into consideration the ages and developmental stage of the children attending the excursion and be based on a risk assessment of the excursion.
- Head counts and roll calls must be conducted regularly throughout the duration of the excursion.
- Children will carry identification on excursions that clearly states the name of the service and the contact phone number.
- 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 road side of the footpath.
- When crossing a road, a pedestrian crossing must be used if possible. 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.
- A fully charged mobile phone.
- Other information/equipment noted on the Risk Management Plan.

Lost Child

In the event that 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 make an announcement 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 to an excursion on any form of transport with written permission from their families.
- If using public transport (such as bus, ferry, taxi, train, etc.) children must be effectively supervised at all times and never left unattended.
- In some circumstances where the site of the excursion is close to the service, it will be appropriate for children and educators to walk to the site.
- The decision to walk should be preceded by a risk assessment and the route should be determined consistent with the objective of ensuring the safety of educators and children.
- Public transport should be used for excursions, wherever appropriate.
- When using public or private transport it is important 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

Water Safety

- The service recognises the risks posed by bodies of water. The service will ensure that every precaution is taken so that children are able to 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 is considered best practice and this may need to be adjusted should the water be risk assessed to pose a higher hazard such as unfenced water areas, areas where there will be a large group of children etc. A ratio of 1:5 is recommended for excursions where children are swimming. It must also be noted that in sections 165, 167 and 169 of the National Law there are clear statements about adequate supervision. 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, in particular 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, the experience, knowledge and skill of each educator.

Definition of a body of water:

- ✓ Swimming pools and /or 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 at the same time.

CONSIDERATIONS:

Education and Care Services National Law & Regulations	National Quality Standards & Elements	Links to other Service Policies	Other Documentation/ Evidence
S165, 167, 169 R99, 100 to 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	– 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