

Early Years Services - QA1.2 Excursions

TRIM Reference:	D14/70705	Due for Review:	7 February 2028
Responsible Officer:	Coordinator Early Years		

Purpose

Surf Coast Shire Council is committed to ensure that all Surf Coast Shire Council Early Years services regular outings, excursions and incursions (refer to definitions) are:

- well planned, documented and includes the required risk assessment management plan, that ensures each child's health, safety and wellbeing at all times during the excursion/incursion;
- developmentally appropriate;
- within the planned education and care program for the children;
- conducted in a safe and inclusive manner in line with *Education and Care Services National Act and Regulations (2011)*.

Policy Principles

Evidence of link to National Quality Standards: QA1, QA2, 3.2.1, 4.1, QA5, QA6, 7.1.2, 7.3

Evidence of link to Education & Care Services National Regulations: 89, 99 to 102; 122, 123, 124, 136, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172

Victorian Children's Services Regulations 2020.

Scope

This policy applies to all Surf Coast Shire Council Early Years services staff, students, volunteers, family helpers, children and their families enrolled at all Council's Early Years Services.

Policy

Excursions and regular outings are an important part of our educational program, providing opportunities for the children to build connections with the local community and contributing to their sense of belonging and connection with the world around them. We are committed to ensuring the safety, health and wellbeing of children during excursions and regular outings by conducting risk assessments and ensuring authorisations are obtained from families.

When planning regular outings/excursions/incursions for children enrolled in all Surf Coast Shire Council Early Years services, children's developmental levels and the planned educational program for the children will be used to guide excursion planning and processes.

Children's safety, rights and best interests is paramount, and all experiences for the service including excursions and regular outings, will be conducted in a way that minimizes and addresses any risks identified.

The following applies when planning regular outings/excursions/incursions:

- Ensure staff seek approval for the outing/excursion/incursion via Authority Form
- Ensure staff visit the proposed location/site to carry out risk assessment prior to the outing/excursion/incursion
- Ensure the regular outing/excursion/incursion context and learning reflects the Early Years Framework.
- Regular outings/excursions/incursions that are provided will extend children's learning and development and planned around the children's emerging interests.
- Bush and Beach Kinder program site visits
- The needs of all individual children are taken into account and arrangements made to ensure all children are able to attend the regular outing/excursion/incursion.

- Discuss regular outing/excursion guidelines with children prior to the trip, eg. staying with staff/educator, not speaking to strangers, etc.
- Staff/educators supervise children closely on regular outings/excursions/incursions and conduct regular head counts to ensure all children are accounted for. On excursions, particular attention will be paid when boarding/alighting buses/cars, when moving through crowded areas and arriving at/leaving a destination.
- Personal devices are not permitted to be used in centre-based services by any staff members, including volunteers and students, while working directly with children. Personal devices may be used during an excursion when necessary for safety or to support the education and care of the children, only when a service supplied device is unavailable or not operational eg. to contact emergency services.

Risk Assessment

Regular Outings and Excursions/Incursions

Documented risk assessments are conducted prior to each excursion and for some incursions that have additional risk, that aren't already covered in the service risk assessments. Risk assessments will identify the benefits of the activity and assess risks and hazards that the excursion/incursion may pose to the safety, health or wellbeing of any child attending the excursion/incursion and specify how the identified risks will be managed and minimised.

Prior to the regular outing/excursion/incursion, the service staff/educators will undertake a risk assessment on the *SCSC Early Years Risk Assessment Management Plan* (Refer to TRIM document Number D14/87971)

Service staff/educators will conduct 12 monthly periodic new risk assessments for regular outings.

Completion of the *SCSC Early Years Risk Assessment Management Plan* must ensure that the following components are taken into account when undertaking the risk assessment (in accordance with r101):

- the proposed route and destination for the excursion;
- any hazards (including water hazards);
- any risks associated with water-based activities;
- the means of transport to and from the proposed destination for the excursion (bus, car etc);
- any requirements for seatbelts or safety restraints under a law of each jurisdiction in which the children are being transported
- the process for entering and exiting the education and care service premises and the pick-up location or destination (as required)
- procedures for embarking and disembarking the means of transport, including how each child is to be accounted for.
- a nominated supervisor or staff member (other than the driver) must be present as children embark and disembark a vehicle at the education and care service premises during regular transportation (regulations 102E and 102F)
- the nominated supervisor or staff member (other than the driver) who is present must account for each child and conduct a check of the interior of the vehicle to confirm no children remain on the vehicle (regulation 102F)
- : records that include specific details about children embarking and disembarking and the check of the vehicle (regulations 102E and 102F) must be made immediately and kept for a period of 3 years after the last date on which the child was educated and cared for by the service (regulations 177 and 183)
- the number of adults and children involved in the excursion/incursion;
- given the risks posed by the regular outing/excursion/incursion the number of staff/educators or other responsible adults that is appropriate to provide supervision and whether any adults with specialised skills are required e.g. First Aid Training
- the proposed activities;
- the proposed duration of the regular outing/excursion/incursion;
- the items that should be taken on the regular outing/excursion (see 5.4 below).

SCSC Early Years Risk Assessment Management Plan must be communicated and authorised by Team Leaders, a minimum of 2 weeks (Kindergartens) prior to excursion taking place.

Note: Children will not be taken outside the service on a regular outing/excursion unless approved by Early years Leadership in advance, a risk assessment has been undertaken and a written authorisation has been provided by each child's parent or guardian.

Upon arrival, check for potential hazards. This should also occur for each visit on regular excursions/outings, even if the staff/educator is familiar with the setting.

Written Authorisation

Written authorisations must be given by a parent or other person named in the child's enrolment record as having authority to authorise the taking of the child outside the service.

Refer to *SCSC EY Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations Policy D15/42541*.

The written authorisation must state:

- if the authorisation is for a **regular outing**, a description of when the child is to be taken on the regular outings
- if the authorisation is for **an excursion**, the date the child is to be taken on the excursion

The written authorisation will include:

- the child's name;
- the reason the child is to be taken outside the premises;
- the date the child is to be taken on the excursion (unless the authorisation is for a regular outing);
- a description of the proposed destination for the excursion;
- the means of transport to be used for the excursion;
- any requirements for seatbelts or safety restraints under a law of each jurisdiction in which the children are being transported.
- the proposed activities to be undertaken by the child during the excursion;
- the period the child will be away from the premises;
- the anticipated number of children likely to be attending the excursion
- the anticipated ratio of staff/educators attending the excursion to the anticipated number of children attending the excursion;
- the anticipated number of staff members and any other adults who will accompany and supervise the children on the excursion;
- that a risk assessment has been prepared and is available at the service;
- the name and signature of the person providing authorisation;
- an emergency contact number in case of an emergency.

Authorisations for excursions must be kept in the enrolment record for each child enrolled at an education and care service (regulation 161(1)(b)).

Child and Staff/Educator Ratios

All required child and staff/educator ratios must be adhered to as required for each service in relation to excursions and outings.

- Key Resource Surf Coast Shire Council Early Years Services:
Education and Care National Regulations 2010: Educator to Child Ratios and Qualifications
- Key Resource Occasional Care:
Victorian Children's Services Regulations 2020: Educator to Child Ratios:

Staff/Educators must take on Excursions:

- completed up to date detailed information for each child
- contact details for each child's parent/guardian/emergency contacts
- children's health information and medical management plans (eg. anaphylaxis)
- any required medication (including asthma inhalers and auto-injectors)
- authorisation from parents for the excursion
- service asthma and epipen

- operational mobile phone
- Ipad that allows parents to sign in or out
- first aid equipment
- sunscreen
- hats
- staff identification
- staff information and emergency contacts
- high vis vests for each child/teacher to wear

Definitions

Regular Outings: A regular outing is a walk, drive or trip to and from a destination that an education and care service visits regularly as part of its educational program, and where the circumstances relevant to the required risk assessment are the same on each outing (r4). Parent/guardian authorisation for regular excursions/outings is only required once every 12 months, unless the circumstance of the risk assessment and excursion change (a regular outing is an outing that occurs at the same time, same day either weekly or fortnightly – anything outside of this scope is regarded as an Excursion)

Excursions: Excursions organised by an education and care service that are non-regular (as stipulated under 'Regular Outing'), requires a risk assessment and specific authorisation from parents/guardians for children to attend that particular excursion.

Incursions: An activity that is offered in the service venue by an external company; requiring additional planning.

Authorised person: A parent or family member of a child who is being educated and cared for by the service.

Personal device: A personal device is a device that is owned by a person (NOT owned/supplied by an approved provider for education and care purposes) and is capable of capturing, storing or transmitting an image, for example phones, cameras, tablet computers, and hard drives.

Service-supplied device: is a device that is owned or supplied by an approved provider to be exclusively used for providing education and care, including to capture, store or transmit images of children. This may include devices such as phones, cameras, tablet computers and hard drives. A service-supplied device must not be used for personal purposes.

Related Procedure

Nil

References

Related Surf Coast Shire Council and Early Years Services Policies

MPP-030	Motor Vehicles Policy
SCS-020	Community Bus Policy
D15/42541	Early Years Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations Policy
D15/35312	Early Years Providing a Child Safe Environment Policy
D14/94973	Early Years Delivery of children to, and collection from, education and care service premises Policy
D14/94986	Early Years Administration of First Aid Policy
D14/104807	Early Years Health, hygiene and safe food practices Policy
D14/105413	Early Years Incident, Injury, Trauma & Illness Policy
D15/32925	Early Years Medical Conditions & Medications Policy
D15/32932	Early Years Nutrition & Healthy Eating and Oral Health Policy
D15/35300	Early Years Sun Protection Policy

D15/33004	Early Years Supervision of Children Policy
D15/38683	Early Years Water Safety Policy
D18/125865	Early Years Safe Transportation of Children and Road Safety Policy

Related Surf Coast Shire Council and Early Years Services Work Instructions and Forms

D14/87971	Early Years Risk Assessment Management Plan
D17/23578	Kindergarten - Template - Regular Outing Parent Authority Form
D25/216436	Kindergarten – Template – Excursion Parent Authority Form
D24/86382	Kindergarten – Excursion Authority Form – combine all families
D19/24753	Kindergarten Incursion/Excursion Authority Form – internal
D26/7831	Work Instruction - Kindergarten – Excursion / Regular Outing / Incursion
D26/63091	Visitor registration in Early Years Services via SISO
D25/141710	Kindergarten Reps – Work Instructions

Other References

Education and Care Services National Law 2010
 Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
 Victorian Children's Services Regulations 2020
 ACECQA National; Quality Framework Resource Kit
 Childcare Service Handbook (Department of Education)

Document History

Version	Document History	Approved by – Date
1	Approved	General Manager Culture & Community – 1 April 2014
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4	Amended	Manager Community Strengthening – 17 April 2019
5	Amended	Manager Community Strengthening – 13 August 2020
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