EXCURSION/INCURSION POLICY

Excursions are a valuable experience for children, families and staff. They provide the opportunity to expand and enhance children's experiences, explore different environments and engage in meaningful ways with our communities. Excursions require appropriate planning and risk management to ensure the best experience and enjoyment for all. The majority of Highland Grove's excursions are walking excursions. If we ever participate in an excursion that includes bus travel this policy is implemented alongside the Safe Transportation Policy. All excursions are well considered, provide meaningful experiences and ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of children at all times.

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY		
2.2	Safety	Each child is protected.
2.2.1	Supervision	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard.
2.2.2	Incident and emergency management	Plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are developed in consultation with relevant authorities, practiced and implemented.
2.2.3	Child Safety and Protection	Management, educators and staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities regarding child safety, including the need to identify and respond to every child at risk of abuse or neglect
QUALITY AREA 7: GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP		
7.1.2	Management System	Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service that is child safe.

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL LAW AND NATIONAL REGULATIONS	
S. 2A	Paramount consideration—safety, rights and best interests of children
S. 3A	Paramount consideration [NSW]
S. 51	Conditions of service approval
S.165	Offence to inadequately supervise children
S. 166A	Offence to subject child to inappropriate conduct [NSW] Offence relating to inappropriate conduct
S.167	Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards
4	Definitions
89	First Aid Kits
90	Medical conditions policy
97	Emergency and evacuation procedures
98	Telephone or other communication equipment
99	Children leaving the education and care service premises

child care CENTRE DESKTOP

100	Risk assessment must be conducted before excursion
101	Conduct of risk assessment for excursion
102	Authorisation for excursion
102B	Transport risk assessment must be conducted before service transports child
102C	Conduct of risk assessment for transporting of children by the education and care service
102D	Authorisation for service to transport children
102E	Children embarking a means of transport – centre-based services
102F	Children disembarking a means of transport – centre-based services
122	Educators must be working directly with children to be included in ratios
123	Educator to child ratios-centre-based services
136	First Aid qualifications
149	Volunteers and students
151	Record of educators working directly with children
158	Children's attendance records to be kept by approved provider
160	Child enrolment records to be kept by approved provider and family day care educator
161	Authorisations to be kept in enrolment record
168	Policies and procedures are required
170	Policies and procedures to be followed
171	Policies and procedures to be kept available
172	Notification of change to policies or procedures

PURPOSE

To ensure that all excursions undertaken by Highland Grove are carefully planned and conducted in a safe manner, maintaining children's health, safety and wellbeing at all times in accordance with the Education and care National Regulations. We believe excursions provide the children with the opportunity to expand and enhance their skills and knowledge gaining insight into their local and the wider community. We are committed to complying with all relevant legislation to support the planning, authorisation, supervision and risk management of all excursions and incursions to ensure children's safety, rights and best interests are the paramount consideration. This includes ensuring the safe use of digital technologies and online environments during excursions and incursions, in line with our policies to protect children's privacy, safety and wellbeing.

SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, students, volunteers, management, and visitors of the Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

Excursions and incursions will be conducted with the children's safety and wellbeing in mind at all times.

We will regularly schedule incursions and visitors to Highland Grove, however, if we feel an excursion will benefit the children and offer a valuable experience, we will adhere to the National Regulations and Service policies and procedures to plan and manage an experience that is enjoyable and educational for children.

This policy relates to excursions that may be a 'regular outing' or a one-off excursion for a particular purpose and incursions where visiting performers, groups or community services may visit our Service.

Considerations for excursions and incursions

The purpose of the excursion should be clearly identified by staff providing information on how the excursion supports the educational program and contributes to the outcomes for children. Excursions and incursions should be planned in advance and consideration given to the:

- time away from the service
- availability of toilet and washing facilities
- access to safe drinking water
- adequate health and hygiene practices
- possible risk to children (identified in risk assessment)
- accessibility for all children
- weather- wet weather arrangements
- water hazards
- any Risk Assessment documentation provided by the excursion venue
- teaching children safety procedures and responsibilities whilst on an excursion
- transportation (where appropriate)
- cost (excursions and incursions if applicable)

Excursion/incursion Risk Assessment

The Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor must conduct a detailed risk assessment which reflects Regulation 101 before an authorisation is scheduled under Regulation 102 to determine the safety and appropriateness of the excursion/incursion. If the excursion involves transporting children, the risk assessment must adhere to **all** components of regulations 101 and 102 (effective 1 October 2020).

The risk assessment must:

- identify and assess possible risks that the excursion/incursion may pose to the health, safety and wellbeing of any child being taken on the excursion or participating in the incursion
- specify how the identified risks will be managed and minimised
- ensure Working with Children Checks (WWCC)/ are conducted for all adults visiting the Service on incursions
- consider the proposed route and destination for the excursion and

- identify any water hazards
- consider the transport to and from the proposed destination for the excursion
- consider the duration of the transportation
- consider any requirements for seatbelts or safety restraints under a law for our state/territory jurisdiction
- consider whether access to service-issued devices are sufficient to meet safety and education and care requirements without routine reliance on personal devices
- the process for entering and exiting the ECEC 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 on embarking and disembarking
- consider the ratio of adults to children involved in the excursion
- consider the risks posed by the excursion/incursion, the number of educators or other responsible adults required to provide supervision, and whether any adults with specialised skills are required to ensure children's safety (e.g.: lifesaving skills)
- consider the planned activities
- determine the duration of the excursion
- consider items that should be taken on the excursion (mobile phone, emergency contacts, first aid kit, medical plans, etc.).
- consider strategies to ensure supervision is consistent at all times during the excursion-transitions, toileting, departure from the service and conclusion of the excursion

If the excursion is a *regular excursion*, or '*regular outing'* a risk assessment authorisation is only required to be carried out once in a 12-month period, however, must be regularly reviewed. If circumstances around the excursion change, a new risk assessment is required.

THE APPROVED PROVIDER/NOMINATED SUPERVISOR/MANAGEMENT WILL:

- meet obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and Education and Care Service National Regulations
- ensure educators, staff, students, visitors and volunteers have knowledge of and adhere to this policy and associated procedure
- provide all new employees, students and volunteers with a copy of this policy as part of their induction process
- develop an *Excursion/Incursion Risk Assessment* and management plan prior to any excursion or incursion and ensure this is approved by the nominated supervisor
- appoint a responsible person to oversee the organisation of the excursion/incursion (excursion coordinator)
- ensure the excursion coordinator is aware of their role and responsibilities, including preparing for the excursion and completing all required documentation
- review risk assessments, authorisation forms and supervision plans for all excursions, before any approval of an excursion is granted
- provide staff with ongoing training and information sharing to ensure they fulfil their roles effectively
- ensure all educators, students and volunteers participating in the excursion undertake regular head counts whenever exiting and entering the vehicles and any spaces/buildings
- ensure attendance checks are completed regularly, including prior to leaving the Service, embarking and disembarking from transport, upon arrival at the venue, transitioning between spaces whilst at the venue, leaving the venue, returning to the Service
- provide the excursion coordinator and other nominated staff members with service-issued electronic devices, ensuring these are charged and are in working order

- consider increasing child to educator ratios in high-risk situations, such as water hazards or busy roads/highways
- ensure child safe standards are adhered to at all times
- notify families about the excursion
- request written authorisation be provided by a parent or other person named in the child's enrolment record
- notify families that they can view the risk assessment prior to the excursion/incursion upon request
- monitor all documentation and records relating to excursions ensuring these are kept safe and secure for a period of 3 years after the date of the excursion
- ensure volunteers, students and other adults participating in the excursion are aware of their roles and responsibilities, including ensuring they are not left alone with children
- support children to understand safety expectations and participate in discussions about the excursion where appropriate.

Parent/Families Authorisation

The Nominated Supervisor must ensure:

- that a child is not taken outside the Service premises on an excursion unless written authorisation has been provided
- the authorisation must be given by a parent or other authorised person named in the child's enrolment record as having authority to authorise the child to attend a walking excursion
- the authorisation must state:
    - the child's name
    - the reason the child is to be taken outside the premises and the destination of the walking excursion
    - if the authorisation is for a regular outing, when the outings will occur
    - the proposed activities to be undertaken by the child during the excursion
    - the approximate period the child will be away from the premises
    - the anticipated number of children likely to be attending the excursion
    - the anticipated educator to child ratio 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
    - that the excursion policy is provided to families and is available at the Service
- if the excursion is a regular outing, the written authorisation is only required to be obtained once in a 12-month period and authorisations must be kept securely in the child's enrolment records
- on each day that a walking excursion occurs, the educators will notify the families (once authorisation has been sought).

Staffing Arrangements

The Approved Provider will ensure that:

- educator to child ratios are no less than the prescribed ratios as per National Regulations
- additional educators/staff are engaged to provide care and support to children with additional needs
- consideration for adequate supervision may include:

    - the number, age and ability of children
    - the number and physical positioning of educators
    - risks related to the mode of transport (for example: walking)
    - visibility and accessibility
    - the experience and skill of each educator
- educators are aware of their responsibility to provide supervision to other responsible adults or volunteers assisting on the excursion
- educators are aware the procedures to follow in the event of an emergency
- at least one educator or the nominated supervisor must hold current First Aid qualification, approved emergency Asthma management and approved anaphylaxis management training. (As all of Highland Grove's permanent educators hold this qualification, this should be exceeded)

Parent and Volunteer Participation

The approved Provider will ensure parents and volunteers:

- cannot be counted as part of the educator to child ratio
- cannot be left alone with a child/children and must be supervised by an educator at all times
- are briefed prior to participating on an excursion about the risk assessment, emergency procedures, supervision, photograph policy for privacy and confidentiality and use of mobile phone
- are aware that smoking/vaping is not permitted
- are aware of need to wear appropriate clothing and footwear
- will be briefed on the use of mobile phones.

Items to be taken on an Excursion

The Approved Provider must ensure that the following items are taken on all excursions, as per the risk assessment:

- appropriate number of suitably equipped first aid kits
- fully charged and operating mobile phone
- emergency contact information details for all children participating on the excursion
- medication for children requiring medical and relevant medical management plans
- items required for excursion circumstances- such as sunscreen, hats, other equipment
- The day's attendance record

Transportation for Excursion

It is a requirement of National Regulations that the means of transport and how each child is accounted for is stated on the risk assessment record and parent authorisation record.

At Highland Grove, our excursions are primarily walking excursions (mostly to our local park). When on a walking excursion, educators:

- must ensure children and adults use the safest footpaths and safe crossings where possible, such as pedestrian crossings and traffic lights
- will ensure all children and adults obey road rules and ensure children follow the 'stop, look, listen and think' process when walking near roads.
- will remain vigilant that no child runs ahead or lags behind the group

Excursions involving transportation must adhere to the *Safe Transportation Policy* including ensuring a risk assessment has been completed prior to children being transported and authorisation for the service to transport children as part of the excursion.

It is a requirement of National Regulations that the means of transport is stated on the risk assessment record and parent authorisation record. Information must be included in the risk assessment about the process for embarking and disembarking the means of transport, including how each child is to be accounted for.

On the rare times the centre transports children on an excursion by bus, the Approved Provider will ensure that the seating capacity, as displayed on the compliance registration, is not exceeded. All children must sit on seats, preferably with, or close to an adult. Any requirements for seat belts or safety restraints under law must be followed depending on the vehicle used. If the bus has seat belts, they must be worn at all times.

Check for Children's Safety

On a walking excursion, educators will ensure:

- Children's attendance records are taken on excursions.
- where possible, educators hold children's hands (or peers join hands) to supervise them walking
- head counts are conducted at least every 30 minutes whilst on the excursion
- bathrooms and toilets are checked for any potential hazard before children enter, and children are escorted to the bathrooms and supervised.
- An educator accompanies a child to the bathroom unless that child's parent is present on the excursion.

When on an excursion where transport by bus is involved, educators will do above and also ensure:

- all children are accounted for when embarking and disembarking the bus.
- A thorough check is made of the bus to ensure no child is left on the vehicle.
- The vehicle is parked to avoid, driveways or car parks.
- The vehicle is parked as close as possible to the venue

CHILD BECOMES ILL WHILST ON EXCURSION

Educators will:

- assess the child's illness and follow *the Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Procedure*, including
- contacting an ambulance if required
- keep the child calm and comfortable
- if a child has an individual medical management plan for their symptoms displayed, follow the directions and administer medication if applicable and notify parents/guardians
- use the supplies in the excursion first aid kit to assist in applying first aid to child
- seek medical assistance, including ambulance transport, medication if required
- contact the child's parents/guardian as soon as possible- (no later than 24 hours after the incident)
- contact the nominated supervisor at the Service for further direction if required
- ensure ratios are maintained for supervision
- complete an *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record*
- notify the regulatory authority of any serious incident of a child while being educated and cared for at the Service within 24 hours.

LOST CHILD DURING AN EXCURSION

In the event of a child being unaccounted for during an excursion, educators will immediately:

- inform another educator and provide supervision for groups
- conduct a head count

- ask children/parent helpers/other educators if they have seen the missing child
- search the premises
- check organised meeting points (use mobile phone to contact other educators)
- if the child is still unaccounted for after checking as above, the nominated supervisor, educator will contact the Police on 000 and report the incident
- the nominated supervisor will contact parents/guardian
- educators will reassure other children and provide supervision
- the Approved Provider must make a notification to the Regulatory Authority within 24 hours of a serious incident
- following any incident during an excursion a thorough review of this policy and associated procedure will be conducted and documented for improvements.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DURING AN EXCURSION

During the planning of the excursion, the excursion coordinator will conduct a risk assessment to identify any potential emergencies that may occur. The excursion coordinator will check whether the venue has appropriate emergency procedures in place and incorporate this information into the excursion risk assessment. In the event of an emergency occurring while educators and children are participating in the excursion, staff will follow the emergency evacuation procedure or lockdown procedure as required.

The excursion coordinator will contact the nominated supervisor or the responsible person immediately and follow instructions provided by emergency services. Families will be informed as soon as practicable, but no later than 24 hours after the emergency event. Families may be required to collect children from the excursion venue; educators will contact parents/guardians or emergency contacts if required. The approved provider will notify the regulatory authority of any serious incident involving a child while being educated and cared for at the Service within 24 hours. The approved provider will complete a review following the emergency incident, including an assessment of areas of improvement.

Sources

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2026). *Guide to the National Quality Framework*

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority (ACECQA). (2024). *Excursions Policy and Procedure Guidelines*

Australian Government Department of Education. (2022). *Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia. V2.0.*

Children (Education and Care Services) National Law (NSW) (NSW services only)

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011

Education and Care Services National Regulations (NSW) (2025) (NSW services only)

Kidsafe Victoria *Road Safety* https://www.kidsafevic.com.au/road-safety/

Kids and Traffic Early Childhood Road Safety Education Program (NSW). (2023). *Transporting Children Safely*

Western Australian Legislation Education and Care Services National Law (WA) Act 2012 (WA Services only)

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