CatholicCare
DIOCESE OF BROKEN BAY

Children's Services

Excursion and Workshops

Policy

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What do we believe?

At CatholicCare Diocese of Broken Bay, we are committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and hold this at the centre of our decision making and practice. We believe in the principle of paramountcy of the safety of children. This means that the safety, wellbeing, and best interests of the child are the primary consideration in all decisions, actions, and practices. Where there is a conflict between the interests of a child and those of adults or the organisation, the child's safety and wellbeing will always come first.

We believe excursions and workshops should be meaningful, engaging and appropriate for the age, abilities and interests of the children and have a clear connection to our educational program. We believe every child should have the opportunity to participate in excursions and be supported to engage in meaningful ways, including children with additional needs. We believe that careful planning, effective risk management, active supervision and clear communication help ensure excursions are safe, inclusive and enjoyable experiences for children. We also believe families and the wider community have an important role to play in supporting children's learning and wellbeing during excursions.

What are we going to do?

We will carefully plan each excursion by considering the children's ages, abilities, interests and individual needs, as well as the purpose of the excursion and how it connects to our educational program. We will complete appropriate risk assessments, consider transport, weather, staffing requirements, the environment and any potential hazards, and put strategies in place to actively supervise and account for every child throughout the excursion. We will ensure families receive clear information about excursions and provide the required authorisation before a child participates. Educators and responsible adults will understand their roles, supervision expectations, emergency procedures and the risks identified for the excursion. We will ensure appropriate staffing, first aid equipment, communication devices, medication and emergency information are available whenever children leave the service. During excursions, we will conduct regular headcounts and attendance checks, particularly when transitioning between locations and when entering or leaving transport. We will encourage families and responsible adults to participate where appropriate, while ensuring they are supported and supervised by educators. Following excursions, we will reflect on the experience, consider feedback and identify opportunities to improve future excursions and ensure they continue to provide safe, inclusive and meaningful learning experiences for all children.

How will it be done?

Excursion

Determining Suitable Excursions

When determining an excursion, the Nominated Supervisor will consider the following:

- Any previous excursion evaluations to a particular venue including previous incidents, injuries, and feedback. Where previous unforeseen situations arose, the excursion leader will consider and document ways to minimise the risk within the *Excursion / Workshops Risk Assessment*.
- Access and suitability for all children.
- Interests of the children.

- Relevance of the excursion to the overall program.
- Cost of the excursion to families.
- Safety issues.
- Access to toileting facilities.
- Age appropriateness of playground equipment and/or the experience.
- Mode of transport to and from the venue and how the children will be moved on and off the transport.

Planning Excursion

When planning for an excursion, staff will:

- Check current Government advice and restrictions and consider how this may impact excursion planning.
- Assess the requirements for the excursion.
- Conduct a risk assessment. (See: ACECQA risk assessment and management template – Excursions as a guide)
- Book transport and 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 & Ventolin) and mobile phone to be taken on the excursion.
- 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.
- Ensure excursion planning includes strategies for actively supervising and accounting for every child at all times, particularly during transportation, transitions and movement between locations.
- Ensure staffing arrangements and supervision zones are responsive to identified risks, children's ages, abilities, behaviours and additional needs.

Risk Assessment for Excursion

Consult ACECQA risk assessment and management - *Safe transportation of children safety checklist and regular transportation record form* as a guide only.

The nominated supervisor will ensure that:

A responsible person is appointed for the excursion.

- A risk assessment is conducted before any excursion to identify and assess the risk the excursion may pose to the safety, health and well-being of any child whilst on the excursion and will specify how the service will manage any risks identified.
- Once risks have been identified, they will be categorised as high, medium or low and management of the risks will be detailed.

- Educators and any responsible adults attending the excursion will be made aware of the service's policy and procedures that set out the instructions for what must be done in the event of an emergency (regulation 97(1)(a)) and are aware of the risk assessment for the excursion.
- Before departing for the excursion, risks will be checked, including the weather, to assess any increases to the level of risk and whether the excursion can proceed.
- Procedures will be implemented to ensure every child is actively supervised and individually accounted for during all stages of the excursion and transportation process.
- Attendance records and headcounts will be conducted regularly and at all transition points, including departure, arrival, embarking, disembarking and return to the service.

The risk assessment conducted will consider:

- Proposed route and destination for the excursion
- Any water hazards
- Any risks associated with water-based activities.
- Method of transport to and from the proposed destination, including:
    - The means of transport and 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 pickup location or destination; and
    - Procedures for embarking and disembarking the means of transport, including how each child is to be accounted for on embarking and disembarking.
- Number of adults and children involved in the excursion.
- Given the risks posed, the number of educators or other responsible adults that is appropriate to provide supervision and whether any adults with specialised skills are required to ensure children's safety.
- Proposed activities
- Proposed duration of the excursion
- Items that should be taken on the excursion
- Access for emergency services
- Availability of toilets, hand washing and shade
- Adequate mobile phone coverage
- Strategies for accounting for all children on the excursion, particularly during transition times, such as ensuring all children have been transported to the destination and have been returned to the service at the conclusion of the excursion
- Strategies to maintain active supervision and visibility of children at all times
- Management of risks associated with crowded environments, public access areas, water hazards, transport hubs and unfamiliar environments
- Communication procedures between educators and responsible adults to support child safety and accountability
- If the excursion is a regular occurrence, a risk assessment will be carried out once in a 12-month period, where the circumstances relevant to the risk assessment are substantially the same on each outing. Should an incident occur, or circumstances change, the risk assessment will be reviewed outside the 12-month period.

Regular Outing

A regular outing means a walk, drive or trip to and from a destination:

1. that the service visits regularly as part of its educational program; and
2. where the circumstances relevant to the risk assessment are substantially the same on each outing.

Authorisation for Excursion

The Nominated Supervisor will ensure that:

- For all excursions, parents or legal guardians will be given an excursion permission form with full details of the excursion, including:
    - The child's name.
    - Date the child is to be taken on the excursion, description, duration and destination of the proposed excursion.
    - If the excursion involves transporting children, the means of transport and any requirements for seatbelts or safety restraints under the law of each jurisdiction in which the children are being transported.
    - Reason for the excursion, and proposed activities to be conducted on the excursion.
    - The anticipated adult: child ratio – outlining the 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.
- In the event an authorisation is given, that authorisation must be given by a parent or other person named in the child's enrolment record as having authority to authorise a child to participate in the excursion and/or transportation. The child's enrolment record must include this person's name, address and contact details (regulations 102, 102D, 160).
- Families will be provided with sufficient information to make informed decisions regarding their child's participation and safety during excursions.
- If the excursion is a regular outing, authorisation is required once in a 12-month period.
- All parents or legal guardians will be asked to sign permission forms for regular excursions on enrolment and at the beginning of each subsequent year. This permission form will include a description of when the child is to be taken on the regular outings.
- No child will be taken on an excursion unless written permission from parents or legal guardian has been received.

Staffing Arrangements

- Educators attending the excursion will be no less than the number prescribed in the Education and Care Services National Regulations and depending on the supervision requirements and additional hygiene procedures, may need to be higher to ensure adequate supervision.
- Additional educators or responsible adults may be required based on identified risks, children's needs, and the excursion environment to ensure children's safety remains the paramount consideration.
- Educators will position themselves strategically to always ensure active supervision and clear visibility of children.
- The number of educators will also be adequate to supervise any responsible adults who volunteer to assist with the excursion.

- Consideration will be given to the number of educators who have required first aid qualifications and the number of educators required to educate and care for children who remain at the service.
- Where a group of children are taken on an excursion, while some children remain at the service, at least one educator who holds the following qualifications must be in attendance at both the excursion and at the service where children are being educated and cared for, and must be immediately available in an emergency. At least:
    - Staff member or one Responsible Person of the service who holds a current approved first aid qualification (Regulation 136).
    - Staff member or one Responsible Person of the service who has undertaken current approved anaphylaxis management training.
    - Staff member or one Responsible Person of the service who has undertaken approved emergency asthma management training.
- All educators attending the excursion will be made aware of the service's policy and procedures that set out the instructions for what must be done in the event of an emergency (regulation 97(1)(a)) and are aware of the risk assessment for the excursion.

Families and Volunteers

- Where appropriate, families will be encouraged to participate in excursions to increase the number of responsible adults and assist in ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of children.
- Families and volunteers will not be counted as part of ratio requirements under the Education and Care Services National Regulations.
- Family members wishing to attend excursions will be mature, responsible people who are aware of the hazards and responsibilities of taking a group of children out of the service. If the responsible adult needs to bring their child's sibling because they cannot find suitable care, the responsibility provided to this adult will be adjusted accordingly and considered in the risk assessment.
- Family members/volunteers will not be left in sole charge of children (including their own children) and must be always supervised by an educator.
- All volunteers and family members will be provided with clear guidance regarding supervision expectations, child-safe practices and excursion procedures prior to participation.
- All responsible adults attending the excursion will be made aware of the service's policy and procedures that set out the instructions for what must be done in the event of an emergency (regulation 97(1)(a)) and are aware of the risk assessment for the excursion.

Travel Arrangements

Travel arrangements are made on the basis of individual excursion requirements. Every reasonable precaution will be taken to protect children from harm and any hazard likely to cause injury. The following forms of transport are used:

Walking

- Educators will ensure children obey road rules and crossroads at a crossing or lights where available.
- Educators will remain vigilant to ensure no child runs ahead or lags behind the group.
- Educators will conduct regular head counts and actively supervise children during all movement between locations.

Public Transport (trains, buses)

- All requirements for seatbelts or safety restraints under a law of each jurisdiction in which the children are being transported will be checked and followed for any transport being used.
- Every child will wear a seatbelt where one is fitted.

- Children will be individually accounted for when embarking and disembarking any form of transport.
- Educators will conduct and document checks to ensure no child is left unattended on any vehicle or at any location.

Private Bus / Charter Bus

- We will ensure the private bus or charter bus provider is appropriately licensed and meets all relevant safety requirements.
- The bus and transport arrangements will be considered as part of the excursion risk assessment prior to the excursion.
- Educators will ensure children are seated safely throughout the journey and follow any seatbelt or safety restraint requirements that apply to the vehicle.
- Educators will actively supervise children throughout the journey and ensure appropriate supervision is maintained at all times.
- A headcount will be conducted before boarding the bus, when children are seated on the bus, when disembarking and whenever the group transitions between locations.
- A current attendance list, emergency contact information, required medication and a suitably stocked first aid kit will be carried by the responsible educator.
- Educators will ensure children are safely supervised while boarding and disembarking from the bus, including when crossing roads or moving through car parks.
- Any concerns regarding the safety or suitability of the private bus or transport provider will be reported to the Nominated Supervisor and the excursion will not proceed until the concern has been appropriately addressed.

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 Responsible Person.
- Checks will be conducted at designated points and times to ensure all children are accounted for; these must be recorded.
- Attendance checks and head counts will occur regularly throughout the excursion, particularly during transitions and transportation.
- Any discrepancy in attendance will be treated as a serious incident and responded to immediately in accordance with service emergency procedures.
- Before leaving on the excursion, a notice will be prominently displayed 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 & Ventolin.
    - Hand sanitizer and any items required to support hygiene practices.
    - An operating mobile phone with an appropriate telephone network.
    - Children’s emergency contact numbers and the child’s registered medical practitioner or medical service.
    - Children’s medication, medical communication and medical action plan.
    - Other items as required e.g. sunscreen, drinking cups, jackets, food and beverage, etc.

Internal & External Provider Workshops

As per excursions, workshops require careful planning and consideration prior to implementation. Each external and internal workshop its own risks and challenges which cannot necessarily be accounted for in the usual service risk assessment or supervision risk assessment. The *Excursion / Workshop Risk Assessment* must be completed prior to hosting the incursion.

When determining an internal or external workshop, the Director/Coordinator will consider the following:

- Any previous evaluations of the workshop including previous incidents, injuries, and feedback. Where previous unforeseen situations arose, the Director/Coordinator will consider and document ways to minimise the risks identified in the risk assessment.
- Age and abilities of children.
- Interests of the children.
- Relevance of the incursion to the overall program.
- Cost to the families.
- Safety issues.
- Suitability of the workshop to the physical environment and group care settings.

Who is responsible?

Roles	Responsibilities
Approved Provider	• Ensuring that a child does not leave the service premises on an excursion unless prior written authorisation has been provided by the parent/guardian or person named in the child's enrolment record, and that the authorisation includes all details required under Regulation 102 (4)(a-k). • Ensuring that educator-to-child ratios are maintained at all times, including during excursions. • Ensuring the safety, wellbeing and rights of children remain the paramount consideration in all excursion-related decision-making and risk management practices. • Ensuring a staff member, nominated supervisor or responsible person (other than the driver) being present at the service to account for all children as they embark and disembark at the service premises and keep a record of how each child was accounted for. • Ensuring a check of the interior of the vehicle to ensure there are no children left behind and witnessed by a second check by driver. • Ensuring that parents/guardians, volunteers, students and all adults participating in an excursion are adequately supervised at all times • and are not left with sole supervision of individual children or groups • of children. • Ensuring the risk assessment identifies and assesses the risks, specifies how these will be managed and/or minimised, and includes all details required by Regulation 101.
Practice Manager	• Implementing approved provider responsibilities as delegate (see above).

Roles	Responsibilities

Nominated Supervisor	• A nominated supervisor or a staff member (other than the driver) must:
	  ○ Be present when children embark and disembark a vehicle at the service premises.
	  ○ Account for each child when they embark and disembark a vehicle at the service premises.
	  ○ Complete a check of the interior of the vehicle after all children have disembarked at the service premises to ensure there are no children left on the vehicle.
	• Ensuring that each child's personal medication and current medical management and communication plan is taken on excursions and other off-site activities.
	• Ensuring that a portable first aid kit (including required medication for dealing with medical conditions) is taken on excursions and other off-site activities.
	• Ensuring a mobile phone, the emergency contact details for each child and the contact details of their medical practitioner are taken on excursions for notification in the event of an incident, injury, trauma or illness.
	• Ensuring an accurate roll of attendance is taken and checked regularly.
	• Responding immediately to any concerns regarding a child's whereabouts, safety or wellbeing.

Educators	• Adhering to this policy.
	• Checking that a parent/guardian or person named in the child's enrolment record has completed, signed and dated the excursion/service event authorisation form prior to the excursion.
	• Allowing a child to participate in an excursion or service event only with the written authorisation of a parent/guardian or person named in the child's enrolment record.
	• Ensuring an accurate roll of attendance is taken and checked regularly, including embarking and disembarking any means of transport.
	• Ensuring every child is individually accounted for throughout the excursion, including during transportation and transitions between environments.
	• The records must be made immediately and include the time, date, full name and signature of the person/s responsible for:
	  ○ accounting for the children during embarking and disembarking of the vehicle.
	  ○ conducting the vehicle check after children have disembarked.
	• Maintaining the required educator-to-child ratios at all times, and adequately supervising children during excursions and service events.
	• Adequately supervising parents/guardians, volunteers, students and all adults participating in an excursion, and ensuring that they are not left with sole supervision of individual children or groups of children.
	• Undertaking a risk assessment for an excursion prior to obtaining written authorisation from parents/guardians.
	• Ensuring the risk assessment identifies and assesses the risks, specifies how they will be managed and/or minimised, and includes all details required by Regulation 101.
	• Including all children in excursions and service events regardless of their abilities, additional needs or medical conditions.
	• Taking each child's personal medication and current medical management plan on excursions and other off-site activities.
	• Taking a portable first aid kit (including required medication for dealing with medical conditions) on excursions and other off-site activities.
	• Taking an anaphylaxis EpiPen and asthma kit.

Parents / Guardians	• Completing, signing and dating excursion/service event authorisation forms. • Providing written authorisation for their child to leave the service premises on routine outings. • Reading the details of the excursion or service event provided by the service and asking for additional information if required. • Understanding that, if they participate in an excursion or service event as a volunteer, they will be under the immediate supervision of the Responsible Person at all times.

National Quality Standards (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
S. 51	Conditions of service approval
S.165	Offence to inadequately supervise children
S. 166A	Offence to subject child to inappropriate conduct 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
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

Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations	
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

Related documents

Children's Services Policies or Guidelines

- *Administration of First Aid Policy*
- *Medical Conditions Policy*
- *Staffing Arrangements Policy*
- *Sun Protection Policy*
- *Supervision Policy*

Forms

- *Excursion/Workshop Risk Assessment*
- *Excursion and Workshop Evaluation.docx*
- *Non-Routine Excursion Authority Form*
- *Routine Excursion Authority Form*
- *Swimming Excursion Authority Letter Template*
- *Travel Procedure Embarking/Disembarking*

Resources

External

- *Education and Care Services National Regulations (NSW) (2025 SI 601a) - NSW Legislation*
- *Children (Education and Care Services National Law Application) Act 2010 No 104 - NSW Legislation*

Glossary

ACECQA – Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authorities

The independent national authority that works with all regulatory authorities to administer the National Quality Framework, including the provision of guidance, resources and services to support the sector to improve outcomes for children.

Child Paramountcy

Child paramountcy refers to the obligation to ensure that the best interests, safety, and wellbeing of children are paramount above all other considerations. All decisions, practices, and actions must prioritise the protection and wellbeing of children, particularly where competing interests exist.

ELC

All centre-based services for children aged 0-5 years including Long Day Care and Preschool services.

Excursion

An excursion is any visit outside of the service's boundaries. This may include to an attraction, e.g., aquarium, play centre, or it could be to a local park, library or school grounds.

OSHC

Out of School Hours Care

Practice Manager

A practice manager oversees and supports a cluster of services within a local area. They work with the Nominated supervisor to ensure services operate safely, meet legal and quality requirements, and follow organisational policies. They do not work directly with children day to day.

Nominated Supervisor

The Nominated Supervisor is in charge of all aspects of planning and risk assessments. The Nominated Supervisor may delegate specific tasks to the Responsible Person attending the excursion.

Non Routine Excursions

A once off planned outing and one which a children's service would not normally attend regularly, i.e., not on a daily, weekly or monthly basis.

Risk Assessment

A systematic process of evaluating the potential likelihood and consequences of risks that may be involved in a projected activity or undertaking.

Routine Excursions

An outing to a venue the children's service frequently attends.

Workshop

A workshop involves a third party attending the service to provide a particular organised experience for the child in attendance. Generally, this involves a company, however, may include parents bringing in pets to teach the children about e.g., snakes, turtles, dogs.

Sign off and review

This document remains valid until it is either superseded by a new version or officially revoked.

CatholicCare values your input and welcomes feedback on this policy. Your suggestions help us improve and better support your work. Please send any feedback to policy.updates@catholiccaredbb.org.au.

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