Excursions

POLICY STATEMENT:

SHARE will plan excursions to extend on the innovative programming at the service and give children fun experiences in their communities and surrounds. 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 and the potential risks assessed. When planning excursions, Educators will take into consideration experiences that encourage children to investigate ideas, solve problems and use complex concepts and thinking, reasoning and hypothesising and to transfer and adapt what they have learned from one context to another ("My Time, Our Place" Outcomes 4.2, 4.3).

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.
- Costs to families

a) Risk Management

A Risk Management Plan (RMP) must be prepared prior to 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 outing to the same place, unless there is a change to the place or venue.

RMPs will include:

- ✓ The proposed route and destination for the excursion;
- ✓ Any water hazards;
- ✓ 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 Educators or other responsible adults will be required to ensure appropriate supervision. This number will be determined by the Regulations taking into consideration the risks posed by the excursion and whether any adults with specialised skills are required, along with the ratio of 1:8 when outside the service and 1:5 when swimming.
- ✓ 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;
- ✓ Verbal instructions to children on appropriate behaviour expected whilst on excursions.

- A sample Excursion Risk Management Plan can be downloaded from the ACECQA website: http://acecqa.gov.au/storage/Excursion%20risk%20management%20plan.pdf ✔

(b) Policies

Service Policies such as behaviour Guidance, Supervision of Children, Child Protection, Providing a Child Safe Environment, Risk Assessment, Incident Injury and Illness and Trauma, and water safety will be taken into consideration whilst planning and attending excursion venues and implemented where appropriate

(c) 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.
- Authorisations 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 descritipion of the proposed destination
  - ✔ The method of transport
  - ✔ The prosed 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
  - ✔ The anticipated number of Educators 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. 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.

(d) Supervision

Children will be supervised at all times they are outsider the services 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 call must be conducted regularly throughout the duration of the excursion.
- Children will wear Red Hats and Yellow visibility vests that clearly state the name of the service and the contact phone number.
- An Educator must inspect all public toilets before children use them. Two Educators who must remain in sight of each other must accompany any child when using a public toilet. Educators when taking children to the toilet should gather up as many children as need to use the facilities all at one time.
- 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.

(f) 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 condition, additional needs.
- 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.

(g) 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 two Educators or majority 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 unless advised otherwise by the Police or any other emergency personal. The appropriate notification to the Regulatory authority will be made within the designated time frame.

(h) 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.
- When using any form of using 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.
- Private transport, ie Bus's 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 licenses and insurance
- Ensure they provide correct facilities i.e. wheelchair access if applicable
- Know here toilet /emergency stops are located along the route
- Ensure children display appropriate behavior

(i) Water Safety

SHARE recognises the risks posed by bodies of water and will ensure that every precaution is taken so that children are able to enjoy water-based excursions safely. Risk assessments will be carried out for programed water-bases activities. (r101) Authorisation from families will be sought prior to excursions including those involving water-based activities.

The National Law and 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 and entering the water.

Children on excursion involving water (swimming, water sliding, beach play) are to wear the Fluro **Pink** high visibility rash vests supplied by the service. **Pink** is the colour recommend by the Australian surf Life Saving association and is easily seen in bodies of water. Educators are to wear the Fluro **green** rash vests supplied by the service.

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.

The service recognises the following locations as bodies 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 Regulations	National Quality Standard	Other Service policies/documentation	Other
S165, 167, 169, R99, 100 to 102 168	Standards 2.2, 6.2, 7.1 Elements	• Risk assessment. • Child Protection, • Providing a child safe	My Time, Our Place. Parent Handbook Risk Assessments

	2.2.1 2.2.2. 2.2.3 6.2.3. 7.1.2	Environment, Water Safety, Supervision of Children, Behavior Guidance policies.	Authorisation forms Attendance records.

ENDORSEMENT BY THE SERVICE:

Approval date: Date for Review: