

Excursions, Regular Outings & Service Events Policy

Policy Statement

Uniting Early Learning is committed to:

- Supporting children to be active citizens and participate, explore and positively interact and influence our community and world
- Discovering and exploring their impact on the environment and influence and the world at large
- providing opportunities through the educational program for children to explore and experience the wider environment and broader society;
- ensuring that all excursions, regular outings and service events are accessible, affordable and contribute to children’s learning and development;
- ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of children at all times.

Executive Summary

Children develop a sense of belonging to groups and their communities at an early age. To enable them to broaden their understanding of the world in which they live, opportunities to participate in excursions, regular outings and/or service events is important for their learning. For excursions and service events to be a valuable teaching and learning vehicle, experiences provided will be considered in the context of children’s abilities, interests and learning needs. An inclusive approach is essential, to ensure that all children can attend, regardless of their socio-economic background, ethnicity, ability level, and additional or medical needs.

Mandatory prior planning is required and will include the completion and approval of a risk assessment, gaining parent’s written authorisation and on the day, ensuring adequate supervision at all times and child/adult ratios that are above minimum requirements.

Current Environmental Context

Regular recording and monitoring all children in attendance, or should be in attendance is critical, particularly at times of transition and while on an excursion, regular outing or participating in a service event. Services must regularly check children’s presence against accurate attendance records and ensure the identity of each and every child.

The Approved Provider, educators and approved family day care assistants must all be aware of the additional risks when taking children outside of the service, and when children are being transported.

The service must assess whether any additional staffing is required for the proposed venue and activities, and to meet their duty of care. Additional children attending, for example, younger siblings accompanied by parents are not included in the ratio but must be planned for in the risk assessment. The number of children attending, must not exceed the maximum number of approved places, for example during an incursion.

For the purpose of this policy, a service event excludes a parent attended event, where children are on site and does not form part of the program for children, however as the service does have a duty of care to all consumers, a risk assessment must be completed prior to these events and submitted for approval.

Attachment 3a: Responsibilities relating to the Excursions, Regular Outings and Service Events Policy

Attachment 3b: Excursion approval procedure

Attachment 3c: Guidelines for accompanying Volunteers/Students

Current forms can be found on the Uniting Intranet. [Click here](#)

Form 3.1 Excursion Plan and Risk Assessment

Form 3.2 Excursion Authorisation Form

Form 3.3 Regular Outing Plan

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Early Learning

Form 3.4	Regular Outing Authorisation Form
Form 3.5	Service Event Plan
Form 3.6	Service Event Authorisation Form
Form: 33.7	Risk Assessment

Reference/Sources

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

Uniting Child Safety Policy – Uniting adopts the Uniting Church Australia National Child Safety Policy Framework, 2019 and the principles of this Policy Framework

Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations Policy	Participation of Volunteers and Students Policy
Administration of Medication Policy	Anaphylaxis appendix Policy
Asthma appendix Policy	Code of Conduct Policy
Dealing with Medical Conditions Policy	Delivery and Collection of Children Policy
Diabetes appendix Policy	Educational Program and Practice Policy
Emergency and Evacuation Policy	Enrolment and Orientation Policy
Epilepsy appendix Policy	Fees Policy
Food Safety Policy	Hygiene and Infectious Disease Policy
Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy	Privacy Policy
Interactions with Children Policy	Inclusion, Diversity & Equity policy
Workplace Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy	Administration of First Aid Policy
Sun Protection Policy	Supervision of Children Policy
Safe Travel (Children) Policy	Water Safety Policy
Nutrition, Oral Health and Active Play Policy	Student placement form

- *Children's Services Amendment Act 2019*
- *Children's Services Regulation 2020*
- Department of Education & Training, Regulation and Quality Assessment, *NQF Fact Sheets. Excursions and routine outings* (October 2017).
- *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010*: s51, 165, 167, 169, 52
- *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*: Regulations 73, 77, 78, 97, 98, 99, 100-102, 109, 122, 123, 136, 144, 161, 168, 169, 171, 355, 357, 360
- National Quality Standard, Quality Area 1: *Educational Program and Practice*
- National Quality Standard, Quality Area 2: *Children's Health and Safety*
- Tasmanian Licensing Standards for Centre Based Child Care Class 5 (October 2014). Standard 4.

Authorisation

This policy was adopted by Uniting Early Learning on 14/10/2020

Review

This policy is to be reviewed by: 14/10/2021

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Attachment 3a - Responsibilities relating to the Excursion/ regular outing/service event Policy

Approved Provider

Ensure an *Excursion, regular outing and service event* policy is developed in consultation with all stakeholders.

- Ensure educators, staff, parents, volunteers, students, and others at the service are provided with access and/or a copy of this policy (if requested) and comply with its requirements.
- Ensure a child does not leave the service premises on an excursion unless prior written authorisation and signed consent has been provided by the parent or person named in the child’s enrolment record, and that the authorisation includes all details required under legislation.
- In the circumstances, where a family day care assistant participates, ensure written consent is provided by the parent for each child.
- Ensure a risk assessment is carried out for an excursion/regular outing and service event including events where parents are present before authorisation is sought from parents, including volunteer numbers (Refer to *Form 3.1*).
- Ensure that children are always actively supervised.
- Ensure all volunteers have a current Working with Children check. Regular service volunteers (this does not include current parents) must be appointed and orientated as per Uniting’s Volunteer policy. *Early learning volunteers*
- Ensure that proposed excursions/regular outings and service events are inclusive of all children
- Provide a mobile phone to enable contact with parents and emergency services in the event of an incident, injury, trauma or illness.

Responsible Person and Educators

- Read and comply with the requirements of this policy.
- Ensure educators, staff, parents, volunteers, students and others at the service have access and/or a copy of this policy (if requested) and comply with its requirements.
- Consider the financial context of the community before deciding on an excursion/service event. Events that can be planned ahead of time should be included as an expenditure item in the service’s budget and, as a result, will not incur additional charges. Inform parents/volunteers of any associated costs before event.
- Ensure that excursions/regular outings and service events are based on the approved learning framework, meets the needs and interests of children and families at the service, and that there is a clear purpose and educational value to each excursion/regular outing and service event that is communicated to parents.
- Ensure that proposed excursions/regular outings and service events are inclusive of all children.
- Consult with children, discuss the aims and objectives of the excursion, regular outing or service event, and engage the children in the decision making process.
- Ensure a risk assessment is carried out for an excursion/regular outing and service event before authorisation is sought from parents, including volunteer numbers (Refer to *Form 3.1*).
- A risk assessment is not required for a regular outing if a risk assessment has been conducted not more than 12 months before the excursion is to occur. Consideration should also be given to whether circumstances of the regular outing have changed since this risk assessment was completed
- Ensure a risk assessment is carried out for service planned parent events and educators and staff understand their duty of care to consumers.
- Ensure the risk assessment identifies and assesses the risks, including during transition times specifies how these will be managed and/or minimised, and includes all details required by legislation (Refer to *Form 3.1*).

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- Ensure an excursion or service event, plan has been completed with required documentation (Refer to Form 3.1, 3.3 or 3.5) and sent to Early Learning Coordinator a minimum of 28 days (or in consultation with the Early Learning Coordinator) prior to the event and earlier depending on the nature of the event.
- Ensure Early Learning coordinator's approval for planned excursion, and service event is provided.
- Provide parents or a person named in the child's enrolment record with an excursion, and service events authorisation form (Refer to *Form 3.2, 3.4 or 3.6*).
- Ensure a child does not leave the service premises including the family day care residence or approved family day care venue on an excursion unless prior written authorisation and signed consent has been provided by the parent or person named in the child's enrolment record, and that the authorisation includes all details required under legislation.
- Ensure parents or persons named in the enrolment record have provided written authorisation within the past 12 months for the service to take the child on regular outings (refer *Glossary*), and that this authorisation is kept in the child's enrolment record (refer to *Form 3.4*).
- Inform parents of items required by children for the excursion, regular outing or service event, e.g. toileting arrangements, snack/lunch, sunscreen, coat, drinking water etc.
- Ensure 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.
- Ensure strategies are in place to provide an accurate attendance record for children attending an excursion, and for children remaining at the service while an excursion takes place.
- Ensure that each child's personal medication and current medical management plan is taken on excursions and other offsite activities.
- Risk assessments for transportation must identify and assess risks that the transportation of a child may pose to the safety, health or wellbeing of the child, and specify how the identified risks will be managed and minimised.
- As a minimum, a risk assessment for transportation must include assessment of the matters set out in the risk assessment. Risks should be evaluated each time children are transported, unless the transportation is 'regular transportation'.
- Ensure that educators follow procedures when children are transported (Refer *Safe Travel Children policy*). This includes undertaking regular head counts, identity checks and cross-checking against the attendance record to ensure no child is left behind.
- Ensure all early learning and parent volunteers have a current Working with Children check.
- Ensure that the number of children attending an excursion or incursion does not exceed the number for which service approval has been granted on that day.
- Ensure there is an accurate list of everyone participating in an excursion, including educators, parents, siblings, volunteers, students with contact details for each individual.
- Provide a reminder to parents of upcoming excursion or incursion and ensure the policy is available for reference.
- Display a notice at the service or Family Day Care (FDC) venue indicating that children are on an excursion, including the location of the excursion and expected time of return to the service.
- Keep an accurate attendance record for children attending an excursion, and for children remaining at the service while an excursion takes place.
- Ensure induction occurs for volunteers, parents, students and other person participating in the excursion/regular outing.
- Ensure all educators, parents, students and volunteers are familiarised with the risk management plan and that it has been approved by the relevant *Uniting Early Learning Coordinator*.

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- Review risk assessment for an excursion/regular outing and service event, including events where parents are present prior to the day and plan for any contingency (Refer to *Form 3.1*).
- Risk assessments for excursions and regular outings that involve motor vehicle travel, should include details of the child's restraint needs which, for regular outings, may need to be assessed more frequently than every 12 months.
- Ensure 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.
- Ensure the emergency details of each educator, volunteer, parent, student are taken on excursions and regular outings for notification in the event of an incident, injury, trauma or illness.
- Ensure that children are actively supervised at all times and take regular headcounts, identity checks and cross-check against the attendance record to ensure no child is left behind.
- Maintain the required educator-to-child ratios (only educators who are working directly with children) at all times, and actively supervise children during excursions, regular outings and service events.
- Ensure that parents, volunteers, students and all adults participating in an excursion are actively supervised at all times and are not left with sole supervision of individual children or groups of children.
- Provide and maintain a portable adequately stocked first aid kit that can be taken on excursions and other offsite activities, and ensure the kits contain the required medication for dealing with medical conditions. Check all medications taken for current use-by dates.
- Ensure all visitors to the service during a service event, enter their details in the service visitors' sign in book.
- After the excursion, complete a review/evaluation and identify any program and learning outcomes.

Parent

- Read and comply with the requirements of this policy.
- Complete and sign the authorised nominee (refer to *Glossary*) section of your child's enrolment form before your child commences at the service.
- Read the details of the excursion, regular outing and service event provided by the service and ask for additional information if required.
- Complete, sign and date excursion/service event authorisation forms.
- Provide written authorisation for your child to leave the service premises on regular outings. Sign and date attendance record to document your attendance at any excursion, regular outing and service event.
- Ensure all parent volunteers have a current Working with Children check.
- Ensure that your child's personal medication and current medical management plan is taken on excursions and other offsite activities.
- Provide items required by your child for the excursions/regular outings and service events e.g. snack/lunch, sunscreen, coat, drinking water etc.
- Understand that, if you participate in an excursion/regular outing and service event as a volunteer, you will be under the immediate supervision of an educator.
- Ensure you are clear on your role and responsibilities while participating in an excursion/regular outing.
- Comply with all service policies while participating in an excursion or incursion including the *Code of Conduct Policy*, *Sun Protection Policy*, *Safe Travel Children policy* and *Hygiene and Infectious Policy*.
- Supervise and care for siblings and other children in your care who are not enrolled in the program.
- Support educators to supervise all children.
- If participating in an excursion, regular outing or service event, inform an educator immediately if a child becomes unwell or appears to be missing from the group.

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Attachment 3b – Excursion approval procedure

Educator planning activity is to:

- Read requirements of policy for relevant activity:
 - Excursion
 - Regular outing
 - Service event
- Prior to any further planning, discuss with the Responsible person the value and relevance of the activity demonstrating:
 - the activity is based upon an approved early learning framework and meets the interests and needs of children and families
 - a clear purpose and demonstrated educational value
- Consult with children and families about intent
- Determine rationale and cost implications
- Complete an excursion/regular outing/service event:
 - **plan** (Form 3.1 or 3.3 or 3.5) and
 - **risk assessment** (Form 3.1)
- Responsible person to approve in writing the excursion/ regular outing/ service event plan
- Send and obtain Early Learning Coordinator’s approval at least 28 days before the activity of the:
 - Plan & risk assessment, and
 - required documents

(Early Learning Coordinator to respond within 72 hours)
- Provide families with an excursion/regular outing/service event authorisation form (Form 3.2, 3.4 or 3.6)
- Ensure excursion/regular outing/service event authorisation is signed for **ALL** children participating in the activity and that all parents agree with their child undertaking the activity.

No excursion/regular outing/service event can be implemented without:

- Prior approval from the Early Learning Co-Ordinator
- Written authorisation from parents

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Attachment 3c – Guidelines for accompanying Early Learning Service Volunteers/parent volunteers and Students

Volunteers play an important support role when early childhood services implement excursions and regular outings. Increased adult: child ratios, maximise children’s learning opportunities. The legislative requirements in Victoria however do not allow for volunteers, students and educators employed as additional assistants to be included in the mandated adult: child ratios. Therefore, volunteers/students are in addition to the prescribed number, and their primary role is to support and assist educators.

To participate in an excursion/regular outing, all volunteers/students must hold a current Working with Children check (Volunteer checks are free, refer to www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au). However, volunteers/students and additional assistants **are not** responsible for the supervision of the children and must at all times be supervised by a staff member.

All volunteers/students/additional assistants must be aware of their roles and responsibilities when conducting activities outside the service premises. Expectations may be different, risks greater and activities, context driven. communication and supervision by staff are important processes in orientating volunteers to their role when on an excursion/regular outing. Induction and clear directions, prior to the excursion/regular outing must be provided by staff to assist volunteers to understand and carry out their role and be aware of the service/organisation expectations.

All participants (including volunteers/students) have a “duty of care” responsibility to ensure the health, safety and well being of all children, at all times.

Procedure

Volunteers will:

- read this policy and adhere to the requirements
- as part of their role in attending the excursion, attend an induction as soon as practical
- at induction, be provided with all relevant information regarding the excursion/regular outing
- commit to following the mission and values of the service while participating
- understand their role and responsibilities while participating
- follow directions from supervising staff member at all times while on the excursion/regular outing
- be supervised by staff at all times
- support the needs of the children at all times
- seek support from their supervising staff member, when required
- provide emergency contact details prior to attending the excursion/regular event

Consideration needs to be given to volunteers’ role if additional children are accompanying a parent on the excursion

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Induction of volunteers and additional assistants by the Responsible person will include:

- access to the policy and related policies
- clear information regarding the role and responsibilities of the individual while participating on the excursion/regular outing
- the development of a staff and attendance record, including emergency contact details, of the volunteer
- familiarisation with the risk management plan
- discussion of the educational purpose of the excursion/regular outing
- the nature and details of the excursion/regular outing
 - Location and map, including details of emergency assembly areas, toilets, first aid kit, telephone
 - Toileting process for children and adults
 - Emergency evacuation procedures at the destination site
 - Communication
- Introduction to the children
- Allocation and introduction to their supervising staff member
- Discussion of expectations during the excursion/regular outing
- Discussion of any medical conditions/additional needs of the children in their care
- Explanation of the headcount and child identification process
- Action to take in the case of an emergency situation

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