



CATHOLIC EDUCATION

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

EXCURSIONS FROM THE SERVICE

POLICY STATEMENT

At Holy Name we *may* plan excursions to compliment the program being offered at our service. Excursions are carefully planned and potential risks are identified and managed accordingly. Excursions will only be conducted to venues after a risk assessment has been completed and the level of risk has been determined as appropriate for the children attending.

PROCEDURES:

To ensure children's health, safety and well-being is maintained at all times during excursions, the following procedures are implemented:

1. Risk assessment

A Risk Management Plan (RMP) must be prepared before each excursion to identify and manage any risks posed by the excursion. RMPs will include:

- Proposed date, time and destination for the excursion
- Method of transport to and from the destination
- Proposed route
- Name of excursion coordinator and the number of educators or other responsible adults required to ensure appropriate supervision. This number will be determined by taking into consideration the risks posed by the excursion and whether any adults with specialised skills are required
- Any water hazards
- Number of adults and children involved in the excursion
- Proposed activities
- Likely length of time of the excursion;
- 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.
- Wet weather contingency plan

A sample excursion Risk Management Plan and Excursion Checklist can be downloaded from the ACECQA website: <http://acecqa.gov.au/storage/Excursion%20risk%20management%20plan.pdf>.

Where an excursion venue or activity is deemed to pose significant risk to children an educator will visit the destination (if possible) to assess the level of risk. In cases where it is not possible to visit the venue prior to excursion an educator will contact a suitable person / representative at the venue to discuss the above details. They will also address facilities available such as toilets, hand washing facilities, shade from the sun and mobile phone coverage.

If an excursion is a regular outing, the authorisation is only required to be obtained once in a 12-month period. Parents must give permission for regular excursions on their child's enrolment form. 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.

2. Challenging activities

Excursions to participate in challenging activities may at times be planned for children attending the service. An activity will not be planned unless it is deemed developmentally appropriate for the children it is planned for. Challenging activities may include abseiling, bush walking, caving and horse riding.

An additional Risk Management Plan (RMP) will be conducted for challenging activities. The risk assessment will:

- identify likely hazards and where appropriate take steps to minimise those hazards
- confirm the suitability of safety standards set by the organisers including confirming the skills, experience and qualifications of any person conducting or assisting in the activity
- determine the availability of all necessary safety equipment
- determine whether children and educators will receive all necessary training before participating in the activity.

Should any of the listed requirements not be met to the satisfaction of the licensee the excursion will not proceed.

3. Permission

- Once details of the excursion have been confirmed and a Risk Management Plan has been completed, parents will be advised in writing of the details of the excursion. (Including any items children may be required to bring with them).
- Written permission from parents must be obtained before any child is taken outside of the centre (using the Excursion Consent Form).
- By signing the excursion permission form, the parent is authorising their child to attend the activities stated.

4. Staffing and supervision

- The nominated supervisor will appoint an educator who is at least 21 years of age to be the person in charge of an excursion from the service. The educator in charge of the excursion will ensure that all educators and volunteers attending the excursion are aware of their responsibilities.
- Adequate numbers of educators to effectively supervise the children must be rostered on for excursions. Numbers of educators must take into consideration the needs, ages and developmental stage of the children attending the excursion and be based on a risk assessment of the excursion.
- The educator to child ratios will be maintained in accordance with the *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2012* at all times. For most excursions this will mean an educator to child ratio of one educator for every ten children (or for any remainder fewer than ten) attending the excursion. When an excursion involves challenging activities the ratio of one educator or adult volunteer to every five children.
- At no time will only one educator accompany children on an excursion. Where only one educator would be required to meet staff to child ratios at least one other educator or volunteer will attend the excursion.
- At least one educator accompanying the excursion will hold current first aid qualifications as well as anaphylaxis and asthma management qualifications.

5. Staff practices during excursions

- Head counts must be conducted regularly throughout the duration of the excursion.
- An educator must inspect all public toilets before children use them. An educator and at least one other child must accompany any child when using a public toilet.
- When walking the children, one educator must lead the group, another to follow at the back, and the remaining educators spaced alongside the group.
- 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 (when safe to do so), and if necessary, stop traffic from both directions. The remaining educators then lead children across the road.
- Educators supervising a challenging activity will ensure that children comply with the set safety standards, follow safe practices and wear any safety equipment deemed necessary by the operator.
- When participating in an excursion where children are in or near water educators will remain in close proximity to children and maintain constant visual contact.

6. Information and Equipment

Information and equipment to be taken on excursions will include:

- A list of all children with relevant personal details and parent contact phone numbers.
- A list of emergency procedures and contact numbers.
- A first aid kit, including SPF 30+ broad-spectrum water resistant sunscreen and children's sun hats.
- Any medication for children attending the excursion.
- A fully charged mobile phone with any emergency services contact numbers.
- Other information/equipment noted on the Risk Management Plan.
- Hand sanitiser, soap or toilet paper if not already provided at the excursion venue.
- Children may also be required to bring a water bottle, packed lunch and change of clothes.

7. Lost Child

In the event that a child is lost during an excursion the following practices will be implemented;

- Inform other educators in your group.
- Ask the children if they have seen the missing child recently.
- 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 Nominated Supervisor or another educator will call the Police and the parents.
- Reassure any child who may be upset

7. Transporting Children to/from an excursion:

- Children are only permitted to travel to an excursion on any form of transport with written permission from a parent.
- If using public transport (such as bus, ferry, taxi, train, etc.) children must be effectively supervised at all times and never left unattended.
- 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.
- In some circumstances where the site of the excursion is close to the service, it will be appropriate for children and the staff to walk to the site provided it is safe to do so.
- The decision to walk should be preceded by a Risk Management Plan.

8. Water Safety

- For the purpose of this policy a water activity is defined as swimming or any other activity in a body of water.
- Beach excursions where swimming is to occur will only be conducted in an area that is a closed water environment or where the water is still or slow moving unless the area is patrolled by Surf Life Saving WA or the relevant local government and the area is clearly designated as a swimming area by flags or other signs.
- When a water activity is planned the educator in charge of the excursion will complete a *Risk Assessment Form for Water Activities* (See Water Safety Policy).
- Children may not enter the water until the assessment has been completed and the risk determined to be low or medium. Should risks posed by the water activity be deemed high the activity will not take place.
- Staff must also have the appropriate Royal Lifesaving Training if swimming activities are planned as part of an excursion.

9. Records

A record of each excursion will be maintained at the centre including:

- the name of each child who attended,
- parental authorisation for each child who attended,
- destination, time of departure from the service,
- time of arrival back at the service and
- a copy of the risk assessment will be maintained by the service for a minimum period of three years.
- Any incidents or injuries which may have occurred on the excursion.

References:

Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority (2012), *Education and Care Services National Regulations (WA) 2012*. ACECQA, NSW.

Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority (2011), *The Guide to the National Quality Standard*, ACECQA, NSW.

Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority (2011), *The Guide to the Education and Care Services Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations*, ACECQA. NSW.

Review history

YEAR OF REVIEW	AMENDMENTS
January 2015	Reviewed and edited content to align with requirements under the national regulations.
January 2016	Reviewed, no changes
January 2017	Reviewed, no changes
January 2018	Reviewed and updated floor maps
January 2020	January 2021