

# Excursion and Incursion Policy



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|--|--|------------------------|----------|
| <b>Document Title</b>  | NQS2.90 Excursion and Incursion Policy | <b>Version</b>         | 4a       |
| <b>Date Approved</b>   | October 2024                           | <b>Date for Review</b> | May 2027 |
| <b>Warning - Ensure you are using the latest version of this policy.</b>                         |  |                        |          |
| DCC Network/All Organisation Information/DCC Policies/Quality Area 2 – Childrens Health & Safety |  |                        |          |

## 1. Policy Statement

Excursions, regular outings, and incursions are an important part of educational programming, providing opportunities for children to build connections with the local community and contributing to their sense of belonging and connection with the world around them. River Region Early Education is committed to ensuring the safety, health, and wellbeing of children during excursions, regular outings, and incursions by conducting risk assessments and ensuring authorisations are obtained from families where required.

Feedback from River Region Early Education families is that they value excursions that have an educational purpose, that teach children important skills like road safety, support them to socially interact with the community, and encourage them to explore nature. They want excursions to be safe, with enough adults to ensure children are adequately supervised, and for excursions and incursions to be planned equitably so all children have the opportunity to participate across the year.

## 2. Rationale

Education and Care Services National Regulations require Approved Providers to ensure that a risk assessment is conducted before any excursion and that children are only taken outside the service premises on excursion with written authorisation. It is also a requirement to have policies and procedures relating to excursions, and for these policies and procedures to be followed, kept available, and for families to be notified of changes. This policy gives guidance to employees as to the documentation required before, during, and after excursions and incursions in order to maintain the safety, health, and wellbeing of children and protect them from harm and hazard.

The transportation of children other than for excursions is governed by *NQS2.23 Safe Transport and Arrival Policy*.

The arrival and departure of children by public bus is governed by *NQS2.50 Delivery and Collection of Children Policy*.

## 3. Scope

This policy applies to all employees, including students and trainees, and volunteers, including Board members.

## 4. Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the Board as Approved Provider to ensure that:

- A risk assessment is carried out in accordance with regulation for each excursion that is not a regular outing before authorisation for the excursion is sought,

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- A risk assessment is conducted for regular outings at least every 12 months,
- A child being educated and cared for by the service is not taken outside the education and care service premises on an excursion unless written authorisation by a parent or other person named in the child's enrolment record as having authority has been provided in accordance with regulation,
- The service has in place policies and procedures in relation to excursions,
- Nominated supervisors and staff members of, and volunteers at, the service follow the policies and procedures required under regulation,
- Copies of the current policies and procedures required under regulation are readily accessible to nominated supervisors, educators, and volunteers, and are readily available for inspection at the education and care service premises at all times that the service is educating and caring for children or otherwise on request, and
- Parents of children enrolled at the service are notified at least 14 days before making any change to a policy or procedure referred to in regulation that may have a significant impact on the provision of education and care or a family's ability to use the service, or as soon as practicable if the notice period would pose a risk to the safety, health, or wellbeing of any child enrolled in the service.

It is the responsibility of the General Manager to:

- Carry out or delegate the responsibilities of the Board as described above,

It is the responsibility of Nominated Supervisors or Responsible Persons to:

- Plan and approve excursions, regular outings, and incursions, that are equitable and inclusive of children regardless of the days they attend service, their circumstances, strengths, gender, capabilities, or diverse ways of doing and being,
- Complete a risk assessment in accordance with regulation for regular outings at least once every 12 months that identifies and assesses risk that the excursion may pose to the safety, health or wellbeing of any child being taken on the excursion and specifies how the identified risks will be managed and minimised,
- Ensure that a risk assessment is completed in accordance with regulation, before authorisation is sought, for each excursion that is not a regular outing and that identifies and assesses risk that the excursion may pose to the safety, health or wellbeing of any child being taken on the excursion and specifies how the identified risks will be managed and minimised,
- Ensure that each child only leaves the service premises for an excursion with the written authorisation of a parent or other person named in the child's enrolment record as having authority and that this authorisation includes the information required by regulation,
- Ensure that educator-to-child ratios are maintained at all times during excursions and incursions,
- Ensure that all adults who are not employees and are present or participating in an excursion, regular outing, or incursion have a verified Working with Children Check (WWCC) where required, are adequately supervised at all times, are not left with sole supervision of individual children or groups of children, and understand their responsibilities while present,

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- Verify that all required equipment and items are taken on excursions, including first aid kit, personal medication, medical management plans, charged mobile phone or communication device, and emergency contact lists, and
- Ensure an accurate roll of attendance is taken and checked regularly before, during and after excursions.

It is the responsibility of educators to:

- Check that a parent or an authorised person named in the child's enrolment record has given authorisation prior to a child attending an excursion,
- Ensure they are aware of any potential hazards specific to an excursion, regular outing, or incursion and their responsibilities to monitor and control risks,
- Take an accurate roll of attendance and check it regularly during excursions and regular outings, including when embarking and disembarking any means of transport,
- Maintain required educator-to-child ratios at all times, and adequately supervise children during excursions, regular outings, and incursions,
- Adequately supervise any adult who is not an employee and is participating in an excursion, regular outing, or incursion and ensure they are not left with sole supervision of individual or groups of children, and
- Take required equipment whenever children are leaving the service premises, including for excursions, that includes each child's personal medication and current medical management plan where relevant, a portable first aid kit, a charged mobile phone or communication device, and the emergency contact details, including their medical practitioner, for each child.

It is the responsibility of families to:

- Read the details of the excursion, regular outing, or incursion provided by the service and ask for additional information if required,
- Provide authorisation forms prior to the event if they wish their child to attend an excursion, and
- When attending an excursion, ensure they are aware of their responsibilities and accountability to the Responsible Person at all times.

## 5. Definitions

**Regular outing** – Defined in Education and Care Services National Regulation as a walk, drive, or trip to and from a destination that the service visits regularly as part of its educational program, and where the circumstances relevant to the risk assessment are substantially the same on each outing.

**Excursion** – Defined in Education and Care Services National Regulation as an outing organised by an education and care service. This is further defined by River Region Early Education as any planned outing where children leave organisational premises and does not include walking from one service to another where these services are adjacent or the supervised and authorised escorting of children to or from a public bus stop.

**Incursion** – Where a community member, individual, group or organisation visits a service while children are being educated and cared for in order to present an experience to children as part of the educational program. In this policy, it does not include family members visiting the service

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to participate in non-regular activities with their child, for example reading, playing music, or craft, or organised celebration or special days.

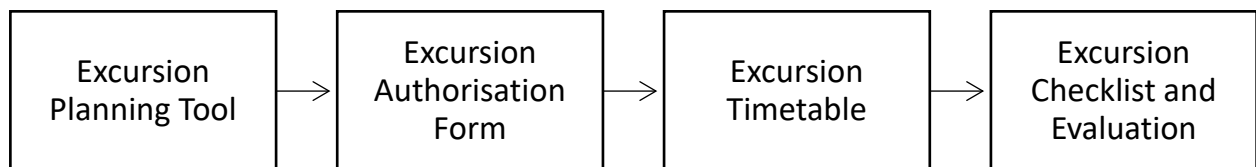
### 6. Guidelines

#### a) Excursion planning and risk assessment

River Region Early Education views excursions as meaningful to children's development and learning and encourages each individual centre-based service to complete a minimum of four (4) excursions a year and two (2) incursions.

All non-regular excursions can only occur:

- Once a risk assessment has been completed and any potential hazards managed or minimised,
- With the approval of the Nominated Supervisor, and
- With the written authorisation from the parent (or a person named in the child's enrolment record as having this authority) for each child attending.



The documentation process for non-regular excursion planning and implementation is:

- Educator or Nominated Supervisor completes *NQS2.90A Excursion Planning Tool*,
- Families are informed and provide authorisation by completing *NQS2.90B Excursion Authorisation Form*,
- Educator or Nominated Supervisor creates a timetable using *NQS2.90C Excursion Timetable Template*,
- Educator or Responsible Person completes *NQS2.90A Excursion Checklist and Evaluation* before, during, and after the event, and
- Authorisations, attendance and headcounts at each transition are documented.

Non-regular excursions can be suggested by a family member or by any educator completing *NQS2.90A Excursion Planning Tool* for approval by the Nominated Supervisor. The planning tool includes a risk assessment that is to be completed before parental authorisation for the excursion is requested.

The risk assessment is mandatory and identifies and assesses risks that the excursion may pose to the safety, health, or wellbeing of any child and how the risks will be managed and minimised. It considers:

- the proposed route and destination for the excursion,
- any water hazards and any risks associated with water-based activities,
- if the excursion involves transporting children, the means of transport and any requirements for seatbelts or safety restraints,
- the process for entering and exiting the education and care service premises; and the pick-up location or destination (as required) and procedures for embarking and

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disembarking the means of transport, including how each child is to be accounted for on embarking and disembarking,

- the number of adults and children involved in the excursion and, given the risks posed by the excursion, the number of educators or other responsible adults that is appropriate to provide supervision and whether any adults with specialised skills are required,
- the proposed activities,
- the proposed duration of the excursion, and
- the items that should be taken on the excursion.

The organisation has identified that risks to children attending excursions are highest:

- When transitioning from one space to another, for example, when leaving the service premises or arriving at a destination,
- During transport either on foot or by vehicle due to traffic and other hazards,
- When in spaces that are not modified and made safe for young children, including indoor venues, parks, and playgrounds,
- When interacting with people who are not employees of the organisation, and
- Where there is a medical or other emergency.

To minimise these risks, the following principles are followed for all excursions:

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|---|---|
| <b>Supervision and educator to child ratios</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educators are supported to actively supervise children.</li> <li>• The minimum educator to child ratio is maintained, both on the excursion and at the service with children not attending as per <i>NQS4.38 Staffing Arrangements Policy</i> and increased on excursion to accommodate any specific hazards identified in risk assessment.</li> <li>• Any adult attending who is not an educator is not included in the calculation of educator to child ratios.</li> <li>• Educators are informed of any specific hazards where increased supervision may be needed.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Transitions</b>                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A list of children authorised to attend the excursion is created and checked against attendance and authorisation.</li> <li>• A copy of the list is carried by the Responsible Person and a copy left at the service.</li> <li>• A head count is completed and recorded when leaving and arriving at each venue and getting on and off transport.</li> <li>• A visual check is made and recorded of the interior of vehicles after children disembark to ensure no child is left behind.</li> <li>• When leaving the service premises, children wear high-visibility clothing provided by the service so they are easily recognisable.</li> <li>• Children hold hands or a safety rope with an educator at the front and back of the group when moving from one space to another.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Transport by vehicle or on foot</b>          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vehicles are checked for suitable safety features, including seat belts and safety restraints, prior to the event.</li> <li>• Walking routes use pedestrian and island crossings to cross roads, where available.</li> </ul>   |

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|                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walking along roads includes intentional teaching about road safety.</li> <li>• Children walk in a group, holding hands or a safety rope and with an educator at the front and at the back with an additional educator in the middle if numbers permit.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Child protection</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All educators undertake child protection training.</li> <li>• All parents / family members / volunteers in attendance aged 18 years and over have a verified Working with Children Check (WWCC).</li> <li>• All adults attending excursions who aren't employees are actively supervised and are never left alone with children.</li> <li>• Educators are reminded of the need to supervise interactions between children and members of the public.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Emergencies</b>      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The personal medication and medical management plan of any child with a medical condition is carried at all times (buddy bags).</li> <li>• A portable first aid kit, including asthma and anaphylaxis equipment, and charged mobile phone are carried at all times.</li> <li>• A list of each child in attendance, their emergency contacts and their medical practitioner contact details are carried at all times.</li> <li>• At least one educator in attendance will be trained in first aid, including CPR, anaphylaxis, and asthma management.</li> <li>• Emergency exits and assembly points are checked prior to or on arrival at venues.</li> <li>• Educators are reminded to follow RREE emergency management plan procedures.</li> </ul> |

**b) Regular outings**

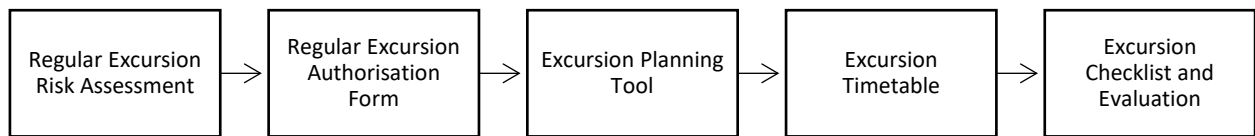
Regular outings are any destination that the service visits regularly as part of its educational program, and where the circumstances relevant to the risk assessment are substantially the same on each outing. River Region Early Education refers to regular outings as regular excursions.

In general, regular outings for River Region Early Education services are those that:

- Are accessible on foot with minimal need to cross roads and with walking routes that can be easily checked prior to the excursion,
- Are to community and private venues where there is an established relationship with the organisation, such as libraries, aged care facilities, and schools,
- Include any off-premises assembly points used in emergency drills, and
- For the Mobile service, include activities by children outside coned areas at venues where fencing does not meet regulation, as identified in Venue Management Plans.

The principles for excursions are the same for regular outings except that risk assessment and parent authorisation is needed only once in a 12-month period.

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The documentation process for regular excursion planning and implementation (other than for the Mobile Service) is:

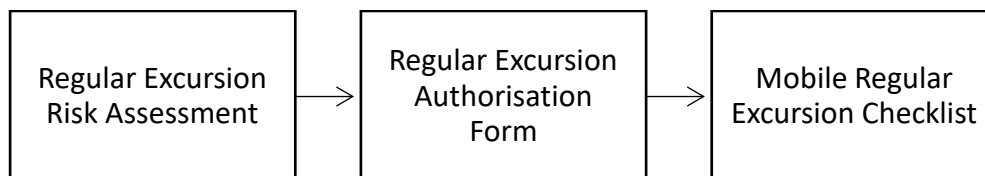
- Nominated Supervisor completes *NQS2.90E Regular Excursion Risk Assessment* for the start of the calendar year,
- Families are informed and provide authorisation by completing *NQS2.90F Regular Excursion Authorisation Form* on enrolment and at the start of the calendar year,
- Educator or Nominated Supervisor uses *NQS2.90A Excursion Planning Tool* prior to each excursion event to identify and manage any additional risks,
- Educator or Nominated Supervisor creates a timetable using *NQS2.90C Excursion Timetable Template*,
- Educator or Responsible Person completes *NQS2.90A Excursion Checklist and Evaluation* before and during the event, and
- Authorisations, attendance and headcounts at each transition are documented.

### c) Mobile service and regular outings

Education and Care Services Supplementary Provisions apply to the Mobile Service and include a requirement for an approved venue management plan that identifies risk minimisation controls related to fencing and adequate supervision where fencing at venues does not meet regulation.

To manage and minimise these risks:

- The Mobile Service Responsible Person identifies a safe outdoor zone each day with cones,
- Where children are taken outside of this zone, for example for nature play, this is considered a regular outing.



The documentation process for the Mobile Service for regular excursion planning and implementation is:

- Nominated Supervisor completes *NQS2.90E Regular Excursion Risk Assessment* for the start of the calendar year,
- Families are informed and provide authorisation by completing *NQS2.90F Regular Excursion Authorisation Form* on enrolment and at the start of the calendar year,
- Educator or Responsible Person completes *NQS2.90G Mobile Regular Excursion Checklist* before, during, and after the event, and
- Authorisations, attendance and headcounts at each transition are documented.

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### **d) Authorisations**

A child can only attend an excursion with written authorisation from a parent or a person named on the child's enrolment record as having this authority. Written authorisation can only be requested once a risk assessment for the excursion or regular outing has been completed.

Written authorisations must include:

- the child's name,
- the reason the child is to be taken outside the premises,
- for a regular outing, a description of when the child is to be taken on the regular outings or, for an excursion that is not a regular outing, the date the child is to be taken on the excursion,
- a description of the proposed destination for the excursion,
- if the excursion involves transporting children, 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 proposed activities to be undertaken by the child during the excursion,
- the period the child will be away from the premises,
- the anticipated number of children likely to be attending the excursion,
- the anticipated ratio of educators 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, and
- that a risk assessment has been prepared and is available at the service.

Written authorisation for non-regular excursions is collected using *NQS2.90B Excursion Authorisation Form* prior to each excursion event and recorded in the child's enrolment record.

Written authorisation for regular outings is collected using *NQS2.90F Regular Excursion Authorisation Form* after enrolment and at the start of each calendar year and recorded in the child's enrolment record.

### **e) Incursions**

An incursion is where a community member, individual, group or organisation is invited to visit a service while children are being educated and cared for in order to present an experience to children as part of the educational program.

*In this policy, it does not include family members visiting the service to participate in activities with their child, for example reading, playing music, or craft, or organised celebration or special days.*

Incursions are not specifically addressed in Education and Care Services National Regulations but do present some potential risks to the safety and wellbeing of children. River Region Early Education is guided by the following principles when planning and implementing incursions:

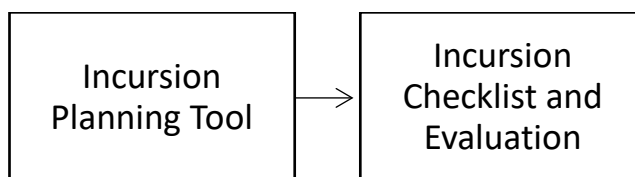
- Each service completes an annual *NQS7.62B Visitor Risk Assessment* that includes risk identification and controls for incursions, celebrations and special days, and visitors and contractors on site,
- Any adults who are not employees nor an immediate family member of an enrolled child and who are presenting during incursions (presenters) will need to have a current



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Working with Children Check (WWCC) that will be verified or be from an organisation where WWCCs are mandatory, such as emergency services, police, and teachers, and

- Incursion presenters will not be left alone with children and will not be included in calculating educator to child ratios.



The documentation process for incursion planning and implementation is:

- Educator or Nominated Supervisor completes *NQS2.90H Incursion Planning Tool*,
- Families are informed of the event (no authorisation is needed), and
- Educator or Responsible Person completes *NQS2.90I Incursion Checklist and Evaluation* before, during, and after the event.

### f) Family and community involvement

Family members are encouraged to participate in excursions to increase the number of responsible adults, assist in ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of children, and build positive relationships and connections with people who are important to the children in our care.

We require any adult attending an excursion who is not an employee to:

- Be a mature and responsible people able to be aware of and respond to hazards,
- Have a current Working With Children Check (WWCC) that has been verified by our organisation, and
- Notify the Nominated Supervisor if there is a need to bring a child who is not enrolled in our service on the excursion due to a lack of other care options (this will be noted in the risk assessment and responsibilities adjusted).

Any family member or other volunteer attending an excursion:

- Will be briefed before the excursion as to the excursion risk assessment, timetable, required procedures, any responsibilities they will have, and what to do in an emergency, and
- Will not be left unsupervised with children or given sole responsibility for supervising children.

## 7. Relevant Legislation, Regulations and Standards

| Legislation                                     |  |
|---|--|
|   |  |
| Education and Care Services National Regulation |  |
| 4   | Definitions (Regular Outing)                             |
| 99  | Children leaving the education and care service premises |
| 100   | Risk assessment must be conducted before excursion       |
| 101   | Conduct of risk assessment for excursion                 |

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|---|---|
| 102   | Authorisation for excursions  |
| <b>National Quality Standards</b>                       |   |
| 2.2.1   | At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard. |
| <b>Child Safe Standards</b>                             |   |
| 3   | Families and communities are informed and involved  |
| 5   | People working with children are suitable and supported   |
| 8   | Physical and online environments minimise the opportunity for abuse or other kinds of harm to occur               |
| <b>Early Years Learning Framework Learning Outcomes</b> |   |
| 2   | Children are connected with and contribute to their world   |
| <b>Early Years Learning Framework Principles</b>        |   |
|   |   |
| <b>Early Years Learning Framework Practices</b>         |   |
|   |   |

## 8. Related Documents

| Doc #    | Attachments                          |
|----------|--------------------------------------|
| NQS2.90A | Excursion Planning Tool              |
| NQS2.90B | Excursion Authorisation Form         |
| NQS2.90C | Excursion Timetable Template         |
| NQS2.90D | Excursion Checklist and Evaluation   |
| NQS2.90E | Regular Excursion Risk Assessment    |
| NQS2.90F | Regular Excursion Authorisation Form |
| NQS2.90G | Mobile Regular Excursion Checklist   |
| NQS2.90H | Incursion Planning Tool              |
| NQS2.90I | Incursion Checklist and Evaluation   |
| NQS2.90J | Excursion and Incursion Procedures   |
| NQS2.90K | Excursion Authorisation Check        |
| NQS2.90I | Excursion Documentation Check        |

| Doc #   | Intersections with other key documents     |
|---------|--|
| NQS2.23 | Safe Transport and Arrival Policy          |
| NQS2.50 | Delivery and Collection of Children Policy |

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| Doc #    | Intersections with other key documents     |
|----------|--|
| NQS2.80  | Emergency Management and Evacuation Policy |
| NQS2.80K | Emergency Management Plan                  |
| NQS4.38  | Staffing Arrangements Policy               |
| NQS7.62  | Student, Volunteer and Visitor Policy      |
| NQS7.62B | Visitors Risk Assessment                   |

## 9. Document Control

| Doc #   | Doc Title  | Version | Approved      | Next Review   |
|---------|--|---------|---------------|---------------|
| NQS2.90 | Excursion Policy   | 1       | April 2013    | April 2015    |
| NQS2.90 | Excursion Policy   | 2       | April 2018    | April 2020    |
| NQS2.90 | Excursion Policy   | 3       | December 2020 | December 2023 |
| NQS2.90 | Excursion Policy (minor changes due name change and new policy document format)                  | 3a      | January 2024  | December 2023 |
| NQS2.90 | Excursion and Incursion Policy   | 4       | May 2024      | May 2027      |
| NQS2.90 | Excursion and Incursion Policy (addition of Excursion Planning Tool to regular outing procedure) | 4a      | May 2024      | May 2027      |