

## **Incursion, Excursion and Transportation**

- *Incursion / Excursion Planning and Risk Assessment*
- *Transporting Children*

### **Policy Statement**

Meerilinga considers excursions and inviting visitors to the Centre to be a valuable part of the children’s curriculum and is committed to providing an opportunity to expand and enhance children’s experiences, reinforce learning outcomes, explore different environments and engage in meaningful ways to strengthen their connection with community.

Excursions and incursions require appropriate planning and risk management to ensure the best experience and enjoyment for all.

### **Policy Purpose**

Children will go on excursions within the local and wider community to broaden their knowledge of the world around them and how it functions. Excursions will be based on children’s interests and needs and will support their:

- Sense of identity and wellbeing.
- Connection and contribution to their local and wider community.
- Growth as confident and involved learners.

### **Scope**

This policy applies to children, families, management and all workers, volunteers, students and visitors of the service.

### **Exclusions**

### **Policy Review**

Biennial or from time to time when the organisation may make changes to this policy to improve the effectiveness of its operations.

<b>Policy Reviewed</b>	<b>10 July 2024</b>	<b>By</b>	<b>Advisor Policy &amp; Compliance</b>
<b>Approved By</b>	<b>Manager Children and Community Services</b>		
<b>Previous Review</b>	<b>27 February 2023</b>		

## **Implementation**

Meerilinga will ensure that all excursions and incursions undertaken by the service are planned and conducted in a safe manner, maintaining children's wellbeing at all times in accordance with National Legislation.

This policy relates to excursions that may be a 'regular outing' or a one-off excursion for a particular purpose and incursions, where visiting performers, groups or community services may visit our Service.

Educators, staff, families and volunteers will strictly follow this Policy and Processes.

### ***Excursion***

An outing is organised by the service where enrolled children leave the Children and Community Service site.

### ***Regular Outing***

Children may be taken on regular outings within the community. These outings may be a walk or drive, a trip to a destination the service visits regularly as part of its curriculum.

### ***Incursion***

When children have the opportunity to engage in other activities outside the Early Learning Program but remain within the Children and Community Service location. This may include visitors to the service or children participating in community events at the service.

## **Planning**

Prior to an excursion or incursion, the Nominated Supervisor will confirm the services insurance policy with the Manager Finance and Operations to ensure liability is protected by the organisation.

Planning for an excursion or incursion will be a collaborative process involving discussion between the Educators and children together with the service Co-ordinator / Nominated Supervisor.

Educators will record intentional teaching strategies that are planned to enhance children's learning experience.

### ***The following will be considered:***

The relevance and suitability of the proposed activity and how it supports the children's:

- Sense of identity and wellbeing.
- Connection and contribution to their local and wider community.
- Growth as confident and involved learners.
- Current interests as an extension of learning
- Specific requirements for the excursion/incursion.

The Educators and service Co-ordinator / Nominated Supervisor will complete a Risk Assessment and Management Plan prior to seeking authorisation from parent/guardian, to identify all potential hazards and risks that are likely to be encountered.

When planning an excursion, where possible the risk assessment will include a preliminary site visit, where this is not possible other means/methods will be used to gather information about potential hazards, the availability of toilets, hand washing, drinking and shade facilities from the sun, shelter from cold weather or rain at the destination, mobile phone coverage and access for emergency services, which will also consider any contingency arrangements that need to be made for unexpected events such as inclement weather, transport delay, etc.

Factors to take into account when determining adult : child ratio:

- Age and abilities of all children.
- Possible risk to children (identified in risk assessment)
- Destination and length of the activity.
- Method of transport, if planning a wider community excursion.
- Previous experience of accompanying supervising adults.

Where there are significant water hazards (such as rivers, ponds, lakes or beaches), risk management strategies will be identified and implemented, such as higher adult to child ratios.

Travel arrangements for the activity must be planned in accordance with the Education and Care Services National Regulations and WA Road Safety Codes and be adhered to for all excursions that require transportation. Children must be appropriately restrained under the Law, in approved safety devices, that's relevant to their age.

The cost of the activity to the service, estimated number of children participating and parents/authorised nominees volunteers accompanying the children.

Children enrolled at the service, but not attending on that day, may participate in the excursion, subject to regulatory compliance.

The Nominated Supervisor will ensure:

- An *Excursion/Incursion Risk Assessment and Management Plan* is developed prior to any excursion or incursion:
  - Excursion - Excursion and Transport Risk Assessment and Management Plan T1032
  - Incursion - Risk Assessment and Management Plan T1103
- An excursion Responsible Person is appointed to oversee the organisation and implementation of the excursion/incursion.
- Staff are provided with ongoing training and information sharing to ensure they fulfil their roles effectively.
- Families are notified about the excursion using an *Excursion Authorisation Form* and written authorisation must be provide by a parent or other authorised person named in the child's enrolment record.

- Families are notified about incursions and if permission is required for participation.
- Families have a right to view the risk assessment prior to the excursion/incursion upon request in which the service must comply with ensuring all information is available.
- The risk assessment must:
  - Identify and assess possible risks that the excursion/incursion may pose to the health, safety and wellbeing of any child being taken on the excursion or participating in the incursion.
  - Specify how the identified risks will be managed and minimised.
  - Ensure the visiting group/performance is covered by insurance.
  - Consider the proposed route and destination for the excursion and identify any water hazards.
  - Reflect on any risks associated with water-based activities.
  - Consider the transport to and from the proposed destination for the excursion, duration and any requirements for seatbelts or safety restraints under a Western Australian Law.
  - The process for entering and exiting the education and care service premises and the pick-up location or destination (as required).
  - Procedures for embarking and disembarking the means of transport, including how each child is to be accounted for on embarking and disembarking.
  - Consider the ratio of adults to children involved in the excursion.
  - Consider the risks posed by the excursion/incursion, the number of educators or other responsible adults required to provide supervision, and whether any adults with specialised skills are required to ensure children's safety (e.g: lifesaving skills).
  - Consider the planned activities.
  - Determine the duration of the excursion.
  - Consider items that should be taken on the excursion (mobile phone, emergency contacts, first aid kit, medical plans, etc.).
  - Consider strategies to ensure supervision is consistent at all times during the excursion- transitions, toileting, departure from the service and conclusion of the excursion.

If the excursion is a *regular excursion*, or '*regular outing*' a risk assessment authorisation is only required to be carried out once in a 12-month period, however, must be regularly reviewed. If circumstances around the excursion change, a new risk assessment is required.

### **Authorisation for Excursions**

The Nominated Supervisor or Responsible Person will ensure that:

- That a child is not taken outside the service premises on an excursion unless written authorisation has been provided.
- The authorisation must be given by a parent / legal guardian or other authorised person named in the child's enrolment record as having authority to authorise transportation of a child

- The authorisation form must state:
  - The child's name
  - The reason the child is to be taken outside the premises
  - The reason the child is to be transported (if transportation is included in the excursion)
  - If the authorisation is for a regular outing, a description of when the child is to be taken on the regular outing
  - The date the child is to be taken on the excursion and transported
  - A description of the proposed pick-up location and destination for the excursion
  - The method of transport to be used for the excursion
  - The proposed activities to be undertaken by the child during the excursion
  - The period the child will be away from the premises
  - The period of time during which the child is to be transported
  - The anticipated number of children likely to be attending the excursion
  - The anticipated educator to child ratio 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
  - Any requirements for seatbelts or safety restraints under a law of each jurisdiction in which the children are being transported
  - That a risk assessment has been prepared and is available at the service
  - That written policies and procedures for transporting children are available at the service
- If the excursion is a regular outing, the written authorisation is only required to be obtained once in a 12-month period.
- Parental authorisation may be required for incursions if identified in the risk assessment or if a cost is required
- Authorisations must be kept securely with the child's enrolment records.

### **Staffing Arrangements**

The Nominated Supervisor will ensure that:

- Educator to child ratios are no less than the prescribed ratios as per National Regulations
- Additional educators/staff are engaged to provide care and support to children with additional needs
- Consideration for adequate supervision may include:
  - The number, age and ability of children
  - The number and physical positioning of educators
  - Each child's current activity
  - Risks related to the mode of transport (for example: walking)
  - Visibility and accessibility
  - The experience and skill of each educator

- Educators are aware of their responsibility to provide supervision to other responsible adults or volunteers assisting on the excursion
- Educators are aware the procedures to follow in the event of an emergency
- At least one educator or the Nominated Supervisor participating, must hold current First Aid qualification, approved emergency Asthma management and approved anaphylaxis management training

## **Volunteer Participation**

The Nominated Supervisor and Responsible Person will ensure:

- Volunteers and students registered with Meerilinga have completed induction, child protection training and have provided the required criminal history checks before excursion participation.
- Family volunteers are only the parent or legal guardian of a child attending the excursion. They must complete and sign the Excursion Volunteer Declaration form prior to participation on excursion.  
*Refer to Child Safe Environment - Child Protection Policy. Working with Children Check Exemptions.*
- Volunteers are not counted as part of the educator to child ratio.
- Volunteers are not left alone with a child/children and must be supervised by an educator at all times.
- Volunteers are briefed prior to participating on an excursion about the risk assessment, emergency procedures, supervision, photograph policy for privacy and confidentiality and use of mobile phone.
- Volunteers are aware that smoking is not permitted
- Volunteers are aware of need to wear appropriate clothing and footwear.

## **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.

Children will not be transported in a vehicle without written authorisation from the parent/guardian or authorised person.

All vehicles used for excursions must be registered and free of any defects that could put any passenger at harm. The driver must have a current and correct drivers licence for the vehicle class they are driving.

### Walking

*Educators will:*

- Ensure children and adults use the safest footpaths and safe crossings where possible, such as pedestrian crossings and traffic lights.
- Ensure all children and adults obey road rules.
- Ensure children follow the 'stop, look, listen and think' process when walking near roads.
- Remain vigilant that no child runs ahead or lags behind the group.

### Motor Passenger Vehicle

- A motor passenger vehicle seats **under** 12 adults (including the driver).
- Western Australian Child Restraint Laws require drivers to ensure all children up to 7 years of age travelling in a motor passenger vehicle are restrained in an approved child restraint.

Refer to Child Safety Commission – [Child Safety on WA Roads](#).

- Children will not be transported in an employee's private motor vehicle.
- Children will walk to and from the vehicle in small groups and carefully supervised.
- Determined educator to child ratios that will be maintained during vehicle journeys..
- Educators who supervise children in the vehicle will involve them in activities that will encourage appropriate behaviour rules and make the journey pleasant for all.

### Bus (Public Transport or Private Bus Charter):

- The Nominated Supervisor or excursion Responsible Person will check the seating capacity as displayed on the compliance registration is not exceeded.
- The Western Australian Road Traffic Code 2000 states - a 'bus' is defined as a motor vehicle, built mainly to carry people, which seats **over** 12 adults (including the driver). In this case, child restraints are not required.
- If the bus has seat belts, they must be worn at all times.
- Children travelling on a bus will be required to remain seated at all times the vehicle is in motion and preferably with, or close to, a supervising adult.

### Train (Public Transport):

- The risk assessment conducted prior to excursion will determine the travel arrangements on a train.
- Children travelling on a train will remain seated at all times whilst in motion, in one carriage if possible and preferably with, or close to, a supervising adult.

### **Insurance**

The Nominated Supervisor will review the insurance policy prior to the incursion / excursion to ensure liability is protected by the Service.

### **Check for Children's Safety**

*Responsible Person and Educators will ensure:*

- Children's walking and transporting attendance records are taken on excursions.
- Head counts are conducted at regular intervals whilst on the excursion, recorded and verified by another supervising adult.
- Where possible, educators hold children's hands when walking them to destination / venue premises

- Bathrooms and toilets are checked for any potential hazard before children enter, and children are escorted to the bathrooms and supervised
- When children are participating in walking excursion:
  - The Walking Excursion Record T1102 is used for each excursion to record all children attending the excursion and includes a safety checklist.
  - To ensure all children are accounted for, the following head counts are conducted and recorded:
    - ~ Before leaving the service
    - ~ Arriving at destination / venue
    - ~ Before leaving the destination / venue
    - ~ Arriving back at the service
  - Responsible Person to ensure all children are accounted for. A second person will repeat this check. The name, signature, time and date of the persons who accounted for the children is recorded.
- When transporting children:
  - The Transport Excursion Record T1065 is used for each excursion to record all children attending the excursion and includes a safety checklist.
  - The vehicle is parked to avoid other vehicles, driveways or car parks
  - The vehicle is parked as close as possible to the service premises or visiting venue.
  - Children only embark or disembark the vehicle when it is safe to do so, and a record is made immediately after.
  - To ensure all children are accounted for, the following head counts are conducted and recorded:
    - ~ Before leaving the service / embarking the vehicle
    - ~ Arriving at destination / disembark vehicle / interior vehicle check
    - ~ Arrive at venue premises
    - ~ Leaving venue premises
    - ~ Embarking vehicle / leaving destination
    - ~ Disembarking vehicle / interior vehicle check / arrive at service
  - A thorough check of the inside of the vehicle is made by the excursion Responsible Person to ensure that no child is left in the vehicle. A second person will repeat this check. The name, signature, time and date of the persons who accounted for the children is recorded.