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POLICY AND PROCEDURE

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Approved By:	Director
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EXCURSIONS/INCURSIONS

1. POLICY STATEMENT AND/OR PURPOSE

This policy outlines the procedures and responsibilities for planning and conducting excursions and regular outings as part of the educational program. The aim is to provide children with opportunities to engage with the local community, fostering a sense of belonging and connection to the world around them, while ensuring their safety and wellbeing.

2. APPLICATION

This procedure applies to all Catholic Early Learning and Care Services in the Diocese of Cairns.

To achieve this, the service will:

- Conduct comprehensive risk assessments for all excursions and outings.
- Obtain written authorisation from families prior to participation.
- Ensure appropriate supervision and adherence to safety standards throughout the activity.

For the purpose of this policy/procedure:

- An **excursion** is a structured learning experience which is conducted external to the CELC premises;
- An **incursion** is a planned learning experience, which is conducted within the CELC premises, and may involve members of the community attending the service to educate, perform or participate in learning experiences or bring plant/equipment to the premise for the children to use;
- A **Regular Outing** means a walk from the CELC Early Learning service to a local destination which the service visits regularly as part of its educational program and where the Risk Assessment is completed for the same outing,
- A **Risk Assessment** is assessing the risk involved in the activity and working out how likely it is that a hazard will harm someone and how serious the harm could be and putting strategies in place to minimise the risk of harm.

3. PROCEDURE

Planning Excursions/Incursions:

Decision-making when planning excursions and incursions requires the Nominated Supervisor and educators to take into consideration:

- Children's safety, health and wellbeing is paramount. All experiences for the service, including excursions and regular outings, will be conducted in a way that minimises and addresses any identified risks.
- Clear and concise guidelines to ensure management, educators and staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities in relation to excursions and regular outings.
- The proposed program/excursion and Risk Assessment are to be completed and submitted for Operations Manager's approval at a minimum of 4 weeks prior to the Vacation Care period commencement date.
- A Risk Assessment must be completed and available to all stakeholders prior to seeking permission from the parent/guardian for the child to attend.
- In the event that the service has **not conducted an excursion** to the site before, a site visit must be completed by the Nominated Supervisor/2IC **within the previous 3 months** before gaining written permission from the children's parents/guardians.
- For **previously attended** and **approved** excursion venues or destinations, the Nominated Supervisor or 2IC must have visited the site **within the previous 12 months**
- The Nominated Supervisor or 2IC must attend all excursions.

Risk Assessment and Booking & Consent Form (written authorisation)

The Nominated Supervisor of a service must ensure a risk assessment is completed in accordance with Regulation 100/101 and be approved by the Operations Manager **before** authorisation from parents/guardians is sought under regulation 102 for an excursion.

- The Nominated Supervisor must:
 - Complete the program that outlines what excursion/incursions are planned;
 - Develop Risk Assessments for the excursion/incursion*;
 - Issue Booking and Consent Forms via the electronic booking system;
 - Seek approval in writing from the Operations Manager prior to releasing the program or booking and consent form to families

*Risk assessments must be made available to parents/guardians.

The below steps outline the process in completing a Risk Assessment prior to gaining approval for an excursion or incursion.

1. Site visit:

The NS/2IC MUST conduct a site visit prior to completing the Risk Assessment. During this visit, they must:

- Identify potential hazards and risk that children may encounter at the site of the excursion.
- Assess risks and hazards along the designated travel route to and from the excursion site.
- Confirm the location of the toilets, emergency exits, and evacuation routes and the risks associated with these.
- Identify the availability of drinking water and shaded areas.
- Review the pathways or routes to be used during the excursion and identify any hazards and risks within these areas.
- If children will access multiple areas at the site, the NS/2IC must identify risks within each space and consider the activities children will engage in while in those areas.

- If applicable, request, view and collect the excursion site's Risk Assessment documentation.

2. **Creating a risk assessment** (refer to the Risk Management Policy when writing Risk Assessments)

STEP ONE: Identify

Conduct a site visit as per above instructions and identify hazards.

- Identify the risks associated with the excursion/Incursion.

Risk assessments for excursion MUST address the following:

- Proposed route and destination for the excursion.
- Any water hazards and risk associated with water-based experiences.
- Transporting children, including:
 - The means of transport
 - Seatbelt requirements for your state or territory
 - The process for entering and exiting the service
 - The destination
 - The procedures for embarking and disembarking the means of transport
 - The process of how each child will be accounted for on embarking and disembarking the means of transport.
 - The number of adults and children involved in the excursion
 - The number of educators or to her responsible adults needed to provide adequate supervision
 - The proposed experiences/activities that the children will engage in while on the excursion
 - The duration of the excursion, including the expected departure time from the service, arrival time at the destination and departure time from the destination and arrival time back at the service.

A map of the proposed route to be taken to and from the destination must be attached to the Risk Assessment.

STEP TWO: Assess

Using the Risk Matrix, assess the risks identified (likelihood vs consequences)

- Assess the hazard.
- Assess the possible harm, likelihood, consequence and seriousness of the hazard.
- Identify any potential risks or benefits of undertaking the activity/experience for children's learning, development and wellbeing.

When assessing the risk of possible harm, it is important to consider the following:

- How likely is it to happen?
- How often might it happen?
- How serious is the outcome?
- What are the possible consequences?
- Are there any potential benefits to children's learning, development and wellbeing?

STEP THREE: Manage

Control measures are strategies and actions to be implemented to manage, eliminate or reduce hazards and potential risks.

Specify the control measures that will be put in place to reduce and manage the risk to all individuals involved.

The control measures **MUST** address **ALL** identified risks and hazards including the ones mentioned above and any other hazards that have been identified. Categories to consider are:

- Biological (insects, plants, animals, food, medical emergencies such as allergies)
- Chemicals
- Emergency management (evacuation/lockdown, medical emergency, inquiry to child or adult)
- Environmental (sun exposure, water, sound/noise, weather conditions, temperature)
- Facilities, building environments and equipment (carparks, paths, fixed equipment /furniture, entries and exits to the facility)
- Vehicles, machinery and equipment
- Manual tasks
- Social and Emotional hazards
- People and members of the public

Step Four: Evaluate and Monitor:

Evaluate the risk of harm now that control measures have been put in place and ensure that controls put in place reduce the likelihood of harm.

Booking and Consent Form/Written Authorisation:

- The booking and consent form can only be completed by a parent/guardian or an authorised nominee named in the child's enrolment form.
- All children have written authorisation (Booking and Consent) to attend the service during Vacation Care, Student Free Days and Term 4 Half Days.
- Excursions must be compliant with the National Regulations 102 – Authorisation for Excursions.
- All authorisations will be stored and archived on the service's Child Care Management Software.
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Requirements of a regular excursion:

The Authorisation forms in the Child Care Management Software MUST state the following information as per regulation 102:

- The child's name;
- The reason the child is to be taken outside the service premises;
- The date the child is to be taken on the excursion and the time that the child will be away from the service (unless it is for a regular excursion);
- A description of the proposed destination and activities to be undertaken by the child for the excursion

Details about transporting children:

- the means of transport to be used;
- any state or territory specific laws for seatbelts or safety restraints;
- the anticipated number of children likely to be attending the excursion.

Other information:

- The expected educator-to-child ratio and the number of staff members and any other adults who will accompany and supervise the children on the excursion;
- That a risk assessment has been prepared and is available at the service, noting that:
- where a children's education and care service is provided on a school site, it is not considered an excursion if the child or children leave the service accompanied by an educator but do not leave the school site.

Regular Outings – Early Learning Only

- If the excursion is a regular outing, the authorisation from families or other authorised persons are required once annually in Child Care Software Management System.
- The Nominated Supervisor/Lead Educator is required to complete the details of the regular outing and complete a risk assessment as per this policy/procedure.
- A Responsible Person or NS/2IC must be in attendance for all regular outings.

Swimming Excursions/incursions

Refer to 'Water Safety' Policy

Documentation requirements for excursions:

The following is a list of documents that must be available at all times when **ON** an excursion:

- Copy of risk assessment
- Roll of who is attending the excursion
- Emergency contact details – children
- Emergency contact details – educators
- Booking and consent forms (accessed via Child Care Software Management System APP)
- Individual health action plans and Risk Minimisation and Communication Plans
- General action plans for asthma and anaphylaxis
- Incident report forms (accessed via Child Care Software Management System APP)
- Grouping of children and educators (if used in planning)
- Children's individualised Behaviour Support and Guidance Plans
- Special requirements

Equipment requirements for excursions

The following is a list equipment that must be available at all times when on an excursion:

- First aid kit including service generic EpiPen and Ventolin
- Individual children's medication
- Sunscreen
- Insect repellent
- Mobile telephone (additional service phone for excursion)/walkie talkies
- Drinking water (for emergencies)
- Credit card
- Hand sanitiser

Transport for excursions

- Nominated Supervisors must ensure a staff member or Nominated Supervisor (other than the driver) accounts for children as they get in or out of a vehicle at an education and care service.
- Nominated Supervisors must ensure records are made showing children are accounted for as they get in or out of a vehicle at the education and care service.
- Nominated Supervisors must ensure records are made, confirming a check of the inside of a vehicle was completed at the service after all children have left to ensure no children remain.

To ensure the above, the Nominated Supervisor must:

- Make sure roll records are accurate and up to date.
- Conduct both roll checks and head counts
 - Conducting roll calls as children enter and leave the vehicle is essential.
 - When completing roll checks, look at the child as they respond
 - If a child is not named on the roll, the educator should confirm with the service, school or the parent of the child whether they should be in care that day and update the roll accordingly.
- Thoroughly check the vehicle
 - Conduct a physical inspection throughout the vehicle to ensure all children have left the vehicle, including checking under the seats, in the luggage racks and in any storage areas.
 - Have a second person to physically check the vehicle again, including checking under the seats, in the luggage rack and in any storage area.
- Conduct a second roll check and headcount upon entry to the service/arrival to the venue to ensure all children are accounted for.
- All educators are to be seated spread throughout the bus.
- All staff should receive a practical induction and regular, practical training relating to the transportation of children.
- It is your responsibility to ensure children in your care are not left unattended in vehicles.
- If a child is unaccounted for, immediately make all necessary enquiries to establish the child's whereabouts.
 - Contact Operations Manager to inform CELC Director of the situation.
 - The bus/vehicle must not leave the service/venue until all children are accounted for.
 - You will need to conduct physical searches of the service and, if necessary, contact the child's family and/or the police.

In any of the circumstances below, **Operations Manager is to be contacted:**

- bus breakdown
- bus accident
- missing child, or child appears to be missing.

• CELC's minimum transportation controls for excursions:

Buses:

- Seating capacity as displayed on compliance plate is not exceeded.
- Buses must have seat belts available for all occupants. CELC will not take children on a bus without a seatbelt at any time.
- Minimum of 1 adult to 8 children whilst travelling on a bus, unless otherwise stated according to an approved Risk Assessment
- As above, The Nominated Supervisor must print off a map (and clearly mark the bus route to and from the excursion venue as part of the risk assessment.

Personal vehicles:

- Where required and approved by the Operations Manager as part of the excursion risk assessment, and if ratio allows, educators may drive their personal vehicle to/from an excursion.
- CELC children **are not permitted** to travel in an educator's vehicle at any time.

Walk:

- The Nominated Supervisor must print off a map and clearly mark the walking route to and from the excursion venue as part of the risk assessment.
- Minimum of 1 adult to 8 children must be used when walking to an excursion venue, unless otherwise stated according to an approved Risk Assessment
- The Nominated Supervisor MUST drive/walk the route on the morning of the excursion to ensure there are no new hazards e.g. road works.

- **On the day of excursion/incursion**

All aspects of the General Risk Assessment document and the activity/venue-specific risk assessment and related processes must be followed

Head Count must be completed every 30 – 45 minutes.

- If head counts don't match, a roll call must be conducted – refer to the process for a child unaccounted for procedure in the Arr. & Dep Policy or step out the entire procedure here...?

- **Should an excursion need to be cancelled:**

The Nominated Supervisor is to notify CELC Management of the cancellation, the reason and the contingency plan.

Notification of cancellation to be communicated by:

- Telephone call to company/venue/transport provider to advise of cancellation, followed up by an email
- All parents/guardians to be notified by email, SMS and posted on Childcare Software Management System as soon as practically possible

4. BREACHES OF THIS POLICY

Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against a person who is found to have breached the requirements contained within this document. Action taken will depend on the nature and circumstance of each breach and could include an official warning and note on the individual's personnel file; a formal written and/or verbal apology; counselling; demotion; transfer; or suspension or dismissal for very serious matters

5. ENQUIRIES

Catholic Early Learning and Care Director - admin@ccelc.catholic.org.au

6. SEE ALSO

- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- Education and Care Services National Law 2010
- The National Quality Standard for Education and Care Services 2018
- National Quality Standards

Policies

- Incident Management

- Risk Management
- Medical Conditions
- Emergency Response
- Travel
- Providing a Child Safe environment
- Nutrition and Menu Planning
- Sun protection
- Water safety
- Sleep and Rest for Children
- Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations
- Arrivals and Departures

Forms

- Risk Assessment Excursion/Incursion
- Booking and Consent Form in OWNA
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7. APPROVAL

Alison Forster
Director
Catholic Early Learning and Care

Date: 8/12/2025