

## EXCURSIONS POLICY

### 1. Purpose:

The purpose of this Policy is:

- To foster children and young people's wellbeing and safety in a safe and supportive environment.
- To provide educators with appropriate strategies and procedures to use when determining risks or hazards during incursions, excursions and general activities provided for children and young people.

### 2. Scope:

This policy applies to:

- Little Saints Early learning Centre (the Service) and
- St Andrew's OSHC (the Service)

### 3. Policy Statement:

While most activities within a childcare centre pose little risk of injury, some activities require a risk assessment to ensure that potential risks can be identified and effective strategies developed in order to remove or minimise them. This policy outlines how risk of harm will be managed at the Service for general identified risks; as well as a risk assessment for excursions.

The Service supports the rights of children and young people and is committed to providing a safe and supportive service environment directed at ensuring their safety and wellbeing.

In order to support this commitment, we are dedicated to our child risk management strategy which effectively addresses the safety and wellbeing of children and young people in our care.

### 4. Rationale:

The Public Safety Business Agency (PSBA) identifies specific strategies which are to be implemented within a childcare environment to ensure that any activities which may pose a risk of harm to children or staff are managed. 'Harm' is defined as including physical, sexual, psychological, emotional, cultural abuse and neglect.

The PSBA describes the following processes which must be put in place in services to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and young people:

- A statement of commitment – outlines the College's commitment to maintain the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.
- A code of conduct – outlines the College's values and provides expectations for all stakeholders.
- Policies for recruiting, selecting, training and managing employees (including volunteers).

- Procedures for handling disclosures and suspicions of harm – to ensure that staff respond as quickly as possible to a disclosure, allegation or suspicion of harm.
- A plan for managing breaches of this child and youth risk management strategy.
- Blue card policy – including tracking/monitoring a register of blue cards or exemption cards.
- A risk management plan for high risk activities and special events – to identify potential risks and develop and implement an effective risk management plan to remove or minimise the risk of harm to children and young people.
- Strategies for communication and support – how all stakeholders are made aware of this policy.

## **5. Risk Management:**

The risk management process includes:

- Describing the activity
- Identifying the hazards or risks
- Risk assessment using risk matrix
- Managing the risks: Elimination / control measures
- Review

## **6. Excursions**

A site visit must be carried out prior to the excursion. If visiting the site is not possible e.g. due to distance, a phone call must be made to the venue to ascertain any risks. The following questions must be answered:

- Provision of toilets
- Provision of handwashing facilities
- The suitability/appropriateness of the venue
- Provision of water for drinking
- Provision of shelter for both shade and wet weather
- Mobile phone coverage

The Excursion Pack must be completed for all excursions, including a Pre-Excursion Site Evaluation Form and before the venue is used, it must be approved by the OSHC Coordinator or the Nominated Supervisor.

Upon arrival at the venue, educators must assess risk for that day before children enter the venue. If the venue is too large, educators must assess for risk as they enter each section before children are permitted to use the area.

A risk assessment must be carried out for an excursion before permission is sought. The risk assessment must identify and assess risks that an excursion may pose to the safety, health or wellbeing of any child being taken on the excursion, and detail strategies for minimising and managing those risks. The risk assessment must consider:

- the proposed route and destination for the excursion
- any water hazards and risks associated with water based activities
- the method of transport
- the number of adults and children involved in the excursion
- given the risk/s posed, the number of educators or other responsible adults that is appropriate to provide supervision and whether any specialised skills are required to ensure children's safety
- the proposed activities
- the likely length of time of the excursion
- the items that should be taken on the excursion.

(Guide to the Law, ACECQA)

While an increased educator to child ratio for excursions is not specified in the *National Regulations*, there is a requirement to adequately supervise children at all times. A thorough risk assessment should determine whether minimum ratios are sufficient to provide adequate supervision while attending an excursion. (Guide to the Law, ACECQA)

A written authorisation must be given by a parent or other person with authority for an excursion, before a child leaves the approved service. The authorisation must contain the information prescribed in the *National Regulations*. For a regular outing, authorisation is only required to be obtained once every 12 months. Excursions to the College are considered regular outings and families will be required to provide permission annually via our online survey monkey form.

(Guide to the Law, ACECQA)

### **7.Sources & Further Reading:**

- Regulations 100–102, 168(2)(g)
- Public Safety Business Agency (<http://www.bluecard.qld.gov.au/>)

### **8.Related Documents:**

- Child Risk Management Strategy Worksheet
- Child Risk Management Strategy Summary
- Excursion Pack