

Excursions and Regular Outings Procedure

1. Purpose

Under the Education and Care Services National Regulations, an approved provider must ensure that policies and procedures are in place for managing excursions and regular outings (Regulation 168) and take reasonable steps to ensure policies and procedures are followed.

The purpose of this Policy is to ensure excursions, incursions and regular outings are:

- Aligned with curriculum decision making and documentation processes
- Safe and suitable for all involved
- Communicated to parents/guardians ahead of time with accurate information so that the parent/guardian may make an informed decision regarding participation for them and/or their child/ren.

2. Scope

This policy applies to My Place FDC Educators, Educator Assistants, staff, parents, authorised nominees and children in care.

3. Definitions

Approved Provider: Inala Community House (ICH) has approval from the Federal Government to operate an approved FDC service.

Service: My Place Family Day Care, whose Approved Provider is Inala Community House.

Parent/Guardian: The person responsible for the payment of fees and who is paid the Child Care Subsidy. Referred to as the Parent/s. PLEASE NOTE: this does not include a parent who is prohibited by a court order from having contact with the child

Educator: A suitably qualified person who is registered with the service.

Educator Assistant: With permission from parents, the Educator Assistant can:

- Transport children between the Educator's residence and a school or another education and care service or child's home.
- Support the Educator in provision of child care (working with the Educator present) or in absence of the Educator in unforeseeable or exceptional circumstances to attend an appointment if less than 4 hours, and approved by the Service and notice of that (Educator) absence has been given to parents of the children involved.

Authorised Nominee: In relation to a child, means a person who has been given permission by a parent or guardian to collect the child from the FDC Educator

Authorised Person: Means a person who is a parent or family member of the child who is being educated and cared for by the Educator. PLEASE NOTE: A parent or family member does not include a person whose access to the child is provided or restricted by a court

order or tribunal of which the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor or Educator is aware of.

Authorisation/Permissions: An Authorised Nominee makes written authorisation for their child to participate in any Excursion/Transport when they first commence care and as required with the individual Educator. Each Educator's regular Excursion/Transportation will be discussed with individual families and permissions sort annually.

Excursions: Any activity outside the approved FDC residence, that has been planned as a learning opportunity for the child and is part of the current educational program. Examples of an excursion are:

- Visits to Aquariums, wildlife parks
- Play sessions with My Place FDC
- Visits to the beach or a park

Regular Excursion: Means a walk, drive or trip to and from a destination that occurs on a regular basis as in daily, weekly, fortnightly or monthly where the circumstances relevant to the risk assessment are substantially the same on each outing. Examples of regular outings are:

- Dropping off or picking up from schools, day care or kindergarten
- Play groups
- Visiting the same educator
- Music sessions
- Playgrounds

Regular transportation: Is transport by the Educator or arranged by the Educator (other than as part of an excursion) of a child being educated and cared for, where the circumstances relevant to a risk assessment are substantially the same each time the child is transported. [An example of a change in circumstances that are substantially different might be when the means of transport or the transportation route or destination(s) have altered, or the provider of the transportation service has changed.]

Non-regular Transport: In relation to an Education and Care Service, it means transportation organised by the Educator that is not a regular transportation. *Wherever 'excursion' is mentioned within this policy and procedure it is taken to be inclusive of a 'regular excursion', unless specifically mentioned otherwise.*

4. Procedure

4.1 Penalties for breaching regulatory requirements

Under the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations, penalties may apply to Approved Providers and FDC Educators in relation to:

- Offence to inadequately supervise children (s.165 of the Law)
- Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards (s.167 of the Law)
- Children attending the service are provided with an environment that is free from the use of tobacco, illicit drugs and alcohol (regulation 82)

- A child involved in any incident, injury, trauma or illness while attending the service, a parent of the child is notified as soon as practicable and no later than 24 hours after the occurrence (regulation 86)
- A child in attendance does not leave the residence or venue except for one of the reasons outlined (regulation 99)
- A risk assessment must be conducted before excursion (Regulation 100)
- A child who is being educated and cared for at the residence or venue is not taken outside the service premises on an excursion without written authorisation (Regulation 102)
- A transport risk assessment must be conducted before service transports child (Regulation 102B)
- Authorisation for service to transport children (Regulation 102D)

Penalties for breaching these regulatory requirements may be as high as \$57,400.

4.2 Excursion Preparation and Planning

The Service as the Approved Provider's representative must be informed of any excursion prior to its commencement. The Service must receive an Excursion/Transportation Risk Management Plan and approve the excursion/regular outing **BEFORE** children can be taken outside the Educators residence. My Place FDC has the right to decline the approval of an excursion if deemed not in the child's best interest.

Specific requirements relating to:

- The transporting of children for excursions and regular excursions are detailed within policy 2.17 Transporting Children
- The conduct of risk assessments and management plans for excursions are detailed within the Excursion and Regular Outings Policy and Procedure

Excursions and outings should be child-orientated, add value to the curriculum and planned for with consideration for the interests and learning outcomes of each individual child in care. It is essential that excursions and outings are discussed with families and that Educators complete the *Excursion/Regular Excursion/Transport Risk Assessment and Authorisation Form* and get it signed by the families **BEFORE** the commencement of any outings.

Families not wanting their child to attend excursions or outings should have their views respected and accommodated where possible. However, they need to be aware other children will still be participating and this may mean they will have to seek alternative care for the period/day. Families will be charged as usual for their booking if they decide not to allow their child to attend.

Outings to non-approved areas of the Educators property must not occur unless approved by the Coordination Team to ensure that sufficient risk assessment has occurred. An Excursion/Regular Excursion/Transport Risk Assessment and Authorisation Form will be required for all outings to any areas not approved for FDC to ensure that the area has been risk assessed each time. This is not approved to occur on a flexible basis.

Educators are required to carry a mobile phone always turned on and keep the contacts of families and the Coordination Team in the phone and up to date. When planning for excursions or regular outings, consideration needs to be given to what resources are required to ensure children's health, wellbeing, and safety is protected (including but not limited to):

- Prams and other items (blankets for children to sit on)
- Medical conditions – requirements in line with Health Management plan
- Essential supplies required and how they will be transported e.g. food, drinks (placed in cooler bag or similar with ice bricks), hand towels, soap, nappies, bags and wipes.
- Applying sunscreen before leaving the residence and sunscreen applied at regular intervals (include in the bag being taken on excursion)
- Children having adequate clothing to cover shoulders and a hat is supplied
- Children having suitable footwear, especially for active and running activities
- Fully stocked first aid kit is accessible.

Educators should consider the learning outcomes to be achieved by undertaking this excursion and how child's learning will be promoted.

4.3 Excursions and Regular Outings

4.3.1 Regular Outings

At the initial interview and each year after that, Educators will provide parents with the list of regular outings and regular transportation that the Educator intends to take their child/children on. The Excursion/ Regular Excursion/ Transport Risk Assessment and Authorisation Form must be completed and authorised in writing by the child's parent or authorised nominee:

- For each regular outing/transportation listed; and
- At least once in each 12-month period unless there is a change in circumstances of the regular outing/transportation, this must be updated, and new parental permission gained.

A Excursion/ Regular Excursion/ Transport Risk Assessment and Authorisation Form is completed by Educators for all regular outings and submitted to the Coordination Team for approval. The *Excursion/ Regular Excursion/ Transport Risk Assessment and Authorisation Form* should be accompanied by a map showing the planned route to the destination, or written directions on the form.

Excursion/ Regular Excursion/ Transport Risk Assessment and Authorisation Form for each regular outing must be completed or reviewed at least annually or when a new child starts care, and before seeking parental authorisation. The completed *Excursion/ Regular Excursion/ Transport Risk Assessment and Authorisation Form* must be assessed by the Coordinator who will provide feedback or approval on receiving the completed forms.

Alternative arrangements (contingency plans) will be planned in case of changed weather conditions or other unforeseen circumstances.

Regular Transportation can be defined as school runs / pick up children. If the Educator needs to exceed this, then they need to seek written permission from the Coordination Team. The Educator must be aware of the rules around the definition of 'Regular Outings and Regular Transportation', meaning only excursions which meet the 'REGULAR' definition will be included on the 2.17 Transporting Children Policy.

Once approval is given, the Educator will share the completed approved *Excursion/ Regular Excursion/ Transport Risk Assessment and Authorisation Form* with families and seek written permission/authorisation for their child to participate.

Educators are required to complete any trips on their transporting form and abide by procedures as set out in Policy 2.17 Transporting Children. Where the Educator charges for transportation, only one child in the family can be charged per trip. This fee may occur for example when transporting children to and from school. Each Educator lists such charges in their Fee Schedule.

If the Educator goes on a regular outing, the Coordination Team must be notified by text to the excursion phone, of the time, location and number of children present. The parents or authorised nominee must also be notified before the regular outing takes place. Educators ARE NOT required to text the excursion phone for school drop off and collection. Educators must text or phone the service in the event of a change of route as per Excursion/ Regular Excursion/ Transport Risk Assessment and Authorisation Form.

4.3.2 Excursions

Educators will complete a risk assessment of each location, venue, or event before seeking service and parental permission using the Excursion/ Regular Excursion/ Transport Risk Assessment and Authorisation Form regardless of whether the venue has been visited as an excursion at a prior time. All Excursion/ Regular Excursion/ Transport Risk Assessment and Authorisation Forms and associated forms must be completed and sent to the office to be approved by a Coordinator/Nominated Supervisor, prior to the intended excursion.

Once the Excursion/ Regular Excursion/ Transport Risk Assessment and Authorisation Forms are approved, Educators will discuss the excursion with the parent, in particular, the activities to be undertaken and strategies for risk management.

The Parent or authorised Nominee will sign the Excursion/ Regular Excursion/ Transport Risk Assessment and Authorisation Forms prior to the excursion or make alternative arrangements for their child.

Please note: Where the service deems the excursion is unsafe for any child or not appropriate for the ages of children involved, Educators and parents will be informed that the excursion will not be approved.

Excursions and regular outings must follow the guidelines for transporting of children. To participate in any additional excursions or outings, Educators must seek written permission from the Coordination Team **24 hours prior** to the additional excursion or outing.

5. Risk Assessments

5.1 Preparing risk assessments

When proposing to take children outside the approved FDC residence/venue for an excursion, Educators will be required to review risk assessments provided by My Place FDC for the proposed excursion or outing. For any specific excursions or outings, Educators will be required to complete an *Excursion/ Regular Excursion/ Transport Risk Assessment and Authorisation Forms*, and have it approved by the Coordination Team **prior** to parental authority being obtained.

A visit to the proposed excursion destination may assist in conducting a risk assessment and may include (but not be limited to):

- Visiting the destination/venue to identify any hazards present in the environment
- Utilising other means to assess the site such as google maps, contacting the venue
- Water hazard, give thought to the location and likelihood of access by a child
- Location of event/equipment to a busy road or is the location fenced
- Suitability of equipment – height and position for supervision
- Capacity to supervise each child attending – consider age range and abilities in relation to the direct supervision of a child and supervision of all other children,
- Availability of toilets and handwashing facilities
- Available shade – consider the best time of day (sunscreen required and hats, clothing to reduce the likelihood of sun exposure)
- Flora or fauna which could pose a risk – attracts bees, spiders or snakes,
- Capacity to sight all children during play experiences
- Identify other wildlife and animals that could pose a risk to a child's safety, dogs off leash
- Document the route to the destination and an alternate route to and from the destination
- Consider how the transport of children (in vehicles, on foot or public transport) will be managed

Once approval from the Coordination Team has been received, Educators will be required to get parental signatures authorising the outings and send completed document to Coordinator.

5.2 Exceptions for Regular Outings

A newly developed risk assessment is not required for an excursion if:

- The excursion is a **regular excursion or regular transport such as a school run or dropping off**; and
- A risk assessment has already been conducted for the excursion/regular outing within the last 12 months
- At the discretion of the service these documents may need to be updated as requested
- Risk Assessments are reviewed at least annually or when a new child starts care, and before seeking parental authorisation

5.3 Endorsement of risk assessments

Risk assessments are required to be endorsed by the Coordination Team prior to seeking parent written authorisation therefore, Educators should forward their completed *Excursion/ Regular Excursion/ Transport Risk Assessment and Authorisation Form* to the Coordination Team ensuring sufficient time for consideration and approval – at least one week.

The Coordination Team will review and determine if the *Excursion/ Regular Excursion/ Transport Risk Assessment and Authorisation Form* is appropriate and if the *Excursion/ Regular Excursion/ Transport Risk Assessment and Authorisation Form* mitigates the risk of harm to children.

6. Authorisation for each child's participation

Written authorisation from a parent (or other persons named with authorisation in the child's enrolment record), will be held by the FDC Educator before the child is taken on an excursion or regular excursion. My Place FDC's Excursion/ Regular Excursion/ Transport Risk Assessment and Authorisation Form will be created in a manner to provide and collect all relevant details from the parent or authorised nominee. The written authorisation for an excursion or regular outing must contain:

- The child's name
- The reason the child is to be taken outside the premises
- The date the child is to be taken on the excursion (unless the authorisation is for a regular outing)
- A description of the proposed 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 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
- That a risk assessment has been prepared and is available on request from the Educator

All authorisations will be stored in a manner consistent with the protocols set out in policy 7.7 Privacy and Confidentiality of Records.

7. Transport and Travel

Educators transporting children travelling to or from an excursion or regular outing will comply with specific requirements regarding transporting children and vehicle safety as set out in policy 2.17 Transporting Children.

Where the Educator nominates an alternate driver, such as an Educator Assistant, a certified copy of this person's Blue Card and Driver's License is to be provided to the Coordination Team. The alternate driver must be listed on the Regular Outings and Excursion Form and the Educator must be present if that person is driving the children.

For regular outings such as school pickups and drop offs, permission from the parent will be sought in writing to allow an Educator Assistant to transport children as per National Regulation 144 which states that an approved FDC Educator Assistant may assist the FDC Educator:

- a) *in the absence of the family day care educator, to transport or escort a child between the family day care residence or approved family day care venue and*
 - i. *a school; or*
 - ii. *another education and care service or children's service; or*
 - iii. *the child's home.*

Educators are required to carry with them in the vehicle and on their person, the My Place FDC contact details, children's emergency contacts and medical information.

Educators must only transport the number of children that can be safely transported in their vehicle and ensure vehicles are not accessible to children when not in use. Educators must ensure their vehicle has enough petrol to accommodate for the excursion or regular outing travel as children **MUST NOT** be left in the vehicle whilst paying.

7.1 Escorting children

Educators will seek approval from My Place FDC for all circumstances where children may be escorted by an Educator or Educator Assistant, including regular outings for school pick up and drop off. Authorisation for escorting children will be obtained through the *Regular Outing/Transportation Permission Form* and signed by a parent.

Before escorting children or attending walking outings Educators and supervising adults will discuss road safety with children to ensure that the road rules are obeyed and that we can walk on the footpath and cross the road in a safe and organised way. Educators use a range of road safety strategies including:

- Holding a child's hand when near traffic and when another car is reversing nearby
- Making sure children get out of the car on the kerb side only
- Talking to children about road safety. Talking about what you are doing even with very young children e.g. 'Look and listen for cars' while walking with the child in the pram

Educators should be aware of road safety and play safety and discuss with children. They should have a strategy in place for crossing the road and car park safety.

7.2 Transport on buses

Ensure the seating capacity displayed on the compliance plate is not exceeded. All children must sit on seats, preferably with or close to an adult. Seat belt guidelines must be followed depending on the bus. If the bus has seat belts, they must always be worn.

7.3 Other Public Transport

Educators should ensure children are seated at all times while transport is moving. Utilising seatbelts if available.

8. Supervision

As per requirements as set out in policy 2.4 Supervision of Children, the role of the Educator is to ensure the safety and well-being of all children. Educator-to-child ratios alone do not determine what is considered adequate supervision and does not automatically allow for the excursion or outing to occur, particularly if there is water accessible.

Educators must maintain supervision, requiring that they be actively involved with and for the safety of the children.

Where parents/guardians, volunteers or students are participating in an excursion, Educators will discuss what supervising children looks like along with their expectations.

Educators will stay close to monitor and check in with them, so they are not left with sole supervision of any children. Educators will advise supervising adults of their responsibilities while on outings. These responsibilities include:

- Advising the Educator of any immediate risk, incident, or emergency
- Identify a signal to be used in the case of an emergency
- Remain calm during an emergency and signalling for immediate assistance
- Identifying the person in charge of administering first aid whilst on the outing
- Ensuring the safety of all children
- Accounting for all children at regular intervals through head counts.

9. Review

This procedure shall be reviewed at a minimum every two years in conjunction with the policy.

	Date	Details
V1.0	07/2015	Original policy issued
V2.0	12/2016	Reviewed
V3.0	08/2017	Reviewed
V4.0	11/2019	Reviewed
V5.0	01/2021	Reviewed and excursions procedures separated
V6.0	09/2024	Reviewed
V7.0	26/05/2025	Updated format and enhanced procedures
V7.1	5/09/2025	Updated document names

10. Related Documents

Please refer to the Excursions and Regular Outings Policy for all related legislation, policies and procedures, forms.