EXCURSIONS

Quality Area 2: Children’s Health and Safety

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: Regulation 101,102

Link to national Quality Standard: 2.3.2, 7.3.5

INTRODUCTION

Excursions are a valuable experience for children, families and staff. Excursions provide opportunities to expand and enhance children’s experiences, explore different environments and engage in meaningful ways in their communities. Excursions require appropriate planning and risk management to ensure the best experience and enjoyment for all. Forest Hill Preschool is committed to providing excursions that are well considered and planned, provide meaningful experiences that ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of children at all times.

GOALS

* Whenever possible, attend transition to school excursions and visits to Forest Hill Public School to assist and enhance with transition to school.
* Include onsite visitors and performers (community dental nurse, Healthy Harold, Community members) as part of the program
* Plan for excursions with careful consideration of safety of children and adults.
* Carry out excursions only where full documentations and permissions have been completed and obtained.
* Undertake full risk assessment, consideration of value of educational excursions and plan for first aid requirements.

STRATEGIES/PROCEDURES

When planning the excursion the following should be considered and researched:

* Individual and the group of children involved, consideration given to the mobility and supervision of children with additional needs.
* Transport and traffic
* Supervision and staffing adult/child ratios and number of volunteers needed – that supervision is adequate so children cannot be separated from the group
* Venues that are developmentally appropriate and safe, access to hazardous equipment and environments is minimized and that adequate sun and shade protection is available and there is access to food, water and facilities e.g. toilets and handwashing.
* Requirements of the excursion meet with requirements of regulation and with public liability insurance held by Forest hill Community Preschool. Cost to the Preschool and /or families

PLANNING AND PREPARATIONS:

All excursions will be well planned in advance to:

* Maximize both children’s developmental experiences and their safety.
* Reflect the age, capacity and interest of the children.
* Ensure they are properly supervised and conducted in a safe manner
* Are conducted with fully informed written parental permission

When planning for an excursion staff will:

* Access the requirements of the excursion
* Conduct a risk assessment
* Book transport/venues if applicable
* Consider and make alternative arrangements for adverse weather conditions
* Inform families of the details of the excursion including destination, how we are getting there and back, what we will be doing there and what the child needs to bring and who will be supervising and what staff are attending with a first aid certificate.
* Provide parents/guardians with an excursion permission not to authorise their child to attend.
* Collect permission notes for each child attending prior to the excursion
* Request additional adult participation to help with supervision where required
* Check the portable first aid kit is fully stocked (including necessary medication such as asthma puffers or epi-pen is included). Check mobile phone is available.

RISK ASSESSMENT:

**The Nominated Supervisor will:**

Ensure a risk assessment is conducted prior to any excursion to identify and assess the risk the excursion may pose to safety, health and well-being of any child whilst on the excursion and will specify how the service will manage any risks identified.

The risk assessment will consider:

* Destination and duration of the excursion
* Potential water hazards or any hazard associated with water based activities
* Transport to and from destination
* Number of educators, responsible persons and children involved
* Proposed activities and
* Items to be taken on the excursion eg mobile phone, medications, emergency contact numbers
* Appoint a certified supervisor to be in charge of the excursion

If the excursion is a regular occurrence as in excursion to Forest Hill Public School; a risk assessment needs only to be carried out once, provided the circumstances around the excursion have not changed.

AUTHORISATION FOR EXCURSIONS:

**The Nominated Supervisor** **will ensure:**

For all excursions parents or legal guardians will be given an excursion permission form with full details of the excursion including:

* Date, description, duration, and destination of proposed excursion
* Method of transport
* Reason for excursion and proposed activities
* The anticipated adult: child ratio outlining number of staff attending and other adults attending
* A statement that a risk assessment has been prepared and is available at the Preschool for the parents to view

If the excursion is a regular outing such as excursions to Forest Hill Public school authorization is required once in a twelve month period.

**NO CHILD WILL BE TAKEN ON EXCCURSION UNLESS WRITTEN PERMISSIO HAS BEEN RECEIVED FROM PARENT OR LEGAL GUARDIAN**

FAMILIES AND VOLUNTEERS

Families will be encouraged to participate in excursions to assist maintain suitable child/adult ratios. If the parent needs to bring the child’s sibling they must be included in the ratio.

Id additional adults are required volunteers will be invited. Volunteers should be mature and responsible who are aware of the hazards and shall be fully prepared and briefed on their responsibilities, the procedure and hazards prior to leaving on the excursion.

Volunteers/family members shall not be left in sole charge of the children and must be supervised by educators at all times. They must sign in and out in the visitors/volunteers book.

TRANSPORT AND TRAFFIC

Safety of the children will be considered in the choice of route and mode of transport. Forest Hill Community Preschool will follow all applicable NSW road rules as well as the Kids and Traffic best practise recommendations for transporting young children safely in buses. Every reasonable precaution will be taken to protect children from harm and hazard likely to cause injury. Educators will educate and ensure children obey road safety rules and cross roads at crossings or lights where available. Children will be taught the importance of holding hands and staying together and educators will be vigilant to ensure no child runs ahead or lags behind the group.

SUPERVISION:

Supervision on excursions will ensure the safety and well – being of all children for the duration of the excursion, taking into account ratios and all the risks and hazards likely to be encounted. The venue will be assessed as safe for all children and adults on the excursion and should be easily supervised and accessible.

**WATER HAZARDS:** No excursion will be conducted to a swimming pool or other water related activity. Where there are significant water hazards (such as rivers, lakes or dams) risk management strategies will be identified and implemented.

CONDUCTING THE EXCURSION:

All educators, volunteers and children attending will be informed of the excursion timetable/itinerary, special requirements, safety procedures, grouping of children and responsibilities.

A list of children on the excursion will be left at the service and a copy taken on the excursion carried by the delegated certified supervisor. Before leaving the Preschool a note will be left on the front gate with the itinerary and time table, and mobile contact phone number.

* Children should be placed in small groups and each group allocated to a responsible adult
* Children should wear an identification badge with their name and the phone number of the Preschool on it
* Staff should supervise toileting of children on excursions unless the child’s parent or guardian is present.
* A head count and roll call of the children should be made prior to leaving, on arrival, before departing and on return to the preschool.
* There should be a designated meeting spot in case of emergency or in case a group get separated. Staff should be familiar with emergency exits and procedures of the venue and where the toilets are located.
* Sufficient food and drink (appropriate to excursions duration), first aid kit, mobile phone, emergency contacts, sign in sheet, extra clothing and any medication required should be taken.
* Children should be dressed appropriately with covered shoes and a sunhat and sunscreen applied.

EVALUATION:

All excursions are conducted in a safe manner and evaluated. Any improvements identified in the risk assessment prior to conducting the excursion or the evaluation are addressed and actioned to ensure the safety of the children and adults.