

Policy Title: Excursions Policy

Classification: Teaching and Learning

Monitored by: Senior Teachers

Approved by: GM Professional Services

Effective Date: May 2021

Review Date: May 2023

Objective: To ensure children are provided opportunities to experience safe educational experiences outside the kindergarten.

Commitment: All excursions (planned or spontaneous) will comply with the Licensing Criteria for Early Childhood Education and Care Centres and New Zealand Safety Regulations. HCK is committed to giving children opportunities to go on excursions that are enjoyable, safe and offer learning experiences that link with the curriculum.

Related documents

- Excursions Procedure (attached)
- Excursion documents and forms (found on Storypark)
- Safe Driving Policy (when using private or Association vehicles on an excursion)
- Licensing Criteria for Early Childhood Education and Care Services 2008

Policy Detail:

An “excursion” is defined as any occasion in which the children go outside the kindergarten premises. This includes visits to schools, libraries, local walks, bus rides etc.

Excursions may be:

- Where all the children at the kindergarten are taken on a planned excursion
- Where a small group of children are taken on a planned excursion, either as a “one off” or a regular event, such as the library, local school or park
- Spontaneous, where a small group of children are taken outside the kindergarten to a location within walking distance, such as the post box, local shop or school.

Kindergarten staff will ensure that:

1. A ‘Person Responsible’ is identified from within the teaching team who is participating in the excursion, and another identified if some children are remaining at the kindergarten.
2. Senior Teacher approval is gained before children are taken on an excursion.
3. Children are only be taken on an excursion once the required documentation has been completed and parental/caregiver permission has been received.
4. The Excursions Procedure is followed at all stages of the excursion.
5. Parents/caregivers are informed about the excursion details (ratio, costs, times, venue etc).
6. Excursions are generally linked to the current programme. Participating caregivers and children will be made aware of the aims of the excursion and their part in it.
7. There are teachers trained in first aid on the excursion and if appropriate, also at the kindergarten.
8. Teachers will take an appropriate first aid kit with them on the excursion.

Ratios:

1. There must be a ratio of one adult to four children.
2. Where children have access to open water, the ratio shall be one adult to two children. Senior Teacher approval must be gained to change the adult:child ratio. Senior Teachers will consider the distance to the water and the purpose of the excursion before granting a change to these ratios.
3. Where children are going to places with crowds and heavy traffic teachers consider the ratio required depending on the environmental factors, but the ratios will not be less than 1:4.
4. Where private or Association vehicles are used, two adults must travel in each vehicle. However, if a caregiver is only transporting their own child/ren, this ratio does not apply.

Transportation:

1. Public transport will be used whenever practically possible.
2. The Safe Driving Policy applies if private or Association vehicles are being used. A copy of the policy will be given to drivers.
3. The required documentation will be completed by both caregivers and drivers before transporting children in private or Association vehicles.

Children not attending an excursion:

1. Where parental permission is not given, plans must be in place to provide a learning programme for the child/ren remaining at kindergarten. The ratio of adults to children at the kindergarten will include a trained teacher.

Review:

This policy will be reviewed biennially, in consultation with staff.

Excursions Procedure

The Excursions Procedure must be followed when planning and undertaking any excursion.

Documents and forms relevant to this procedure can be found on Storypark. They are:

- Excursion Planning Checklist
- Excursion Approval Application
- Excursion Hazard Action Plan (+ example doc)
- Recurring Excursion Attendance List
- Parent/Whānau/Caregiver Permission for Excursion
- Spontaneous Excursions Record
- Vehicle Approval Form

Procedure Details:

1. With the prior approval of the Senior Teacher Team, children may be taken on an excursion. The 'Excursion Approval Application' and 'Excursion Hazard Action Plan' forms will be completed and sent to the kindergarten's Senior Teacher at least one week before the proposed excursion.
2. A copy of these approved forms must be held at the kindergarten.
3. An excursion cannot occur unless approval has been given.
4. Teams will develop procedures that include:
 - The purpose of the excursion
 - links to programme
 - administrative aspect of excursions eg: inform parents about the excursion venue, date, cost and how the excursion links to the programme etc.
5. Teachers must complete a 'Parent/Whānau/Caregiver Permission for Excursion form, which obtains written approval from all parents/whānau/caregivers. A record of this form will be kept at the kindergarten.
6. Public transport should be used wherever practically possible. Where private vehicles are used, the 'Vehicle Approval Form' must be completed and child restraint regulations must be complied with.
7. The Head Teacher is responsible for overseeing all Health and Safety requirements prior to and during any excursion. This includes identifying and addressing any potential hazards, ensuring that all supervising adults are aware of these hazards, and planning for emergencies whilst on the excursion. They must identify the Person Responsible, both attending the excursion and at the kindergarten.
8. Excursions should be linked to the current programme. Participating parents and children should be made aware of the purpose and aims of the excursion and their part in it.
9. Where parental permission is not given the Head Teacher may discuss alternative plans for the child with the parent. If the parent still chooses to send the child to kindergarten on the day of the excursion an appropriate programme must be made available and appropriate ratios provided.
10. The Head Teacher will advise their Senior Teacher of any incidents that occurred and any additional hazards that should be added to the list for that destination.

When planning an excursion teachers will ensure the following occurs:

- Excursion Approval Application and Excursion Hazard and Emergency Action Plan documents are completed and emailed to the appropriate Senior Teacher at least two weeks before the proposed excursion.
- Senior Teacher will approve or decline the excursion and advise the Head Teacher.
- Recurring excursions (eg: weekly library visits) must be reapproved biennially.
- Spontaneous excursions (eg: to the post box) will be documented on the Spontaneous Excursions Record.
- First Aid requirements are considered and provided for.

Whilst on the excursion:

- A notice will be placed on the kindergarten front door, stating where the excursion is and the planned return time. A contact phone number will also be given.
- All adults participating in the excursion will be clear about their roles and responsibilities.
- The Head Teacher is responsible for maintaining the correct adult to child ratio.
- The Head Teacher is responsible for identifying and managing any hazards and informing all supervising adults.
- A list of attendees, a first aid kit and a mobile phone will be taken on the excursion.
- The Head Teacher will make sure any child-specific medication is taken.
- The Person Responsible for the excursion will ensure all children and adults are present at each stage of the excursion.
- The Person Responsible for the excursion is responsible in the event of an emergency or accident.