

# Excursions Policy

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## **Quality Area 2: Children's health and safety**

**Standard 2.1** Each child's health is promoted.

**Standard 2.2** Each child is protected.

Element 2.1.1: Each child's wellbeing and comfort is provided for, including appropriate opportunities to meet each child's needs for sleep, rest and relaxation.

Element 2.2.1: At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazards.

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## **POLICY STATEMENT**

At Arabanoo, we firmly believe that children's connection with the world around them significantly contributes to their sense of belonging. As an integral part of our educational program, we organise excursions and regular outings to provide ample opportunities for children to establish meaningful connections with the local community.

The safety, health, and well-being of our children are of utmost importance to us. We are committed to conducting all experiences, including excursions and regular outings, in a manner that minimises and addresses any identified risks. Through thorough risk assessments, we ensure that every experience is carried out in a way that prioritises the well-being of the children.

To ensure effective coordination and implementation of excursions and regular outings, we maintain clear and concise roles and responsibilities. This ensures that our management, educators, and staff are fully aware of their specific roles and responsibilities in relation to these activities, guaranteeing a safe and enriching experience for all children and young people.

## **BACKGROUND**

The Education and Care Services National Regulations require approved providers to ensure their services have policies and procedures in place for managing excursions.

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## CONSIDERATIONS:

| Education and Care Services National Regulations                                       | Education and Care Services National Law | National Quality Standard | Other Service policies/documentation   | Other                    |
|--|--|---------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| R.89, R.90, R.99, R.100, R.101, R.102, R.122, R.123, R.136, R.168, R.170, R.171, R.172 | Section 165                              | 3.1, 3.2<br>7.1.1, 7.2.1  | Health & Safety Policies,<br>Water Safety,<br>Sun Protection,<br>Crossing Road Risk Assessment,<br>Road Safety Transport NSW | My Time, Our Place V2.0. |

## ENDORSEMENT BY THE SERVICE:

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| <p><b>Approval date:</b> Sept 2024</p> <p><b>Date for Review:</b> Sept 2026</p> |
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## Policy History

Version 1.0

December 2005, May 2006, March 2007, May 2007, February 2009, August 2010, May 2011, March 2012.

Version 2.0 Overhaul of policies following regulatory changes in 2012. Drafted from the Network template and using the Current Arabanoo Policy Handbook by Sarah Evans. Reviewed by Ruth Scott and Stuart Findlay, May 2013.

| Version | Date reviewed  | Who by                                    | Area changed              | Changes made           | Authorisation                      |
|---------|----------------|---|---------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 3.0     | 12 August 2015 | Melanie Murray and Constandina Shackleton | Information and equipment | Changed SPF30 to SPF50 | Kerry Sinclair<br>12 February 2016 |

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|-----|----------------------------|--|---|--|------------------------------------|
| 4.0 | 1 June 2017<br><br>18 July | Rowan Friend<br>and Belinda<br>Edmunds | Policy                                    | Split Policy from<br>Procedure<br>Specific reference<br>to authorisations  | Belinda<br>Edmunds 18<br>July 2017 |
| 5.0 | 2 May 2019                 | Rowan Friend<br>and Stewart<br>Dodwell | Standards                                 | Updated to the<br>new NQS  | Kate Sellick –<br>8 May 2019       |
| 6.0 | June 2023                  | Katie Woods<br>KW OSHC<br>Consulting   | Considerations<br><br>Policy<br>Statement | <p>More emphasis on the importance of excursions and regular outings in fostering children's connection with the world around them and promoting a sense of belonging.</p> <p>Commitment to prioritise the safety, health, and well-being of children by conducting comprehensive risk assessments and obtaining necessary authorisations.</p> <p>The policy statement also emphasises the importance of clear roles and responsibilities to ensure effective management and coordination of excursions and regular outings.</p> | Rowan Friend<br>– 3 Sept 2024      |

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## **PURPOSE**

Excursions play a vital role in our educational program, enabling children to establish connections with the local community, fostering a sense of belonging and connection to the world around them. This policy outlines the procedures and guidelines for planning, conducting, and ensuring the safety of children during excursions.

## **COMPLIANCE AND INSURANCE**

All excursions shall comply with the requirements and exclusions of the Public Liability Insurance cover held by Arabanoo. They will also comply with relevant Regulations and Legislations.

## **PROCEDURES**

### Planning Excursions

When planning excursions, Arabanoo will take into account the following factors:

1. Children and young people's ages, abilities and interests
2. Maximising children and young people's developmental experiences and opportunities to practice new skills
3. Suitability of the venue
4. Clothing and equipment required
5. Travel arrangements
6. Weather conditions (Time of year)

### Risk Assessment

#### General Risk Assessment

Arabanoo will conduct a Risk Assessment for each excursion, which includes:

- a. The proposed route and destination
- b. If any water hazards are expected
- c. Any risk associated with water-based experiences
- d. The transport to and from the proposed destination for the excursion
- e. The number of adults and children involved in the excursion;
- f. The number of educators or other responsible adults required to ensure appropriate supervision. This number will be determined by taking into consideration the risks posed by the excursion and whether any adults with specialised skills are required e.g. lifeguards.
- g. The proposed activities
- h. The likely duration of the excursion and the need for staff breaks

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- i. The items that should be taken on the excursion: including a first aid kit, mobile phone and a list of emergency contact numbers; refer d) 'Information and Equipment'
- j. Excursion relevant verbal expectations to children.
- k. Identifying and assessing risks that may pose a threat to the safety, health or wellbeing of any child or young person on the excursion.
- l. Specifying measures to manage and minimise identified risks.

### Change in Circumstances

Arabadoo recognises that changes in circumstances may affect the risk assessment for regular outings and excursions. In such cases, the service will update the risk assessment and authorisation forms. Examples of change in circumstances include:

- a. Additional children attending,
- b. Change in location,
- c. Changes to the route taken to and from the outing / excursion,

While some venues may offer their own risk assessments, their suitability may vary, so caution should be exercised when relying on them. Whenever feasible, a site visit will be conducted prior to each excursion to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the venue's safety considerations. In instances where a site visit is not possible, Arabadoo's risk assessment will depend on the information provided by the venue. However, upon arrival at the venue, educators will perform a brief visual risk assessment to identify any potential concerns and communicate them to all educators involved in the excursion. This process ensures a thorough evaluation of the environment's safety factors.

### Permission and Authorisation

#### Written authorisation

The following guidelines and information will be incorporated into the Arabadoo excursion authorisations forms:

- Parents or carers written authorisation must be obtained before taking any child outside the Service. Specific permission will be required for activities such as swimming and water-based experiences. By signing authorisation, parents or carers authorise their child to participate in the stated activities.
- Parents or carers signature on the Arabadoo enrolment form will grant authority for the child or young person to be escorted and spend time on the Eastern Campus school grounds.

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- Written authorisation is also required for ‘regular outings’, such as local parks. For regular outings, authorisation is only required to be obtained once within a 12-month period.
- Parents or carers must have completed an enrolment form in full before a child or young person can be enrolled for an excursion.
- Arabanoo’s excursion authorisation forms will include the following information:
  - Child or young person’s full name.
  - Reason for the child or young persons participation in the excursions.
  - Date of the excursion (unless it is a regular outing).
  - Description of the proposed destination for the excursion.
  - Method of transport to be used for the excursion.
  - Proposed activities that the child will engage in during the excursions.
  - Duration of time the child or young person will be away from the Arabanoo premises.
  - Anticipated number of children / young people likely to attend the excursion.
  - Anticipated number of educators and other adults who will accompany and supervise the children / young people during the excursion.
  - Acknowledgement that a risk assessment has been prepared and is available at the service.

### Communication

#### Communication with Educators prior to Excursion:

To ensure that all educators, staff, and volunteers are well-informed about their responsibilities during excursions, the following communication methods are employed:

- Facebook Post: A Facebook post is made to inform educators, staff, and volunteers about the upcoming excursion.
- Briefings: Prior to the commencement of vacation care, briefings are conducted to provide detailed information about the excursion and their respective roles and responsibilities.
- Risk Assessment and Daily Plan: Educators are required to read and sign a form acknowledging that they have reviewed the risk assessment and daily plan for the excursion. This ensures that they are aware of potential risks and prepared to manage them effectively.

#### Communication with Children prior to Excursion:

To effectively communicate with children and set expectations prior to excursions, the following strategies are implemented:

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Briefing on Expectations: Educators conduct a briefing with the children, going through a checklist to ensure everyone is prepared for the excursion. The briefing covers the following key points:

- Toileting procedures
- Expectations and safety procedures
- The wearing of wristbands
- The wearing of bibs for younger children

By conducting these briefings and discussing the expectations and necessary preparations, we aim to ensure that children are aware of their roles and responsibilities, promoting a safe and enjoyable experience during excursions.

## Supervision

### Adequate staffing

Adequate numbers of educators must be rostered on for excursions, considering the aged and developmental stages of the children attending. The minimum supervision ratios determined by Arabanoo are as follows:

- Non-water-based activities: 1 educator to 8 children
- Water-based activities: 1 educator to 5 children

### Head Counts

Regular head counts and roll calls should be conducted throughout the excursions, with at least two educators involved. This includes specific points such as:

- before and after toilet breaks,
- getting on and off the bus (or other means of transportation),
- when on the bus (or other means of transportation)
- separating into groups,
- arriving back at the Service,
- and at any other times deemed appropriate.

### Roll Calls

Roll Calls will happen periodically throughout the excursion. Children and young people are expected to raise their hand when responding to their name, and a dedicated educator is allocated to witness and identify the respond child/young person.

A roll should be taken at the following times:



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- before leaving the service,
- before getting on bus,
- before separating off into groups,
- when arriving back at the Service
- times when the head count doesn't add up,
- and at any other times deemed appropriate.

## Safety Measures

To enhance safety during excursions:

- Children and young people will wear Arabanoo wristbands displaying the Service's name and contact phone number.
- An educator will inspect all public toilets before children use them.
- Typically, an educator will accompany the children to the public toilet. However, if it is considered safe, children may attend in pairs with an educator closely monitoring their safety.
- Educators will always ensure that when accompanying children to the toilet, there is a minimum of two children or one additional educator present.
- When walking, one educator leads the group, another follows at the back, and remaining educators are spaced along the group, walking on the roadside of the footpath.
- Road crossings will use pedestrian crossings whenever possible, with one educator stepping onto the road to ensure safety. If necessary, this educator will hold traffic while the children / young people and remaining educators cross the road.
- Educators are required to always wear high-visibility vests during the excursion.
- Educators and other supervising adults will be briefed on the risk assessment and possess a comprehensive understanding of the excursion itinerary.
- All educators will be familiar with the lost child procedures and be knowledgeable about any individual child/young person's special requirements, such as dietary restrictions, allergies, support needs, or non-swimmers during water-based activities.
- Excursion details, including the location, contact phone numbers, and estimated return time to Arabanoo should be prominently displayed at the Service.
- Two Arabanoo Go Bags, containing emergency supplies, are stored in the service, and taken on excursions. A checklist of the Go Bog contents is included in the bag, and the contents are regularly inspected before each excursion to ensure nothing is missing.

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- The responsible person on duty will complete an embarking and disembarking checklist to confirm all children have safely entered and exited the bus and/or vehicle.

## Not Exceeding Maximum Capacity:

Excursions must ensure that the total number of children present, including both those at the service premises and those on the excursion, does not exceed the maximum number of approved places designated for the service. This ensures compliance with safety regulations and maintains appropriate supervision ratios.

## Qualifications of Educators and Staff:

At least one educator or staff member participating in excursions, must hold appropriate qualifications, including valid first aid certification and child protection training. This ensures that there is at least one qualified individual present who can effectively respond to any emergencies or incidents that may occur during the excursion.

## Information and Equipment

For each excursion, the following information and equipment shall be prepared:

- A list of all children with relevant personal details and parents/carers contact phone numbers.
- A list of emergency procedures and contact numbers.
- First aid kits, including SPF 50+ broad-spectrum water resistant sunscreen, asthma inhaler, epipens and instant ice pack.
- Any child with anaphylaxis must bring their epipen on any excursion
- Any medication for children attending the excursion.
- A fully charged mobile phone.
- Other information/equipment noted on the Risk Assessment.

## Transporting Children to/from an Excursion:

- Children and young people are authorised to travel to/from an excursion using the designated mode of transportation specified on the excursion permission form.

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- When utilising public transport (e.g., bus, ferry, taxi, train, etc.), children and young people must be closely supervised at all times and never left unattended.
- In the event of unforeseen circumstances necessitating a change in transportation on the day of the excursion, parents/carers will be promptly notified via email and authorisation sort.
- In certain situations where the excursion site is in close proximity to the service, it may be appropriate for children and staff to walk to the destination.
- The decision to walk should be preceded by a thorough Risk Assessment, and the chosen route should prioritise the safety of children, young people and educators.
- Public transport is utilised for service excursions whenever suitable.
- When using public or private transport, it is imperative to conduct a risk assessment for each journey. For instance, when traveling by bus:
  - Confirm that the bus operators possess appropriate licenses and insurance coverage.
  - Ensure the bus provides necessary facilities, such as wheelchair accessibility and seat belts if applicable.
  - Ensure that children exhibit appropriate behaviour and remain seated throughout the journey.

## Families Collecting Directly from Excursion:

When families choose to collect their child directly from the excursion instead of returning to the service, the following procedures are in place:

- Informing the Service via email: Families, prior to the excursion, must inform the educators of their intention to collect their child/ren directly from the excursion. This must be done in writing (usually via email).
- Sign Out: Upon arrival at the excursion location, families will be required to locate an educator designated for sign-out purposes. The educator will have a sign-out sheet or a service iPad for families to indicate the collection of their child.

## Regular Outing between Campuses:

- Balgowlah Heights is a split-campus school, with Juniors (Kindy - Year 2) located on the Eastern Campus and Seniors (Year 3 - 6) on the Western Campus. Due to this arrangement, children and young people are transported between campuses for activities or pick-up.
- When crossing the road, the pedestrian crossings on Lewis Street are utilised.
- The crossing is conducted as a group, not individually.
- Children are instructed to use the pavement when walking alongside the road.

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- A staff-to-child ratio of 1:15 is employed for road crossings between campuses.
- Whenever possible, staff members wear high-visibility vests to enhance visibility.
- In cases where there are two or more staff members, the following guidelines apply:
  - One staff member leads the group.
  - One staff member remains at the back of the group.
  - The group waits at the crossing until everyone is together, and the crossing is made as a cohesive group, not spread out.
  - If additional staff members are present, they are strategically positioned throughout the group to ensure the safe crossing of children.

### Review of Excursions:

To ensure continuous improvement and provide valuable feedback, the following steps are taken to review excursions:

- **Review of Incidents:** Any incidents or accidents that occur during the excursion are thoroughly reviewed and documented. This includes minor injuries, near-miss situations, or any other incidents that require attention. The purpose of this review is to assess the incident, identify contributing factors, and determine appropriate preventive measures for the future.
- **Reflection with Educators:** Educators involved in the excursion engage in reflective discussions to share their observations, insights, and experiences. These conversations provide an opportunity to discuss the strengths and areas for improvement regarding the excursion. Educators can contribute valuable feedback and suggestions based on their firsthand involvement.
- **Survey of Families:** Families are invited to participate in a survey to provide feedback on their child's excursion experience. The survey includes questions about the organization, safety measures, educational value, and overall satisfaction. The feedback collected helps assess the effectiveness of the excursion program and provides valuable insights for future planning.

### Responsibilities of Individuals within the Service:

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## Approved Provider & Nominated Supervisor:

- Ensure compliance with the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations.
- Complete appropriate risk assessments and necessary actions before the excursion.
- Obtain written authorizations from families for children to participate in excursions.
- Maintain educator-to-child ratios during the excursion and address identified risks.
- Ensure that family members and volunteers attending the excursion are not left alone with any child or group of children.
- Take reasonable steps to ensure that nominated supervisors, educators, staff, and volunteers follow the policy and procedures.
- Make copies of the policy and procedures readily accessible to relevant individuals and available for inspection.
- Provide families with at least 14 days' notice before making changes to the policy or procedures that significantly impact fees, education and care of children, or family's ability to utilize the service.
- Conduct risk assessments for excursions, manage risks, and update assessments for regular outings.
- Ensure all children attending the excursion have written authorizations from families.
- Ensure volunteers understand the excursion details, expectations, and their supervision responsibilities.
- Verify that all required equipment and items (first aid kit, personal medication, mobile phone, etc.) are taken on the excursion.

## Educators:

- Ensure the excursion is conducted in accordance with the Excursion policy and procedures.
- Confirm that all children attending the excursion have written authorizations from families.
- Conduct risk assessments for excursions, manage risks, and update assessments for regular outings.
- Ensure the required educator-to-child ratios are maintained and provide continuous supervision.
- Brief children prior to excursions using the pre-excursion checklist.
- Conduct regular attendance checks to account for all children.
- Ensure family members and volunteers attending the excursion understand expectations and are not left alone with children.

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- Take necessary health and medical requirements of children on the excursion (first aid kit, personal medication, etc.).

### Families:

- Sign authorization forms for their child to attend the excursion and ensure all required information is up to date.
- Provide written authorizations for their child to leave the service premises on regular outings.
- Be aware of all excursion information and ask questions if needed.
- If volunteering on excursions, understand the excursion details, expectations, and supervision responsibilities.
- Ensure required medication for their child is up-to-date and available for the excursion.
- Follow relevant pick-up procedures when collect their child/ren from the excursion directly.
- Be involved in excursion reviews by completing surveys.

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**CONSIDERATIONS:**

| Education and Care Services National Regulations                                       | National Quality Standard | Other Service policies/documentation | Other  |
|--|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| R.89, R.90, R.99, R.100, R.101, R.102, R.122, R.123, R.136, R.168, R.170, R.171, R.172 | Section 165               | 3.1, 3.2<br><br>7.1.1, 7.2.1         | Health & Safety Policies, Water Safety, Sun Protection, Crossing Road Risk Assessment, Road Safety Transport NSW |

**ENDORSEMENT BY THE SERVICE:**

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| <p><b>Approval date:</b> Sept 2024</p><br><p><b>Date for Review:</b> Sept 2026</p> |
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**Procedure History**

Version 1.0

December 2005, May 2006, March 2007, May 2007, February 2009, August 2010, May 2011, March 2012.

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|---------|----------------|---|---|---|------------------------------------|
| 3.0     | 12 August 2015 | Melanie Murray and Constandina Shackleton                   | Information and equipment   | Changed SPF30 to SPF50  | Kerry Sinclair<br>12 February 2016 |
| 4.0     | 1 June 2017    | Carin Rollo, Michael Shea, Rowan Friend and Belinda Edmunds | Planned Exursions<br><br>Permission<br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br>Supervision<br><br><br>Information and Equipment | Split Policy from Procedure<br><br>Added weather conditions<br><br>Removed the permission to take children on mini excursions without permission and when a Risk Assessment is carried out.<br><br>When roll calls need to be conducted<br><br>Added Go Bag<br><br><br>Removed as there is a separate procedure<br><br>Required information for excursion | Belinda Edmunds 18 July 2017       |



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|     |                 |                                   |                          |  |                            |
|-----|-----------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|--|----------------------------|
|     | 11/18 July 2017 | Rowan Friend and Belinda Edmunds  | Lost Child<br>Permission | permission note added  |                            |
| 5.0 | 2 May 2019      | Rowan Friend and Stuart Dodwell   | Standards                | Updated to the new NQS   | Kate Sellick – 8 May 2019  |
| 6.0 | June 2023       | Katie Woods<br>KW OSHC Consulting | Procedures               | Added:<br>- Change in circumstances and updating of risk assessments<br>- Roles and Responsibilities<br>- Qualifications for educators on excursions<br>- Communication with educators prior to excursions<br>- Communication with children prior to excursions<br>- Pick up arrangements when children are collected directly from the excursion<br>- How excursions are reviewed | Rowan Friend – 3 Sept 2024 |