Excursion & In-service Activity Policy

Purpose

Peak will provide a range of excursions and in-service activities, particularly during Vacation Care sessions, to extend the educational programming at the service. We believe these experiences enrich the children's learning by allowing them to engage with members of the community who have specialised knowledge in a wide range of areas, additional to that of Peak educators. Excursions are designed to allow children to explore their physical and social environment, including their local community, away from the service's premises.

In planning excursions and in-service activities, input is gained from families, staff and children. Permission is sought for all excursions and in-service activities, they are carefully planned, with potential risks assessed and minimised. Educators take into consideration planning experiences that encourage and extend the children's knowledge, allowing them to learn through the My Time Our Place outcomes.

The safety, rights and best interests of children are the paramount consideration in every decision Peak makes about excursions and in-service activities (section 3A, Children (Education and Care Services) National Law (NSW)). This covers choosing venues and providers, staffing, transport, costs and whether an activity goes ahead on the day.

If the interests of Peak, a venue, a provider or a staff member ever conflict with the rights and best interests of a child, the child's interests will always come first (section 4). Educators are expected to speak up, and can stop or change an activity, if they believe a child's safety or wellbeing is at risk. Any concern will be raised with the Responsible Person straight away, and the decision and the reasons for it will be recorded.

Considerations

Education and Care Services National Regulations	National Quality Standard/s	Other Service policies/documentation	Other
Section: 3A (NSW), 4, 165, 166A (NSW), 167 Regulations: 89, 90, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 102B, 102C, 102D, 123, 136, 151, 158, 160, 161, 168, 170	Standard 1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.1.3, 1.3.3, 2.2.1, 2.2.2, 2.2.3, 7.1.2	- Transportation Policy - Transport Safety Management Plan - Health & Safety Policies including Sun Safety and Water Safety - Safe Use of Digital Technologies and Online Environments Policy	My Time, Our Place. Child Safe Standards

Procedures

Planned in-service activities and excursions will consider:

- Children's ages, abilities and interests.

- Ways to maximise the children's developmental experiences and opportunities to practice new skills.
- Suitability of the venue.
- Clothing and equipment required.
- Travel arrangements.
- Keeping additional costs for families to a minimum.

Risk Assessment

It is a requirement of the National Regulation that the means of transport is stated on the risk assessment record and parent authorisation record. Information must be included in the risk assessment about the process for embarking and disembarking the means of transport, including how each child is to be accounted for.

A Risk Assessment must be prepared for each excursion. They will include:

- The proposed route and destination for the excursion;
- Any water hazards;
- Any risks associated with water-based activities
- The transport to and from the proposed destination for the excursion;
    - if the excursion involves transporting children, the risk assessment will include:
    - (i) the means of transport; and
    - (ii) any requirements for seatbelts or safety restraints under a law of each jurisdiction in which the children are being transported; and
    - (iii) the process for entering and exiting—
        - (A) the education and care service premises; and
        - (B) the pick-up location or destination (as required); and
    - (iv) procedures for embarking and disembarking the means of transport, including how each child is to be accounted for on embarking and disembarking; and
- The expected number of adults and children involved in the excursion;
- 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;
- The proposed activities;
- The likely length of time of the excursion;
- A checklist of items that should be taken on the excursion: attendance roll, first aid kit including EpiPen and asthma puffers, medications, first aid register, mobile phone and a list of emergency contact numbers.
- Access to service issued devices, so educators can stay in contact and take any photos without relying on personal devices;
- Verbal instructions to children on safety guidelines and appropriate behaviour expected whilst on excursions.

Alternative Locations within the School

From time to time, Peak may need to relocate to another building within the school, for example the school library or a classroom at the same school address. Responsible Persons will ensure that the information and equipment necessary for excursions is taken to the alternative location.

In-service Activities

In-service activities are programs run at the service by a visiting provider, such as a sports coach, animal show, cultural group or performer.

- A risk assessment will be completed before the activity, covering the space being used, any equipment or animals, and how children will be supervised.
- Visiting providers must hold a current Working With Children Check, which will be verified before the activity.
- Visiting providers are not counted in educator to child ratios and will not be left alone with children at any time. Peak educators stay responsible for supervising children for the whole activity.
- Visiting providers must follow the Safe Use of Digital Technologies and Online Environments Policy, including the rules for taking photos or using devices around children.
- Families will be told about in-service activities ahead of time.

Authorisation Forms for Excursions

- Families' permission will be obtained prior to the date, or at latest on the day for any excursions.
- Families are required to authorize a consent form in Fullybooked upon booking. This can only be authorised by the account holder, or if consent is gained on a paper form, that individual must have authorisation in Fullybooked for permissions:
  - *Authorise an educator to take a child outside the service; for example for excursions or regular outings*
  - *Authorise the service to transport the child or arrange transportation of the child*
- Some venues may require an additional consent form which will be filled out on the day. E.g. FlipOut.
- Excursions to locations visited on a regular basis such as a local aged care centre may be undertaken without prior notice if families of children in the group have given excursion permission. If an excursion is a regular outing, the authorisation is only required to be obtained once in a 12-month period.
- Once an initial risk assessment has been carried out for regular outings, risk assessments are not required for subsequent outings to the same place, unless there is a change to the place or venue.

Authorisation Forms will include the following information:

a) the child's name; and
b) the reason the child is to be taken outside the premises; and
c) if the authorisation is for a regular outing, a description of when the child is to be taken on the regular outings; and
   (ca) if the authorisation is for an excursion that is not a regular outing, the date the child is to be taken on the excursion; and
d) a description of the proposed destination for the excursion; and
e) if the excursion involves transporting children—
   (i) the means of transport; and
   (ii) any requirements for seatbelts or safety restraints under a law of each jurisdiction in which the children are being transported; and
f) the proposed activities to be undertaken by the child during the excursion; and
g) the period the child will be away from the premises; and
h) the anticipated number of children likely to be attending the excursion; and

i) the anticipated ratio of educators attending the excursion to the anticipated number of children attending the excursion; and
j) the anticipated number of staff members and any other adults who will accompany and supervise the children on the excursion; and
k) that a risk assessment has been prepared and is available at the service.

Supervision

- Children will be orientated to the risk elements and procedures prior to attending any excursion. This includes elements such as what to do if they become separated from the group, toilet procedures, talking to strangers etc.
- Adequate numbers of educators to effectively supervise the children will be rostered on for excursions. Numbers of educators take into consideration the ages and developmental stage of the children attending the excursion and be based on a risk assessment of the excursion.
- Parents, volunteers and visiting providers who join an excursion are not counted in educator to child ratios and will not be left alone with children.
- Head counts are conducted regularly throughout the duration of the excursion.
- Children will wear a wrist band for identification on excursions that clearly states the name of the service and the contact phone number.
- An educator will inspect all public toilets before children use them. An educator is stationed outside the door of restrooms and at least one other child will accompany any child when using a public toilet.
- When walking the children, one educator will lead the group, another to follow at the back, and the remaining educators spaced along the group, walking on the road side of the footpath.
- When crossing a road, a pedestrian crossing will be used if possible. If there is no pedestrian crossing, the safest way to cross the road must be determined. One educator must step out onto the road, and if necessary, stop traffic from both directions. The remaining educators then lead children across the road.

Information and Equipment

Information and equipment to be taken on excursions will include:

- The daily roll featuring a list of all children attending and special information sheet on medical considerations
- The centre mobile phone with contacts for each child and emergency contact numbers
- Photos and videos of children will only be taken on service issued devices, as set out in the Safe Use of Digital Technologies and Online Environments Policy
- The Hart first aid kit including asthma puffers and EpiPen
- Any medication for children attending and their medication administration form
- First aid register
- Other information/equipment noted on the Risk Assessment.

Lost Child

In the event that a child is lost during an excursion the well-being and safety of the other children in the group will be considered and at least one educator will remain with the group.

- Inform other educators in your group.
- Ask the children if they have seen the missing child recently.
- Reassure any child who may be upset.

- Search the premises.
- Check the meeting points.
- Ask the venue staff to begin a search and make an announcement over a loudspeaker if possible.
- Once initial checks have been undertaken and if the lost child has not been found, the Director or Supervisor will call the Police and the family.
- A missing child is a serious incident. The Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor will notify the NSW Early Learning Commission through the NQA ITS within 24 hours.

Method of Transport on Excursions

Excursions involving transportation must adhere to the Safe Transportation Policy including ensuring a risk assessment has been completed prior to children being transported by the service and authorisation for the service to transport children as part of the excursion.

Walking

- Educators must ensure children and adults use the safest footpaths and safe crossings where possible, such as pedestrian crossings and traffic lights
- Educators will ensure all children and adults obey road rules
- Educators will ensure children follow the 'stop, look, listen and think' process when walking near roads
- Educators will remain vigilant that no child runs ahead or lags behind the group
- In circumstances where the excursion venue is close to the service children and educators will walk to the venue
- To ensure the safety of educators and children:
    - There will be a pre-determined route
    - A risk assessment will be completed prior to the day.

Transport provided by Private Charter Bus Service

- To ensure access and availability of excursions, Peak Sports & Learning will engage with private bus charter services to provide transport for excursions at times
- A risk assessment will be completed prior to the day and will identify the safest transport route.
- Bus Charter Services will hold appropriate accreditation standards as per the Passenger Transport Act 2014 (NSW).
- Bus drivers that are involved in the Transport of children will be appropriately screened for suitability working with children.
- Bus Drivers engaged through a Private Bus Charter service, will not be left alone or responsible for the supervision of children during transport.
- Peak Educators will be responsible for supervision throughout transport maintaining adequate supervision during transport as determined by the relevant risk assessment.

Transport provided by Peak Privately owned fleet

- Where the excursion venue is not within walking distance children will be transported to the excursion venue via privately owned buses operated by appropriately licensed and trained Peak Sports and Learning drivers.
- A risk assessment will be completed prior to the day and will identify the safest transport route.

- Any vehicle transporting children will park in a safe location and will not require children to cross roads (where possible).
- Bus Transportation Procedures to ensure the safety of educators and children as above will be adhered to before, during and after transport as per the Transport Safety Management Plan and Policy.

Water Safety

- The service recognises the risks posed by bodies of water. The service will ensure that every precaution is taken so that children are able to enjoy water-based activities safely.
- A ratio of 1 educator to 5 children will be maintained on water-based excursions such as the local swimming pool
- Risk assessments will be carried out for programmed water-based activities.
- Additional information will be obtained about each child's swimming ability from parents, along with an onsite practical assessment conducted in the pool to ensure that non-swimmers are identified. Non-swimmers will not be allowed to enter the deep part of the pool.

Version Control Table

Version Control	Date Released	Next Review	Approved by	Amendment
1	Jan 2017	July 2019	Directors	Nil – Small amendments to procedure
2	August 2019	August 2020	Directors	- Rewritten and edited to reflect 2018 updated Quality Standards. - Permission and risk assessments of On-site activities added - Sections added on procedures for lost children, walking excursions, bus transportation, water safety.
3	December 2019	September 2020	Directors	Amended term incursion to on-site activity. Moved to new document review timeline.
4	September 2020	May 2022	Directors	Amendment to some wording in reference to updates to Transportation Policy.
5	May 2022	May 2024	Directors	Amendment to **Authorisation Forms for Excursions** including ability to gain consent through Fullybooked and details of what Authorisation forms will include.
6	March 2024	May 2025	Directors	Amendment to policy to include *Venues that require transportation – Transport provided by Private Charter Bus Service*
7	January 2025	September 2026	Directors	Amendment to Authorisation Forms, and what is included in the forms to be more closely aligned regulations terms and language.
8	September 2026	September 2027	Directors	Updated to include the paramount consideration and conflicts of interest (s3A and s4 NSW), updated legislation and NQS references, renamed in-service activity, added In-service Activities section, service issued devices, serious incident notification for a missing child and Passenger Transport Act 2014.