Early Learning
Excursions, Regular Outings & Service Events Policy

1. Policy Statement/Purpose

All decisions made by educators and Uniting Victoria & Tasmania are guided by a commitment to children's safety, rights, and best interests.

Children develop a sense of belonging to groups and their communities at an early age. To enable them to broaden their understanding of the world in which they live, opportunities to participate in excursions, regular outings and/or service events is important for their learning.

Uniting Early Learning is committed to:

- Supporting children to be active citizens and participate, explore, and positively interact and influence our community and world
- Children discovering and exploring their impact on the environment and influence and the world at large
- Providing opportunities through the educational program for children to explore and experience the wider environment and broader society
- Ensuring that all excursions, regular outings, and service events are accessible, affordable and contribute to children's learning and development.
- Ensuring the health, safety, and wellbeing of children at all times
- An inclusive approach so that all children can attend, regardless of their socio-economic background, ethnicity, ability level, and additional or medical needs.

2. Scope

This policy applies to the following groups working in Uniting Early Learning:

- Approved provider and persons with management or control
- Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge
- ECT, Educators, FDC educators and all other staff (including agency staff)
- Parents/guardians
- Contractors, volunteers, and students.

3. Policy

- Mandatory prior planning for excursions, outings and service events is required and will include the completion and approval of a risk assessment, gaining parent's written authorisation and on the day, ensuring adequate supervision at all times and where possible services will roster to child/adult ratios that are above minimum requirements.

- Clear and concise roles and responsibilities will ensure management, educators and volunteers are aware of their roles and responsibilities in relation to excursions and regular outings.
- Regular recording and monitoring all children in attendance, or should be in attendance is critical, particularly at times of transition and while on an excursion, regular outing or participating in a service event. Services must regularly check children's presence against accurate attendance records and ensure the identity of each and every child.
- The Approved Provider and educators must all be aware of the additional risks when taking children outside of the service, and when children are being transported.
- The service must assess whether any additional staffing/volunteers is required for the proposed venue and activities, and to meet their duty of care. Additional children attending, for example, younger siblings accompanied by parents are not included in the ratio but must be planned for in the risk assessment. The number of children attending, must not exceed the maximum number of approved places, which includes children both at the service premises and on an excursion.

1.1 Transportation

As transportation can present heightened risks to the safety of children when children get in or out of vehicles and when they arrive at or leave the service, the following regulatory requirements apply to centre based services that **use transportation** for excursions or regular outings:

- To ensure best practice and minimise risk, Uniting Early Learning is embedding the regulatory requirements into policy and procedures for all excursions where children are transported by a vehicle (bus, train, or tram).
- Approved providers and nominated supervisors must ensure a staff member or nominated supervisor (other than the driver) accounts for children as they get in or out of a vehicle at the education and care service.
- Approved providers and nominated supervisors must ensure records are made showing children are accounted for as they get in or out of a vehicle at the education and care service.
- Approved providers and nominated supervisors must ensure records are made confirming a check of the inside of a vehicle was completed at the service after all children have left to ensure no children remain.
- Approved providers must notify the regulatory authority when they start providing or arranging **regular** transport, and again when they finish. This can be done through the NQAITS.

For the purpose of this policy, parent attended events where children are on site and the event does not form part of the program the service has a duty of care to all consumers. A risk assessment must be completed prior to these events and submitted for approval.

1.2 Accompanying Early Learning Service Volunteers/parent volunteers and Students.

Volunteers play an important support role when early childhood services implement excursions and regular outings. Increased adult: child ratios, maximise children's learning opportunities.

The legislative requirements in Victoria however do not allow for volunteers, students and educators employed as additional assistants to be included in the mandated adult: child ratios. Therefore, volunteers/students are in addition to the prescribed number, and their primary role is to support and assist educators.

To participate in an excursion/regular outing, all volunteers/students must hold a current volunteer Working with Children check or Working with Vulnerable People check (Volunteer checks are free, refer to Working with Children Check for Victoria or (Registration to work with vulnerable people) for Tasmania).

However, volunteers/students and additional assistants are not responsible for the supervision of the children and must at all times be supervised by a staff member.

All volunteers/students/additional assistants must be aware of their roles and responsibilities when conducting activities outside the service premises.

Expectations may be different, risks greater and activities, context driven. communication and supervision by staff are important processes in orientating volunteers to their role when on an excursion/regular outing.

Induction and clear directions, prior to the excursion/regular outing must be provided by staff to assist volunteers to understand and carry out their role and be aware of the service/organisation expectations.

All participants (including volunteers/students) have a "duty of care" responsibility to ensure the health, safety, and wellbeing of all children, at all times.

Review

This policy is to be reviewed by: July 2029

4.Responsibilities relating to the Excursion/Regular outing/service event policy

Responsibilities	Approved provider and persons with management or control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	ECT, Educators, FDC educators and all other staff	Parents/guardians	Agency staff, Contractors, volunteers, and students
R indicates legislation requirement, and should not be deleted					
Ensure an Excursion, regular outing and service event policy is developed in consultation with all stakeholders *R 168*	**R**	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ensure educators, staff, parents, volunteers, students, and others at the service are provided with access and/or a copy of this policy (if requested) and comply with its requirements. *R 171*	**R**	✓	✓	✓	✓
Read and comply with the requirements of this policy *R 170*	**R**	✓	✓	✓	✓
Consider the financial context of the community before deciding on an excursion/service event. The cost recovery for one-off excursions only applies to children, NOT ELIGIBLE for KFS. Events that can be planned ahead of time should be included as an expenditure item in the service's budget and, as a result, will not incur additional charges. Inform parents/volunteers of any associated costs before the event		✓			
Ensure children who would be eligible for KFS (Vic) are not charged for incursions or excursions Free Kinder: *guidelines for services*	**R**	✓			
Ensure families are not charged (Vic) for incursions or regular excursions (including Bush Kinder) that are a core part of the kindergarten program.		✓			
Ensure an excursion or service event risk assessment and plan has been completed with required documentation (Refer to Form 3.1, 3.4 or 3.5) and sent to Program Manager a minimum of 14 days (or in consultation with the Program Manager) prior to the event and earlier depending on the nature of the event and approved by the Program Manager *R 100*	**R**	✓	✓		
Ensure Program Manager's approval for planned excursion, and service event is provided *R 100*		✓	✓		
Ensure a child does not leave the service premises including the family day care residence or approved family day care venue on an excursion unless prior written authorisation and signed consent has been provided by the parent or person named in the child's enrolment record, and that the authorisation includes all details required under legislation. (Refer to *Form 3.2, 3.4 or 3.6*) *R 99, 102 & 161 Tas 4.1*	**R**	✓	✓	✓	✓

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R indicates legislation requirement, and should not be deleted					
Ensure parents or persons named in the enrolment record have provided written authorisation within the past 12 months for the service to take the child on regular outings (refer Glossary), and that this authorisation is kept in the child's enrolment record (refer to Form 3.4) *R 99, 161, Tas 4.1*	**R**	✓	✓	✓	✓
At least one session prior to the day of the regular outing (if not a regular scheduled outing), notify parents that children will be going on a regular outing and **request additional authorisation**. Place the form next to the attendance iPad include the address and the expected time of departure and how long we will be away from the service	**R**	✓	✓	✓	✓
In the circumstances where a family day care assistant participates, ensure written consent is provided by the parent for each child *R 169*	**R**		✓		
Ensure a risk assessment is carried out for an excursion/regular outing and service event including events where parents are present before authorisation is sought from parents, including volunteer numbers (Refer to Form 3.1) *R 100, 101 & 102*	**R**	✓	✓		✓
Although a risk assessment is not required for a regular outing if a risk assessment has been conducted not more than 12 months before the excursion is to occur. Documented consideration must also be given to whether circumstances of the regular outing have changed since this risk assessment was completed (road works etc.) *R 100, 101, Tas 4.2*	**R**	✓	✓		✓
Ensure a risk assessment is carried out for service planned parent events and educators and staff understand their duty of care to consumers *R 100 & 101*	**R**	✓	✓		✓
Ensure the risk assessment identifies and assesses the risks, including during transition times specifies how these will be managed and/or minimised, and includes all details required by legislation (Refer to Form 3.1) *R 100 & 101, Tas 4.2*	**R**	✓	✓		✓
Review risk assessment for an excursion/regular outing and service event, including events where parents are present prior to the day and plan for any contingency (Refer to *Form 3.1*)		✓	✓		✓
Complete the Safe Transportation of Children Safety Checklist and Transportation Record Form *R 102*	**R**	✓	✓		✓

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Risk assessments for transportation must identify and assess risks that the transportation of a child may pose to the safety, health, or wellbeing of the child, and specify how the identified risks will be managed and minimised. Risks should be evaluated each time children are transported unless the transportation is 'regular transportation' *R 99, 100, 101, 102 & Tas 4.2*	**R**	✓	✓		✓
Ensure that educators follow procedures when children are transported (Refer Road Safety Policy - Transportation as passenger, cyclists & pedestrians). This includes regular head counts and checks against the attendance record of children, including but not limited to before each departure, after each child embarks and disembarks the vehicle *R 99, 100, 101, 102 & Tas 4.7*	**R**	✓	✓		✓
Ensure procedures for embarking and disembarking the vehicle and processes for entering and exiting each location are documented and understood by all staff *R 102*	**R**	✓	✓		✓
Embed safety procedures for every trip including trips as part of an excursion or single trips. This may include having two people to conduct physical inspections of the vehicle at all destinations to ensure no children remain in the vehicle every time children disembark *S 167*	**R**	✓	✓		✓
Ensure the number of educators or other responsible adults is appropriate to provide supervision ensuring active and effective supervision at all times whilst using transportation– with a particular focus on the seating of children and positioning of educator/s *S 165, Vic S 27 Tas 4.3 & 4.4*	**R**	✓	✓		✓
Ensure educator to child ratios are maintained during excursions, regular outings and service events and children are always actively supervised *R 123 Tas 4.3 & 4.4*	**R**	✓	✓		✓
Ensure that children are actively supervised at all times and take regular headcounts, identity checks and cross-check against the attendance record to ensure no child is left behind *S 165*	**R**	✓	✓		✓
Ensure that parents, volunteers, students, and all adults participating in an excursion are actively supervised at all times and are not left with sole supervision of individual children or groups of children *S 165 & 167*	**R**	✓	✓		✓
Ensure induction occurs for volunteers, parents, students, and other people participating in the excursion/regular outing and that they are clear on their role and responsibilities		✓	✓	✓	✓
Supervise and care for siblings and other children in your care who are not enrolled in the program				✓	

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R indicates legislation requirement, and should not be deleted					
Ensure all volunteers have a current volunteer Working with Children check (Vic) or volunteer Working with Vulnerable People check (Tas). Regular service volunteers (this does not include current parents) must be appointed and orientated as per Uniting's Volunteer policy *R 358, Tas 4.6*	**R**	✓	✓	✓	✓
Establish effective signing in and out procedures which may include having a second person to check the record *R 158*	**R**	✓	✓		✓
Ensure emergency contact details for each child and the contact details of their medical practitioner are taken on excursions for notification in the event of an incident, injury, trauma, or illness. *Tas 4.3*	**R**	✓	✓		✓
Ensure all volunteers have a current volunteer Working with Children check (Vic) or volunteer Working with Vulnerable People check (Tas). Regular service volunteers (this does not include current parents) must be appointed and orientated as per Uniting's Volunteer policy *R 358, Tas 4.6*	**R**	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ensure strategies are in place to provide and keep an accurate attendance record for children attending an excursion, and for children remaining at the service while an excursion takes place *R 158 & 159*	**R**	✓	✓		✓
Ensure that each child's personal medication and current medical management plan is taken on excursions and other offsite activities *R 90, Tas 4.3*	**R**	✓	✓		✓
Ensure a mobile phone, the emergency contact details for each child and the contact details of their medical practitioner are taken on excursions for notification in the event of an incident, injury, trauma, or illness *R 99, Vic R 74, Tas 4.3*	**R**	✓	✓		✓
Ensure that personal devices that take and store images are only used for emergencies during excursions and regular outings, and that essential purposes authorisation documentation is completed prior to excursions and regular outings *S 167*	**R**	✓	✓		✓
Ensure there are sufficient service-issued devices available when programs are delivered outside the approved service premises (such as bush, beach or other nature programs) *S 167*	✓				
Ensure parents/guardians do not use their personal devices to record images of children during service events *S 167*	**R**	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ensure third parties delivering programs or service activities do not use their personal devices to record images of children when providing education and care and working directly with children *S 167*	**R**	✓	✓	✓	✓

Responsibilities	Approved provider and persons with management or control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	ECT, Educators, FDC educators and all other staff	Parents/guardians	Agency staff, Contractors, volunteers, and students
R indicates legislation requirement, and should not be deleted					
Ensure the emergency details of each educator, volunteer, parent, student are taken on excursions and regular outings for notification in the event of an incident, injury, trauma, or illness *Tas 4.3*	**R**	✓	✓		✓
Ensure that only service-issued devices record images of children during in excursions, nature/bush programs *S 167*	**R**	✓	✓	✓	✓
Develop procedures in response to forecast of extreme weather conditions and when to cancel the in-nature program, and ensure that parents understand this process		✓	✓	✓	✓
Provide and maintain a portable adequately stocked first aid kit that can be taken on excursions and other offsite activities, and ensure the kits contain the required medication for dealing with medical conditions. Check all medications taken for current use-by-date *R 89*	**R**	✓	✓		✓
Ensure educators hold current approved first aid, anaphylaxis management and emergency asthma management training *R 136*	**R**	✓		✓	✓
Ensure that the number of children attending an excursion or incursion does not exceed the number for which service approval has been granted on that day *S 51*	**R**	✓		✓	✓
Ensure there is an accurate list of everyone participating in an excursion, including educators, parents, siblings, volunteers, students with contact details for each individual *Tas 4.3*	**R**	✓	✓		✓
Display a notice at the service or Family Day Care (FDC) venue indicating that children are on an excursion, including the location of the excursion and expected time of return to the service *Vic R 73*	**R**		✓		
Ensure that proposed excursions/regular outings and service events are inclusive of all children *R 73, 155 & 156*	**R**	✓	✓		✓
Ensure that excursions/regular outings and service events are based on the approved learning framework, meets the needs and interests of children and families at the service, and that there is a clear purpose and educational value to each excursion/regular outing and service event that is communicated to parents *R 73, 155 & 156*	**R**	✓	✓		✓
Consult with children, discuss the aims and objectives of the excursion, regular outing, or service event, and engage the children in the decision-making process *R 155*	**R**	✓	✓		✓
Inform parents of items they are required to provide for children for the excursion, regular outing, or service event, e.g., toileting arrangements, snack/lunch, sunscreen, coat, drinking water etc.		✓	✓		✓

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Provide a reminder to parents of upcoming excursion or incursion and ensure the policy is available for reference		✓	✓		✓
Develop strategies to improve children's safety in high-risk situations such as bushland, near water or near a road *R 100 & 101*	**R**				
Ensure a new risk assessment is completed when circumstances change for the in-nature program *R 100 & 101*	**R**				
Ensure Child Safe Principles are included when undertaking risk assessments *R 168*	**R**				
Ensure emergency plans are in place, which allow each child to be easily removed from any in-nature site in the case of an emergency and be reviewed regularly *R 100 & 101*	**R**				
Ensure all educators, parents, students, and volunteers are familiarised with the risk management plan and that it has been approved by the relevant Uniting Program Manager *R 100 & 101*	**R**	✓	✓		
Risk assessments for excursions and regular outings that involve motor vehicle travel should include details of the child's restraint needs which, for regular outings, may need to be assessed more frequently than every 12 months *R 102*	**R**	✓	✓		
Ensure all visitors to the service during a service event, enter their details in the service visitors' sign in book *R 165*	**R**	✓	✓		
After the excursion, complete a review/evaluation and identify any program and learning outcomes *S 167*	**R**	✓	✓		
Note: *Volunteers, contractors, and students, while at the service, are responsible for following this policy and its procedures.*					

4. Legislation/Regulations

Children's Services Amendment Act 2019
Children's Services Regulation 2020
Victorian Early Childhood Regulatory Authority (VECRA)
Department of Education & Training, Regulation and Quality Assessment, NQF Fact Sheets. Excursions and routine outings (October 2017).
Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010: s51, 165, 167, 169, 52
ACECQA
Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: Regulations 73, 77, 78, 97, 98, 99, 100-102, 109, 122, 123, 136, 144, 161, 168, 169, 171, 355, 357, 360
National Quality Standard, Quality Area 1: Educational Program and Practice
National Quality Standard, Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety
Tasmanian Licensing Standards for Centre Based Child Care Class 5 (October 2014). Standard 4.
VicRoads
Child Health Promotion Research Centre & Edith Cowan University (2012) National Practices for Early Childhood Road Safety Education:
National-practices-for-early-childhood-RSE.pdf
Tasmanian Transport services
ELAA's Road Safety Education program
Working with Children Check for Victoria
Registration to work with vulnerable people for Tasmania.

5. Related Documents

Uniting
Diversity Statement
Child Safety Commitment Statement
Code of Conduct
Child Safety Policy
Child Safety Code of Conduct
Reconciliation, Inclusion, Diversity & Equity policy
Privacy Policy
Workplace Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy

Early Learning

Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations Policy Administration of First Aid Policy
Administration of Medication Policy Anaphylaxis Policy
Asthma Policy
Child Safe Environment and Wellbeing Policy
Dealing with Medical Conditions Policy
Delivery and Collection of Children Policy
Diabetes Policy
Educational Program and Practice Policy
Emergency and Evacuation Policy
Enrolment and Orientation Policy Epilepsy appendix Policy
E-Safety Technology Policy
Fees Policy

Food Safety Policy
Hygiene and Infectious Disease Policy
Incident, Injury, Trauma, and Illness Policy
Interactions with Children Policy
Nutrition, Oral Health, and Active Play Policy
Participation of Volunteers and Students Policy
Road Safety Policy - Transportation as passenger, cyclists & pedestrians
Sun Protection Policy
Supervision of Children Policy
Water Safety Policy

Forms

Form 3.1 - UF-EL-003-Excursion Plan and Risk Assessment-3.1.docx
Form 3.2 - UF-EL-002-Excursion Authorisation-3.2.docx
Form 3.3 - UF-EL-063-Regular Outing Plan and Risk Assessment 3.3.docx
Form 3.4 - UF-EL-004-Nature or Bush Program Plan and Risk Assessment.docx
Form 3.5 - UF-EL-005-Nature Program or Bush Kinder Guide.docx
Form 3.6 - UF-EL-008-Service Event Authorisation-3.6.docx
Form 6.1 - UF-EL-054-Regular Transportation Authorisation 6.1.docx
Form 3.8 - UF-EL-004-Nature or Bush Program Plan and Risk Assessment.docx
Form 3.9 - UF-EL-005-Nature Program or Bush Kinder Guide.docx
Form 33.7 - Risk Assessment-33.7 OHS.docx
Form 6.4 - UF-EL-007-Safe Transportation of Children Safety Checklist and Transportation Record Form 6.4.docx