

POLICY STATEMENT Children Services Unit EXCURSION & REGULAR OUTING

AUTHORISATION

POLICY TYPE:	Operational
POLICY LOCATION:	Corporate
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	Children Services Coordinator
AUTHORISED BY:	Director, Corporate and Community Services
DATE ADOPTED:	11 March 2025
ADOPTED BY:	Manex
MINUTE NO:	9.12
REVIEW DUE DATE:	March 2028
REVISION NUMBER:	4
RELATIONSHIP TO THE COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN	This policy supports Council's Delivery Program Strategy 4.2: Provide quality, accredited and affordable Education and Care Services within Bland Shire and surrounds (Bland Preschool, Mobile Resource Unit and Toy Library services).

DOCUMENT HISTORY

VERSION NO.	DATE	DESCRIPTION OF AMENDMENTS <i>Include names of former policies that this policy will replace if applicable</i>	AMENDED BY <i>(Where required)</i>
0	August 2014		CSU Coordinator
1	October 2018		CSU Coordinator
2	March 2021		CSU Coordinator
4	March 2025		CSU Coordinator

REVIEW OF THIS POLICY

This Policy will be reviewed within three (3) Years from the date of adoption or as required in the event of legislative changes or business practice changes. Any amendment to the Policy must be by approval of the General Manager/Manex.

1. Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is for Bland Shire Children Services Unit to provide excursions, incursions and regular outings for all children enrolled in a service that are planned, implemented and ensure the safety, health and well-being of children. Excursions and regular outings aim to provide meaningful experiences, explore different environments, and learn from new experiences.

2. Scope:

This policy applies to all Educators and staff at Bland Shire Children Services Unit to communicate expectations and regulations required when planning and implementing excursions or regular outings.

3. Outcomes:

To clearly advise that Bland Shire Children Services Unit requires clear guidelines, procedures and consistent safety measures when planning and implementing excursions to adhere with National Regulations and to ensure the safety and well-being of children, educators and community members.

4. Roles and Responsibilities:

The implementation of this policy applies to the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Educators and parents enrolled at Bland Shire Children Services Unit. Each role is listed below in the policy procedure.

5. Definitions:

In this policy “staff” and “educators” refers to staff employed at Bland Shire Children Services Unit by Bland Shire Council.

An “excursion” is defined as an activity in which children are taken from the service premises. An excursion is NOT part of a regular routine. An example of an excursions is a visit to a zoo. Children are not to participate in an excursion unless appropriate parental or authorised nominee written/digital authorisation for the child to participate has been received.

A “regular outing” in an excursion that forms part of a regular routine. An example of a regular outing is walk to the local park. Written authorisation to participate in regular outings is captured on the enrolment form. A risk assessment is completed every 12 months for regular outings, unless there is a change to the regular outing, and a new risk assessment is established and implemented.

An “incursion” is a recreational or educational activity that is delivered by an external source where the children remain in the service premises, under educator supervision at all times.

6. Legislation and Supporting Documents:

Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority (2023) Guide to National Quality Framework

Education and Care Services National Law 2010

Education and care Services National Regulations 2011

7. Attachments: Policy Procedure

The Nominated Supervisor will:

- ensure Educators conduct a Risk Assessment to identify and assess the risk an excursion, incursion or regular outing may pose to the safety, health and wellbeing of any child, specifying how the service will manage any identified risks.
- ensure Risk Assessments remain current for a period of 12 months.

- inform parents at their initial enrolment of the requirements in relation to excursions, regular outings and required authorisations.
- Authorisation must be given by a parent or parent authorised nominee, to authorise the taking of the child outside the education and care service premises by an educator and must state –
 - The child’s name;
 - The reason the child is to be taken outside the premises
 - If the authorisation is for a regular outing, a description of where the child is to be taken on the regular outings (venues advised on enrolment form only);
 - If the authorisation is for an excursion that is not a regular outing, the date the child is to be taken on the excursion;
 - A description of the proposed destination of the excursion;
 - If the excursion involves transporting their child;
 - The means of transportation;
 - Any requirements for seatbelts or safety restraints under a law of each jurisdiction in which the children are being transported;
 - The proposed activities undertaken by the children on the excursion;
 - The period the children will be away from the service;
 - The anticipated number of children attending the excursion;
 - The anticipated ratio of educators attending the excursion to the anticipated number of children attending the excursion;
 - The anticipated number of staff members and any other adults who will accompany and supervise the children on the excursion; and
 - That a risk assessment has been prepared and is available at the service.
- provide documentation that will ensure the service meets legislative requirements in regards to child participation in excursions and regular outings including Risk Assessments and written authorisations.
- provide support to Educators to adhere to regulatory requirements prior to and during excursions and regular outings.
- excursions that are in or around water (dams, pools, wetlands) are managed accordingly, including providing the experience to small groups of children (approx. 8), with well above ratio educators (trained in First Aid and CPR), educational discussions have taken place with educators and children, and all safety equipment is appropriate (fit) and readily available.

Staff will:

- ensure no child is taken on an excursion or regular outing unless appropriate written permission from a parent or Authorised Nominee has been received. In the event the parent has not returned an authorisation, phone the parent to seek verbal confirmation and have them complete the authorisation form as soon as possible. Document the time, date and person giving consent.
- ensure the excursion or regular outing is reflected in the educational program and based on children’s interest.
- conduct a Risk Assessment which identifies and assesses risks that excursions and regular outings may pose on the health and wellbeing of the children outside the service; A Risk Assessment must be carried out *before* parental permission is sought and the activity takes place. Risk Assessments must be made available for parents to view upon request.
- ensure that a suitably equipped and well stocked first aid kit and mobile phone with contact details are taken on all excursions and regular outings and that an Educator/Responsible Person with approved first aid qualifications is in attendance.
- consider supervision implications before conducting the excursion or regular outing and ensure children are always supervised on excursions and regular outings.
- ensure every reasonable attempt is made to keep children away from areas or persons where alcohol, smoke or drugs have been consumed.
- advise families of any additional costs incurred by the excursion, incursion or regular outing prior to the event.
- make amendments to the original Risk Assessment if the circumstances of an excursion or regular outing have changed and resubmit for authorisation.

- where practical, if a child is lost on an excursion or regular outing,
 - search the area, notifying venue staff for assistance.
 - if the child remains lost, staff remain with all children whilst notifying the Children Services Unit.
 - Children Services Unit gathers relevant information of the child, seeking assistance from additional Educators to maintain ratio at the venue.
 - Educators at the venue contact relevant emergency personnel and parent;
 - one Educator is to remain at the venue until the child is found or emergency personnel attend.
 - all other children and Educators return to the Service/families as soon as possible;
 - notification to regulatory authorities undertaken as required.

Excursion Transportation:

- ensure children are transported in a safe manner in the appropriate child restraints, if applicable. No child in care is to be left unsupervised in a vehicle. The child must not be left in the vehicle with any other person other than the Educator. If a child is left unattended in a vehicle the Educator may be guilty of an offence.
- Prior to boarding the bus ensure that the Attendance Register is accurate, up to date.
- Educators will conduct a roll call and look at each child as they respond, both prior to departing the service and departing the excursion venue.
- Prior to boarding the bus, educators will take a group photo of the children. In the event a child becomes lost, this photo will depict an accurate description of the child's current clothing, appearance and height etc.
- A head count is conducted as the children embark and disembark the bus at all venues.
- The Responsible Person will advise the bus driver when all children are accounted for, and it is safe to leave each venue.
- Educators are situated throughout the bus to ensure active and responsive supervision of all children at all times.
- A sweep of the bus is conducted by an educator (after the children have disembarked), checking under seats, luggage racks and storage areas upon arrival to destination and return to the service.
- Once children are in their respective classroom at the service or Family Day Care home, another roll check is completed to ensure all children are accounted for.

Families will:

- read and sign the current enrolment form and regular outing authorisation form prior to giving authorisation for children to be taken outside the service.
- read, understand and sign for their child to participate in an excursion on the excursion authorisation form, prior to the excursion day. Should the parent not want their child to participate in the excursion, they will contact the classroom teacher to discuss.
- be aware, if the parent or authorised nominee does not sign the excursion authorisation prior to the excursion day, then verbal permission will be sought from the service (documenting time, date and person authorising), with the excursion authorisation form to be completed and returned to the service asap.
- be welcome to attend excursions and regular outings but will not be left in sole charge of children in care or considered part of the required Educator to child ratio.