Hills Grammar

In School Excursions and Excursion Policy

Policy Statement

Excursions and incursions are a valuable experience for children, families and educators of the ECEC. They provide the opportunity to expand and enhance children's experiences, explore different environments and engage in meaningful ways with their communities. The ECEC is committed to providing In School Excursions and Excursions that are well considered and planned, provide meaningful experiences and ensure the health and safety and wellbeing of children at all times.

Rationale

It is of benefit to children's development and social awareness to be involved in a wide range of experiences within the community. Excursions are a valuable part of the program as they contribute to the growth of the child in all developmental areas.

In School Excursion

A planned event held in the ECEC or on the Hills Grammar Campus that may include external presenters or performers.

Excursion

A visit to a place outside of Hills Grammar.

Excursions and In School excursions require appropriate planning and risk management to ensure the best experience and enjoyment for all. The ECEC is committed to providing excursions that are well considered and planned, provide meaningful experiences and ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of children at all times.

Strategies

The Nominated Supervisor will:

- Plan all excursions and In School excursions in advance to:
  - Maximise children's developmental experiences and their safety.
  - Reflect the age, capacity and interests of the children.
  - Ensure the excursions are properly supervised and conducted in a safe manner.
- Research all excursions and In School excursions thoroughly to ensure:
  - Supervision is adequate for all children.
  - Access to hazardous equipment and environments are minimized.
  - There is adequate access to food, drink and other facilities (toilets, hand washing etc).
  - Consideration is given to the mobility and supervision requirements of children with additional needs.
  - That adequate sun and shade protection is available.
  - Consideration is given to any excursions or In School excursions involving water.

- When planning for an excursion or In School excursion:
  - Assess the requirements for the excursion.
  - Check current Government advice and restrictions and consider how this may impact excursion planning.
  - Conduct a risk assessment, identifying the risks that the excursion or In School excursion may pose to the safety, health of wellbeing of any child involved and how these risks will be managed and minimised.
  - Request a risk assessment from the company or individual running the In School excursion or excursion event.
  - Book transport if applicable. In regard to transport, consider the method of transport to and from the proposed destination, including:
  - the means of transport and any requirements for seatbelts or safety restraints under a law of each jurisdiction in which the children are being transported.
  - the process for entering and exiting the ECEC premises and the pickup location or destination.
  - procedures for embarking and disembarking the means of transport, including how each child is to be accounted for on embarking and disembarking.
  - Make alternative arrangements for adverse weather conditions.
  - Inform families of the details of the excursion including destination, objectives and outcomes, and what the children should bring.
  - Provide parents or legal guardians with an excursion permission form to complete to authorise their child to participate if the excursion is occurring outside of the ECEC / Hills Grammar campus.
  - Collect completed permission forms for each child attending the excursion.
  - Write social stories for children as needed.
  - Request additional adult participation on the excursion if required. Parents or volunteers will be asked to provide a Working with Children's Check before participating in the excursion.
  - Confirm the excursion with the company prior to the excursion.
  - Arrange for a suitably equipped first aid kit (including EpiPen and asthma medication) and a mobile phone to be taken on the excursion.
  - Arrange for emergency contact numbers for each child to be taken on the excursion.
  - Educators must make alternative arrangements for any children who are not attending the excursion, and ensure that any dialogue or pre-planning for the excursion does not exclude such children from any experiences.
  - Additional factors will be considered in the planning of excursions for children with special rights. Where possible, the ECEC will uphold the right for all children to access all excursions and engage in meaningful ways while on excursions.
- Develop strategies for accounting for all children on the excursion, particularly during transition times, such as ensuring all children have been transported to the destination and have been returned to the ECEC at the conclusion of the excursion. Apply safety requirements for regular transportation to all periods of transportation including single trips.
- Ensure authorisation for Excursion/In School excursion. If the excursion is taking place outside of the ECEC or Hills Grammar campus or the In School Excursion is at cost to the parent / guardian, the Nominated Supervisor will ensure that parents or legal guardians will be given an excursion permission form with full details of the excursion including:
  - The child's name.
  - Date, description, duration and destination of proposed excursion.
  - If the authorisation is for a regular outing, a description of when the child is to be taken on the regular outings.
  - If the authorisation id for an excursion that is not a regular outing, the date the child is to be taken on the excursion.
  - Ratio of proposed children and educators / adults attending.
  - If the excursion involves transporting children, the means of transport and any requirements for seatbelts or safety restraints.
  - Reason for the excursion and proposed activities to be conducted on the excursion.
  - Period the child will be away from the ECEC.

    - The anticipated number of children likely to be attending the excursion.
    - A statement that a risk assessment has been prepared and is available at the ECEC for parents / guardians to view.
    - The nominated supervisor will ensure the collection of all signed permission forms before the children attend an Excursion or paid In School excursion.
- If the excursion is a regular outing, (eg. Hills Grammar campus) authorization is provided by parents once in each 12 month period and is kept in the child's file at ECEC. All parents or legal guardians will be asked to sign permission forms for regular In School Excursions on enrolment and throughout subsequent years.
- A child will not be taken on an excursion unless written permission from parents or legal guardian has been received.

The nominated supervisor will ensure the safety of the children and educators at all times by implementing the following procedures where applicable:

Travel arrangements

Travel arrangements are made on the basis of individual excursion requirements. Every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and any hazard likely to cause injury.

Walking

- Educators will ensure children understand and are supported to follow road rules and cross roads or pedestrian crossings appropriately and remain with the group.
- Educators will remain vigilant to ensure no child runs ahead rather one educator will walk in front of the group and one educator will walk behind the group maintaining strong supervision.

Public Transport

- All requirements for seatbelts or safety restraints under a law of each jurisdiction in which the children are being transported will be checked and followed for any transport being used.
- Every child will wear a seatbelt where one is fitted.

Supervision and Ratio

Supervision on excursions will ensure the safety and wellbeing of all children for the duration of the excursion, taking into account ratios and all risks and hazards likely to be encountered. The venue will be assessed as safe for all children and adults on the excursion and will be easily supervised and accessible. The correct ratio will be maintained at all times.

Water Hazards

An excursion conducted near a swimming pool or other water related activity will be avoided where possible. Where there are significant water hazards (such as rivers, lakes or beaches), risk management strategies will be identified and implemented.

Conducting the Excursion/In School excursion

A list of children on the excursion/ regular outing will be carried by educators. If no one will remain at ECEC, before leaving, a notice will be prominently displayed at the ECEC which includes:

- Where the excursion is taking place
- Mobile contact phone number

Items to be taken on an excursion / In School excursion include

- A stocked first-aid kit including the ECEC EpiPen and asthma medication / spacer.
- A mobile phone.

- Families emergency contact numbers.
- Children's medication including but not limited to the children's Epipens, asthma medication and Medical Management Plans.
- Spare clothes.
- Sunscreen and tissues.
- Evacuation rope for the children hold onto. This is used to support children to walk as a group safely.

Risk Management

The Nominated Supervisor will ensure that a risk assessment is completed prior to any excursion conducted. The risk assessment will identify and assess the risk the excursion may pose to the safety, health and wellbeing of any child whilst on the excursion, and will specify how the ECEC will manage any risks identified. Specifically:

- All risk assessments will be completed using Hills Grammar Risk Assessment Form.
- Where an external provider has been organised to deliver an educational experience they will be asked to provide a full risk assessment which outlines the risks associated with their venue, program and activities and the measures they take to minimise the risk to students and staff participating in the program.
- Risk Assessments must take into account the nature of the proposed activity, venue of activity, transport, age of participants, learning and wellbeing needs of participants, and physical capabilities of participants.
- All Risk Assessments must be signed and dated by the organising staff member preparing the document, endorsed by the ECEC Manager and approved by the Head of Administration and Daily Planning.
- ECEC educators will be asked to sign off on the risk assessment before the excursion or In School excursion takes place.
- All risk assessments are located in the ECEC risk assessment folder and the shared drive.
- Ensure educators and any responsible adults attending the excursion are made aware of the ECEC procedures of what must be done in the event of an emergency.
- Before departing for the excursion, risks are checked including the weather to assess any increases to the level of risk and whether the excursion can proceed.

The risk assessment conducted will consider

- Destination, proposed route and duration of the excursion.
- Potential water hazards or any hazard associated with water based activities.
- Transport to and from the destination.
- The projected number of educators, adults, responsible persons, other adults and children involved.
- Proposed activities.
- Items that should be taken on the excursion.
- Access for emergency services.
- Availability of toilets, handwashing and shade.
- Adequate mobile phone coverage.
- Strategies for accounting for all children on the excursion, particularly during transition, times, such as ensuring children have been transported to the destination and have been returned to the ECEC at the conclusion of the excursion.

In the event of an In School excursion such as routine walks through THGS campus, a risk assessment will be carried out once, provided the circumstances around the excursions have not changed in any way since the initial risk assessment was conducted.

If the excursion is a regular occurrence, the risk assessment will only be carried out once and then reviewed annually or as required.

Approval for In School excursions / excursions

- All In School excursions and excursions must be approved by the ECEC Manager/Head of Administration and Daily Planning prior to the planned event.
- Documents sent for approval include:
  - Notice of In School Excursion, Function Form and Permission Form sent to families.
  - Risk assessment.
  - Risk assessment from the provider of the excursion.
  - Risk assessments for level 5 children.

Cost of Excursion

Parents will be charged the amount of the excursion which will be added to the ECEC invoice. Parents will consent to paying the cost when they sign the permission slips for the event.

Educators will:

- Adhere to and support the implementation of this policy.
- Maintain the required educator to child ratios at all times, and adequately supervise the children during excursions and In School excursions.
- Adequately supervise the families volunteering their time to participate in an excursion and ensure they are not left in sole care of the children at any time.
- Read and sign off on any relevant risk assessments before the excursion or In School excursion
- Include all children in excursions and In School excursions regardless of their abilities or medical needs.
- Ensure an accurate roll of attendance is taken and checked regularly.
- Ensure a suitably packed emergency backpack is taken on any outing away from the ECEC premises.
- Take each child's personal medication bag in the emergency backpack when leaving the ECEC premises.
- Update the emergency backpack including first aid kit as required.

Families will:

- Sign any excursion permission notices when provided by ECEC.
- Sign permission notice on enrolment and annually providing permission for their child to leave the ECEC premises on routine outings through THGS campus.
- Families will be encouraged to participate in excursions to assist and maintain suitable child/adult ratios.
- Understand that, if they participate in an excursion or In School excursion as a volunteer they will be under the immediate supervision of the ECEC educators. Family members will not be left in sole care of the children.
- Provide a Working with Children's Check to the Nominated Supervisor if they are participating in the excursion.
- All family members details will be entered into the appropriate staff record for the day of the planned excursion.

Statutory Legislation and Considerations

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010

Education and Care Services National Regulations

Guide to the National Quality Standard ACECQA

Sources

Community Early Learning Australia www.cela.org.au

Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) www.acecqa.gov.au

Australian Childcare Alliance www.childcarealliance.org.au

Review

This policy is reviewed by management, employees and families as required or when legislative requirements change.

Families and staff are essential stakeholders in the policy review and will be given opportunity and encouragement to be actively involved.