# EXCURSION POLICY

## The Children's House Montessori

### Purpose

The Children's House Montessori is committed to providing children with opportunities to participate in excursions and outings that enhance their learning, extend their experiences beyond the service environment, and strengthen their connection with the wider community. Excursions support children's sense of belonging, wellbeing, confidence, and understanding of the world around them.

The service recognises that excursions are valuable educational experiences and will ensure that all excursions are carefully planned, appropriately supervised, and conducted in a manner that protects the safety, health and wellbeing of every child.

All excursions will comply with the **Education and Care Services National Law**, the **Education and Care Services National Regulations**, including Regulations 100, 101 and 102, and the service's Child Safe Environment policies.

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# Procedures

## 1. Excursion Planning and Approval

The Nominated Supervisor will appoint an Excursion Supervisor for each excursion.

Prior to any excursion:

- A written Excursion Risk Assessment and Management Plan must be completed.
- The risk assessment must identify, assess and document how all identified risks will be managed and minimised.
- The risk assessment must be completed before parent authorisation is sought.
- Risk assessments must consider:
    - the destination and route;
    - supervision requirements;
    - transport arrangements;
    - water hazards and water-based activities;
    - weather conditions;
    - children's individual needs;
    - activities being undertaken;
    - the duration of the excursion;
    - emergency procedures;
    - items and equipment required.

Where the destination does not provide sufficient information for the completion of a risk assessment, the Excursion Supervisor will conduct a site visit prior to the excursion.

For regular outings, risk assessments may be reviewed annually provided circumstances remain substantially unchanged.

# 2. Organisation of Excursions

Educators are responsible for the thorough organisation of each excursion, including:

- Investigating transport requirements.
- Establishing all associated costs.
- Confirming venue bookings where required.
- Identifying available facilities including:
    - toilets;
    - handwashing facilities;
    - drinking water;
    - eating areas;
    - shade and shelter;
    - accessible emergency exits;
    - safe pedestrian access and crossings.
- Confirming emergency contact arrangements.

Excursions may be postponed, modified or cancelled if weather conditions, bushfire warnings, air quality concerns, flooding, public emergencies or other identified risks make participation unsafe.

# 3. Parent Authorisation

No child may attend an excursion without written authorisation from a parent, guardian or authorised nominee.

The Written Authorisation Form must include:

- destination;
- purpose of excursion;
- proposed activities;
- date and times;
- method of transport;
- anticipated child-to-adult ratio;
- number of children attending;
- any specific risks associated with the excursion.

A copy of the authorisation must be retained with the excursion records.

# 4. Transport Requirements

Transportation arrangements will be determined following completion of the excursion risk assessment.

Where transport is required:

## Private Vehicles

- All drivers must hold a current and valid driver's licence.
- All volunteer drivers must complete the Transportation of Students by Parents Form.
- Suitable comprehensive insurance must be held by volunteer drivers.
- Vehicles must comply with all NSW road laws.
- Child restraints must comply with Australian Standard AS/NZS 1754.
- There must be a minimum of two adults in each vehicle, including the driver.

## Bus Transport

- The operator must provide evidence of required licences and approvals.
- Drivers must hold all required licences.
- A Working with Children Check assessment will be completed where applicable.
- Buses must be fitted with approved seatbelts.
- There must be at least two supervising adults in addition to the driver.

The service will ensure children are safely supervised while embarking and disembarking from all vehicles.

A designated supervising adult, other than the driver, must check each vehicle at every arrival and departure point to ensure no child is left behind.

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# 5. Attendance and Accountability

Accurate attendance records must be maintained throughout the excursion.

Educators must ensure children are signed:

- out of the service;
- into educator supervision upon arrival;
- out of the venue when departing;
- back into the service upon return.

Documented head counts must occur:

- prior to departure;
- before entering transport;
- after entering transport;
- on arrival;
- before leaving the destination;
- after boarding transport for return travel;
- upon return to the service;
- whenever supervision groups change.

Attendance records will be maintained in both the excursion file and the service attendance records.

# 6. Supervision Ratios

Minimum supervision arrangements are:

| Excursion Type | Minimum Ratio |
|---|---|
| Excursion not involving transport or crossing a major road | 1 adult : 5 children |
| Excursion involving crossing a major road | 1 adult : 4 children |
| Excursion involving a significant water hazard | 1 adult : 3 children |
| Transport by car | Minimum 2 adults per vehicle |
| Transport by bus | Minimum 2 adults plus driver |

Additional supervision may be required following assessment of:

- children's ages and abilities;
- additional needs;
- behaviour support requirements;
- environmental hazards;
- excursion complexity.

At least one adult attending the excursion must hold current approved First Aid, CPR and Anaphylaxis qualifications.

# 7. Volunteer and Parent Participation

Parents and volunteers assisting on excursions:

- must comply with service policies and educator directions;
- remain under educator supervision at all times;
- must never be left solely responsible for groups of children unless approved by the Nominated Supervisor;
- must support the service's Child Safe Environment practices.

The service will ensure all volunteers are appropriately supervised to maintain children's safety and wellbeing.

# 8. Communication

All educators and supervising adults must carry a fully charged mobile phone for use in an emergency and for contacting the service if required. Personal devices are not to be used for taking images of the children. The service will provide a camera not connected to the internet for this purpose.Upon returning to the service the camera will be downloaded according to our Digital Devices Policy.

The Excursion Supervisor will ensure:

- emergency contact numbers are available;
- the service's contact details are accessible;
- parents can be contacted if required;
- emergency services can be contacted immediately if necessary.

# 9. Clothing, Food and Sun Safety

Children must wear:

- weather-appropriate clothing;
- sturdy enclosed footwear;
- suitable sun-safe hats where required.

Parents are responsible for providing sufficient food and drink for their child unless otherwise advised.

Children must have access to food and water at regular intervals throughout the excursion.

Educators will carry additional food and drinking water for emergencies.

Sunscreen will be applied in accordance with the service's Sun Protection Policy.

# 10. First Aid and Medical Management

The Nominated Supervisor will ensure that:

- a fully stocked first aid kit accompanies every excursion;
- each vehicle carries a first aid and clean-up kit;
- copies of emergency contacts are available;
- medical management plans are taken for children with diagnosed medical conditions;
- prescribed medications, including EpiPens, inhalers and emergency medication, accompany the child and are clearly labelled.

Medication must remain readily accessible at all times.

# 11. Water Hazards

Where an excursion involves a water hazard:

- a site-specific risk assessment must be completed;
- supervision ratios may be increased;
- supervision zones and educator positions must be clearly identified;
- a responsible adult with lifesaving, rescue or strong swimming ability must be present.

Swimming activities are not included in service excursions.

# 12. Child Identification and Road Safety

Children will wear identification containing:

- The Children's House Montessori name;
- the service contact number; and
- the Excursion Supervisor's contact details.

Educators will ensure children:

- follow road safety rules;
- use designated pedestrian crossings where available;
- remain with their allocated group at all times.

Educators will actively supervise children to prevent children from running ahead or falling behind the group.

# 13. Missing Child Procedure

If a child is unaccounted for during an excursion:

1. An immediate head count will be conducted.
2. All supervising adults will be alerted immediately.
3. A search of the immediate area will commence.
4. Remaining children will be moved to a safe location under educator supervision.
5. The Nominated Supervisor will be notified.
6. Emergency services (000) will be contacted if the child is not located immediately.
7. The child's parents or guardians will be informed as soon as practical.
8. All required incident, notification and reporting procedures will be completed.

The safety and wellbeing of all children will remain the priority throughout any emergency response.

# Related Documents

- Excursion Risk Assessment and Management Plan
- Written Authorisation for Excursions
- Transportation of Students by Parents Form
- Parent Authorisation for Unaccompanied Child Form
- Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy
- Child Safe Environment Policy
- Sun Protection Policy
- Medical Conditions Policy
- Digital Devices Policy

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**Approved By:** Denise Underwood Principal

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