
Document name:	Excursions and Service Events
Document Type:	Policy
Document Number:	
Domain:	Meli Kindergarten Services
Regulation:	National Quality Framework
Regulatory Area:	Quality Area 2
Version:	2.0
Document Status:	Draft
Effective Date:	16/11/2023
Review Date:	16/11/2026
Approver:	CEO
Custodian:	Executive Director Services

1. Purpose

This policy provides a guideline for Meli Kindergarten Services (Meli) to plan and conduct safe and appropriate excursions, regular outings, and service events

2. Policy Statement

Meli is committed to:

- providing opportunities through their educational programs for children to explore and experience the wider environment and broader community
- ensuring that all excursions, regular outings, and service events are accessible, and contribute to children's learning and development
- ensuring the health, safety, and wellbeing of children at all times, conducting risk assessments, and ensuring authorisations are obtained from parents/guardians
- providing adequate supervision of all children during excursions, regular outings, and service events
- promoting road safety education and safe active travel for children.

3. Scope

This policy applies to the Meli as the approved provider, persons with management or control, nominated supervisor, persons in day-to-day charge, early childhood teachers, educators, staff, students, volunteers, parents/guardians, children, and others attending the programs and activities of Meli, including during offsite excursions and activities

4. Background

Excursions and service events are planned to extend the educational program and further develop the current interests of children. The *Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework* states that "Participating in their communities strengthens children's sense of identity and wellbeing" (Outcome 2: Children are connected with and contribute to their world). The purpose and educational value of each excursion or service event should be clearly communicated to parents/guardians.

When planning excursions and service events, it is important to ensure that they are inclusive of all members of the service community. Consideration must be given to any extra costs involved and the ability of families to pay these costs. Consideration must also be given to ensuring that all children can attend regardless of their

abilities, additional needs, or medical conditions (*refer to Inclusion and Equity Policy, Dealing with Medical Conditions Policy, Asthma Policy, Anaphylaxis Policy, Diabetes Policy, and Epilepsy Policy*). Clear procedures must be developed and followed, and these should be communicated to parents/guardians.

A risk assessment must be conducted for each excursion to determine any risks to children's health, safety or wellbeing before permission is sought from parents/guardians (*Regulations 100, 101*). The risk assessment must identify each risk and specify how the risk will be managed and/or minimised (*Regulation 101*).

Written authorisation for the child to attend the excursion must be obtained from a parent/guardian or person named in the child's enrolment record before the child can be taken outside the service premises. For details regarding information to be included in the written authorisation, *refer to Attachment 1*.

Active travel excursions near the service have a range of benefits including:

- children and staff being physically active
- providing the opportunity to practice road safety
- engaging with the community

Early childhood road safety education aims to reduce the risk of serious injury and death from road trauma. It also aims to lay the foundations for children to become safe and independent road and transport users in the future. Road safety education is an important part of a holistic approach to keeping children safe around traffic and in the road environment. Effective traffic skills are best learnt if they occur in a real environment.

5. Definitions

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy.

Adequate supervision: (In relation to this policy) entails all children (individuals and groups) in all areas of the service, being in sight and/or hearing of an educator at all times including during toileting, sleep, rest, and transition routines. Services are required to comply with the legislative requirements for educator-to-child ratios at all times. Supervision contributes to protecting children from hazards that may emerge in play, including hazards created by the equipment used.

Adequate supervision refers to constant, active, and diligent supervision of every child at the service. Adequate supervision requires that educators are always able to observe each child, respond to individual needs and immediately intervene if necessary. Variables affecting supervision levels include:

- number, age, and abilities of children
- number and positioning of educators
- current activity of each child
- areas in which the children are engaged in an activity (visibility and accessibility)
- developmental profile of each child and of the group of children
- experience, knowledge, and skill of each educator
- need for educators to move between areas (effective communication strategies).

Attendance Record: Kept by the service to record details of each child attending the service including name, time of arrival and departure, signature of person delivering and collecting the child or of the nominated supervisor or educator (*Regulation 158(1)*).

Excursion: An outing organised by the education and care service. The written permission of parents/guardians or a person named on the child's enrolment record as having lawful authority must be obtained before educators/staff take children outside the service premises.

Risk assessment: (In the context of this policy) must identify and assess any hazard that poses a risk to a child's health, safety and/or wellbeing while on an excursion, and specify how these risks will be managed and/or minimised (*Regulation 101*). Risk assessments must consider:

- the proposed route and location of the excursion
- any water hazards (*refer to Water Safety Policy*)
- any risks associated with water-based activities (*refer to Water Safety Policy*)

- transport to and from the proposed location of the excursion (*refer to Occupational Health and Safety Policy*)
- the number of adults and children participating in the excursion
- the number of educators or other responsible adults who will be providing supervision given the level of risk, and whether specialised skills are required (e.g., lifesaving skills)
- the proposed activities, and the impact of this on children with varying levels of ability, additional needs, or medical conditions
- the proposed duration of the excursion, and the impact of this on children with varying levels of ability, additional needs, or medical conditions
- any items/information that should be taken on the excursion e.g., first aid kit, emergency contact details for children, medication for children with known medical conditions (such as asthma, anaphylaxis, and diabetes) and a mobile phone.

Service event: A special activity, event, visitor, or entertainment organised by the education and care service that may be conducted as part of a regular session at the service premises or as an excursion.

Supervision: refer to adequate supervision in *Definitions* above

6. Responsibilities

RESPONSIBILITIES	Approved provider (Meli) and persons with management control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	Early childhood teacher, educators, and all other staff	Parents/guardians	Contractors, volunteers, and students
R indicates legislation requirement, and should not be deleted					
Communicating and implementing the requirements of the <i>Excursions and Service Events Policy</i> in consultation with the nominated supervisor, staff, and parents/guardians at the service (<i>Regulation 168</i>)	R	√	√	√	√
Ensuring that staff, volunteers, students, and others at the service are provided with a copy of the <i>Excursions and Service Events Policy</i> and comply with its requirements (<i>Regulation 171</i>)	R	√	√	√	√
Ensuring that all parents/guardians have completed, signed, and dated their child's enrolment form (<i>refer to Enrolment and Orientation Policy</i>) including details of persons able to authorise an educator to take their child outside the service premises (<i>Regulation 99, 160, 161</i>)	R	√	√	√	√
Ensuring that parents/guardians or persons named in the enrolment record have provided written authorisation (<i>Regulation 99</i>) within the past 12 months where the service is to take the child on regular outings, and that this authorisation is kept in the child's enrolment record (<i>Regulation 161</i>) (<i>refer to Attachment 1</i>)	R	√	√	√	√
Ensuring that a child does not leave the service premises on an excursion unless prior written authorisation has been provided by the parent/guardian or person named in the child's enrolment record, and that the authorisation includes all details required under <i>Regulation 99, 102(4)</i> (<i>refer to Attachment 1</i>)	R	R	√		√
Ensuring that the number of children attending an excursion does not exceed the number for which service approval has been granted on that day	R	R	√		
Ensuring that educator-to-child ratios are maintained, including during excursions, regular outings, and service events (<i>Regulations 123</i>)	R	R	√		

Ensuring that children are always adequately supervised (<i>Regulation 122 (National Law: Section 165)</i>)	R	R	√		√
Ensuring that parents/guardians, volunteers, students, and all adults participating in an excursion are adequately supervised at all times and are not left with sole supervision of individual children or groups of children (<i>refer to Participation of Volunteers and Students Policy</i>)	R	R	√		
Ensuring that a risk assessment is conducted for an excursion (<i>in accordance with Regulation 101</i>) before authorisation is sought from parents/guardians (<i>Regulation 100</i>), including suitability of venue	R	R	√		
Ensuring the risk assessment identifies and assesses the risks, specifies how these will be managed and/or minimised, and includes all details required by <i>Regulation 101</i>	R	R	√		
Developing strategies to improve children's safety in high-risk situations such as excursions near water or near a road (<i>refer to Supervision of Children Policy, Water Safety Policy and Road Safety and Safe Transport Policy</i>)	R	R	√		
Ensuring that staff comply with the service's <i>Road Safety and Safe Transport Policy</i>	R	R	√	√	√
Encouraging parents/guardians to comply with the service's <i>Road Safety and Safe Transport Policy</i>	R	R	√	√	√
Providing road safety education as part of the curriculum		√	√		
Where appropriate, taking walking excursions in the local community to promote physical activity, safe active travel, and community connectedness		R	√		
Ensuring that excursions and service events are based on an approved learning framework, the developmental needs, interests, and experiences of each child, and consider the individual differences of each child (<i>refer to Curriculum Development Policy</i>)		R	√		
Ensuring that there is a clear purpose and educational value to each excursion or service event, and that this is communicated to parents/guardians		R	√		
Discussing the aims and objectives of the excursion or service event, and items of special interest, with children prior to undertaking the activity		R	√		
Involving children in consultation and decision-making processes		R	√		√
Ensuring that proposed excursions/service events are inclusive of all children regardless of their abilities, additional needs, or medical conditions (<i>refer to Inclusion and Equity Policy, Dealing with Medical Conditions Policy, Asthma Policy, Anaphylaxis Policy, Diabetes Policy, and Epilepsy Policy</i>)	R	R	√		
Ensuring strategies are in place to provide an accurate attendance record for children attending an excursion, and for children remaining at the service while an excursion is happening	R	R			
Ensuring strategies are in place to ensure that there is an accurate list of all adults participating in an excursion, including parents/guardians, volunteers, and students, with contact details for everyone	R	R	√		
Ensuring that each child's personal medication and current medical management plan is taken on excursions and other offsite activities (<i>refer to Dealing with Medical Conditions Policy, Asthma Policy, Anaphylaxis Policy, Diabetes Policy, and Epilepsy Policy</i>)	R	R	√	√	√
Ensuring an accurate attendance record is kept for children attending an excursion, and for children remaining at the service while an excursion is happening	R	R	√		√
Ensuring that there is an accurate list of all adults participating in an excursion, including parents/guardians, volunteers, and students, with contact details for everyone	√	R	√		
Understanding that, if they participate in an excursion or service event as a volunteer, they will be always under the immediate supervision of an ECT/educator or the approved provider		R		√	√

If participating in an excursion, regular outing, or service event, informing an educator immediately if a child is missing from the group		R		√	√
Supervising and caring for siblings and other children in their care who are not enrolled in the program				R	
Taking a portable first aid kit (including required medication for dealing with medical conditions) on excursions and other offsite activities (Regulation 89)	R	R	√		√
Ensuring 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 (Regulation 98)	R	R	√		
Ensuring sunscreen and hats (if required) is taken on excursions and is available as required for service events and that outdoor excursion venues provide adequate shade	R	R	√		√
Informing parents/guardians of items required by children for the excursion, adventure activities or service event e.g., snack/lunch, sunscreen, coat etc	√	R	√		
Displaying a notice at the service indicating that children are on an excursion, and including the location of the excursion and expected time of return to the service	√	R	√		

7. Evaluation

To assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, Meli will:

- regularly seek feedback from everyone affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness.
- monitor the implementation, compliance, complaints, and incidents in relation to this policy.
- keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy, and best practice.
- revise the policy and procedures as part of the service's policy review cycle, or as required.
- notifying all stakeholders affected by this policy at least 14 days before making any significant changes to this policy or its procedures unless a lesser period is necessary due to risk (Regulation 172 (2)).

Attachments

Attachment 1: Developing an excursion/service event authorisation form

8. Related Documents

Meli Kindergarten Services:

- Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations Policy
- Administration of First Aid Policy
- Administration of Medication Policy
- Anaphylaxis Policy
- Asthma Policy
- Code of Conduct Policy
- Curriculum Development Policy
- Dealing with Medical Conditions Policy
- Delivery and Collection of Children Policy
- Diabetes Policy
- Emergency and Evacuation Policy
- Enrolment and Orientation Policy
- Epilepsy Policy
- Fees Policy
- Food Safety Policy
- Hygiene Policy
- Incident, Injury, Trauma, and Illness Policy
- Inclusion and Equity Policy
- Interactions with Children Policy

- Nutrition and Active Play Policy
- Occupational Health and Safety Policy
- Participation of Volunteers and Students Policy
- Privacy and Confidentiality
- Road Safety and Safe Transport Policy
- Sun Protection Policy
- Supervision of Children Policy
- Water Safety Policy

9. Sources

- Belonging, Being & Becoming – The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia: www.acecqa.gov.au
- *Guide to the National Quality Standard*, ACECQA: www.acecqa.gov.au
- ELAA's Road Safety Education program www.childroadsafety.org.au
- *Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework*: www.education.vic.gov.au
- VicRoads: www.vicroads.vic.gov.au
- Child Health Promotion Research Centre & Edith Cowan University (2012) *National Practices for Early Childhood Road Safety Education*: <https://childroadsafety.org.au/assets/Research/National-Practices-for-EC-RSE.pdf>

10. Legislation and Standards

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- *National Quality Standard*, including Quality Area 1: Educational Program and Practice and Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety

ATTACHMENT 1. DEVELOPING AN EXCURSION/SERVICE EVENT AUTHORISATION FORM

The *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 (Regulation 102 (4))* specify that written authorisations for excursions, given by a parent/guardian or person authorised on the child's enrolment record, must include the following details:

- the child's name
- the reason the child is to be taken outside the service premises
- the date the child is to be taken on the excursion (unless the authorisation is for a regular outing (refer to Definitions))
- a description of the proposed location of the excursion
- the method of transport to be used
- proposed activities to be undertaken as part of the excursion
- the period of time that the child will be away from the service premises
- the anticipated number of children attending the excursion
- the anticipated ratio of educators to children attending the excursion
- the anticipated number of staff members, and any other adults who will accompany and supervise children on the excursion
- confirmation that a risk assessment has been prepared and is available at the service.

The authorisation form should require parents/guardians to include contact details for two people and for the child's medical practitioner if the child experiences an incident, injury, trauma, or illness while on the excursion.

The form must be signed and dated by the parent/guardian, or a person authorised on the child's enrolment form.

Services should also include information about:

- additional costs involved, if any, and
- whether parents/guardians/siblings can participate in the excursion and, if so, details of the supervision requirements for additional family members.