



Excursions & Transportation Policy

Policy Statement:

Pennant Hills Before and After School Care Service is committed to ensuring the safety, wellbeing, and inclusion of all children during excursions, regular outings, and transportation of any kind. Excursions and outings are designed to enrich children's experiences, foster independence, and support their educational and social development. All activities will be carefully planned, risk-assessed, and supervised in accordance with the Education and Care Services National Regulations, with particular attention to Regulations 100, 101, and 102. The service prioritises clear communication with families, consistent authorisation processes, and vigilant supervision to maintain compliance and uphold the highest standard of care.

Definitions:

Excursion: Any outing where children are taken outside the service grounds as part of our vacation care program.

Regular Outing: A recurring, routine excursion undertaken by children enrolled in the service, distinguished from one-off excursions by their predictable nature, frequency, and established procedures.

Risk-Benefit Assessment: A documented process conducted prior to excursions and outings to identify hazards, assess risks, and outline strategies to ensure children's safety, as required under Regulations 100 & 101.

Authorised Nominee: A person authorised to sign a child in and out of care. This can include tutors/providers of extracurricular activities if approved by caregivers.

Considerations:

- National Quality Standard:
 - 2.2.1: Reasonable precautions and adequate supervision protect children from harm and hazard.
 - 2.2.2: Incident and emergency plans are developed, practised, and implemented.
 - 2.2.3: Staff are aware of their roles in identifying and responding to children at risk.
 - 6.2.3: The service collaborates with other organisations and service providers to enhance children's learning and wellbeing.
 - 7.1.2: Risk management systems support effective service operation.
- Education and Care Services National Regulations:
 - Regulation 100: Risk assessment must be conducted before an excursion.

- Regulation 101: Risk assessment requirements, including consideration of hazards, supervision, transport, and emergency procedures.
- Regulation 101(2)(b): Specific requirement to assess risks associated with water hazards.
- Regulation 102: Authorisation required for excursions.
- Regulation 165: Service must ensure adequate supervision of children.
- Regulation 167: Service must ensure children are not subjected to harm or hazards.
- Regulation 169: Service must ensure policies and procedures are in place.
- Regulation 168: Required policies and procedures must be documented and implemented.
- Roads and Maritime Services – Road Transport Act 2013 – Requirements for child restraint systems and safe transport of children.

Policy:

Excursions:

Planning & Risk Management:

Excursions will be carefully planned to ensure they are appropriate for all children, considering their ages, capabilities, interests, and cultural diversity. When organising an excursion, staff must consider the suitability of the venue, the availability of food, drink, and facilities, as well as weather conditions, costs, clothing or equipment requirements, and travel arrangements.

In accordance with Regulations 100 & 101, the nominated supervisor is required to ensure that a risk-benefit assessment is prepared prior to each new excursion. As part of this process, risk-benefit assessments will address the following:

- Proposed route and destination
- Water hazards and risks associated with water-based activities
- Transport arrangements, including seatbelt/safety restraint requirements
- Number of adults and children involved
- Supervision requirements and whether specialised skills are needed
- Proposed activities and their duration
- Items to be taken (first aid kit, mobile phone, emergency contacts)
- Procedures for embarking/disembarking transport

Adverse weather conditions will also be considered, with alternative arrangements made if necessary. To further ensure safety and preparedness, staff may visit venues prior to excursions to familiarise themselves with the environment as part of the risk-benefit assessment process.

Authorisation & Communication:

Children will not be taken outside of the service grounds unless written parental authorisation has been obtained (see Acceptance & Refusal of Authorisations Policy). This authorisation must clearly outline the child's name, the reason for the excursion, the date, destination, transport details, planned activities, expected duration, the number of children and staff attending, staff-to-child ratios, and confirmation that a risk-benefit assessment has been completed and is available.

Excursions will be communicated to parents in advance, with full details provided regarding the date, times, destination, transport arrangements, costs, planned activities, and any specific requirements.

In the event of delays or emergencies, staff will ensure timely contact with parents via email or SMS, so that families remain informed.

Supervision & Staff Responsibility:

Staff-to-child ratios are maintained to ensure safety and effective supervision during all excursions. Outside the service, a ratio of 1:8 is maintained. When swimming, a ratio of 1:5 must be observed at a minimum, with best practice recommending a stricter 1:4 ratio for swimming and water-based activities, which is our preference.

Educators are responsible for positioning themselves so that every child always remains within sight, with direct and vigilant supervision. To sustain attentiveness, staff will rotate positions regularly. On swimming excursions, some educators will provide supervision from within the water to further enhance safety.

Volunteers and parents may be invited to assist with excursions, but children must always remain in the care of an educator. Supervision is paramount, and particular attention will be given when crossing roads or navigating crowded areas to ensure children's wellbeing.

Information & Equipment Requirements:

Information and equipment to be taken on an excursion includes:

- Centre iPad with roll (plus paper backup).
- Parents' names and contact details, emergency contacts.
- Portable first aid kit.
- Medications for all children attending with medical conditions.
- Risk-benefit assessments of venue(s) and transportation.
- List of special needs (allergies, health conditions, additional needs).
- Emergency procedures and contact numbers.
- Sunscreen and spare hats.
- Wristbands for children (states centre name and phone number).
- Fully charged centre mobile phone.
- Other items as outlined in the specific risk-benefit assessments for each excursion.

Lost Child Procedure:

1. The Responsible Person in Charge will inform other educators immediately and address the group to ask children if they have seen the missing child or know where they might be, to reassure everyone and ensure a calm environment. The Director will be contacted immediately, if not present.
2. At least two educators must remain with the group to ensure all other children are supervised and safe.
3. Staff will conduct a thorough search of the premises and designated meeting points. Request venue staff to assist with the search and make public announcements if possible.
4. If the child is not located within a reasonable timeframe, the Director or Nominated Supervisor will:
 - a. Contact the police immediately.
 - b. Notify the child's family without delay.

If contact is made with the police, regardless of the outcome following this, a serious incident report will be made to the Regulatory Authority within 24 hours of the event.

Transportation Requirements:

Children may travel to excursions by foot, public transport, or private transport, depending on the needs of the outing. Prior to any excursion, transportation type will be included in the overall risk-benefit assessment to ensure safety. This assessment will consider:

- Route and duration
- Departure and arrival points
- Means of transport
- Seatbelt/safety restraint requirements
- Potential hazards enroute (e.g. roadworks if going by foot)
- Number of adults and children
- Items required during transport (mobile phone, emergency contacts, medication, etc.)
- Procedures for embarking/disembarking transport

Bus operators engaged for excursions must hold the appropriate licences and insurance and provide facilities such as wheelchair access where required. Throughout all travel, staff will ensure that children display appropriate behaviours, maintaining safety and respect for others during the journey.

Water Safety:

If an excursion involves water play, a risk-benefit assessment will be conducted to determine the appropriate educator-to-child ratio (while adhering to legal ratios of 1:5, at a minimum). Only educators with current, approved first aid qualifications will supervise, and venues with lifeguards

will be preferred. Educators must actively supervise, positioning themselves to keep every child in sight, rotating as needed to maintain vigilance.

Venues with bodies of water will not be used if adequate precautions cannot be ensured. Supervision adequacy will be assessed based on the number, ages, and abilities of children; the number and positioning of educators; the activities being undertaken; visibility and accessibility of play areas; environmental risks; and educators' knowledge of the children and their skills.

For the purposes of this policy, a "body of water" includes swimming pools, wading pools, lakes, ponds, the ocean, creeks, dams, rivers, and any equipment or container holding 5cm or more of water in which a child could submerge both nose and mouth.

Events Run by Pennant Hills Public School:

Pennant Hills Public School hosts events throughout the year for the children (e.g. discos). Each event is unique and will require procedures tailored to the specific circumstances. However, the following requirements will apply to all events.

Written permission must be obtained for every school event for the service to take a child to and/or from the event. Families will receive notes outlining all event details at least two weeks prior, ensuring they have sufficient time to review arrangements and provide authorisation. Children who do not have written parental permission will not be permitted to attend the school event. To maintain required supervision ratios and ensure appropriate care for children remaining at the service, the centre is unable to contact families on the day of the event to seek last-minute authorisation for attendance.

It is important to note that **permission for the centre to take the child to the school event is separate from the school's permission note for the child to attend the event itself**. Parents must therefore complete both authorisations to ensure their child can participate.

Decisions regarding whether children may be collected by the centre after a school event rest with the Director, and parents will be notified of this decision in advance. Where the centre does collect children following an event, parents are not permitted to collect their child directly from the school event. To avoid confusion, children must first be signed back into the service upon return from the event and then signed out again by parents in the usual manner.

During the event itself, children are formally signed out of the service and into the care of the school. The school is responsible for conducting risk assessments and ensuring child safety while children are under their supervision. The centre accepts no responsibility for children while they are outside the service's direct care.

Regular Outings:

A *regular outing* refers to a recurring, routine excursion undertaken by children enrolled in the service. Regular outings are distinguished from one-off excursions by their predictable nature, frequency, and established procedures.

Regular outings include, but are not limited to:

- Walk Up and Walk Down (all 3-6 students): Daily transport of all primary students between the service site and the 3-6 site, conducted under staff supervision.
- Year 6 Walk Down: Independent travel by Year 6 students from the 3-6 site to the service site.
- Extracurricular Lessons and Activities: Attendance at structured programs such as band practice, instrumental lessons, tutoring, therapy sessions, private tuition, or school-run activities, where participation is consistent and authorised by families and the service.

Risk Management & Authorisations:

Educators are required to plan regular outings in advance, selecting safe travel routes, assessing potential hazards, and preparing for emergencies. Road safety, pedestrian safety, and safe play must always be prioritised, with all practices aligned to NSW Roads and Traffic Authority laws. Each outing must include a risk-benefit assessment to identify and minimise hazards, ensuring the wellbeing of all children.

No child will be taken out of the school grounds without written authorisation, except for in an emergency. Authorisation for regular outings is obtained through enrolment forms, with annual updates secured via re-enrolment. Risk-benefit assessments are conducted for all regular outings to confirm that supervision and safety standards are consistently maintained.

Walk Up & Walk Down Procedure:

Each day, children are transported on foot between the infant and primary sites, which are located approximately 500 metres apart.

Staff-to-child ratios are maintained at the standard level of 1:14, with adjustments made for specific conditions such as wet weather or other adverse circumstances. Throughout the outing, staff remain responsible for the supervision of the group. They position themselves at the front and back of the line, with additional staff evenly spaced to maintain supervision.

The staff member leading the group monitors the line closely, adjusting the walking pace to ensure the group remains together. This leader also pauses the group at any roads or driveways in use, ensuring safe passage before continuing. A school crossing supervisor is also present each morning and afternoon to assist with road crossings.

The itinerary is adhered to without deviation, unless a change is required in the best interests of the children's safety and wellbeing.

Year 6 Walk Up & Down Procedure:

Year 6 students may walk independently from the primary site to the K-2 site, provided that signed permission has been obtained, and they have signed the "Year 6 Walk Down Contract", which outlines expectations. Before departing, all Year 6 students must report to the roll-marking staff member/s, who ensure that every Year 6 child listed on the roll is accounted for. Only once this process is complete may the group begin their walk. Children are required to walk as a group and are not allowed to deviate from the usual route. They are to adhere to all instructions given by the school crossing supervisor.

Upon arrival at the K-2 site, the students are required to present themselves to the Responsible Person in Charge, who records their attendance and confirms their safe arrival. In circumstances where only one Year 6 student is present, independent travel is not permitted. That student must instead accompany the remainder of the primary group to the K-2 site, ensuring that no child undertakes the journey alone.

Extracurriculars Procedure for School Activities:

Families have the option to add tutors or other providers to the authorised nominee list through our Childcare Provider Software. Once authorised, these individuals are permitted to sign children in and out of care for the purpose of attending scheduled sessions and have the same drop-off/pick-up responsibilities as all other authorised nominees.

At all times, adequate supervision must be provided, with staff positioned to oversee the group effectively. Supervision must always be structured to safeguard the wellbeing of all children.

Service staff are not permitted to be alone with children and therefore are not responsible for delivering children to extra-curricular activities.

Emergency Transport:

In emergency situations, the service may transport children off-site without prior written consent. For more information about these procedures, please refer to our Emergency & Evacuation Policy. All children that are outside of the care of the service during an emergency, remain the responsibility of the person/s supervising them at that time e.g. the school.

Version	Action	Date
V.1	Major update Merging previous "Excursions", "Regular Outings" & "Water Safety" policies. Added information about school events.	2 nd December 2025
V.1	Approved by PMC	18 th February 2026