

(Policy Number) SAMPLE OUTINGS POLICY

1. Rationale and Policy Considerations

Outings extend and enhance the learning opportunities provided within an early years setting.

The main purpose of this policy is to specify what to do to keep children safe and well when they are under the control of the service, but not on the premises.

It is important also to ensure that we provide an enjoyable, engaging and valuable experience that will extend the children's interests and knowledge beyond the early years setting.

Legislation and regulatory requirements

- [Child Care Act 1991\(Early Years Services\) Regulations 2016](#)
- [Children First Act 2015](#)
- [Health and Safety at Work Acts 2005 and 2010](#)

Children's needs

Children need:

- Well-planned, interesting and safe opportunities to explore the world outside their early years setting to enhance their interests and learning about the world.
- Adequate, appropriate supervision so they can feel safe and secure.
- Someone who can provide first aid in case of accidents.
- Someone who knows what to do and how to keep everyone safe and well if a serious incident occurs.

Parents'/Families' needs

Parents/guardians need to know that:

- Their children will not be taken on outings unless they (parents or guardians) have given informed consent.
- Their children will be safe and appropriately supervised.
- Their children will have well-planned, purposeful opportunities for interesting and exciting learning experiences outside of their early years setting.
- There will be clear information on the plans for any outings, including any risk assessments.
- The adults who lead outings will be able to deal with any situations that may arise, such as medical or other emergencies, that occur while not on the service premises.

The rationale and policy considerations outline the main reasons for the policy.

This section also includes a consideration of the needs of the main stakeholders for the policy including:

- Children's needs, i.e. what children need the policy to achieve for them.
- Parents'/Families' needs, i.e. what parents need from the policy.
- Staff needs, i.e. what the staff team members need the policy to provide for them in their role.
- Management's needs, i.e. what the management needs the policy to do.

These considerations are provided to help those who are developing policies and those reading/reviewing them to ensure that all aspects of service provision related to the particular policy area/topic are considered in the wording of their policy and procedures documents.

This section should also have a list of Legislative and Regulatory Requirements (see Tusla Quality and Regulatory Framework for detailed Early Years Regulations 2016 requirements) and a list of relevant Quality Frameworks.

Much of the text used in the sample policies and procedures can be cut and pasted and used 'as is' in your own policy or procedures as long as it represents accurately what the practice is, or is expected to be, in your own service/setting.

Staff needs

Staff members need:

- To be clear on their roles and responsibilities in relation to ensuring the safety and well-being of the children when planning and going on outings.
- To be clear on what the procedures are to make sure children stay safe and their wellbeing is assured on outings.

Management needs

Management need:

- To know that all staff members have the information and resources they need to provide quality learning opportunities for the children.
- To make sure that staff members will inform them about any plans for outings.
- To make sure that all necessary procedures and precautions needed for outings – including:
 - appropriate consents from parents or guardians;
 - risk assessments;
 - appropriate ratios and supervision arrangements;
 - appropriate and safe transportation;
 - communication with all other stakeholders about the outing;
 - first aid and medical considerationsare clearly known to all staff members to ensure their full implementation.

National Quality Frameworks

- [Tusla: Quality and Regulatory Framework](#)
- [Síolta: The National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education](#)
- [Aistear: The Early Childhood Curriculum Framework](#)
- [Early Years Education-focused Inspection \(EYEI\) Framework](#) (Department of Education and Skills)

2. Definitions/Glossary

[Include definitions here of any words used that may need explanation.]

Outings	Occasions when the children attending the service are under the control of the service but not on the service premises

The Definitions/Glossary provides definitions of terms that are not in everyday use or for terms that have a specific meaning in the context of the particular policy, e.g. terms such as 'curriculum', 'pedagogy', 'holistic', 'open-ended' may need explanation for some stakeholders who will read this policy.

3. Policy Statement *[The Policy Statement outlines the principles, values and the purpose of the policy. The statement of policy will generally be quite short. The Policy Statement can be included in the Parents/Guardians Handbook.]*

Outings are planned to provide new, varied, exciting and interesting learning and development experiences for the children.

Thorough risk assessments are carried out prior to all outings/excursions and adequate insurance cover for the outing, including transportation, is provided for. Adequate and appropriate precautions are taken to prevent accidents, incidents or infection.

The safety and welfare of the child will always be the first consideration if a child is injured or an accident or incident occurs, and parents and guardians will always be kept fully informed.

Part of our planning process involves ensuring that outings are appropriate for the age and level of development of participating children.

Parents/guardians will be provided with advance notice of each outing with details of the date, destination, leaving and return times, staffing and group size, cost and transport arrangements.

Written parent/guardian consent must be obtained for each child participating. Only a parent or legal guardian can give consent for their child. Signed consent forms will be retained in the service in accordance with data protection requirements. For a regular outing, the written consent will be obtained once at the beginning of term. (Include a consent form as an appendix in your policy.)

All children will be safely and appropriately supervised while on the outing.

Parent/guardian or carer support on the day of the outing or excursion is encouraged and welcomed. The ratio of children to adults will be based on the risk assessment.

[If you plan to have parents or guardians or other adults who are not staff members (who may not have been subject to any vetting procedures) accompany a group of children as volunteers on any outings you need to consider how you will ensure that your Child Protection Procedures will be followed. For example, specifying in your policy that volunteers will not be allowed to supervise any children (other than their own children) unless accompanied by at least one member of staff.]

Different types of outings take place. Each may require slightly different preparations and staffing levels.

The Policy Statement outlines the principles, values and the intent of the policy. The statement of policy will generally be quite short. This would usually be the piece that goes into the Parents/Guardians Handbook (See 'Communication Plan' section below)

Text that is written in italics in the Sample Policies and Templates is not intended to be copied or used directly in your own policies. Italics are used either to outline additional things to consider when developing your own policy and procedures or simply to say what is to be written in to the space between brackets in order to personalise the finished document.

These include:

- Trips on foot, for example - visits to the woods, the park, the library or the post office.
- Trips requiring transport to places like museums, open farms, and so on.

When transport is needed, all necessary steps are taken to ensure that children will be transported safely with appropriate use of car seats and seat belts.

Parents and guardians can decline any offer for their children to be involved in any planned outings. If this happens, alternative arrangements are made for their child. Children who do not have parent or guardian consent to go on an outing will be supported to make sure they do not feel excluded.

4. **Procedures & Practices** *[Outlines the specific steps and/or guidance to be followed in order to implement the policy.]*

Consent

Parents or guardians must have given written authorisation for their child to be involved in an outing with full knowledge of the date, proposed destination and method of transport, planned activities and number of staff members and other adults accompanying/supervising children.

The consent form must include:

- The child's name
- The reason for the outing
- The date and the expected time of departure and return
- A description of the proposed destination
- The method of transport that will be used
- The proposed activities
- The anticipated number of children likely to be going on the outing
- The adult:child ratio on the outing
- Any adults other than staff members who will accompany and supervise the children on the outing
- Information about the risk assessment that has been carried out and is available at the service.

Parents or guardians must also be notified in advance about what type of clothing will be suitable for their child to wear, and also whether they will need to provide items such as spare clothing, sunscreen, a packed lunch and drinks.

The procedures section of your policy outlines the specific steps to be followed (generally by staff team members) and/or provides clear guidance on how to implement the policy. This should be referred to often in practice as it gives clear information about how to put the policy into practice.

Staff can only plan outings with the knowledge and written consent of *the Manager*.

Written plans of the outing, including the risk assessment, must be presented to *the Manager* in advance of the proposed outing.

Insurance

You should check with your insurance provider whether you are required to notify them of each outing individually and, if so, include here that the manager must notify the Insurance Company – it is useful to also include the name and contact details for the service's insurance provider.

Safety considerations and risk assessment

The person in charge of the outing must have the ability to implement safety procedures – this includes taking all appropriate steps to ensure that children are transported safely.

Specify by name here which staff members can lead which types of outings and that all outings must be notified to and approved by the Manager in advance of notifying parents or guardians.

In all cases, a risk assessment must be done to assess how many members of staff are needed to accompany children on outings.

An exploratory visit is to be carried out by appropriately qualified staff members, to assess the suitability of the destination/venue. A risk assessment must be carried out before an outing takes place.

The risk assessment must identify and assess the risks a particular outing may pose to the safety, health or wellbeing of any child being taken on the outing and specify how the identified risks will be managed and minimised.

It is important to be aware of any possible risks and any necessary precautions involved for a particular location and for particular types of weather.

Consider:

- The route and destination
- The type of activities
- The weather forecast – consider the need for sunscreen and/or raingear and wellies, suitable footwear (not sandals)
- The proposed duration
- The transport to and from the proposed destination for the outing
- The number of adults and children involved in the outing

- The number of staff and other responsible adults needed to provide supervision and any specialised skills are required
- The items that should be taken
- Safety notices at the destination, such as signs and flags
- Hand washing requirements
- Children's allergies, including food hypersensitivities
- Additional needs of any child
- Water hazards
- Any risks associated with water-based activities

Age-appropriate guidance and warnings should be given to the children.

Discuss hygiene issues with all children and volunteer helpers (especially on farm visits).

A list of all members of staff and children participating in the outing, along with relevant phone numbers, will be left with.....

Supervision of children

A group photograph is to be taken before leaving the service to check against if required. This is to provide the most recent picture of the children and their clothes.

Name tags must be placed on the children before leaving the service and only removed when children return to the service.

The children must, at all times, be appropriately supervised to ensure no child gets lost and that there is no unauthorised access to children.

Particular care must be taken when supervising children at pick up and drop off.

Prior to any outing, staff members should decide who will help to search, how the search will be carried out and who will take charge of the rest of the group of children should a child go missing.

It is essential to call or mark names in a roll call, with a name-to-face check rather than count heads. To ensure that all children are accounted for, this procedure should be followed:

- On leaving the service
- On arrival at the destination
- At regular intervals while at the destination
- When moving from area to area – including going indoors or outdoors
- Leaving the destination
- On return to the service.

Items to be taken, by the person in charge, on the outing:

- A fully charged mobile phone (with easily accessible emergency contact numbers) must be taken by the person in charge of the outing on all outings (available from *insert name here*).
- The First Aid kit and medications for the children who need them on the day must also be taken (see Medications Policy for more detail). Emergency medications or supplies as specified in any of the children's Individual Care Plans. All medications must be in their proper original container with pharmacist's instructions included. Medications that normally require refrigeration must be carried in a cool pack.
- The Record of Attendance and the children's next of kin emergency contact information (i.e. parent(s)/guardian(s) home, work and mobile numbers).
- Individual Care Plans for children who have them.
- A list of emergency service contacts.
- A Critical Incident Plan where appropriate.
- Some spare clothes.

There must be at least one holder of a current First Aid certificate present at all times.

Food and drinks

Where food and drinks are brought on the outing, food safety guidelines must be followed.

Children must have their hands cleaned before eating.

Children must have access to drinking water and be kept well hydrated during all outings.

Transport

When transport is needed for any outing, the staff member in charge of the outing must ensure that:

- Car seats are provided and are appropriate to the age and height of each child being transported, in line with S.I. No. 240 of 2006, European Communities.
- Drivers are appropriately vetted by the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána where applicable.
- There is safe supervision of children during transport, and getting in and out of vehicles.
- Children are never left alone inside a vehicle, even when the engine is turned off.

- Car keys are never left in the ignition when getting out of the car and car keys are kept in a safe place, out of reach of children.
- Where required, a vehicle is equipped with a ramp or hydraulic lift to allow entry and exit.
- Records are kept of the vehicles used to transport children, with named drivers and appropriate insurance cover, in accordance with data protection requirements.

Clear detailed contingency plans must be made in advance for an unavoidable late return.

Accidents, incidents or injuries

If there is an accident involving a child, a member of staff, or an accompanying adult or a child goes missing on the outing or is left behind, the staff member in charge of the outing must make sure that:

- The previously agreed search procedure is followed if necessary.
- The pre-assigned members of staff take the other children back to the service.
- The member of staff with up to date First Aid training administers First Aid if necessary.
- They take charge of all necessary communications with emergency services and with the parents/guardians of the child/children concerned.
- The registered provider or service manager is contacted immediately.
- On return the occurrence is recorded as an incident on the Incident Report Form.

5. Communication Plan [For staff & families]

All parents or guardians are to be informed of the policy and procedures regarding outings on enrolment. Staff members will check with parents/guardians that they have read and understood the policy and provide any assistance needed.

A summary of this policy will be included in the Parent Handbook. This policy will also be reviewed with staff members at induction and annual staff training.

A copy of all policies will be available during all hours of operation to staff members and parents/guardians in the Policy Folder located in

Parents/guardians may receive a copy of the policy at any time upon request.

This section of your policy outlines how all of the stakeholders are to be informed about the content of the policy. For example, communication with staff members might involve holding meetings to discuss changes to policies while parents might be made aware of policies through the Parent/Guardian Handbook.

Parents/guardians and the staff team will receive written notification of any updates.

6. Related Policies, Procedures and Forms *[List of all related documents. The policies in bold are those required under the Early Years Regulations 2016.]*

- **Policy on Accidents and Incidents**
- **Policy on Infection Control**
- **Recruitment Policy**
- **Policy on Administration of Medication**
- Child Protection Policy
- Programme/Curriculum Planning Policy
- Parent/Carer Involvement Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Volunteers Policy
- Students Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Parent/Guardian Consent for Outings/Excursions Form
- Risk Assessment Form

[Other policies or forms that are relevant to your service]

This section lists all of the related policy documents including other policies and forms.

7. References/Supporting Documents/Related Legislation *[List of any relevant Legislation and Practice Guides referred to in drafting the policy.]*

- [Tusla: Quality and Regulatory Framework](#)
- [Child Care Act 1991 \(Early Years Services\) Regulations 2016](#)
- Health and Safety in Childcare: A Guide for Centre-based Services, Barnardos and the Border Counties Childcare Network, 2006
- [Síolta: The National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education](#)
- [Developing a Child Safeguarding Statement: A Guide For Early Years Services in Ireland.](#)

This section of your policy lists any relevant legislation regulations and quality practice resources that you referred to when drafting your policy. This information will be useful when reviewing the policy.

List here all of the relevant people who are responsible for observing the policy within your service.

8. Who Must Observe This Policy

This policy must be observed by all managers and all staff members.

9. Actions to be Followed if the Policy is not Implemented
[Add in any relevant actions to be taken]

This section identifies the action management will take if a staff member does not implement the policy (for example, an initial step might be discussion at supervision).

10. Contact Information *[Who to contact for more information]*

If you need more information about this policy, contact:

Name	
Phone number or email	

Here include the name of the person in your service who can be contacted for more information about the policy.

11. Policy Created

Date this policy was created	
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Take a note here of the date the policy was created.

12. Signatures

	Name and position	Signature
Approved by		
Approved by		

Whoever approved the policy and procedures – the registered provider/owner or manager – should sign the document here.

13. Review Date

Date this policy will be reviewed	
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Give details here on when this policy will be due for review. Policies should be reviewed annually.