

Children's Services Excursions Policy

Aim

Excursions are an essential part of the Open Arms Care Inc. Children's Service programs as they provide variety and an opportunity to expand a child's experience, explore different environments and learn new activities.

Parent permission will be sought for all excursions. Children, on excursions will be ensured of proper supervision and care for the full duration of the excursion.

Commencement of Policy

This Policy will commence from 1/10/2020. It replaces all Excursion policies of Open Arms Care Inc. relating to Children's Services (whether written or not).

Application of the Policy

This Policy applies to all users of services provided by Open Arms Care Inc. relating to Children's Services and all employees of Open Arms Care Inc.

This Policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment.

Relevant Legislation

- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- Education and Care Services National Law 2011
- Relevant transport legislation and regulations
- National Quality Standards – Quality Area2: Children's Health & Safety

Practices

Planning and Risk Assessments

All excursions will be planned taking into consideration:

- The children's ages, capabilities and interests.
- Ways to maximize the children's developmental experiences and safety.
- Suitability of the venue and access including wheelchairs if required.
- Access to food, drink and other facilities.
- Weather conditions, which would make the venue unsuitable.
- The specific clothing and equipment needs of the children.
- Transport arrangements needed, including embarking and disembarking transport.

Educators are to visit and complete a risk assessment for the venue before undertaking the excursion, to ensure that it is suitable, safe and accessible by all. (Regulation 101) before written authorisation is sought from the parent/guardian/authorised nominee (Regulation 102)

Risk assessments need to:

- a. identify and assess risks that the excursion may pose to the safety, health or wellbeing of any child being taken on the excursion; and
- b. specify how the identified risks will be managed and minimized

Without limiting sub regulation (1), a risk assessment must consider –

- the proposed route and destination for the excursion; and
- any water hazards; and
- any risks associated with water-based activities; and
- if the excursion involves transporting children
 - the means of transport
 - any requirements for seatbelts or safety restraints under a law of each jurisdiction in which the children are being transported; and
 - the process for entering and exiting-
 - the education and care service premises; and
 - the pick-up location or destination (as required); and
 - procedures for embarking and disembarking the means of transport, including how each child is to be accounted for on embarking and disembarking; and
- the number of Educators and children involved in the excursion; and
- given the risks posed by the excursion, the number of educators or other responsible adults that is appropriate to provide supervision and whether any adults with specialised skills are required; and
- the proposed activities; and
- the proposed duration of the excursion; and
- the items that should be taken on the excursion.
- There is adequate access to food, drink and other facilities (toileting, hand washing etc)

Staff will phone venue ahead (if possible) when special requirements are needed.

When planning an excursion alternative arrangements will be made for adverse weather conditions.

Staff/Educators will consider not just wet weather, but cold or hot weather conditions when making plans for excursions and the final decision to continue/or not with the excursion.

Authorisation and Notification

No child will be taken outside the service without the parent/guardian/authorised nominee's written authorisation.

All excursions will be publicised to all parents with full details of destination, times of departure and return, staff and volunteers attending, and what the children should bring.

The excursion permission form will be filled out for each specific excursion indicating:

- the child's name; and
- the reason the child is to be taken outside the premises; and

- If the authorisation is for a regular outing, a description of when the child is to be taken on the regular outings; and
 - If the authorisation is for an excursion that is not a regular outing, the date the child is to be taken on the excursion; and
- A description of the proposed destination for the excursion; and
- If the excursion involves transporting children-
 - 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; and.
- The proposed activities to be undertaken by the child during the excursion; and
- The period the child will be away from the premises; and
- The anticipated number of children likely to be attending the excursion; and
- The anticipated ratio of educators attending the excursion to the anticipated number of children attending the excursion; and
- The anticipated number of staff members and any other adults who will accompany and supervise the children on the excursion; and
- That a risk assessment has been prepared and is available at the service.

Regular Excursion Definition: *In relation to an education and care service, means a walk, drive or trip to and from a destination:*

- *That the service visits regularly (at least monthly) as part of its educational program, and*
- *Where the circumstances relevant to the risk assessment are substantially the same on each outing.*

A regular excursion form needs to be authorised only once in a 12 month period, which should be at the start of care and then at the beginning of each year

Transportation

Steps will be taken to ensure that all excursions comply with transport legislation and regulations.

The *Transport Policy* will apply in relation to traveling to and from any venue.

All staff, relief staff, educators, volunteers and parents on the excursion will be made aware of the Transport Policy and Procedures for supervising and assisting children while travelling in public or private transport.

Particular attention will be made to assist children when embarking or disembarking from public transport and when walking with children across roads or in crowded areas.

Note: For the purpose of this policy transport relates to the movement/transfer of children by means of motor vehicles ie bus, car, etc.

Supervision

Parents may be invited to assist and understand they are to follow the instructions of the Responsible Person in charge of the excursion.

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.

Supervision is of utmost importance and must be maintained at all times, with educators conducting head counts and roll calls throughout the duration of the excursion.

Effective supervision is to be provided taking into consideration appropriate staff/child ratios for specific activities.

An educator is to inspect all public toilets before children use them. An educator and at least one other child must accompany any child when using a public toilet.

Bush walking excursions will only be undertaken in well-known areas. Children and staff must remain on defined paths.

The person in charge of any excursion where there is a significant water hazard needs to hold a current approved First Aid Certificate and the knowledge and ability to implement water safety procedures.

While on the Excursion

Information and equipment to be taken on the excursion will include:

- A list of all children on the excursion, with relevant personal details, parent contact numbers and authorised nominee contact numbers, medical information and medication if required.
- List of adults participating in the excursion and contact information for each adult.
- A list of all relevant and emergency procedures and contact numbers, to be readily accessible to all staff at all times.
- A fully stocked portable first aid kit, including any medication required for children in care for the day
- Access to spare drinking water.
- The service's emergency, accident, illness and medication, sun protection policies will be implemented on excursions as required.
- Mobile phone/other means of communication with the service and emergency services.

Educators will:

Annual regular excursion forms are to be returned to the office when signed and completed.

Excursion forms are to be returned to the office before excursion occurs.

The Coordinator and Nominated Supervisor needs to be advised prior to leaving the premises for any excursion both regular and non-regular and should state time leaving and when returning.

Children must not be taken on an excursion to a river, lake or other place where there is a significant water hazard unless it has been discussed with the Coordination Team prior and approved by them.

When Educators come together with their children at another Educator's residence or Family Day Care venue, all educators involved in the excursion (including the educator at the residence or Family Day Care venue) must comply with Part 4.2 Division 6 in respect of the excursion.

Educators will evaluate after the excursion outing:

- Its value to the children
- Any safety issues

- Organisational aspects
- Would you do it again
- What would you do differently?

Sources

Education and Care Services National Law:
Education and Care Services National Regulations 100 – 102, 168
National Quality Framework

Variations

Open Arms Care Inc. reserves the right to vary, replace or terminate this policy from time to time.

Associated documents

- Excursion Permission Form
- Excursion Risk Management Plan

Policy version and revision information

Policy Authorised by: Clayton Sippel

Original issue: Jan 2015

Title: Chief Executive Officer

Policy Maintained by: Cindy Warren
Brittany Hardy

Current version: 5

Title: Coordinator

Review date: 1/02/2022

Workplace participant acknowledgement

I acknowledge:

receiving the Open Arms Care Inc. Policy;

that I will comply with the Policy; and

that there may be disciplinary consequences if I fail to comply, which may result in the termination of my employment.

Name:

Signed:

Date:
