

Children's Services Transport Policy

Aim

Open Arms Care Inc. protects the rights of the child and families to have safe and responsible transport arrangements whilst being cared for in our service, by requiring Educators to be aware all transporting requirements and meeting regulations and laws with procedures in place.

Commencement of Policy

This policy will commence from 1/10/2020. It replaces all other Transport 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 & Care Services National Regulations 2011

NSW Government - Transport

Education & Care Services National Law

National Quality Standards 2018 Quality Area –Quality Area 2 health and Safety

Purpose

The sole purpose of this transportation policy is for the movement/transfer of children by means of motor vehicles ie bus, car, etc outside of an excursion.

Safety

Children should never be left alone in a car, even for short periods. This includes paying for petrol or picking up another child.

Animals should not be transported with children unless an emergency situation occurs and then done so with appropriately restraints.

Educators are to follow the road rules at all times whilst children are in the car, including no use of the mobile phones unless the car is pulled over to the side and turned off. Ensuring the provision of general road safety information about transporting children to and from the service (which might include using the 'safety door' (the rear kerbside door), driveway safety, child restraint information and role modelling safe road use) to parents/guardians/educators.

Educators are to have a current full Australian Drivers License which is to be kept on them when driving and a copy at the coordination office.

Child Restraints

Educators are to ensure that all children who travel in motor vehicles use the correct child care restraints depending on age, weight and height. Whilst laws are based on age there are provisions to allow a child to use other child care restraints depending on their weight and size. Discussions between families and Educators should take place to determine what size child care restraint your child needs especially if the child is not using the one designed for the age of the child.

Educators must use car seats that have not been in an accident, meet Australian Standards, have not expired, in good condition, has no tears in any of the restraints, seat has not cracks or other damage and used in the correct manner as stated by manufactories instructions. We recommend that a child car seat should not be used if it is more than 10 years old.

Car Restraints need to be assessed and certifiably installed by an authorised child restraint fitting station annually. Record is to be kept in the car, in compliance folder and at the Coordination office.

When using child care restraints Educators will follow the laws as set out by NSW Government – Transport Laws

- Children up to the age of six months must be secured in an approved rearward facing restraint
- Children aged from six months old but under four years old must be secured in either a rear or forward facing approved child restraint with an inbuilt harness
- Children under four years old cannot travel in the front seat of a vehicle with two or more rows
- Children aged from four years old but under seven years old must be secured in a forward facing approved child restraint with an inbuilt harness or an approved booster seat
- Children aged from four years old but under seven years old cannot travel in the front seat of a vehicle with two or more rows, unless all other back seats are occupied by children younger than seven years in an approved child restraint or booster seat
- Children aged from seven years old but under 16 years old who are too small to be restrained by a seatbelt properly adjusted and fastened are strongly recommended to use an approved booster seat
- Children in booster seats must be restrained by a suitable lap and sash type approved seatbelt that is properly adjusted and fastened, or by a suitable approved child safety harness that is properly adjusted and fastened.

If your child is too small for the child restraint specified for their age, they should be kept in their current child restraint until it is safe for them to move to the next level.

If your child is too large for the child restraint specified for their age, they may move to the next level of child restraint upon discussions with the family.

Only one child should be placed in each child care restraint.

Buses:

- School Buses: Seat Belts should be worn in rural and regional areas unless they are travelling in urban areas (in zones less than 80km/hr).
- Hired Buses: During excursions ensure fitted seatbelts are installed and are correctly used by all children, staff and volunteers for the entire trip.
- Public Buses: Seatbelts must be worn by educators and children where fitted in buses.

Company/private vehicles

- Motor vehicles are to be kept in good repair with regular maintenance checks, vehicles must be kept clean and tidy. Current registration and Insurance certificates are to be sent through to the Coordination Office on renewal.

Risk Assessment

Children are considered to be under the care of an education and care service at the point the service is taken to assume responsibility for their care and wellbeing, therefore transportation provided by or arranged by the services forms part of the service and requires a transportation risk assessment.

The transportation risk assessment must identify and assess risks and specify how the identified risks will be managed and minimised.

A transportation risk assessment must include:

- The proposed route and duration of the transportation
- The proposed pick-up location and destination
- The means of transport
- Any requirements for seatbelts or safety restraints under a law of each jurisdiction in which the children are being transported
- Any water hazards
- The number of adults and children involved in the transportation
- Given the risks posed by transportation, the number of educators or other responsible adults that is appropriate to provide supervision and whether any adults with specialised skills are required;

- Whether any items should be readily available during transportation; example, mobile phone and a list of emergency contact numbers for the children being transported.
- The process for entering and exiting— the education and care service premises; and (ii) the pick-up location or destination (as required);
- Procedures for embarking and disembarking the means of transport, including how each child is to be accounted for on embarking and disembarking.

Risks should be evaluated each time children are transported, unless the transportation is 'regular transportation'.

Definition of 'regular transportation': *means the transportation by the service or arranged by the service (other than as part of an excursion) of a child being educated and cared for by the service, where the circumstances relevant to a risk assessment are substantially the same for each occasion on which the child is transported. (An example is where the route or destination has altered)*

A regular transportation risk assessment is to be conducted every 12 months.

Permission

A child being educated and cared for by the service is not to be transported by the service or on transportation arranged by the service unless written authorisation has been given. Authorisation for a child to be transported must be given by a parent or other person named in the child's enrolment record as having authority to authorise the child being transported by the service or on transportation arranged by the service before and must state—

- The child's name
- The reason the child is to be transported;
- If the authorisation is for regular transportation, a description of when the child is to be transported;
- If the authorisation is not for regular transportation, the date the child is to be transported;
- A description of the proposed pick-up location and destination;
- The means of transport;
- The period of time during which the child is to be transported;
- The anticipated number of children likely to be transported;
- The anticipated number of staff members and any other adults who will accompany and supervise the children during the transportation;

- Any requirements for seatbelts or safety restraints under a law of each jurisdiction in which the children are being transported;
- That a risk assessment has been prepared and is available at the education and care service;
- That written policies and procedures for transporting children are available at the education and care service.

If the transportation is regular transportation, the authorisation is only required to be obtained once in a 12 month period."

Note: Where transporting children as part of an excursion please also refer to Excursion Policy.

PROCEDURES FOR EMBARKING AND DISEMBARKING TRANSPORT

Excursion/Collection of children (ie. After School Care):

- Educator to be aware of children attending care prior to collection by observing roll.
- Children to be signed into care upon arrival to collection area (*if child fails to present to collection point follow Child Non-Attendance procedure for each individual service*)
- Children are to be grouped together until transport arrives
- Head count to occur as children embark on transport, if head count does not match with the roll then the roll is to be called to ascertain who is missing or extra. (*refer to Delivery and Collection of Children (Child Handover) Policy*)
- Children are to be grouped together on transport, with regular head counts to be completed as necessary
- When disembarking transport conduct head count to ensure all children are accounted for, if child/ren missing don't allow transport to leave until all child/ren are accounted for
- Once at destination complete roll call to ascertain all children are accounted for.

Delivery of children (ie. Before School Care):

- Conduct a roll call to ascertain all children are on premises and accounted for
- Children are to be grouped together until transport arrives
- Head count to occur as children embark on transport, if head count does not match with the roll then the roll is to be called to ascertain who is missing or extra. (*refer to Delivery and Collection of Children (Child Handover) Policy*)
- Children are to be grouped together on transport, with regular head counts to be completed as necessary
- When disembarking transport conduct head count to ensure all children are accounted for, if child/ren missing don't allow transport to leave until all child/ren are accounted for

- Children to be signed out of care upon arrival to destination.

What to do if a crash occurs?

- Stop immediately and give as much help as possible
- Protect the area if able to
- Switch off ignition of immobilised vehicle and switch on hazard lights
- Relocate anyone involved in the crash to safety away from road
- Call police, 000 if
 - Person is trapped, killed or injured
 - A bus or truck needs to be towed away
 - They are needed to direct traffic or deal with hazards
 - A person fails to stop or exchange information
 - Any driver is believed to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs
 - If driver is injured and children need supervision
- If police do not attend the crash scene, you must report the crash as soon as possible after leaving the crash site to the Police Assistance Line on 131444 where:
 - Either car needs to be towed
 - You are unable to provide particulars to the owner
 - There is damage to property or injured animals
- Police do not need to be notified of a crash when there are no injuries and the vehicles involved do not require towing. However, if someone is later treated for an injury (related to the crash), then call the Police Assistance Line on 131444.
- Ensure to call the Nominated Supervisor or Coordinator or office immediately for assistance to help attend and to call parents should you need assistance.
- Complete an incident report and ensure to inform Department of education.

Sources

Education & Care Services National Regulations 2011

NSW Government – Transport:

<https://roadsafety.transport.nsw.gov.au/stayingsafe/children/childcarseats/index.html>

Retrieved 14.1.2020

Road Users Handbook

https://www.rms.nsw.gov.au/documents/roads/licence/road_users_handbook-english.pdf
retrieved 14.1.2020

Road Transport (Safety and Traffic Management) Amendment (Child Safety on School Buses) Bill 2012 Retrieved 1.9.2020

<https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/pdf/bill/8e68cfb5-6f29-6b70-85fc-8d4216c58ba7>

Variations

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

Policy version and revision information

Policy Authorised by: Clayton Sippel

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Title: Chief Executive Officer

Policy Maintained by: Cindy Warren
Brittany Hardy

Current version: 4

Title: Coordinator

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