

ARMIDALE & DISTRICT FAMILY DAY CARE

Excursion Policy (includes Motor Vehicle Transport Policy)

Related Policy/policies:	Water safety, Sunsafe, Administration of First Aid, Authorisations and Refusals, Educator's Assistant policies.
Regulation/s/ Standards:	National Education and Care Regulations 99,100, 101 and 102 National Law 165 and 167 National Quality Standards 2.3.1, 2.3.2, 2.3.3, 6.1.2 and 6.3.4
Related procedures:	Workplace Health and Safety (Educators and Staff) www.kidsafensw.org
References:	www.roadsafety.transport.nsw.gov.au/stayingsafe/children/childcarseats/
Date effective	September 2018
Date for review	September 2020
Purpose	To provide guidelines for safe excursions (including routine, non-routine and nature play excursions and safe transport practices).
Responsibility	Educators, Educator's Assistants and Staff

Key information:

- Excursions provide children with the opportunity to experience and explore different environments within their community and develop a sense of belonging.
- Children's safety, needs and interests and input must be key considerations when planning excursions.
- Educators must ensure their programs offer a balance between outings and home based activities.

The suggested number of excursions for Educators offering care five days per week is, three per week.

The suggested number of excursions for Educators offering care four days per week is, two per week.

The suggested number of excursions for Educators offering care three days per week is, one per week.

(Excursions in this sense do not include taking children to school or picking them up)

- Armidale and District Family Day Care (AFDC) needs to be given the opportunity to consider a proposed Non-Routine excursion and to review the Risk Assessment for that excursion therefore copies of the Risk Assessment and signed permission notes need to be provided to the office at least 24 hours prior to the Non-Routine Excursion taking place.

- Armidale and District Family Day Care reserves the right to decline an Excursion which does not meet Policy Guidelines/Regulations in terms of destination, preparation, adult/ child ratios, Risk Assessment or age appropriateness.
- **Educators must not access private, Council or University Swimming Pools whilst children are in care.**

Procedures: All Excursions

- Educators must ensure that children are closely supervised at all times.
- Excursions should not go ahead if, on arrival, there are any concerns about the venue or there are doubts about managing the risks presented.
- The Adult/ Child ratio must be maintained.
- **Destinations with a significant water hazard and a fall risk (where a child can fall into the water and out of view i.e. the Creeklands) are to be avoided.**
- **Excursions to venues that have dams and ponds where children can walk to the waters edge under supervision can occur with a recommended ratio of adults to children, according to children's ages. The recommended ratio for under 3 year olds is one adult for every two children.**
- **The notified itinerary for planned excursions must not change unless all families and Armidale and District Family Day Care are given 24 hours' notice of the change.**
- Educators and Staff attending excursions must have current First Aid qualifications.
- Educators must carry a basic first aid kit, a mobile phone and emergency contact details for all families whilst on excursions.
- Action Plans for children with a medical condition must be carried on excursions.
- Road Safety must be discussed with all children prior to attending excursions. Educators need to instruct children to hold hands when walking and to look, listen and look again before crossing the road. Educators also need to discuss safe car travel with children, reinforcing the need to remain in car restraints until the vehicle has stopped and the Educator is able to assist them to unbuckle. Children should always alight from the vehicle on the kerbside.
- Educators must wear an AFDC lanyard with their photo and Scheme contact details. **Children's should not be identified by name.** Their tags should have the Educator's name and the Scheme's contact details attached.
- Vehicles used to transport children must be fitted with approved child restraints and Educators must ensure anchor points are inspected annually by an Authorised Inspection Station.
- Water, nappies, spare clothes, gloves, antibacterial gel, hats and sunscreen should be taken on all excursions.

Nature Play Excursions

AFDC recognises that nature play excursions offer great learning potential and benefits i.e. children gain a deeper knowledge of and connection to their community as well as a deeper understanding of sustainability. Nature Play excursions provide children with positive opportunities to explore and problem solve in response to positive challenges and managed risks.

Preparation

- Snake drills /discussions need to be carried out before excursions, particularly in the summer months.
- Children should practice carrying their back pack containing water bottle, food and spare clothes.
- Risk assessments need to be completed and sent to the office 24 hours before the excursion.

On the day

- Notify the office when leaving your service and on your return.
- The venue must have vehicle access and mobile reception. If not, the Educator needs to consider how is this risk to be managed e.g. determine where the closest point of mobile reception is
- The weather and seasons need to be considered before the excursion occurs, and suitable clothing needs to be worn e.g. jackets, hats, covered shoes
- A site assessment needs to take place on arrival and a boundary needs to be defined.
- If an injury occurs, correct first aid and procedures need to occur. Educators are advised to review First Aid instructions for insect or snake bite.
- Ratios of 1:2 for under 3 year olds is recommended if there is water present. This 2nd person can be a Coordinator, Educator's Assistant, known person to the children and their families.

Routine Excursions

- A **Routine Excursion** is defined as an excursion that is a regular part of the Educator's program e.g. a neighbourhood walk, a visit to another Educator's home, a visit to the library, attendance at Playsession, a visit to the park, nature play in specific places.
- Initial written authorisation to participate in routine excursions is provided by families when they enrol their child/children (recorded on the Personal Profile).
- **Written authorisations for Routine Excursions need to be updated annually.**
- Educators must discuss details the of the activities that will be undertaken on the Routine Excursion with families and they need to document Routine Excursions in their program.
- Educators must ensure that the routine excursion does not interfere with the afternoon sleep or rest period for children under school age.
- Educators must provide Armidale and District Family Day Care with a completed Routine Excursion Information Form and must contact the Office by phone, text or email before leaving their service to attend an identified Routine Excursion.
- Routine Excursions need to a have Risk Assessment performed annually and a copy of the completed assessment needs to be submitted to the Office. **If aspects of the routine excursion venue change a new Risk Assessment must be prepared and provided.**

Non- Routine Excursions

- A **Non- Routine Excursion** is an excursion that is not part of the Educator's normal routine or weekly program e.g. attendance at a children's performance, a special event that is happening in the community or a nature walk.

- Each family's written permission for the specific excursion must be sought and copies of completed permission notes returned to Armidale and District Family Day Care at least **24 hours prior to the excursion taking place.**
- A thorough risk assessment of the venue needs to be undertaken. An Excursion Risk Assessment form needs to be completed and a copy submitted to the Armidale and District Family Day Care at least **24 hours prior to the excursion taking place.**

Attached Forms

- **Educator Routine Excursion Information Form.** To be completed and returned to the office.
- **Excursion Risk Assessment Form.** To be completed annually and supplied to the office for all Routine Excursion venues. A new assessment is required if aspects of venue change. In the case of Non -Routine Excursions a copy of the assessment along with permission notes needs to be submitted to the Office 24 hours prior to the event.
- **Routine Excursion Permission Note.** Initial permission for children to attend Routine Excursions is recorded at enrolment (on the Personal Profile form). Thereafter written permission must be sought annually for each child enrolled. A copy of this signed permission note needs to be supplied to the Office.

Motor Vehicle Transport

Educators and Staff:

- must be appropriately licenced for the vehicle they are driving;
- vehicles must be registered in accordance with RMS legislation;
- must comply at all times with the traffic laws in New South Wales;
- should be aware that vehicles are part of their workplace if they transport children, and as such vehicles need to be regularly maintained and inspected.
- must report any accident or incident to the Nominated Supervisor;
- must drive in a safe manner with regard to other road users;
- must wear a seatbelt.
- must refrain from using a mobile phone whilst the vehicle is in motion.

The status of each Educator's vehicle registration, driver's licence and child restraint inspection will be checked annually as part of re-registration.

Child Restraints and Seating Arrangements

- Written parental permission must be sought before transport of children commences.
- All children must be seated in the back seat prior to the front seat being used.
- Where the motor vehicle is fitted with front seat air bags, only children of an age at which they do not require child seats or booster seats may be transported in the

front seat (i.e. aged 7+). In this case, the seat would need to be positioned as far back as possible. *In NSW it is illegal to use a child restraint in a front passenger seat if there is a passenger side airbag.*

- All vehicle anchorage points and seat belts should be checked by an authorized fitting station annually. Fitting stations can be accessed by calling 13 22 13 (Armidale fitting stations include Hardman's and TJM)
- All restraints used must comply with Australian/New Zealand Standard AS/NZS 1754, and must be used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions;
- Children less than 6 months old must be restrained in an approved rearward facing restraint that is properly fitted to the vehicle and fits the child's body correctly;
- Children aged between 6 months and 4 years must be restrained in an approved rearward or forward facing restraint that is properly fitted to the vehicle, and adjusted to fit the child's body correctly.
- Children aged between 4 and 7 years must be restrained in an approved forward facing restraint or booster seat that is properly fitted to the vehicle, and adjusted to fit the child's body correctly. Children aged between 4 and 7 years must not travel in the front seat of a vehicle that has two or more rows unless all the other back seats are occupied by children who are also under 7 years and in approved child restraints;
- Booster seats are recommended only after a child grows out of an approved child car seat
- A booster seat should be used until a child's shoulder no longer comfortably fits within the seat or when their eye level is higher than the back of the seat; Booster seats should feature high backs and sides, and are to be used with an adult lap sash seatbelt/seat belt sash guide.
- Lap belts are only to be used with either a harness or anchored child restraint. Harnesses are only to be used in conjunction with an anchorage point. Children aged between 4 and 7 years must not use a harness without a booster seat. If a harness is used with a booster seat, then an Anti-Submarining clip must be fitted to hold the seat belt down low across the pelvis.
- In-Built harnesses (i.e. installed in rearward or forward facing restraints) should be adjusted to fit comfortably but firmly, with no slack, so that the harness straps are straight and flat in contact with the child's body. Never place the shoulder strap of a seat belt behind the child's back or under their arm.
- Pets and other animals are not to be transported in a vehicle at the same time as children. (Refer Pet Policy).

Transport by Bus to Play session:

When Educators access AFDC's bus to attend play session, a variety of child restraints are available for use. These include forward facing restraints and boosters. Bookings need to be

made with some notice so that the correct child restraints can be installed. Parental permission for child/ren to be transported in AFDC's bus must be obtained.

Safety in the proximity of Motor Vehicles

- Children must alight from the vehicle on the kerbside;
- When walking in carparks to and from the vehicle children must hold hands
- Children must never to be left alone in a Motor vehicle, unless the Educator, staff member or responsible adult is in the immediate proximity of the vehicle, i.e. loading and unloading children;
- Should the Educator, staff member or responsible adult find it necessary to move a vehicle on private property or in a car park, all children should be placed inside the vehicle and appropriately restrained.
- The Educator, staff member or responsible adult should remove the ignition keys from the vehicle prior to alighting from the vehicle and the vehicle should be locked when unattended.