

St. Jacobs Daycare

Safe Arrival and Dismissal Policy and Procedures

Date Policy and Procedures Established: December 21, 2023

Purpose

This policy and the procedures will help support the safe arrival and dismissal of children at St. Jacobs Daycare.

This policy will provide staff, students and volunteers with a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities for ensuring the safe arrival and dismissal of children receiving care at St. Jacobs Daycare, including what steps are to be taken when a child does not arrive at the centre as expected, as well as steps to follow to ensure the safe dismissal of children from care.

This policy is intended to fulfill the obligations set out under Ontario Regulation 137/15 for policies and procedures regarding safe arrival and dismissal.

Note: definitions for terms used throughout this policy are provided in a Glossary at the end of the document.

Note: see attendance policy for further information.

Policy

General

St. Jacobs Daycare will ensure that any child receiving care at the centre is only released to the child's parent/guardian or an individual that the parent/guardian has provided written authorization the childcare centre may release the child to.

- St. Jacobs Daycare will only dismiss children into the care of their parent/guardian or another authorized individual. The centre will not release any children from care without supervision.
- Where a child does not arrive at the centre for care as expected or is not picked up as expected, staff must follow the safe arrival and dismissal procedures set out below.
- For the purposes of this policy and procedure, arrival time is considered between 7:30am-10:00am and departure time is considered between 3:00pm-5:30pm.

Procedures

Accepting a Child Into Care At The Time Of Drop Off

- Staff must ask the parent/guardian how the child's evening/morning has been.
- Parents/guardians are required to inform the educators if there are any changes to their child's pick-up procedure.
- At times staff will ask parents/guardians if there are any changes to the child's pick-up procedure (i.e., someone other than the parent/guardian picking up).

- Where the parent/guardian has indicated that someone other than the child's parent/guardians will be picking up, the staff must confirm that the person is listed on the child's emergency card in the authorized pickup section in the attendance binder or where the individual is not listed ask the parent/guardian to provide authorization for pick-up in writing eg. email.
- Staff must document the change in pick-up procedures in the daily messages.
- Staff must sign the child in on the program attendance record.

Where a Child Has Not Arrived In Care As Expected

Where a child does not arrive at the centre and the parent/guardian has not communicated a change in drop-off (i.e., left a voice message, sent an email, or advised the closing staff at pick-up), the staff in the program room must:

Inform the Executive Director/Supervisor of the absent child.

- If the Executive Director/Supervisor is not available the Designate Supervisor will call the parent/guardian to inquire about the child's absence and the safety of their child. All parent/guardian phone numbers (ie. cell, home and work) noted on the registration form will be called.

The Executive Director/Supervisor must contact the absent child's parent/guardian by email no later than 11:00am

- If the parent/guardian does not respond to the email within 15 minutes the Executive Director/Supervisor will call the parent/guardian to inquire about the child's absence and the safety of their child. All parent/guardian phone numbers (ie. cell, home and work) noted on the registration form will be called.
- If the parent/guardian does not answer the phone the Executive Director/Supervisor will leave a voicemail, asking about the child's absence and the safety of their child.
- If the parent/guardian does not call back by 1pm on the same day the Executive Director/Supervisor will call the alternate parent/guardian to inquire about the child's absence and the safety of their child.
- If the alternative parent guardian does not answer the phone the Executive Director/Supervisor will leave a voicemail, asking about the child's absence and the safety of their child. All alternative parent/guardian phone numbers (i.e.,- cell, home and work) noted on the registration form will be called.
- If the alternate parent/guardian does not call back within 15 minutes the Executive Director/Supervisor will call emergency contacts in the order listed on the registration form.
- If the emergency contacts do not answer the phone the Executive Director/Supervisor will leave a voicemail, asking about the child's absence and the safety of the child. All emergency contact's phone numbers (i.e., cell, home and work) noted on the registration form will be called.

- If all of the above persons do not call back within 15 minutes of the last call the Executive Director/Supervisor will call the Waterloo Regional Police at 519-570-9777 to inform them of safety concerns of a child who did not arrive at the centre as expected.

Once the child's absence has been confirmed, the staff will document the child's absence on the Attendance Record and in the Daily Messages.

In the event that the child's attendance is not confirmed the staff will document the above steps taken in the Daily Messages.

Releasing a Child From Care

The staff who is supervising the child at the time of pick-up shall only release the child to

- Child's parent/guardian
- The individual that the parent/guardian has provided written authorization that the child care may release the child to.
- No child will be released to an unauthorized person.

Where the staff does not know the individual picking up the child (i.e., parent/guardian or authorized individual):

- Confirm with another staff member the individual picking up is the child's parent/guardian/authorized individual.
- Where the above is not possible, ask the parent/guardian/authorized individual for photo identification and confirm the individual's information against the parent/guardian/authorized individual's name on the child's emergency card located in the program binder, under the section authorized pickups.

Where A Child Has Not Been Picked Up As Expected (before centre closes)

Where a parent/guardian has previously communicated with the staff a specific time or time frame that their child is to be picked up from the centre and the child has not been picked up by the indicated time;

- Staff will wait for 30 minutes and then inform the Executive Director/Supervisor of the child having not been picked up yet.
- The Executive Director/Supervisor/Staff will call a parent/guardian to speak with them or leave a message and advise them that the child is still in care and has not been picked up.
- Where the Executive Director/Supervisor/Staff is unable to reach the one parent/guardian, the Executive Director/Supervisor will call the alternate parent to speak with them or leave a message to inform them that their child is still in care and has not been picked up at the earlier time as expected.
- Where the individual picking up the child is an authorized individual and their contact information is available, the Executive

Director/Supervisor/Staff will proceed with contacting the individual to confirm pick-up as per the parent/guardian's instructions or leave a voice message to contact the centre.

- Where the Executive Director/Supervisor/Staff has not heard back from the parents/guardians or authorized individual who was to pick up the child they will wait until the centre closes and then will refer to the procedure "Where a Child Has Not Been Picked Up and the Centre is Closed".

Where a Child Has Not Been Picked Up and The Centre is Closed

Where a parent/guardian or authorized individual who was planned to pick up a child from care and has not arrived by 5:30 pm, staff will ensure that the child is engaged in an activity and offer a snack if needed, while they await their pick-up.

One staff will stay with the child, while a second staff proceeds with calling the parent/guardian to advise that the child is still in care and inquire about their pick-up time.

- In the case where the person picking up the child is an authorized individual, the staff shall call the parent/guardian to advise that their child is still at the centre and inquire about their pick-up time. If the parent/guardian does not answer the phone, the staff will leave a message and will call the authorized individual and advise them that the child is still at the centre and inquire about their pick-up time.
- If the staff is unable to reach the parent/guardian or authorized individual who was responsible for picking up the child, the staff shall call the authorized emergency contacts as indicated in the child's file.
- Where the staff is unable to reach the parent/guardian or any other authorized individual listed on the child's file (ie-emergency contacts) by 6:00 pm, the staff will proceed with contacting Family and Children's Services of Waterloo Region (FACS) at 519-576-0540 and will follow the FACS's direction with respect to next steps.

Emergency Closure

1. In the event of an emergency closure and/or centre evacuation, parents will be called to pick up their child immediately.
2. Parents may give verbal permission for individuals 18 years of age or older to pick up their child.
 - written permission will be obtained as soon as possible or within 48 hours after the emergency whichever comes first.

Dismissing a Child From Care without Supervision Procedures

Staff will only release children from care to the parent/guardian or other authorized adult. Under no circumstances will a child be released from care to walk home alone.

Glossary

Individual authorized to pick-up/authorized individual: a person that the parent/guardian has advised the child care program staff in writing can pick-up their child from care.

Licensee: The individual or corporation named on the licence issued by the Ministry of Education responsible for the operation and management of the child care centre and home child agency.

Parent/guardian: A person having lawful custody of a child or a person who has demonstrated a settled intention to treat a child as a child of his or her family.

Regulatory Requirements: Ontario Regulation 137/15

Safe arrival and dismissal policy

50. Every licensee shall ensure that each child care centre it operates and each premises where it oversees the provision of home child care has a policy respecting the safe arrival and dismissal of children that,

- (a) provides that a child may only be released from the child care centre or home child care premises,
 - (i) to individuals indicated by a child's parent, or
 - (ii) in accordance with written permission from a child's parent to release the child from the program at a specified time without supervision; and
- (b) sets out the steps that must be taken if,
 - (i) a child does not arrive as expected at the centre or home child care premises, or
 - (ii) a child is not picked up as expected from the centre or home child care premises.