SAFE TRANSPORTATION POLICY

Under the Education and Care Services National Regulations the approved provider must ensure that policies and procedures are in place in relation to the safe transportation of children (regulation 168) and take reasonable steps to ensure those policies and procedures are followed (regulation 170). [ACECQA, 2021]

Transportation of children is sometimes provided as part of our education and care service. Compliance with the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations is mandatory to ensure the safety of children at all times and new provisions and amendments to these regulations are reflected in our procedures and policy for transportation and the safe handover of children. We acknowledge our ensuring duty of care obligations by adhering to relevant legislation providing adequate supervision of children at all times, maintaining correct educator to child ratios, maintaining accurate attendance records and providing appropriate child restraints for children under our care.

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY		
2.2	Safety	Each child is protected.
2.2.1	Supervision	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard.
2.2.2	Incident and emergency management	Plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are developed in consultation with relevant authorities, practiced and implemented.

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL LAW AND NATIONAL REGULATIONS	
S. 51(4A)	The approved provider must ensure that the number of children educated and cared for by the service at any one time does not exceed the maximum number of children specified in the service approval
S. 165	Failure to adequately supervise children
S. 167	Failure to take reasonable precautions to protect children from harm and hazards
4 (1)	Definition regular transportation
24(ha)	Application for service approval—centre-based service A description of any proposed regular transportation of children by or arranged by the education and care service
85	Incident, injury, trauma and illness policies and procedures

89	First Aid Kits
98	Telephone or other communication equipment
99	Children leaving the education and care service premises
100	Risk assessment must be conducted before excursion
101	Conduct a risk assessment for excursion
102	Authorisation for excursion
102A	Transportation of children other than as part of an excursion
102B	Transport risk assessment must be conducted before service transports child
102C	Conduct of risk assessment for transporting of children by the education and care service
102D	Authorisation for service to transport children
102E	Children embarking a means of transport – centre-based services
102F	Children disembarking a means of transport – centre-based services
122	Educators must be working directly with children to be included in ratios
123	Educator to child ratios-centre-based services
136	First aid qualifications
151	Record of educators working directly with children
158	Children's attendance record to be kept by approved provider
161	Authorisations to be kept in enrolment record
168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures
168(2)(ga)	Education and care service must have policies and procedures (transportation)
170	Policies and procedures to be followed
171	Policies and procedures to be kept available
172	Notification of change to policies or procedures
175(2)(f)(g)	A notification must be made to the regulatory authority if regular transportation starts or ceases being provided or arranged by the service
177(1)(o)(p)	Prescribed enrolment and other documents to be kept by the approved provider a record of children embarking a means of transport at the education and care services premises as set out in regulation 102E(4)(c); a record of children disembarking a means of transport at the education and care service premises as set out in regulation 102F(4)(d)
183	Storage of records and other documents

RELATED POLICIES

Administration of First Aid Policy	Emergency Evacuation Policy
Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations Policy	Enrolment Policy
Administration of First Aid Policy	Excursion Policy
Behaviour Guidance Policy	Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy
Child Protection Policy	Medical Conditions Policy
Child Safe Environment Policy	Record Keeping and Retention Policy
Delivery of children to, and collection from Education and Care Service Premises	Responsible Persons Policy
	Work Health and Safety Policy

PURPOSE

The *Education and Care Services National Regulations* requires approved providers to ensure their services have policies and procedures in place in relation to the safe transportation of children and take reasonable steps to ensure those policies and procedures are followed (Reg. 170).
[ACECQA, 2021]

We aim to ensure that all children being educated and cared for by our Service are adequately supervised at all times. This includes ensuring educator to child ratios are met whenever and wherever the service is operating including providing or arranging transportation as part of our service activity.

SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, management, the approved provider, nominated supervisor, students, volunteers and visitors of the Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

The safety of children enrolled at our Service is paramount. Every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and from any hazard likely to cause injury. Appropriate safety measures have been implemented through our comprehensive risk assessment process to ensure supervision is adequate at all times including transportation. Educator to child ratios are adhered to in addition to ensuring the maximum numbers on the service approval are not breached at any time. Adequate supervision is therefore not static as it is dependent upon a range of considerations documented in risk assessments. Procedures are in place to ensure a Nominated Supervisor or staff member is present and

accounts for each child (and make a record) when children embark and disembark the vehicle at the service premises and the interior of the vehicle is thoroughly checked to ensure no child is left behind.

DEFINITIONS

Excursion: an outing organised by an education and care service

Regular outing: in relation to an education and care service, means a walk, drive or trip to and from a destination

(a) that the service visits regularly as part of its educational program; and

(b) where the circumstances relevant to the risk assessment are *substantially* the same on each outing

Regular transportation: in relation to an education and care service, 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 the same for each occasion on which the child is transported.

Transportation (that is part of the education and care service): Transportation forms part of an education and care service if the service remains responsible for children during the period of transportation. The responsibility for, and duty of care owed to, children applied in scenarios where services are transporting children, or have arranged for the transportation of children, including between an education and care service premises and another location, for example their home, school or a place of excursion.

Transition: In relation to the day-to-day process of moving between the service and a range of different education and care settings or from the education and care setting to a school setting.

Written authorisation: authorisation 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. If the transportation is regular transportation, the authorisation is only required to be obtained once in a 12-month period. The authorisation must state:

a) the child's name; and

b) the reason the child is to be transported; and

c) if the authorisation is for a regular outing, a description of when the child is to be taken on the regular outings; and

d) if the authorisation is **not** for a regular transportation, the date the child is to be transported; and
e) a description of the proposed pick-up location and destination; and
f) the means of transport; and
g) the period of time during which the child is to be transported; and
h) the anticipated number of children likely to be transported; and
i) the anticipated number of staff members and any other adults who will accompany and supervise the children during the transportation; and
j) any requirements for seatbelts or safety restraints under a law of each jurisdiction in which the children are being transported; and
k) that a risk assessment has been prepared and is available at the education and care service; and
l) that written policies and procedures for transporting children are available at the education and care service.

Transport specific risk assessment

As per the Education and Care Services National Law, our Service will '*ensure that every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children…from harm and from any hazard likely to cause injury*' (Section 167). Our Service will conduct comprehensive transport specific risk assessments to minimise and manage all potential risks for transporting children before authorisation is sought to transport a child. [Reg. 102B, 102C, 102D (4)].

A risk assessment will be undertaken at least annually for '*regular transportation'* of children. Each time our Service transports, or arranges, the transport of children as part of an excursion, a new risk assessment will be conducted. All risk assessments will be regularly assessed and evaluated as to facilitate continuous improvement in our Service.

Our risk assessment process is guided by the following:

- **identify** any hazards or potential hazards that thetransportion of a child may pose to the safety, health and wellbeing of the child
- **assess** the risk of harm or potential harm using a risk matrix
- **specify how the identified risks will be managed** by eliminating or minimising the impact using control measures
- **evaluate** the current risk or potential harm by implementing control measures
- **review** and monitor the risk or potential harm to ensure it continues to be managed as a low risk

source: Safe Transportation of Children ACECQA (2023)

Our risk assessment will consider:

a) the proposed route and duration of the transportation; and
b) the proposed pick-up location and destination; and
c) the means of transport; and
d) any requirements for seatbelts or safety restraints (as per the law of our jurisdiction); and
e) any water hazards; and
f) the number of adults and children involved in the transportation; and
g) given the risks posed by transportation, the number of educators or other responsible adults to provide supervision and whether any adults with specialised skills are required; and
h) whether any items should be readily available during transportation (mobile phone, list of emergency contact numbers) and;
i) the process for entering and exiting-
    i. the education and care service premises; and
    ii. the pick-up location or destination (as required); and
j) procedures for embarking and disembarking the means of transport, including how each child is to be accounted for on embarking and disembarking.

Additional considerations may include:

- the experience of the driver and licensing conditions for the vehicle
- the age, ability, needs and skills of children being transported (non-ambulant, infants)
- the experience of adults involved in transportation and their capacity for supervising children
- movement of children between the vehicle and venues
- traffic conditions
- extreme weather conditions or natural disasters
- environmental hazards such as temperature extremes, smoke
- communication to/from the vehicle- mobile phone reception
- health needs of all children and adults
- first aid provision and management of illness, injuries and emergencies
- child safe practices.

source: NSW Government Kids and Traffic (2020)

THE APPROVED PROVIDER/NOMINATED SUPERVISOR WILL ENSURE:

- obligations under the *Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations* are met

- all staff and driver (s) are aware of and inducted in the *Safe Transportation Policy* and procedure and have completed practical training relating to safe transportation of children
- all staff, volunteers and students follow the *Safe Transportation Policy* and procedure
- all staff and driver (s) are aware of and inducted in the *Safe Transportation Policy* and procedure and have completed practical training relating to safe transportation of children
- information related to the safe transportation of children is shared with all staff to assist management fulfill their roles responsibly
- a copy of any training undertaken by staff related to practical training of safe transportation is kept at the Service
- risk assessments are carried out prior to seeking authorisation for transporting children
- risk assessments for 'regular transportation' are evaluated regularly or whenever a change of circumstances warrants a new assessment- e.g.: route change of vehicle due to roadworks, additional pick-up points or new provider of transport, to ensure potential risks are identified and managed
- risk assessments for 'regular transportation' are reviewed at least annually
- any updates to policies and procedures are clearly communicated to all staff
- roles and responsibilities are clearly communicated with educators
- a designated driver is nominated as the person who will be responsible for driving the vehicle
- a designated educator is nominated as the person who will be responsible for accounting for each child before, during and after transportation and ensuring relevant records are completed
- messages from families regarding attendance changes to pick up or drop offs are communicated to the designated educator/educators
- children are signed into the service attendance record upon collection, noting the time children enter the vehicle
- rehearsals for transportation of children are conducted throughout the year as 'best practice'
- details of the safest route for travel, type of vehicle and required restraints are included in the risk assessment
- every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and hazards likely to cause injury
- effective and adequate supervision is provided (see below)
- compliance with first aid requirements of Regulation 136 is met in each vehicle
- parents/guardians complete a written authorisation for regular transportation of their child and a copy of this is filed in the child's enrolment record/ attached to the enrolment form
- children are instructed on processes for entering and exiting the service premises and are aware of the pick-up and destination locations
- the *Transport Pick up/Drop off Checklist* is completed each time transportation is provided to children

- A *Transportation Attendance Record* is provided to the designated educator prior to leaving the service to record:
    - children's attendance on the vehicle
    - how children are accounted for as they embark and disembark on the vehicle
    - a final check of the vehicle, including the interior, to ensure no child is left on the vehicle
- children are signed into or out of the attendance record upon delivery or collection of child to the service in accordance with the *Delivery of Children to, and Collection from Education and Care Service Premises Policy*
- the *Transportation Attendance Record* is completed to record how each child was accounted for as they embark or disembark from the vehicle during transportation
- once all children have exited the vehicle/bus, a final check is conducted, including the interior of the vehicle, to ensure no child is left on the vehicle
- a secondary educator conducts a final sweep of the vehicle, including the interior of the vehicle, to ensure there are no children or belongings left behind (best practice)
- the designated educator/Nominated Supervisor confirms the interior of the vehicle was checked and has signed the *Transportation Attendance Record*
- a second educator confirms the interior of the vehicle was checked and has signed the *Transportation Attendance Record* (best practice)
- under no circumstances will the driver and educators/employees supervising children be under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- procedures for the safe handover of children between the Service and other educational site is documented correctly and communicated clearly with all stakeholders
- educator to child ratio requirements are maintained at all times, including when children are being transported as part of the service activity
- a record of staff working with directly with children (Reg. 151) is kept
- children exit the vehicle using the 'safety door'
- children wear approved seatbelts/restraints whilst the vehicle is in motion in accordance to Victorian Road Rules and Road Transport Act
- children are never left unattended in the vehicle
- safety rules are developed with children to ensure a clear understanding of appropriate and inappropriate behaviour
- staff are aware of appropriate procedures to be followed in the event of a vehicle crash involving staff and children from the service

- a working mobile phone or other similar means of communication to communicate with the service, parents/carers is provided in case of emergency
- a list of emergency contact numbers for the children and staff being transported is available
- every effort will be made to notify parents/carers of delays returning to the Service if applicable
- relevant criminal history requirements and Working with Children Checks are made for any person transporting children. WWCC is recorded in staff records
- the designated person driving the vehicle/bus holds a current Australian driver's licence
- any allegation of misconduct of the educator or staff member will be reported immediately as per the Reportable Conduct Scheme detailed in our *Child Protection Policy* and/or *Child Safe Environment Policy and Code of Conduct Policy*
- the maximum number of children approved for a service as confirmed on the service approval is adhered to no matter where the children are located, including when they are being transported by the Service [S. 51(4A)]
- the *Administration of First Aid Policy* is implemented in the event of a serious incident, injury, trauma or medical emergency, including contacting emergency services and notifying parents/guardians as required
- flow charts for procedures of what to do in case of an emergency (missing or unaccounted child) are clearly communicated with all stakeholders regularly, including implementation of the *Missing Child During Regular Transportation Procedure*
- to explicitly communicate attendance register procedure with all stakeholders (school, parents, educators)
- effective and adequate supervision is provided when children are being transported. Consideration must include:
    - the number, age and ability of children
    - visibility and accessibility
    - physical positioning of educators
    - risks related to the mode of transportation (including travel on foot)
    - risks in the environment, location, route and while travelling
    - the experience, knowledge and skill of each educator
    - the capacity of an educator to immediately respond to a situation requiring urgent intervention
- an easily recognised and suitably equipped first aid kit is easily accessible during transportation
- educators carry medication, health plans and risk assessments for individual children
- at least one staff member accompanying children during transportation holds:

- an approved first aid qualification and
- a current approved Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)
- a current approved anaphylaxis management training qualification and
- an approved emergency asthma management training qualification.

THE DESIGNATED EDUCATOR/ DESIGNATED DRIVER/ EDUCATORS WILL ENSURE:

- they adhere to the *Safe Transportation Policy* and participate in practical training relating to the safe transportation of children
- they are aware of their roles and responsibilities while providing transportation for children
- a Risk Assessment has been completed in accordance with the requirements as outlined above
- their driver's licence is current and the driver is in a fit and proper state to drive
- if driving larger vehicles to transport children they hold the relevant licence for the vehicle classification
- every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and from any hazard likely to cause injury
- effective and adequate supervision is provided when transporting children
- educator to child ratio requirements are maintained at all times, including when children are being transported as part of the service activity
- children are never left unattended in the vehicle
- they adhere to the road rules and regulations mandated by law within each state/territory
- children remain seated and do not behave in a dangerous or inappropriate manner
- children wear approved seatbelts/restraints whilst the vehicle is in motion in accordance to Victoria Road Rules and Road Transport Act
- the vehicle is parked in a secure and safe location for children to access
- the number of passengers does not exceed the legal requirement
- a working, fully charged mobile phone is taken in case of an emergency
- the *Administration of First Aid Policy* is implemented in the event of a serious incident, injury, trauma or medical emergency, including contacting emergency services and notifying parents/guardians as required
- a fully equipped first aid kit is easily accessible
- the *Missing Child During Regular Transportation Procedure* is followed in the event a child is deemed missing or unaccounted for
- medication, health plans and risk assessments for individual children are available during transportation

- educators and designated drivers wear a high visibility vest
- a list of emergency contact numbers for the children and staff being transported is available
- emergency contact information is available
- every effort will be made to notify parents/carers of delays returning to the Service if applicable
- messages from families regarding children's attendance changes to pick up or drop offs are communicated effectively and timely to educators travelling with children

TRANSPORTATION ATTENDANCE RECORD KEEPING [Reg:177 (1)(o)(p)]

The designated driver and designated educator will ensure:

- the *Transport Pick up/Drop off Checklist* is completed each time transportation is provided to children
- the *Transportation Attendance Record* is completed to record:
    - each child is signed into the Transportation Attendance Record and Service attendance record upon collection, noting the time children enter the vehicle (for collection from school/home)
    - each child is signed out of the Transportation Attendance Record and service attendance Record noting the time children exit the vehicle (delivery of children to school/home)
    - each child is accounted for as the embark and disembark from the vehicle during transportation
    - that once all children have exited the vehicle/bus, a final sweep of the vehicle is conducted by the designated educator/ nominated supervisor, including the interior of the vehicle, checking around and under seats, storage areas and under the vehicle to ensure there are no children or belongings left behind
    - a secondary educator conducts a final sweep of the vehicle, including the interior of the vehicle, checking around and under seats, storage areas and under the vehicle to ensure there are no children or belongings left behind (best practice)
    - a second educator will confirm the interior of the vehicle was checked and sign the *Transportation Attendance Record* (best practice)

SAFE MAINTENANCE OF TRANSPORTATION VEHICLE

THE APPROVED PROVIDER/MANAGEMENT/NOMINATED SUPERVISOR/ DESIGNATED EDUCATOR/ DESIGNATED DRIVER/EDUCATORS WILL ENSURE:

- the transportation vehicle is fitted with the required seat belts and child restraints, approved by the Roads and Traffic Authorities (see Rule 266 of the Australian Road Rules)

- there are sufficient seat belts installed for all passengers in accordance with current Australian Safety Standards- (AS/NZS 1754)
- the vehicle has enough fuel to transport the children each day as in accordance with schedule
- the vehicle is registered, roadworthy and insured (general legal requirements and best practice standards are adhered to)
- any repairs are completed as soon as possible by a qualified mechanic
- checks of the vehicle should be recorded, signed by the relevant person and kept for inspection by the Regulatory Authority
- drivers hold a current Australian driver's licence, licenced to carry the required number of passengers for the vehicle
- in the event of any mechanical or other breakdown, children will be kept safe, comfortable and occupied with suitable activities
- every effort will be made to notify parents/carers of delays returning to the Service if applicable

FAMILIES WILL:

- adhere to the Service's Delivery of children to, and collection from Education and Care Service Premises *Policy* and *Safe Transportation Policy*
- communicate any change in transportation requirements for their child with the service soon as they are aware (for example: no transport is required on a particular day as the child has returned home from school due to illness)
- notify the Service if their child is going to be absent on a particular day and not require transport
- ensure written authorisation for transportation of their child by the Service is granted by either the parent or authorised nominee named in the child's enrolment record
- provide emergency contact details and phone numbers upon enrolment and update emergency contact details and phone numbers regularly
- sign attendance record upon delivery or collection of child to the service in accordance with the *Delivery of Children to, and Collection from Education and Care Service Premises Policy*

RELATED RESOURCES:

Kids and Traffic- Early Childhood Road and Safety Education Program

- Transporting children safely- Guidance on Understanding safe transport and travel requirements for education and care service providers (2020).
- Safe Travel and Transport- Advice for working with children, families, schools and communities (2020).

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT/REFLECTION

Our *Safe Transportation Policy* will be reviewed on an annual basis in consultation with children, families, staff, educators and management.

SOURCE

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014).
Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2023). *Guide to the National Quality Framework.*
ACECQA. (2023). Policy and Procedure Guidelines. *Safe Transportation of Children.*
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ACECQA. (2023). *Risk Assessment and management- Safe Transportation of children safety checklist and regular transportation record form.*
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ACECQA. (2023). *Minimising the Risk of Children Being Left Behind in Vehicles*. NQF Review 2019
Australian Government Department of Education. *Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia.V2.0, 2022*
Childhood Australia Code of Ethics. (2016).
Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010. (Amended 2023).
Education and Care Services National Regulations. (Amended 2023)
Kids and Traffic Early Childhood Road Safety Education Program (NSW)
Revised National Quality Standard. (2018).
Road Transport (Safety & Traffic Management) Act 1999.
Queensland Government Early Childhood Education and Care (2021) Transportation Look before you Lock
Vic Roads- Primary school road safety education resources

REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED BY	Krystle Hills	Centre Manager	12/02/2025
POLICY REVIEWED	February 2025	NEXT REVIEW DATE	February 2026
MODIFICATIONS	• annual policy maintenance • minor edits - formatting • sources checked for currency		
POLICY REVIEWED	PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS		NEXT REVIEW DATE
August 2024	• annual policy maintenance • minor edits - formatting • sources checked for currency		August 2025
July 2023	• Policy maintenance • Additional regulation added (151) • Links repaired where required • Major edit of existing policy to comply with new regulations effective 1 March 2023		JULY 2024

	• Amendment to National Regulations 2022 (under the Education and Care Services National Law) added • New section added: *Transportation Attendance Record* • Merging of some sections to avoid repetition- (picking up children/during transportation/dropping off children- included in main policy content and related Procedure)	
January 2023	• policy maintenance- additional National Law section added • no major changes to policy • minor formatting edits within text • hyperlinks checked and repaired as required • September (2022) small edits following Kids and Traffic information Continuous improvement section, *effective* supervision, clear communication with all stakeholders, deleted comment driver acting as supervisor (this would be in breach of regulations)	Jan 2024