

Safe Transportation of Children

POLICY

POLICY STATEMENT

Our organisation does not generally transport children to or from the service. However, in 2025 we have introduced this practice in relation to excursions in our local community via walking transport and are committed to ensuring the safe transportation of children during excursions, routine outings, single trips and regular transportation. We will ensure that all staff were trained, and regularly re-trained, to implement the policies and procedures relating to safe transportation.

BACKGROUND

The *Education and Care Services National Regulations* require approved providers to ensure their services have policies and procedures in place in relation to the safe transportation of children.

LEGISLATION

- National Law Act – 165, 167, 175
- National Regulations – 24, 89, 99–102, 122, 123, 136, 158, 168, 170–172, 175, 177
- National Quality Standard – 2, 3.2.1, 4.1, 5, 6, 7.1.2, 7.1.3,

RELEVANT POLICIES

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| • Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations | • Health, Safety and Wellbeing |
| • Administration of First Aid | • Incident, Injury, Trauma & Illness |
| • Dealing with Medical Conditions | • Interactions with Children |
| • Delivery and Collection of Children | • Providing a Child-Safe Environment |
| • Emergency and Evacuation | • Safe Arrival of Children |
| • Enrolment and Orientation | • Staffing Arrangements |
| • Excursions | • Sun Protection |
| • Bush Kinder | |
| • Governance and Management | |

LOCATION OF INFORMATION

- Centre Hallway
- Kids on Mullum Child Care Centre Website

MONITORING AND REVIEW

This policy is required to be reviewed at least annually by the approved provider, in conjunction with nominated supervisors, responsible persons, educators, staff members, parents, guardians, families and children.

- Dates of Review:
January 2026
May 2025
January 2024

Safe Transportation of Children

PROCEDURES

PLANNING FOR TRANSPORTATION

- When planning for transportation, the service will:
 - Assess the requirements for the transportation
 - Conduct a risk assessment.
 - Organise transport.
 - Make alternative arrangements for adverse weather conditions.
 - Inform families of the details of the transportation including pickup and destination, objectives and outcomes, requirements and the availability of a risk assessment.
 - Provide parents, guardians or authorised nominees with an authorisation form to complete.
 - Collect completed authorisation forms for each child using the transportation.
 - Request additional adult participation for the transportation, where required.
 - Arrange for a suitably equipped first aid kit and mobile phone to be readily available for the transportation.
 - Consider any additional factors in the planning of transportation for children with additional needs. Where possible, our organisation will uphold the right for all children to accessible transport.
- All transportation, excursion and regular outing details, risk assessments and map of routes must be approved by the nominated supervisor prior to going ahead.

REGULAR TRANSPORTATION (other than as part of an excursion)

Regular transportation is transport by the service, or arranged by the service, other than as part of an excursion.

- If parents/guardians add additional written authorisations throughout their child's time at the service, these are to be stored with the enrolment record.
- Our organisation recognises that risks apply equally during periods of regular transportation as they do to single transportation.
- Risk assessments for regular transportation will be carried out at least once in a 12-month period, provided the circumstances relevant to the risk assessment are substantially the same each time the child is transported.

RISK ASSESSMENTS

- The transport risk assessment must include an assessment addressing all factors of the transportation of children.
- A transport risk assessment will always be conducted before our service transports children to evaluate risks each time transportation is used, unless the transportation is *"regular transportation"*.
- Risks are required to be evaluated for each occasion, unless the transportation is *"regular transportation"*.

- Risks for regular transportation are to be evaluated at least every 12 months or where circumstances change, *e.g., route taken, vehicle used, destination, adults present, other children present, children with medical conditions.*
- The nominated supervisor will ensure that the risk assessment identifies and assesses the risk the transport may pose to the safety health and wellbeing of any child whilst using the transport and will specify how the service will manage any risks identified.
- Once risks have been identified, they'll be categorised as high, moderate or low and management of the risks will be detailed.
- Staff and any responsible adults using the transport are aware of the organisation's policies and procedures that set out the instructions for what must be done in the event of an emergency, and are aware of the risk assessment for the transport.
- Before using transport, risks are checked, including the weather to assess any increases to the level of risk and whether transport can proceed.
- A procedure for each travel route will be created in line with the risk assessment and will outline specific staff responsibilities, and include the use of strollers & safety restraints, where applicable.
- The risk assessment conducted will consider:
 - The means of transport.
 - The purpose of the transport.
 - The type of transportation being used.
 - The number of children.
 - The number of staff or adults required to provide adequate supervision, and whether any adults with specialised skills are required.
 - The proposed route and duration of the transportation, including estimated time of travel between the different locations.
 - The pick-up and drop off locations during the transportation.
 - How children will be accounted for when embarking and disembarking the transport, and the processes for entering and exiting the service.
 - Whether there are any water hazards.
 - The seatbelt and child restraint requirements of the jurisdiction that the service is operating in.
 - Whether there are any special equipment or provisions required *e.g., a mobile phone and list of emergency contact numbers for the children being transported*
- 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, *e.g., non-ambulant, infants* children.
 - 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 and 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.

AUTHORISATION FOR TRANSPORTATION

- Written authorisation for a child to be transported must be given by a parent, guardian or authorised nominee.
- If the transportation is regular transportation, the authorisation is only required to be obtained once in a 12-month period.
- The transportation authorisation will include:
 - 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 pickup 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 and any other adults who will accompany and supervise the children during the transportation.
 - Any requirements for seatbelts or safety restraints under the law of each jurisdiction in which the children are being transported.
 - That a risk assessment has been prepared and is available at the service.
 - That written policies and procedures for transporting children are available at the service.
 - For each occasion that regular transport is used, staff are to notify families prior to conducting regular transportation.
 - If the transportation is '*regular transportation*', the authorisation is only required to be obtained once in a 12-month period, unless circumstances of transportation change.

STAFFING ARRANGEMENTS

- Staff using the transportation will be no less than the numbers prescribed in the *Education and Care Services National Regulations*, and depending on the supervision requirements, may need to be higher to ensure adequate supervision.
- The number of staff will also be adequate to effectively supervise.
- Responsible adults will be enlisted to assist with the transportation.
- Where a staff member assumes responsibility for driving the bus (and holds the relevant license to drive), they are not considered to be included in the ratio to meet requirements.
- Consideration will be given to the number of staff who have required first aid qualifications and the number of staff required to care for children who remain at the service.
- At least one staff member accompanying children during transportation is to hold a current approved first aid qualification, which includes anaphylaxis management and emergency asthma management training.
- Where a group of children remain at the service whilst others are on transportation, at least one staff member remaining at the service is to hold a current approved first aid qualification, which includes anaphylaxis management and emergency asthma management training.

- All staff attending the transportation will be made aware of the organisation's policies and procedures in relation to what must be done in the event of an emergency, and are aware of the risk assessment for the transportation.

PARENTS, GUARDIANS, FAMILIES, AND VOLUNTEERS

- Families will be encouraged to participate in transportation to increase the number of responsible adults and assist in ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of children.
- Families and volunteers cannot be counted in order to meet ratio requirements under the *Education and Care Services National Regulations*.
- Family members wishing to attend will be mature, responsible people who are aware of the hazards and responsibilities of taking a group of children out of the service. If the responsible adult needs to bring their child's sibling because they cannot find suitable care, the responsibility provided to this adult will be adjusted accordingly and considered in the risk assessment.
- Families and volunteers will not be left in sole charge of children, including their own, and must be supervised by staff at all times.
- All responsible adults attending the transportation will be made aware of the organisation's policies and procedures in relation to what must be done in the event of an emergency, and are aware of the risk assessment for the transportation.

CONDUCTING THE TRANSPORT

- All staff, responsible adults, and children using the transportation will be informed of transportation timetable, itinerary, special requirements, safety procedures, grouping of children and responsibilities.
- A list of children using the transportation will be left at the service, and a copy carried by the delegated responsible person.
- Items to be readily available when transporting children include:
 - A suitably stocked first aid kit.
 - A list of adults attending, including their contact information.
 - An operating mobile phone.
 - A list of children involved, including children's emergency contact numbers.
 - Children's medication and any medical management plans.

GUIDELINES FOR SEATBELTS AND RESTRAINTS

- Seatbelts and restraints must meet Australian Standards and be marked as complying with the Australian Standards.
- Staff will ensure that each child under 7 years of age is secured in a child restraint or booster seat when travelling in a vehicle.
- Babies up to 6 months of age must be restrained in a rearward facing restraint.
- Children from 6 months to under 4 years of age must be restrained in a rearward facing or forward-facing restraint.
- Children under 4 years of age must not be in the front row of a vehicle with two or more rows.
- From 4 years to under 7 years of age, a forward-facing restraint or booster seat must be used.

- Children from 4 to under 7 years of age can only sit in the front row of a vehicle with two or more rows when all other seats are occupied by children of a lesser age in an approved child restraint.
- The ages specified above are a guide. If a child is too small for a restraint specified for their age, they should be kept in their current restraint for as long as necessary.
- If a child is too large for a restraint stated for their age, they may move to the next restraint level.

PICKING UP CHILDREN

- The vehicle is to be parked in a safe location where children are not required to cross any roads.
- A 'head count' of children against the attendance record will be checked by the supervising staff member as children assemble in a predetermined location prior to boarding. This is to be verified by a witness.
- Children are continuously supervised during transportation by designated staff sitting in locations that provide clear vision of all children.
- Children are to remain seated and secured in appropriate child restraints until the vehicle has completely stopped.
- The designated driver of the vehicle is fully licensed and complies with all appropriate road, safety and transport regulations.
- Under no circumstances will the driver of the vehicle or staff supervising the children use electronic devices, unless safely parked.
- Under no circumstances will the driver or staff supervising the children be under the influence of illegal substances, tobacco or drugs.

DROPPING OFF CHILDREN

- The driver must park the vehicle in a safe location, close to the entry to the service or location, and turn off the ignition.
- Children are to remain seated until the vehicle has completely stopped.
- A designated staff member will assist children to safely disembark the vehicle.
- Children will exit the vehicle using the 'safety door' or door located closest to the kerb.
- A 'head count' of children against the attendance record will be checked by the supervising staff member as children assemble in a predetermined location at the end of the journey. This is to be verified by a witness.
- Staff are to conduct a final sweep of the vehicle, checking on and under seats to ensure there are no children or belongings left behind.
- Checks of the vehicle should be recorded, signed by the relevant person and kept for inspection by the Regulatory Authority.
- Once inside, or on location, a 'head count' of children against the attendance record will be checked by the supervising staff member once again. This is to be verified by a witness.
- Staff will record the time when children are signed into the service or other venue.

RECORDS FOR EMBARKING AND DISEMBARKING

- A record must be made immediately after all children have embarked the vehicle that states:
 - Confirmation that each child was accounted for when embarking the vehicle at the service.
 - How each child was accounted for when embarking the vehicle at the service.
 - The name and signature of the two staff members who accounted for the children that embarked.
 - The time and date the record was made.
- A record must be made immediately after all children have disembarked the vehicle that states:
 - Confirmation that each child was accounted for when disembarking the vehicle at the service.
 - How each child was accounted for when disembarking the vehicle at the service.
 - That the interior of the vehicle was checked after all children disembarked the vehicle at the service.
 - The name and signature of the two staff members who accounted for the children that disembarked and completed the check of the vehicle.
 - The time and date the record was made.
- These records must be kept until the end of 3 years after the last date on which the child was educated and cared for by the service.

WHEN A CHILD IS MISSING OR CANNOT BE ACCOUNTED FOR

- The nominated supervisor will be notified immediately and staff will be allocated to undertake a thorough search of the immediate area, specifically checking likely hiding places.
- If the child is still missing, staff should contact the police on 000, and also contact parents, guardians and/or authorised nominees.
- Whilst these notifications are occurring, all available staff will continue to search the immediate and surrounding areas, whilst ensuring that the remaining children are kept safe and calm.
- Once police arrive, they will take charge of the incident and staff will follow their direction, whilst ensuring that the remaining children are kept safe and calm.
- The nominated supervisor and staff involved will document the incident on an incident report.
- The nominated supervisor will notify the regulatory authority within 24 hours of the incident.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Approved Provider	• Assume responsibility under the National Law for the safety, health and wellbeing of all children that are in the care of the organisation. • Ensure that any child being educated and cared for by the service is not transported by the service, or in transportation arranged by the service, unless written authorisation has been given. • Ensure at least two staff members account for children as they get in or out of a vehicle when being transported by the service. • Ensure records are made showing children are accounted for as they get in or out of a vehicle at the service. • Ensure records are made confirming a check of the inside of a vehicle was completed at the service after all children have left to ensure no children remain in the vehicle.
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	• Notify the regularity authority if the service provides or arranges regular transportation. • Ensure risk assessments for '<i>regular transportation</i>' are conducted and reviewed at least annually to ensure potential risks are identified and managed. • Ensure that educator to child ratio requirements are maintained at all times, including when children are being transported by the service. • Ensure that children being transported by the service are never left unattended in a vehicle to ensure supervision, health and safety, and prevent heat stress. • Ensure staff are aware of appropriate procedures to be followed in the event of a vehicle crash involving staff and children from the service. • Read, understand, follow and enforce the organisation's policies and procedures.
Nominated Supervisors and Responsible Persons	• Take steps to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of all children when being transported by, or on transport arranged by, the organisation. • Ensure that any child being educated and cared for by the service is not transported by the service, or in transportation arranged by the service, unless written authorisation has been given. • Only allocate staff to attend transportation of children who understand and are confident with the transport risk assessment and any associated policies and procedures. • Ensure at least two staff members account for children as they get in or out of a vehicle when being transported by the service. • Ensure records are made showing children are accounted for as they get in or out of a vehicle at the service. • Ensure records are made confirming a check of the inside of a vehicle was completed at the service after all children have left to ensure no children remain in the vehicle. • Ensure risk assessments for '<i>regular transportation</i>' are conducted and reviewed at least annually to ensure potential risks are identified and managed. • Ensure that educator to child ratio requirements are maintained at all times, including when children are being transported by the service. • Ensure that children being transported by the service are never left unattended in a vehicle to ensure supervision, health and safety, and prevent heat stress. • Ensure staff members are aware of appropriate procedures to be followed in the event of a vehicle crash involving staff and children from the service. • Ensure that staff carry medication, medical management plans and risk assessments for individual children. • Ensure that staff are aware of emergency procedures in case of an incident, injury or illness of a child. • Ensure at least one staff member accompanying children during transportation holds a current approved first aid qualification, which includes anaphylaxis management and emergency asthma management training. • Ensure items to be taken on transportation are well stocked and easily accessible. • Ensure first aid items taken on transportation are full stocked and in date, including emergency medication.

	• Ensure that transportation means meets all safety requirements for the transport of children, insurances, including approved child restraints, fire extinguishers and emergency exits. • Ensure that any chartered transport companies provide evidence of the operators <i>Working with Children Check</i>, and that this is verified before the use of the transportation. • In the event of a missing child, notify the regulatory authority within 24 hours. • Read, understand, follow and enforce the organisation's policies and procedures.
Educators and Staff Members	• Take steps to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of children when being transported by, or on transport arranged by, the organisation. • Ensure at least two staff members account for children as they get in or out of a vehicle when being transported by the service. • Ensure records are made showing children are accounted for as they get in or out of a vehicle at the service. • Conduct and document regular head and face to name counts as detailed in the risk assessment. • Conduct a check of the inside of a vehicle after all children have left to ensure no children remain in the vehicle, and ensure all records are made confirming this was completed. • Remain responsible for all children being transported and provide particularly close attention to any children in their assigned group. • Promote a safe and secure transportation journey for children, engaging in meaningful interactions throughout. • Communicate with other staff before and during the transportation to keep children safe and implement any risk minimisation strategies. • Ensure relevant medical management plans, risk assessments, medication and contact details for each child attending the transportation are readily available. • Ensure that educator to child ratio requirements are maintained at all times, including when children are being transported by the service. • Ensure that children being transported by the service are never left unattended in a vehicle to ensure supervision, health and safety, and prevent heat stress. • Ensure that all safety restraints are correctly used before and during transportation. • Refrain from using electronic devices when directly responsible for children, other than for the purposes of the transportation or in an emergency. • Role model road safety practices at all times. • Follow appropriate procedures in the event of a vehicle crash or transport-related injury involving any children, staff or volunteers from the service, including notifying the nominated supervisor and approved provider as soon as possible after the event. • In the event of a missing child, follow procedures detailed in the risk assessment. • Read, understand, follow and enforce the organisation's policies and procedures.

Parents, Guardians and Families

- Nominate on their child's enrolment record any persons having authority to authorise transportation of their child.
- Communicate any changes in transportation requirements for their child with the nominated supervisor or responsible persons as soon as they are aware, e.g., *child absence*.
- Role model road safety practices.
- Refrain from leaving a child unattended in a vehicle while delivering or collecting other children from the service.
- Use and fit correct child restraints.
- Update emergency contact numbers regularly.
- Read, understand and follow the organisation's policies and procedures.

SOURCES

- ACECQA – *Changes to Regular Transportation of Children* – February 2023
- ACECQA – *Guidance for Adequate Supervision During Transportation* – January 2023
- ACECQA – *Minimising the Risk of Children Being Left Behind in Vehicles* – January 2023
- ACECQA – *Safe Transportation of Children* – January 2023
- Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority
- Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 – September 2023
- Department of Education and Training
- Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics 2016
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 – July 2023
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 – July 2023
- Guide to the National Quality Framework 2018 – July 2023
- Starting Out Safely
- Victorian Government – *Transporting Children in Early Childhood Services* – April 2023
- ACECQA guidelines 2026