Transportation Policy

Policy first issued	10th August 2016
Current review date	24th September 2024
Personnel responsible	Childcare Operations

NQS 2 Children's Health and Safety

NQS

QA 2	2.2.1	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard.
QA 6	6.2.1	Continuity of learning and transitions for each child are supported by sharing information and clarifying responsibilities.
QA 7	7.1.2	Management systems - Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service
	7.1.3	Roles and responsibilities - Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, and understood, and support effective decision-making and operation of the service

National Regulations

Regs	4	Definitions
	99	Children leaving the education and care premises
	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
	168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures in relation to transportation if service transports or arranges transportation of children other than as part of excursion

National Law

Law	165	Definitions
	167	Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards

Aim

The safety of each child and all educators is paramount at all times. This includes those children and accompanying educators who travel on public or chartered transport. Proper restraint systems will be used according to current Australian Standards. The vehicle itself will be maintained according to Australian Standards. This includes vehicles owned by the Centre.

Related Policies

Additional Needs Policy
Administration of Authorised Medication Policy
Delivery and Collection of Children Policy
Excursion and Centre Events Policy
Incident, Injury, Trauma, and Illness Policy
Parental Interaction and Involvement in the Centre Policy
Staffing Arrangements Policy
Tobacco, Drug and Alcohol Policy
Physical Environment (Workplace Safety, Learning and Administration) Policy

Implementation

The guidelines in the Transportation Policy will be used to educate children, families and the community on safely transporting children, road and pedestrian safety.
Educators will assist motor vehicle drivers to ensure each child is transported safely at all times. The Centre understands that the driver maintains ultimate responsibility for road safety and ensuring each child is properly seated and restrained. All educators, however, have an equal responsibility to assist the driver and check that each child is seated and restrained appropriately using the following guidelines. Under no circumstances will any child be transported if all of the following guidelines are not met.

Mandatory notification to the regulatory authority

It is mandatory to notify the regulatory authority that your Centre provides or arranges regular transportation. The notification is to be lodged through the NQAIT System.

- The approved provider must notify the regulatory authority in a service approval application, or if the Centre is already approved, within seven (7) days of regular transportation being provided or arranged by the Centre.
- The approved provider must notify the regulatory authority within seven (7) days if there is a change to the regular transportation provided or arranged by the Centre, including if regular transportation is no longer provided.

Risk Assessments

This section of the Policy does not include transport of children on excursions as risk assessment requirements for excursions are covered in the Excursion and Centre Events Policy

The Nominated Supervisor or educators will always complete a risk assessment to identify, assess and remove or reduce risks the transport may pose to the safety, health and wellbeing of each child before children are transported unless the arrangement is 'regular transportation' (e.g. transportation where the circumstances are substantially the same on each occasion) and a risk assessment has been completed within the last 12 months. The risk assessment will cover:

- 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 the relevant State / Territory law (for regular transportation consider whether this needs to be assessed more often than every 12 months if child grows etc.)
- Any water hazards
- The number of adults and children involved in the transportation
- The number of educators or other responsible adults that is appropriate to provide supervision and whether any adults with specialised skills are required, given the risks involved.
    - Consider children's ages, whether or not they are mobile, and whether any have additional needs or medical conditions.
- Whether any items should be readily available during transportation (e.g. mobile phone and list of emergency contact numbers for the children being transported).
- The process for entering and exiting the education and care service premises and the pick-up location or destination
- Procedures for embarking and disembarking the transport, including how each child will be accounted for.
- A check system of the interior of the vehicle to ensure there are no children left behind.

The Nominated Supervisor will nominate, as part of the risk assessment control measures:

- The driver (if using vehicle owned or operated by the Centre).
- The lead educator / supervisor responsible for ensuring an excursion runs smoothly and children are adequately supervised, or for supervising children during trips that are not excursions.
- The Checker responsible for checking vehicle at end of trip (may be same as lead educator / supervisor).

- a staff member or Nominated Supervisor (other than the driver) being present at the Centre to account for all children as they embark and disembark at the Centre premises and keep a record of how each child was accounted for.

The Nominated Supervisor will update risk assessments for regular transportation and obtain new authorisations from parents / guardians when circumstances that may affect transport arrangements change, including for example:

- Weather conditions (summer versus winter, extreme weather events like heatwaves, floods and bushfires).
- Changes in routes for example because of road works
- The numbers and vulnerabilities of children.

Authorisations for Transportation

This section of the Policy does not include transport of children on excursions as authorisation requirements for excursions are covered in the Excursion and Centre Events Policy

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 transportation of a child unless the arrangement is 'regular transportation' and there's an authorisation which is less than 12 months old. The authorisation will include:

- The child's name.
- The reason the child is to be transported.
- If it is regular transportation, a description of when the child is to be transported.
- If it is not regular transportation, the date the child will 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.
- Any requirements for seatbelts or safety restraints under the relevant State / Territory law.
- Advice a risk assessment has been prepared and is available at the Centre.
- Advice written policies and procedures for transporting children are available at the Centre.

Transport Guidelines

This section and the rest of the Policy covers all situations where we transport or arrange transportation of children, including excursions. Where relevant, the guidelines and procedures in this Policy will also be used to educate children, families and the community about safely transporting children and related issues like road and pedestrian safety.

- Smoking of any substance, the intake of alcohol or the use of any illegal substance by any individual while involved with the transportation of children is prohibited. Educators will refer to the Centre's Tobacco, Drug and Alcohol Policy for further guidelines.
- Children will never be left unattended in any vehicle to promote positive supervision and to prevent heat stress.
- Educators will ensure that car seats, booster seats and seat belts are properly secured on each child and themselves before departing.
- Educators will assist each child to fasten and release the safety restraints on their seats.
- Children will only be transported in a vehicle if the manufacturer's stated capacity is adhered to at all times.
- Children will be prohibited from drinking, eating, standing and any other dangerous activities whilst in the vehicle.
- Children will be accompanied at all times, including to and from the vehicle.
- If possible, children who have special needs will have their needs accommodated for. An educator who is familiar with these needs will travel with the child.
- Educator ratios apply as they do when travelling for an excursion.

Safety Restraints

Seatbelts and restraint systems will be used as outlined in this policy which is based in the National Road Rules. We note the Australian Design Rules set out vehicle safety requirements including requirements for seatbelts and child restraint anchorage points.

Educators will assist motor vehicle drivers and bus drivers to ensure each child is transported safely at all times. The Centre understands that drivers of small vehicles carrying up to 12 people are responsible for road safety and ensuring each child under 16 is properly seated and restrained. All educators, have an equal responsibility to assist the driver and check that each child is seated and restrained appropriately using the following guidelines.

Vehicles built to carry up to 12 people including the driver

Generally, educators and volunteers will follow the restraint arrangements which follow to ensure the safety of children. However, if a child is too small for a restraint specified for their age, they will be kept in their current restraint for as long as necessary. Likewise, if a child is too large for a restraint specified for their age, they may move to the next level of restraint.

Educators and volunteers will also comply with any current medical plans or certificates signed by a registered medical practitioner that states the child should not be restrained as outlined below while travelling in a vehicle (or bus) for medical reasons. Educators and volunteers will comply with the conditions in the medical certificate, and where possible, ensure the child travels in a rear seat. Medical certificates must have an expiry date.

The Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor will ensure all safety restraints are safe, labelled with Australian Standards (AS/NZS1754) (restraints purchased overseas do not comply with Australian Standards and are not compatible with Australian vehicles), and have been professionally installed or checked by an authorised fitter. They will also ensure there are sufficient restraints to meet the safety restraints requirements under the National Road Rules as detailed below.

- Educators will ensure that each child under seven years of age must be secured in a child restraint or booster seat when travelling in a vehicle.
- Babies up to six months of age must be restrained in a rearward facing restraint with a built-in 5 or 6 point harness.
- Children under four years of age must not be in the front row of a vehicle with two or more rows.
- The number of children transported does not exceed vehicle rated seating capacities.
- Children from six months to under four years of age must be restrained in a rearward facing or forward-facing restraint with a built-in 6-point harness. Rear facing restraints offer better protection as long as the child fits in it.
- From four years to under seven years of age a forward-facing restraint or booster seat must be used. A forward-facing child restraint offers better protection as long as the child fits in it.
- Children from four to under seven 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 the same age or younger in an approved restraint.
- Children do not share a seat belt or child restraint.
- All adults use available safety belts.

Buses (more than 12 seats)

Buses are defined as vehicles built to carry over 12 people including the driver. The Nominated Supervisor, educators and volunteers will:

- Ensure seatbelts / restraints are used if they are required to be fitted
- Ensure seating capacity displayed on the compliance plate is not exceeded.
- Consider whether an alternative mode of transport should be used to ensure children's safety where restraints are not available.

Medical Exemptions

- Children are exempt from wearing a child restraint if they hold a medical certificate signed by a medical practitioner which certifies that the child should not, for medical reasons, be restrained while travelling in a motor vehicle.
- Generally, if a child is unrestrained within a vehicle on medical grounds, they must travel in a rear seat. However, if the medical certificate signed by a medical practitioner certifies that the child should not, or cannot, for medical reasons, travel in a rear seat, then the child may sit in the front row.

Vehicles

- Only insured, registered and vehicles with a high level of maintenance should be used.
- The vehicle will have a First Aid Kit inside it and emergency contact details for all children and educators in the vehicle.
- A mobile phone will be available in case of emergencies.

Drivers

The Nominated Supervisor will ensure persons are safe, responsible drivers before allowing them to transport children. The Nominated Supervisor will nominate the driver (if not using a commercial transport company) and ensure they are not included in ratios or responsible for supervising children as they cannot provide adequate supervision while operating the vehicle. The driver **will not** conduct any checks or record keeping that involve accounting for children as they embark and disembark at the service premises. In addition (if not using a commercial transport company) they will:

- Make sure there are relief drivers available to fill in for any regular drivers
- Keep copies of licenses and driving records which are less than 12 months old for drivers they approve to transport children and make sure drivers:
    - Are at least 18 years old and fully licensed (no L or P plate drivers).
    - Have a suitable driving history e.g. statement of demerit points.
    - Have proof of valid insurance and registration.
    - Are familiar with the first aid kit contents.
    - Can operate the fire extinguisher if required.
    - Have a clear Working with Children Check if required.
    - Understand they must always comply with the road rules (e.g. no speeding or touching mobile phones).
    - Understand they are responsible for paying any fines they incur.
    - Understand they must have a zero-blood alcohol level when driving children.
    - Understand they must report any driving convictions incurred since the Nominated Supervisor reviewed their driving record.
    - Understand in relation to a vehicle operated by the Centre they must:
        - Report any damage or maintenance needs to the Nominated Supervisor
        - Ensure there's enough fuel to complete the trip (e.g. refuel when the tank moves below half full) and never refuel when children are in the vehicle.

Where bus companies are hired to transport children the Nominated Supervisor will discuss the company's policy on driver qualifications, driving history and maintenance procedures etc. to make sure they have reliable and consistent safety processes in place.

Excursions

The Centre will follow the *Excursion and Centre Events Policy* at all times.

Road Safety

Pedestrian Safety

Based on KidSafe Australia's guidelines, our Centre recognises and will follow the following information:

- Children are vulnerable road users.

Although children may think they can handle crossing a road by themselves, remember the children:

- Are easily distracted and focus on only one aspect of what is happening.
- Are smaller and harder for drivers to see.
- Are less predictable than other pedestrians.
- Cannot accurately judge the speed and distance of moving vehicles.
- Cannot accurately predict the direction sounds are coming from.
- Are unable to cope with sudden changes in traffic conditions.
- Do not understand abstract ideas – such as road safety.
- Are unable to identify safe places to cross the road.
- Tend to act inconsistently in and around traffic.

Children need to be accompanied and closely supervised by a parent or adult carer to keep them safer. A simple way of doing this is to hold hands.
Educators will closely supervise all children when outside the Centre near roads. They will hold children's hands, or if not practical to do this for all children, implement measures which keep children safe e.g. ensure children hold on to a rope at all times and wear high visibility vests.

Educators will use the following to guide education with families and the community:
Educators will regularly integrate learning about road safety into our Curriculum. They will also provide information to families about children and road safety including:

- Parents and caregivers have a key role in educating their children about road safety and the close supervision children require in and around traffic to keep them safe. Children learn about road safety largely by experience.
- Opportunities in day-to-day routines to discuss road safety with children e.g. on the way to the local shop, running errands and going to school or Centre, while crossing roads (when and why it is safe to cross).
- Whenever crossing roads, it is advisable to talk about when and why it is safe to cross the road with your children so they can gain an understanding about the broad range of factors involved.
- Anywhere where there is a potential for moving vehicles is a potentially dangerous traffic situation for children. This includes residential areas, car-parks, at traffic lights, along footpaths, zebra and other crossings, driveways, quiet streets and busy streets. It is vital to:
    - Always supervise children whenever moving a vehicle e.g. hold their hands. Put children securely in the vehicle with you if you are the only adult around, even if moving just a small distance.
    - Encourage children to play in safer areas away from the driveway and cars. The driveway is like a small road and should not be used as a play area.
    - Make child access to the driveway difficult e.g. use security doors, fencing or gates.
- Children need parental / adult care and close supervision in and around traffic to make them safer.

Transport Procedures

To ensure children's safety all employees and volunteers will implement the **Transport Procedure** or **Transport Procedure – Excursions** when transporting children to and from destinations. Under no circumstances will any child be transported if all of the guidelines and procedures in this Policy are not met.

Maintenance

To ensure vehicles owned or operated by the Centre are safe and hygienic, where relevant the Nominated Supervisor will:

- Follow the recognised service schedule and organise an annual mechanical inspection, or sight evidence vehicle has had mechanical inspection within the last 12 months.
- Look for obvious maintenance issues e.g. bald tyres.

- Pay insurance, registration etc. or sight evidence vehicle is registered and insured.
- Ensure check oil, water and tyres every month.
- Ensure vehicle is regularly cleaned.
- Ensure children cannot access vehicles when they are not being used.

Children embarking and disembarking a vehicle

A Nominated Supervisor or a staff member (other than the driver) must:

- be present when children embark and disembark a vehicle at the Centre premises
- account for each child when they embark and disembark a vehicle at the Centre premises
- complete a check of the interior of the vehicle after all children have disembarked at the Centre premises to ensure there are no children left on the vehicle.

Record keeping and accounting

The Approved Provider and Nominated Supervisor must ensure that records are kept for regular transportation that:

- confirm each child was accounted for when embarking and disembarking the vehicle at the Centre premises
- state how each child was accounted for at the Centre premises
- state that the interior of vehicle was checked after all children have disembarked at the Centre premises.

The records must be made immediately and include the time, date, full name and signature of the person/s responsible for:

- accounting for the children during embarking and disembarking of the vehicle
- conducting the vehicle check after children have disembarked.

Car Park and Driveway Safety

Young children are at risk from moving vehicles in low speed 'off road' locations such as driveways and car parks. Studies have shown for example, there are large 'blind zones' behind vehicles where drivers cannot see what is happening. The Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor and staff will implement measures to remove or control the risks posed by any car park on the premises. They will complete a risk assessment to identify and control the risks and may implement measures such as:

- Speed signs with maximum car park speed limits
- Parking signs advising parking limited to e.g. 5 minutes or reverse parking required.
- One way signs so all vehicles drive through car park in the same direction.
- Witches hats to control / block access in particular areas.
- Supervising area during drop offs and pick ups.
- Encouraging people collecting children to walk around vehicle before they leave.

Sources

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
National Quality Standard
Road Safety Road Rules 2017
National Guidelines for Safe Restraint of Children Travelling in Motor Vehicles – KidSafe
National Road Rules Model
Motor Vehicle Standards Act 1989 and Australian Design Rules Cwth

Review

The policy will be reviewed annually. The review will be conducted by:

- Management
- Employees
- Families
- Interested Parties

Last reviewed: 24.09.2024
Date for next review: September 2025