

Safe Transportation Policy		 Longreach Regional Council <small>Ilbarranba • Wilford • Longgoorli • Yarran</small>
Policy Number:	12.03	
Policy Category:	Childcare Centre	
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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 (regulation 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, educators, management, approved provider, nominated supervisor and visitors of the Service.

LEGISLATION

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010. (Amended 2023)

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011. (Amended 2023)

DEFINITIONS

Department of Education - Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) – Regulatory Authority responsible for the approval, monitoring and quality assessment of services in their jurisdiction in accordance with the national legislative framework and in relation to the National Quality Standard.

Educator – early childhood or school age practitioner who works directly with children in early childhood or school age care settings.

National Quality Framework (NQF) – provides a national approach to regulation, assessment and quality improvement for early childhood education and care and outside school hours care services across Australia.

National Quality Standard (NQS) – sets a high national benchmark for early childhood education and care and outside school hours care services in Australia. The NQS includes seven quality areas that are important outcomes for children. Services are assessed and rated by their regulatory authority against the NQS, and given a rating for each of the 7 quality areas and an overall rating based on these results.

Parents/Guardians – a person who has parental responsibility for the child.

Staff – employee of Longreach Regional Council based at the Longreach Childcare Centre.

Nominated Supervisor – a person with responsibility for the day to day management of an approved service.

Leadership Team – an internal group of leaders within the Childcare Centre comprising of the Childcare Services Director, the Childcare Services Assistant Director and the Staff Engagement and Development Officer.

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.

OWNA – the digital platform utilised by the Longreach Childcare Services for the recording of information.

POLICY STATEMENT

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 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.

POLICY

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 minimize and manage all potential risks for transporting children before authorisation is sought to transport a child. [Reg. 102B, 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:

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

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 specialized 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:

- a) the experience of the driver and licensing conditions for the vehicle

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

The Nominated Supervisor Will Notify The Regulatory Authority:

- that the Service will offer or arrange transportation as part of the service approval application
- within seven (7) days if there is a change to the regular transportation provided or arranged by the service, including if the regular transportation is no longer provided.

The Leadership Team Will Ensure:

- a) all staff, volunteers and students follow the *Safe Transportation Policy* and procedure
- b) information related to the safe transportation of children is shared with all staff to assist management fulfil their roles responsibly
- c) all staff and driver(s) involved in the transportation of children at the Service are inducted via the *Transportation of Children Induction Form* and have completed practical training relating to safe transportation of children. Evidence is available via OWNA.
- d) risk assessments are carried out prior to seeking authorisation for transporting children
- e) 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
- f) risk assessments for 'regular transportation' are reviewed at least annually
- g) any updates to policies and procedures are clearly communicated to all staff
- h) roles and responsibilities are clearly communicated with educators
- i) a designated driver is nominated as the person who will be responsible for driving the vehicle
- j) 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
- k) messages from families regarding attendance changes to pick up or drop offs are communicated to the designated educator/educators
- l) children are signed into the service attendance record upon collection, noting the time children enter the vehicle

- m) rehearsals for transportation of children are conducted throughout the year as 'best practice'
- n) details of the safest route for travel, type of vehicle and required restraints are included in the risk assessment
- o) every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and hazards likely to cause injury
- p) effective and adequate supervision is provided
- q) compliance with first aid requirements of Regulation 136 is met at all times
- r) parents/guardians complete a written authorisation for regular transportation of their child and a copy of this is filed via OWNA
- s) children are instructed on processes for entering and exiting the service premises and are aware of the pick-up and destination locations
- t) a hard copy Attendance Record is provided to the designated educator prior to leaving the service to record:
 - 1) children's attendance on the vehicle
 - 2) how children are accounted for as they embark and disembark on the vehicle
 - 3) a final check of the vehicle, including the interior, to ensure no child is left on the vehicle
- u) children are head counted via OWNA prior to departure at each stop
- v) children are signed into or out of the attendance record via Kidsoft 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*
- w) the Attendance Record is completed to record how each child was accounted for as they embark or disembark from the vehicle during transportation
- x) once all children have exited the vehicle/bus, a final check is conducted by the designated educator, including the interior of the vehicle, to ensure no child is left on the vehicle
- y) the driver conducts a final sweep of the vehicle, including the interior of the vehicle, to ensure there are no children or belongings left behind
- z) the designated educator confirms the interior of the vehicle was checked and has signed the Attendance Record
- aa) the driver confirms the interior of the vehicle was checked and has signed the Attendance Record
- bb) under no circumstances will the driver and educators/employees supervising children be under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- cc) procedures for the safe handover of children between the Service and other educational site is communicated clearly with all stakeholders
- dd) educator to child ratio requirements are maintained at all times, including when children are being transported as part of the service activity
- ee) a record of staff working directly with children (regulation 151) is kept
- ff) children exit the vehicle using the 'safety door'
- gg) children wear approved seatbelts/restraints whilst the vehicle is in motion in accordance to Queensland Road Rules and Road Transport Act
- hh) children are never left unattended in the vehicle
- ii) education on road safety for children is included in the Service's programming

- jj) safety rules are developed with children to ensure a clear understanding of appropriate and inappropriate behaviour
- kk) staff are aware of appropriate procedures to be followed in the event of a vehicle crash involving staff and children from the service
- ll) a working mobile phone or other similar means of communication to communicate with the service, parents/carers is provided in case of emergency
- mm) a list of emergency contact numbers for the children and staff being transported is available electronically via OWNA and a hard copy stored in the bus
- nn) every effort will be made to notify parents/carers of delays returning to the Service if applicable
- oo) relevant criminal history requirements and Working with Children Checks are made for any person transporting children. WWCC is recorded in staff records
- pp) the designated person driving the bus holds a current Australian LR driver's licence
- qq) 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*
- rr) 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)]
- ss) 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
- tt) 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*
- uu) to explicitly communicate attendance register procedure with all stakeholders (school, parents, educators)
- vv) effective and adequate supervision is provided when children are being transported. Consideration must include:
 - 1) the number, age and ability of children
 - 2) visibility and accessibility
 - 3) physical positioning of educators
 - 4) risks related to the mode of transportation (including travel on foot)
 - 5) risks in the environment, location, route and while travelling
 - 6) the experience, knowledge and skill of each educator
 - 7) the capacity of an educator to immediately respond to a situation requiring urgent intervention
- ww) an easily recognised and suitably equipped first aid kit is easily accessible during transportation
- xx) educators carry medication, health plans and risk assessments for individual children
- yy) at least one staff member accompanying children during transportation holds:
 - 1) an approved first aid qualification and
 - 2) a current approved anaphylaxis management training qualification and

- 3) an approved emergency asthma management training qualification.

The Designated Educator/ Designated Driver/ Educators Will Ensure:

- a) they adhere to the *Safe Transportation Policy* at all times
- b) they complete their *Transportation of Children Induction Form* and participate in practical training relating to the safe transportation of children prior to their first time as a designated educator or driver
- c) they are aware of their roles and responsibilities while providing transportation for children
- d) they have read and are aware of the Risk Assessment that has been completed in accordance with the requirements as outlined above
- e) their driver's licence is current and the driver is in a fit and proper state to drive
- f) they hold the relevant licence for the vehicle classification (LR)
- g) they complete the *Transport Pick up/Drop off Checklist* via OWINA each time transportation is provided to children
- h) every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and from any hazard likely to cause injury
- i) effective and adequate supervision is provided when transporting children
- j) educator to child ratio requirements are maintained at all times, including when children are being transported as part of the service activity
- k) children are never left unattended in the vehicle
- l) they adhere to the Queensland road rules and regulations mandated by law
- m) children remain seated and do not behave in a dangerous or inappropriate manner
- n) children wear approved seatbelts/restraints whilst the vehicle is in motion in accordance to Queensland Road Rules and Road Transport Act
- o) the vehicle is parked in a secure and safe location for children to access
- p) the number of passengers does not exceed the legal requirement
- q) a working, fully charged mobile phone is taken in case of an emergency
- r) 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
- s) a fully equipped first aid kit is easily accessible
- t) the *Missing Child During Regular Transportation Procedure* is followed in the event a child is deemed missing or unaccounted for
- u) medication, health plans and risk assessments for individual children are available during transportation
- v) a list of emergency contact numbers for the children and staff being transported is available
- w) emergency contact information is available
- x) every effort will be made to notify parents/carers of delays returning to the Service if applicable
- y) 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:

- a) the *Transport Pick up/Drop off Checklist* is completed via OWINA prior to each time transportation is provided to children
- b) the Attendance Record is completed to record:
 - 1) each child is signed in and out of the *Attendance Record* and the Service upon collection/delivery of children, noting the time children enter and exit the vehicle
 - 2) each child is accounted for as they embark and disembark from the vehicle during transportation
 - 3) that once all children have exited the vehicle/bus, a final sweep of the vehicle is conducted by the designated educator, 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
 - 4) the driver then 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
 - 5) the designated educator and driver will confirm the interior of the vehicle was checked and sign the *Attendance Record*

SAFE MAINTENANCE OF TRANSPORTATION VEHICLE

The Nominated Supervisor Will Ensure:

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

Parents/Guardians Will:

- a) adhere to the Service's *Delivery of children to, and collection from Education and Care Service Premises Policy* and *Safe Transportation Policy*
- b) communicate any change in transportation requirements for their child with the service as 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)

- c) notify the Service if their child is going to be absent on a particular day and not require transport
- d) 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
- e) provide emergency contact details and phone numbers upon enrolment and update emergency contact details and phone numbers regularly
- f) sign children in/out of the Service 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*

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT/REFLECTION

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

CHILDCARE CENTRE DESKTOP- RELATED RESOURCES

Employee Induction Checklist	Transport Pick Up/Drop Off Checklist
Missing Child during Regular	Transporting Children Risk Assessment
Transportation Procedure	Template
Regular Transportation Authorisation	Vehicle/Bus Transportation Procedure
Safe Transportation of Children Module	Transportation Attendance Record

REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED BY:	Elissa Balke	Childcare Services Director	14.07.2023
POLICY REVIEWED	October 2023	NEXT REVIEW DATE	October 2024

Authorised by resolution as at 26 October 2023:



Brett Walsh
Chief Executive Officer