

Best Practice – Quality Area 2 (and 6)

This policy was developed by Early Learning Association Australia in consultation with VicRoads and the early childhood sector as part of the Vic Roads funded Starting Out Safely programs.

PURPOSE

To provide evidence-based guidelines and procedures to ensure that all children attending GRPSA centres are:

- adequately supervised at all times, including on excursions and regular outings
- kept safe while travelling as pedestrians, cyclists or passengers in a vehicle
- able to participate in road safety education to assist them in being and becoming safe and responsible road users.

POLICY STATEMENT

1. VALUES

GRPSA is committed to the Guiding Principles of the National Quality Framework, and also to:

- the rights of children to travel safely as passengers, pedestrians and cyclists
- the rights of children to be active citizens in the community
- the role of parent/guardians and families as children's first and most influential teachers
- an evidence-based approach in the provision of road safety education and practice.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, educators, staff, students on placement, volunteers, parents/guardians, children and others attending the programs and activities of Goulburn Region Preschool Association Inc, including during offsite excursions and regular outings.

3. PROCEDURES

The Approved Provider is responsible for:

- ensuring that educators/staff only allow a child to participate in an excursion with the written authorisation of a parent/guardian or authorised nominee including details required under Regulation 102(4). If the excursion is a regular outing, the authorisation is required to be obtained once every 12 months and kept with the child's enrolment record (refer to Excursions and Centre Events Policy)

- ensuring that a written risk assessment (refer to Definitions) is undertaken prior to conducting excursions, including details of the safest route for travel and safety aspects for the chosen mode transport. e.g., motor vehicle, bus, train and tram
- ensuring that all children are adequately supervised (refer to Definitions) at all times, including while excursions and regular outings
- ensuring that road safety education, based on the *National Practices for Early Childhood Road Safety Education* is provided as part of ongoing program.
- ensuring that all children attending the centre are included in road safety education (refer to *Inclusion and Equity Policy*)
- ensuring that educators and staff have access to professional development/training in road safety and are kept up to date with current legislation, regulations, rules, standards and best practice information
- ensuring that bicycle helmets that meet Australian/New Zealand Standard 2063 (refer to *Legislation and standards*) are used correctly by all children where bicycles or wheeled toys (refer to *Definitions*) are part of the program.
- ensuring that parents/guardians and visitors to the centre are provided with location-specific road safety information (e.g. details about where to park safely when delivering and collecting children and local area speed limits etc)
- ensuring that parents/guardians are provided with general road safety information about transporting children to and from the centre(which might include using the ‘safety door’, child restraint information and role modelling safe road use)
- ensuring parents/guardians have access to the policy and its attachments.

In relation to the safe transportation of children:

- ensuring that where possible, buses hired for use on excursions have seatbelts fitted, and that these are correctly used by all children and volunteers for the entire trip. Where seatbelts are not available on buses children and volunteers will remain seated for the entire trip.
- ensure that educators /staff only allow a child to be regularly transported with the written authorisation of a parent/guardian or authorised nominee including details required under regulation 102B. When the transportation is regular the authorization is required to be obtained once every 12 months and kept with the child’s enrolment records.
- ensure that a written risk assessment is undertaken prior to conducting regular transportation of children. Reg 102C Attachment 2
- ensuring that appropriate procedures are followed in the event of a vehicle crash or transport related injury involving any children, staff or volunteers from the centre (refer to *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy*)

- developing procedures for educators/staff to follow where a child is observed being transported to or from the premises in an unsafe manner (refer to Attachment 1 for a sample procedure)

Under duty of care obligations, centres must develop appropriate procedures to guide educators and other staff to address situations where a child is observed to be at risk while being transported to or from the early childhood centre. This may include instances where a child is observed to be travelling unrestrained, in an inappropriate restraint, riding a bicycle or wheeled toy without a helmet, or instances where a parent/guardian is in an unfit state to drive due to intoxication or impairment.

Early Childhood Staff are responsible for:

- All ensuring that educators/staff only allow a child to participate in an excursion with the written authorisation of a parent/guardian or authorised nominee including details required under Regulation 102(4). If the excursion is a regular outing, the authorisation is required to be obtained once every 12 months and kept with the child’s enrolment record (refer to Excursions and centre Events Policy)
- ensuring that a written risk assessment (refer to Definitions) is undertaken prior to conducting excursions, including details of the safest route for travel and safety aspects for the chosen mode of transport. e.g., motor vehicle, bus, train and tram
- ensuring that all children are adequately supervised (refer to Definitions) at all times, including while excursions and regular outings
- ensuring that road safety is embedded in the curriculum, based on the *National Practices for Early Childhood Road Safety Education*.
- ensuring ongoing professional development on road safety is maintained and that staff are kept up to date with current legislation, regulations, rules, standards and best practice information
- accessing a broad range of resources to support road safety education
- ensuring that bicycle helmets that meet Australian/New Zealand Standard 2063 (refer to *Legislation and standards*) are used correctly by all children where bicycles or wheeled toys (refer to *Definitions*) are part of the program.

In relation to the safe transportation of children:

- ensuring that where possible, buses hired for use on excursions have seatbelts fitted, and that these are correctly used by all children and volunteers for the entire trip. Where seatbelts are not available on buses children and volunteers will remain seated for the entire trip.
- ensure that educators /staff only allow a child to be regularly transported with the written authorisation of a parent/guardian or authorised nominee including details required under regulation 102B. When the transportation is regular the authorization is required to be obtained once every 12 months and kept with the child’s enrolment records.

- ensure that a written risk assessment is undertaken prior to conducting regular transportation of children. Reg 102C Attachment 2
- ensuring that appropriate procedures are followed in the event of a vehicle crash or transport related injury involving any children, staff or volunteers from the centre (refer to *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy*)
- ensuring that educators provide parents/guardians with appropriate information about road safety
- ensuring that educators follow the centre's procedures and exercise duty of care if a child is observed to be at risk while being transported to or from the centre.

Parents/guardians are responsible for:

- signing and dating permission forms prior to excursions and regular outings.
- ensuring that their child travels in a restraint suitable for their age/size when arriving at or departing from the centre.
- being aware of all location-specific and general road safety requirements including details about where to park to deliver and collect children, observing speed limits in the vicinity of the centre, using the 'safety door' and role modelling safe road use.
- communicating any issues or concerns relating to their child's safety or wellbeing to the early childhood centre
- being aware of this policy and of the centres procedures relating to the safe transportation of children to and from the centre.

Volunteers and students, while at the centre, are responsible for following this policy and its procedures.

EVALUATION

In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, the Approved Provider will:

- regularly seek feedback from parents/guardians, children, educators, management and all affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness
- monitor the implementation, compliance, complaints and incidents in relations to this policy
- keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy and best practice
- revise the policy and procedures as part of the centres policy review cycle, or as required
- notify parents/guardians at least 14 days before making any changes to this policy or its procedures (this is a requirement under Regulation 172 of the National Regulations for policies mandated by law and would be considered best practice for all policies and procedures).

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1: Sample procedure when a child is observed to be at risk of harm while being transported to or from an early childhood premises.
- Attachment 2: Benefit Risk Assessment – Regular Transportation of Children

AUTHORISATION

This policy was adopted by the Approved Provider of Goulburn Region Preschool Association Inc. on 1 October 2017.

Reviewed and Approved: September 2020

REVIEW DATE: SEPTEMBER 2023

ATTACHMENT 1:

Sample procedure when a child is observed to be at risk of harm while being transported to or from an early childhood premises.

Centre providers have a duty of care to ensure the safety of children is paramount. Centre providers must comply with their obligations under state or territory child protection laws.

When a parent/guardian or authorised nominee (refer to Definitions) is observed not using a child restraint, using the wrong child restraint, using a child restraint inappropriately or engaging in other unsafe behaviours such as parking illegally or not using a bicycle helmet, the early childhood educators should:

- talk with the parent/guardian/authorised nominee about the importance of safe transport procedures, including the correct use of child restraints and/or relevant road safety behaviours
- providing/refer the parent/guardian/authorised nominee to relevant information regarding safe transport
- inform the Nominated Supervisor or Approved Provider (where relevant)

If the parent/guardian or authorised nominee persists with unsafe road use behaviours, the early childhood educator must notify the **Nominated Supervisor or Approved Provider, who should:**

- contact the parent/guardian/authorised nominee directly and discuss the importance of child restraint use and/or safe road user behaviour, including legal requirements and implications
- provide the parent/guardian/authorised nominee with a copy of the *Road Safety and Safe Transport Policy*
- offer/provide assistance to the parent/guardian/authorised nominee with the choice/purchase/installation/fitment of the correct restraint for their child
- follow up with the parent/guardian/authorised nominee, where required to ensure that they have the most appropriate restraint for their child and that it is being used correctly.

If a parent/guardian or authorised nominee appears to be impaired or intoxicated when arriving to collect their child, the **early childhood educator should:**

- encourage the parent/guardian or authorised nominee to use an alternate form of transport or contact another authorised person to collect the child. If the parent/guardian or authorised nominee is not willing to use an alternative form of transport, the educator cannot prevent the parent/guardian or authorised nominee from taking the child.
- Notify the police and/or child protection authorities immediately if the educator is of the opinion that the child may not be safe in the care of the parent or guardian or authorised nominee **ATTACHMENT: 2.**

Regular Transporting of Children Permission Form

Safe Transport of Children:

Throughout the year parents/ guardians may take up the opportunity to have their child transported to and from an early childhood centre.

The adult staff/child ration will be set as per Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 at time of each outing.

Child's name:			
Parent/Guardian Name:		Contact number:	
Alternative contact person:		Contact number:	
Child medical information:	Allergy: Medical condition:		
Doctor:		Contact number:	

The children will be collected from their home or collection point authorised by the parents/guardians and transported to _____ - to attend kindergarten and / or occasional care, and returned to their home or pre - authorised drop off point. My child will be collected regularly on a _____, during 2020, between ___ am – ___ am, and returned to my home between ___ pm – ___ pm.

The educators will use a _____, and will use _____ car seats, that meet regulation. At no time will the number of children exceed the number of car seats. At all times 2 educators will accompany the children, 1 will drive and the other supervise. A risk assessment has been prepared and attached to this permission form. Policies and procedures that relate to the transportation of children are available at the centre.

Parent/guardians signature: _____ Date: _____

Date this plan completed/reviewed:		Completed by:	
Plan communicated to:			
Activity			
Start Date:		End Date:	
Departure and arrival times:			
Pick up location and destinations:	Pick up locations: Destination:		
Means of transport:			
Requirements for seatbelts or safety restraints in your state or territory have been met			
Number and full names of each adult involved in the transportation of children:			
The number of children being transported			
Any water hazards on proposed route travelled and at each stop?			
Describe the process for entering and exiting the centre premises, embarking and disembarking the vehicle.			
Proposed route			
Transport checklist – the following items to be readily available when transporting children			
<input type="checkbox"/> First aid kit / emergency backpack	<input type="checkbox"/> Medical information for each child		
<input type="checkbox"/> Contact information for each child and each adult participating	<input type="checkbox"/> Mobile phones / other means of communicating with the centre & emergency services		
<input type="checkbox"/> Sign in book, recording who has			

Risk assessment

Activity	Hazard identified	Risk assessment (use matrix)	Elimination/control measures	Who	When

Reminder: Monitor the effectiveness of controls and change if necessary. Review the risk assessment if an incident or significant change occurs.

Risk Matrix						
Consequence						
	Insignificant	Minor	Moderate	Major	Catastrophic	
Likelihood	Almost certain	Moderate	High	High	Extreme	Extreme
	Likely	Moderate	Moderate	High	Extreme	Extreme
	Possible	Low	Moderate	High	High	Extreme
	Unlikely	Low	Low	Moderate	High	High
	Rare	Low	Low	Low	Moderate	High