

EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES

ROAD SAFETY EDUCATION AND SAFE TRANSPORT POLICY

Best Practice – Quality Area 2 (and 6)

Children are important road users. As passengers in vehicles, pedestrians, cyclists, and users of small-wheeled toys like scooters and skateboards, they use roads and footpaths to move around the community as much as adults. Children benefit from adult support, guidance, and assistance to learn about being safe on our roads.

Their size, combined with the fact that their cognitive and perceptual skills, which are essential for safe road behaviour, are still developing, making them particularly vulnerable.

This policy also aligns with the Education Council who has agreed to new requirements under the Education and Care Services National Regulations (National Regulations) for providers of education and care services that offer, or arrange, transportation of children as part of the education and care service.

These new requirements for safe transportation of children include policy and procedures, risk assessments and written authorisations.

Why is road safety education important?

Road safety education can help to reduce the risk of serious injury and death among young children by assisting them to develop skills, knowledge, and behaviour about the safe use of roads.

Working collaboratively with families to help children become safe and responsible road users aligns with the learning outcomes of the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF).

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

How does road trauma affect young children?

Road trauma is one of the leading causes of death among young Australians¹. Young children are at risk as passengers in motor vehicles, as pedestrians and as cyclists. They are particularly vulnerable due to:

- their small size and changing needs as they grow
- their still-developing cognitive and perceptual skills.

What is the early childhood service duty of care obligation?

Under duty of care obligations, services must develop appropriate procedures to guide staff to address situations where a child is observed to be at risk while being transported to or from the early childhood service.

This may include instances where a child is observed to be:

- travelling unrestrained
- travelling with an inappropriate restraint
- riding a bicycle or wheeled toy without a helmet
- instances where a parent/guardian is in an unfit state to drive due to intoxication or impairment

PURPOSE OF POLICY

To define the responsibilities of Elsa MacLeod Kindergarten to ensure that all children are:

- Kept safe while travelling as pedestrians, cyclists, or passengers in a vehicle to and from the kindergarten.

¹ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) (2012) *A picture of Australia's children 2012* (Cat. No PHE167). Canberra, Australia: AIHW.

- Able to participate in road safety education to assist them in being and becoming safe and responsible road users.

INTRODUCTION

1. VALUES

Elsa MacLeod Kindergarten is committed to:

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

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Person with Management or Control, Nominated Supervisor, Person in day-to-day charge, educators, staff, students on placement, volunteers, parents/guardians, children and others attending Elsa MacLeod Kindergarten , including during excursions and regular outings.

This policy **must** be read in conjunction with the:

- Excursions and Service Events Policy
- Supervision of Children Policy
- Incident, Injury, Trauma, and Illness Policy

The relevant legislation, source documents and useful resources can be found in Attachment 1.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Each person has a specific set of responsibilities depending on their role. The following tables outline the responsibilities of the:

- Approved Provider, Person with Management or Control
- Nominated Supervisor, Person in day-to-day charge and
- Early childhood teachers and educators

| Responsibilities of the Approved Provider with Management or Control | |
|---|--|
| Area of responsibility | Role specific responsibility |
| Written Authorisation | Information that must be included in an authorisation https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-08/Infosheet-SafeTransportationOfChildren.pdf |
| Risk Assessments | Matters that must be considered in a risk assessment https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-08/Infosheet-SafeTransportationOfChildren.pdf |
| Road Safety Education | Ensuring the provision of road safety education, based on the <i>National Practices for Early Childhood Road Safety Education</i> (Attachment 2). |
| Inclusion of all children in road safety education (refer to <i>Inclusion and Equity Policy</i>) | Ensuring that all children attending the service are included in road safety education. |
| Professional development/training in road safety | Ensuring access of educators and staff to regular professional development/training in road safety and ensuring they are kept up to date with current legislation, |
| Bicycle helmets | Ensuring the availability (in good condition) and use of bicycle helmets which meet Australian/New Zealand Standard 2063 for bicycles and wheeled toys (refer to Attachment 1, <i>Definitions</i>). |
| Location-specific road safety information | Ensuring the provision of location-specific road safety information (e.g., details about where to park safely when delivering and collecting children and local area speed limits etc.) to parents/guardians and visitors. |
| General road safety information | Ensuring the provision of general road safety information about transporting children to and from the service (which might include using the 'safety door' or the rear kerbside door, driveway safety, child restraint information and role modelling safe road use) to parents/guardians. |
| Access to policy by parents/guardians and its attachments | Ensuring that parents/guardians have access to this policy and its attachments. |
| Transport using buses | Ensuring that buses hired for use on excursions have fitted seatbelts that are correctly used by all children, staff, and volunteers for the entire trip. |

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| Vehicle crash or transport-related injury | 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 service (refer to <i>Incident, Injury, Trauma, and Illness Policy</i>). |
| Unsafe transport of a child | Establishing agreed procedures for staff to follow where a child is observed being transported to or from the premises in an unsafe manner (refer to Attachment 3 for a sample procedure). |

| Responsibilities of the Nominated Supervisor and Person in day-to-day charge | |
|---|--|
| Area of responsibility | Role Specific Responsibility |
| Written Authorisation | Information that must be included in an authorisation https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-08/Infosheet-SafeTransportationOfChildren.pdf |
| Risk Assessments | Matters that must be considered in a risk assessment https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-08/Infosheet-SafeTransportationOfChildren.pdf |
| Road Safety Education | Ensuring the embedding in the curriculum of Road Safety education, based on the <i>National Practices for Early Childhood Road Safety Education</i> (Attachment 2). |
| Inclusion of all children in road safety education (refer to <i>Inclusion and Equity Policy</i>) | Working with teachers and educators to develop appropriate strategies to ensure all children attending the service are included in road safety education |
| Professional development/training in road safety | Organising access of teachers, educators, and staff to regular professional development/training in road safety and are kept up to date with current legislation, regulations, rules, standards, and best practice information. Providing teachers and educators with access to a broad range of road safety education resources. |
| Bicycle helmets | Provision (in good condition) and use of bicycle helmets which meet Australian/New Zealand Standard 2063 for bicycles and wheeled toys (refer to Attachment 1, <i>Definitions</i>). Monitoring the correct use of bicycle helmets whenever bicycles or wheeled toys are used. |
| Location-specific road safety information | Ensuring that teachers and educators provide parents/guardians and visitors with location-specific road safety information. Ensuring that location specific road safety information is displayed at the service where relevant. |

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| General road safety information | Ensuring that teachers and educators provide parents/guardians with information about road safety. Ensuring that general road safety information is displayed at the service where relevant. |
| Access to policy by parents/guardians and its attachments | Ensuring that parents/guardians have access to this policy and its attachments. |
| Transport using buses | Ensuring that buses hired for use on excursions have fitted seatbelts for use by all children, staff, and volunteers. |
| Vehicle crash or transport-related injury | Ensuring that teachers and educators understand and follow appropriate procedures in the event of a vehicle crash or transport-related injury involving any children, staff, or volunteers from the service (refer to <i>Incident, Injury, Trauma, and Illness Policy</i>). |
| Unsafe transport of a child | Ensuring that teachers and educators understand and follow the service's procedures where a child is observed being transported to or from the premises in an unsafe manner. Implementing the service's agreed procedures when notified by a teacher or educator regarding their observation of children being transported in an unsafe manner. |

Responsibilities of teachers and educators

| Area of responsibility | Role Specific Responsibility |
|---|--|
| Written Authorisation | Information that must be included in an authorisation https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-08/Infosheet-SafeTransportationOfChildren.pdf |
| Risk Assessments | Matters that must be considered in a risk assessment https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-08/Infosheet-SafeTransportationOfChildren.pdf |
| Road safety education | Providing Road Safety education, based on the <i>National Practices for Early Childhood Road Safety Education</i> (Attachment 2). |
| Inclusion of all children in road safety education (refer to <i>Inclusion and Equity Policy</i>) | Including all children attending the service in road safety education. |
| Professional development/training in road safety | Participating in regular professional development/training in road safety to keep up to date with current legislation, regulations, rules, standards, and best practice information. Using a broad range of resources to support the delivery of road safety education. |

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| Bicycle helmets | Providing bicycle helmets which meet Australian/New Zealand Standard 2063 and ensuring that that they are correctly fitted when bicycles or wheeled toys (refer to Attachment 1, <i>Definitions</i>) are used. |
| Location-specific road safety information | Providing parents/guardians and visitors with location-specific road safety information. |
| General road safety information | Providing parents/guardians with information about road safety and actively communicating this information to families. |
| Access to policy by parents/guardians and its attachments | Providing parents/ guardians with access to this policy and its attachments and actively communicating this information to families. |
| Transport using buses | Ensuring the correct use of seatbelts in buses hired for excursions by all children, staff, and volunteers for the entire trip. |
| Vehicle crash or transport-related injury | Following appropriate procedures in the event of a vehicle crash or transport-related injury involving any children, staff, or volunteers from the service (refer to <i>Incident, Injury, Trauma, and Illness Policy</i>), including notifying the Nominated Supervisor and Approved Provider as soon as possible after the event. |
| Unsafe transport of a child | Implementing the service's agreed procedures where a child is observed being transported to or from the premises in an unsafe manner. |

EVALUATION

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

- Regularly seek feedback from staff, parents/guardians, and children regarding its effectiveness
- Monitor the implementation, compliance, complaints, and incidents in relation 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 service's 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 Regulation for policies mandated by law and would be considered best practice for all policies and procedures.)

AUTHORISATION

This policy was adopted by the Approved Provider of Elsa MacLeod Kindergarten in November 2021

POLICY REVIEW DATE: NOVEMBER 2023

Annual or more frequently in response to legislative and/or other changes.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This policy was developed by Early Learning Association Australia in consultation with the Department of Transport and the early childhood sector as part of the Department of Transport Starting Out Safely program.

ATTACHMENT 1

Definitions and Source documents

1. Definitions

The term defined below relates specifically to this policy:

Wheeled toy: A child's pedal car, skateboard, scooter (other than a motorised scooter) or tricycle or a similar toy, but only when it is being used by a child who is under 12 years old.

The definitions of other terms used can be found in related policies as described in the table below:

| Term | Source(s) of definition |
|----------------------|---|
| Adequate supervision | <i>Supervision of Children Policy, Excursions and Service Events Policy</i> |
| Approved Provider | <i>Supervision of Children Policy</i> |
| Attendance record | <i>Supervision of Children Policy, Excursions and Service Events Policy</i> |
| Authorised nominee | <i>Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations Policy</i> |
| Duty of care | <i>Supervision of Children Policy</i> |
| Nominated supervisor | <i>Supervision of Children Policy</i> |
| Risk assessment | <i>Excursions and Service Events Policy</i> |

2. Legislation and standards

The *Road Safety and Safe Transport Policy Early Childhood Policy* is informed by legislation, acts, regulations, Road Safety Rules, and relevant Australian/New Zealand Standards including but not limited to:

Acts

- Road Safety Act 1986

Regulations

- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: Regulations 99, 100, 101, 102, 159, 160, 161

Rules

- Road Safety Road Rules 2009 (Vic)

Standards

National Quality Standard

- Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety
- Quality Area 6: Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities

3. Sources

- Early Learning Association Australia: www.elaa.org.au
- Road Safety Education Victoria: www.roadsafetyeducation.vic.gov.au

- Department of Transport (VicRoads): www.vicroads.vic.gov.au
- National Practices for Early Childhood Road Safety Education

4. Related policies

- *Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations Policy*
- *Child Safe Environment Policy*
- *Curriculum Development Policy*
- *Delivery and Collection of Children Policy*
- *Excursions and Service Events Policy*
- *Inclusion and Equity Policy*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Policy*
- *Supervision of Children Policy*

5. Useful resources

- *Child Road Safety* <http://childroadsafety.org.au>
- **Best practice guidelines for the safe restraint of children travelling in motor vehicles.**
www.neura.edu.au/crs-guidelines/

ATTACHMENT 2

National Practices for Early Childhood Road Safety Education

The *National Practices for Early Childhood Road Safety Education* have been developed by early childhood education and road safety experts across Australia and New Zealand. The eight national practices are based on research and are aligned with the Early Years Learning Framework.

The national practices guide early childhood educators and policy makers to develop, implement and evaluate evidence-based road safety programs that support children's and families learning about road safety. Refer to: <http://roadsafetymeducation.vic.gov.au/resources/early-childhood.html>

The eight national practices are as follows:

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|----|---|---|
| 1. | Holistic approaches | Recognise that children's learning is integrated and interconnected when making curriculum decisions about road safety education. |
| 2. | Responsiveness to children | Deliver road safety education which is responsive to individual children and extends children's strengths, knowledge, and interests. |
| 3. | Learning through play | Through play-based learning seek opportunities to address road safety in a way that expands children's thinking and encourages problem solving. |
| 4. | Intentional teaching | Engage in intentional teaching which extends and expands children's learning about road safety. |
| 5. | Learning environments | Provide opportunities in the learning environment, including the local community, for safe and meaningful interaction with children, parents, and carers about road safety. |
| 6. | Cultural competence | Implement road safety education that is culturally relevant for the diversity of children, their families, and the community. |
| 7. | Continuity of learning and transitions | Use the opportunity of transitions, in active partnership with children, families and the local community, for road safety education. |
| 8. | Assessment for learning | Together with children and families, reflect on each child's learning and application of road safety to plan for future learning. |

ATTACHMENT 3

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

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

Where 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 **educator 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
- provide/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 or bicycle helmet 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 alternative 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/guardian or authorised nominee.



Australian Children's
Education & Care
Quality Authority

The Education Council has agreed to new requirements under the Education and Care Services National Regulations (National Regulations) for providers of education and care services that offer, or arrange, transportation of children as part of the education and care service.

These new requirements for safe transportation of children relate to:

- policy and procedures;
- risk assessments; and
- written authorisations.

This information sheet explains the new requirements for providers and their services.

WHEN DO THE NEW REQUIREMENTS START?

The new requirements will commence on 1 October 2020 in all states and territories.

October 2020

Safe transportation of children | Information sheet

SAFE TRANSPORTATION OF CHILDREN

New requirements for policies and procedures, risk assessment, and written authorisation

From 1 October 2020

Children are sometimes transported by, or on transport arranged by, children's education and care services. Service providers, nominated supervisors and educators need to take specific steps to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of children.

Transportation may present additional risks to children depending on how it occurs and how transition between a vehicle and an education and care service premises or other location is managed. These risks apply equally to single trips or during periods of regular transportation.

To manage these risks, all governments have decided to introduce new requirements to strengthen oversight arrangements of transport that occurs when children are under the care of an education and care service.

The new requirements are mainly about transport of children *other than as part of an excursion*, however, some minor amendments have also been made to transport-related requirements for excursion risk assessments and written authorisations.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES RELATING TO TRANSPORTATION OF CHILDREN

For services that provide or arrange transportation of children, other than as part of an excursion, the approved provider must ensure

the service has policies and procedures for transportation. This includes procedures that address all of the same requirements that must be addressed for written authorisations and risk assessments for transporting children (see below).

WHAT IF A SERVICE ALREADY HAS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES IN PLACE?

Approved providers and their services already have in place policies and procedures to meet a range of requirements under the National Quality Framework. In particular, one or more of these may address the delivery of children from, education and care service premises and other destinations, as well as excursions.

While it may be possible to adapt existing policies and procedures in some form, the new requirements do differ from existing provisions. The service should carefully examine the information below to ensure all requirements are clearly addressed.

RISK ASSESSMENTS FOR TRANSPORTATION

Risk assessments must identify and assess risks that the transportation of a child may pose to the safety, health or wellbeing of the child, and specify how the identified risks will be managed and minimised.

<https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-08/Infosheet-SafeTransportationOfChildren.pdf>