

## POLICY & PROCEDURAL STATEMENTS

**Topic:**            **Early Learning – Transporting Children**

**Policy:**            The safety and wellbeing of each child is the highest priority in the Early Learning Centre. Avenue Neighbourhood House @ Eley (ANH@E) Early Learning Centre is a centre-based service and will manage the safe, **regular transport** of children. Transporting children in the context of this policy is part of the education and care service provided at ANH@E and does not include transport provided for excursions. Excursions and outings are not part of the Early Learning Centre activities with a focus given to educational activities by external providers.

ANH@E will ensure:

- Every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and from any hazard likely to cause injury (section 167).
- All children are adequately supervised at all times that they are in the care of the service (section 165).
- The relevant number of educators is not less than the number prescribed for this purpose (section 169).

**Background:** The National Quality Framework (NQF) sets out the requirements for children's education and care services. From 1 October 2020, services that provide transport, or arrange for the transportation of children, as part of the education and care service, other than as part of an excursion, must:

- Have in place a specific transportation policy and procedure.
- Conduct a risk assessment every time a child is to be transported unless the transportation is **regular transportation**.
- Obtain written authorisation for transportation from parents or guardians.

The requirements for this policy do not apply if transport is not provided as part of the service (e.g., private transport, transport arranged by a third party such as a school bus or commercial bus.)

**Definitions:**

**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 substantially the same for each occasion on which the child is transported. An example of a change in circumstances that are substantially different might be when the means of transport or the transportation route or destination(s) have altered, or the provider of the transportation service has changed.

**Transportation forms part of an education and care service** if the service remains responsible for children during that period of transportation. The responsibility for, and duty of care owed to, children apply in scenarios where education and care services are transporting children, or have arranged for the transportation of children,

between an education and care service premises and another location (e.g., their home, pre-school.)

### **Relevant Legislation and Standards:**

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2011* (Vic)
- *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*

### **Code of Practice:**

- The relevant educator to child ratios and qualification requirements when providing transport as part of the education and care service will be met by ANH@E.
- The required number of educators must remain in attendance at the Centre where children are being educated and cared for by the service. One educator travels on the bus that is being provided to transport children. All educators must be immediately available in an emergency and hold the following qualifications:
  - Current and approved first aid qualification,
  - Current and approved anaphylaxis management training.
  - Current and approved emergency asthma management training (Regulation 136 (1)).
- The number of children that can be safely transported by the vehicle will not be exceeded.
- The person responsible for driving the bus will hold a current Australian driver's licence and current Working With Children Clearance (WWCC).

### **Procedures:**

ANH@E will:

- Obtain written authorisation for the regular transportation of each child from parents or guardians once in a 12-month period. Written authorisation for each child requiring regular transportation will be kept on the child's enrolment record.
- Keep details of any person authorised to give permission for the child to be taken outside the premises on transport arranged by ANH@E.
- Conduct a risk assessment once in a twelve (12) month period as the circumstances relevant to the risk assessment are substantially the same on each occasion (i.e. the same bus route.) The risk assessment will identify how the risks identified will be managed and minimised. The risk assessment will include:
  - The proposed route.
  - State requirements for seatbelts and safety restraints.
  - Processes for entering and exiting the service premises.
  - Pick up location(s) or destination(s).
  - How each child is to be accounted for when embarking and disembarking the bus.
- The children's presence on the bus will be checked against an accurate attendance record when embarking and prior to the bus leaving ANH@E.
- All children will be escorted off the bus when they arrive at their destination and placed into the care of a designated person at their destination.
- Following disembarkation of all children, the bus will be checked to ensure that no child being transported is left on the bus. Both the bus driver and the childcare worker must sign the attendance record at the conclusion of the trip to indicate all children accounted for.

**Related ANH@E policies and codes**

Working With Children Clearance  
 Volunteers  
 Volunteer and Support Worker Code of Conduct  
 Bus Use  
 Bus Incident and Reporting  
 Early Learning Determining the Responsible Person Present  
 Early Learning Duty of Care  
 Child Protection Policy  
 Child Safety Code of Conduct

**Related Documents**

Risk Assessment for Transportation of Children  
 Written authorisation form for the transportation of children

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