

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 provides an ANH@E registered bus to transport children to or from their kindergarten/s from ANH@E Early Learning Centre if families have requested this service.

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 always supervised when 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).
- Children who travel in the ANH@E registered bus will have permission completed by their parents/guardians.
- A risk assessment will be conducted prior to the transportation of children.
- A disembarking bus record will be completed by early learning educators and the bus driver to ensure no child is left unattended on the bus.
- A seat belt record check will be completed by early learning educators and the bus driver to ensure the safe transportation of children each time.

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 required for the safe arrival of children travelling between services every time a child is to be transported.
- 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.)

Relevant Legislation and Standards:

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- *Education and Care Services National Regulations*
- *Bus Safety Act 2009*
- *Transport Act 1983*

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 will travel 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 Early Learning educators will follow the following procedures to ensure safe transportation of children and all children are accounted for:

- On enrolment or when the parents/guardians requires the transport service, the parents/guardians must complete and sign a transportation permission to allow their child to be transported to and/or from Kindergarten by ANH@E.
- The written transportation permission for each child requiring the transportation service 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.
- Each day prior to the Kindergarten transportation, the Early Learning Educator will collect the folder containing the bus roster which details the children to be dropped off or picked up from the Kindergarten. This folder will also contain the risk assessment which includes the daily transport checklists.

Leaving ANH@E Early Learning Centre for transport to kindergarten

- On exiting the ANH@E Early Learning Centre, the qualified educator will walk with the children to the ANH@E bus. The ANH@E bus is parked outside the building in the bus car parking spot.
- Once all the children are on board the bus, the qualified educator will sight each child, sign them in on the bus roster, complete a head count and check all seatbelts are on correctly. The qualified educator will tick and sign the daily transport checklist to indicate the head count and seat belt check has been completed.
- The qualified educator will sit where they believe is the most suitable position in the bus to ensure active supervision based on the number of children on board.
- Upon arrival at the kindergarten, the qualified educator must witness each child disembark the bus and enter the grounds of the Kindergarten. The qualified educator must then record on the daily transport checklist the time each child has been dropped at the Kindergarten and then record their initials next to each time.
- Upon arrival back at ANH@E, the qualified educator, will check each seat area and under each seat to ensure no child has been left in the bus unattended. The qualified educator will sign the disembarking record on the daily transport checklist to confirm no child is on the bus.

- When the bus is parked back at ANH@E on the completion of their rostered drive, the driver will also check each seat area and under the seats to ensure no child has been left in the vehicle unattended. The bus driver will sign the disembarking record on the daily transport checklist to confirm no child is left on the bus.
- **Leaving kindergarten for transport to ANH@E Early Learning Centre**
- The qualified educator will meet the children at the kindergartens designated pick-up spot.
- As the children meet the qualified educator at the designated kindergarten pick-up spot, their name is marked off the daily transport checklist with a tick and they all walk to the parked bus together.
- Once all the children are seated in the vehicle, a head count and seat belt check is completed. The qualified educator initials and documents the time of pick-up on the daily transport checklist.
- The qualified educator will sit where they believe is the most suitable position in the bus to ensure active supervision based on the number of children on board.
- Upon arrival back at ANH@E, the qualified educator will assist the children disembark from the bus. The qualified educator will check each seat area and under each seat to ensure no child has been left in the bus unattended. The qualified educator will sign the disembarking record on the daily transport checklist to confirm no child is on the bus.
- Before the children and the qualified educator move into the ANH@E building, the qualified educator will complete a head count and match to the daily transport checklist. The qualified educator will walk along the path with the children, into the building and then into the Early Learning Centre, signing all children into the service.
- When the bus is parked back at ANH@E on the completion of their rostered drive, the driver will also check each seat area and under the seats to ensure no child has been left in the vehicle unattended. The bus driver will sign the disembarking record on the daily transport checklist to confirm no child is left on the bus.
- 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.

Roles and Responsibilities:

Approved Provider:

The Approved Provider is responsible for:

- Assume responsibility under National Law for the safety, health and wellbeing of all children at all times that children are in the care of the service.
- Ensure that any child being educated and cared for is not transported or in transportation arranged by the service unless written authorisation has been given.

Nominated Supervisor/Responsible Person

The Nominated Supervisor/Responsible Person is responsible for:

- Ensuring that any child being educated and cared for is not transported or in transportation arranged by the service unless written authorisation has been given.
- Ensure that records are kept for regular transportation.
- Ensure that the regulatory authority is notified that service offers, provides arranges or ceases regular transportation.
- Ensure there are policies and procedures for transportation including:
 - procedures that address requirements for risk assessments and
 - written authorisations
 - record keeping requirements
- Ensure that the number of educators or other responsible adults involved in the transportation of children, including when children are embarking or disembarking the vehicle, is adequate, effective and ensures active supervision.
- A nominated supervisor or a staff member (other than the driver) must be present when children embark and disembark a vehicle at the service premises
- Only allocating educators to attend transportation of children who understand and are confident with, the transport risk assessment and any associated policies and procedures.
- A staff member or nominated supervisor (other than the driver) being present at the service to account for all children as they embark and disembark at the service premises and keep a record of how each child was accounted for.
- A check of the interior of the vehicle to ensure there are no children left behind.
- Ensuring items to be taken on transportation are well stocked and easily accessible.
- Ensuring first aid items taken on transportation are fully stocked and in date, including emergency medication.
- Only using/ fitting child restraints in accordance with the National Child Restraint Laws and the mandatory standard AS/NZS 1754 Child restraint systems for use in motor vehicles
- Ensuring that the transportation means meets all safety requirements for the transport of children, insurances, including approved child restraints, fire extinguishers and emergency exits.
- Ensuring that sufficient educators are in attendance on the transportation to meet the Education and Care Services National Laws, Regulations and supervision requirements across the service. The transport operator/driver will not be included in this ratio.
- Ensuring that any chartered transport companies provide evidence of the operators WWCC and that this is verified before the use of the transportation.
- Ensuring that any chartered transport companies provide evidence of the operator's working with children check (or equivalent), and that this is verified before the use of the transportation.
- Ensure that records are kept for regular transportation.
- Lead regular discussions to reflect on the risk assessments associated with transport to address and refine any management and control measures.

Early Childhood Educators

The Early Childhood Educators are responsible for:

- Following all service policies, procedures and risks assessments in relation to transportation and child protection.
- Conduct and document regular head counts as detailed in the transport risk assessment.
- Remaining responsible for all children being transported

- Complete records accounting for the children embarking and disembarking the vehicle at the services premises.
- Conduct the vehicle check after children have disembarked.
- Maintaining items that are taken on transportation in a neat and organised fashion. Notify the responsible person of any items that need replacing and ensure the items are returned to their designated space at the conclusion of transportation, ready for their next use.
- Communicating with other staff before and during the transportation to keep children safe and implement any risk minimisation strategies.
- Ensuring relevant medical plans, risk assessments, medication and contact details for each child attending the transportation are readily available.
- Ensuring that no child is ever left unsupervised on any transportation.
- Ensuring that all safety restraints are used correctly before and during transportation.
- Having their current driver's license with them at all times, if driving.
- Not using their mobile phones while directly responsible for children, other than for the purposes of the transportation or in an emergency.
- Role modelling road safety practices at all times.

Parents\Guardians

The Parents\Guardians are responsible for:

- Nominating on their child's enrolment record, any persons having authority to authorise transportation of their child.
- Notifying the service of their child's absence, or any changes to authorisation for transportation.

Related ANH@E policies and documents

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

Risk Assessment for Transportation of Children

Written authorisation form for the transportation of children

Daily Kindergarten Transport Checklist

Bus Roster

Status	Current
Effective Date	05 June 2024
Review Date	By June 2026
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Enquiries	9808 2000