

POLICY NO 41: ROAD SAFETY & TRANSPORT

Key Policy Contact Person: Manager, Our Village Family Childcare

POLICY STATEMENT:

Our Village Family childcare is committed to helping children and young people be a part of and connect with their local community. Family Day Care is uniquely placed enabling educators to help connect children with and be a part of the community where they live. Educators are encouraged to venture outside of their usual care environment to participate in meaningful and genuine experiences, supporting a sense of belonging. All excursions and outings that take place are purposeful for the children in care and ensure a focus on the strengths, needs and interests within the program being developed.

All children attending Our Village Family Childcare Service are:

- Always supervised, including 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.
- Transported in a vehicle that has been nominated on Our Village Family Childcare Service Home and Vehicle Safety Check for this purpose.
- Restrained in accordance with State Legislation, **The Road Safety (Driver) Regulations 2019**

CRITICAL INFORMATION:

Educators will:

- Comply with the National Road Safety Standards which came into effect from 9 November 2009 under which all children under seven years of age must wear a child restraint or booster seat when travelling in a car. The type of restraint will depend on the child’s size:
 - Under the age of six months: to be restrained in properly fastened and adjusted approved rearward facing child restraint (e.g., infant capsule)
 - From six months to less than the age of four: to be restrained in either a properly fastened and adjusted approved rearward or properly fastened and adjusted approved forward facing child restraint with inbuilt harness (e.g., child safety seat)
 - From four years to less than the age of seven: to be restrained in either a forward-facing child restraint with an inbuilt harness or booster seat restrained by a correctly adjusted and fastened seatbelt or child safety harness

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PURPOSE:

To ensure the rights of children who attend Our Village Family Childcare Service to travel safely as passengers, pedestrians, and cyclists.

SCOPE/RESPONSIBILITIES:

This document applies to all the Educators, Families, Coordination Unit Staff, volunteers, and students of Our Village Family Childcare Service.

STATEMENT OF DIVERSITY

Sunbury and Cobaw Community Health is committed to improving the health of our community and being accessible to all, including people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities, those from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background, people with a disability, Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Intersex and Queer (LGBTIQA+) people and other socially vulnerable groups and supporting their communities across the lifespan from birth to older age.

DEFINITIONS:

<p>Adequate Supervision</p>	<p>entails all children (individuals and groups) in all areas of the service, being in sight and/or hearing of an Educator at all times including during toileting, sleep, rest, and transition routines. Services are required to comply with the legislative requirements for Educator-to-child ratios at all times. Supervision contributes to protecting children from hazards that may emerge in play, including hazards created by the equipment used.</p>
<p>Registered Driver</p>	<p>An Educator registered with the service in an assistant Educator capacity or another fully licensed adult member of the Educator’s family who has been approved by the manager to <u>only</u> transport children with permission from each child’s parents and accompanied by the Educator for full supervision.</p>
<p>Authorised Nominee</p>	<p>is kept by the service to record details of each child attending the service including name, date and time of arrival and departure, signature or person delivering and collecting the child or of the Nominated Supervisor or Educator (Regulation 158 (1)).</p>

Nominated Supervisor	is kept by the service to record details of each child attending the service including name, date and time of arrival and departure, signature or person delivering and collecting the child or of the Nominated Supervisor or Educator (Regulation 158 (1)).
Risk Assessment	must be carried out in accordance with Regulation 101. Details of the safest route for travel, type of vehicle and required restraints are to be included in the assessment along with the identification of any hazards that may be present and how the Educator/staff will minimize/remove the hazard/s. <i>Our Village Family Childcare Service has a specific Excursion Permission Form and Risk Assessment Form which is to be used for all excursions – See Appendices.</i>
Duty of Care	is a common law concept that refers to the responsibilities of organizations to provide people with an adequate level of protection against hard and all reasonably foreseeable risk of injury.
Wheeled Toy	is a child’s pedal car, skateboard, scooter (other than a motorised scooter) or a tricycle or a similar toy, but only when it is being used by a child who is under 12 years old.

PROCEDURES:

When going a specific or routine outings/excursions children within Our Village may be transported in a variety of different ways E.G Bus, train, or educator’s vehicle. All specific and routine outings/excursions are conducted in accordance with the Education and Care Service national Regulations (current version July 1, 2023), when the children are being transported, the educator must seek permission from the parent/guardian before the specific or routine outing/excursion occurs.

All transport permission is as stated within the Our Village Family Childcare Routine/Specific Outing Authority (Part A) including Authorisation form and the Our Village Family Childcare Routine/Specific Outing Risk Management Plan (Part B) will include:

Our Village Family Childcare Routine/Specific Outing Authority (Part A) Including Authorisation Form:

- Description of proposed pick up location and destination.
- Requirements for seatbelts or safety restraints in your state or territory have been met.
- Frequency
- Times& duration of each routine outing
- Purpose/Reason for Proposed Activities
- Number of Children
- Additional adults/staff who will accompany and supervise during transportation.
- Mode of transport i.e.: walking, car, or public transport
- A Risk Assessment has been prepared and is available.
- Witten policies and procedures for transporting children are available at the service.
- Child’s Name, Age, Parent/Guardian Name, Parent Guardian Signature, Date
- FDC Educator Name, Signature and Date.

Our Village Family Childcare Routine/Specific Outing Risk Management Plan (Part B):

- Date(s)/ duration of this risk management plan
- Stated – Routine or Specific Outing/Excursion (including dates)
- Outing location and destination
- Departure and arrival times
- Proposed route of travel (Including Map)
- Estimated time of travel the outing including times between the different locations.
- Requirements for seatbelts or safety restraints in your state or territory have been met.
- Method of transport
- Water hazards identified and associated risks details in risk assessment.
- The number of educators/responsible adults, appropriate to provide supervision and whether any adults with specialised skills are required.
E.g., for children’s individual needs
- Describe the process for entering and exiting the service premises and the pick-up location or destination (as required);
(include how each child is accounted for)
- Number of children attending excursion
- Educator to child ratio, including whether this excursion warrants a higher ratio? Please provide details.
- Outing Checklist – identifying all items and information that need to be taken.
- Detailed Risk Assessment identifying and assessing the risks that the outing/excursion may pose.

A safety routine is to be established and used for when children get out of vehicles so they don’t wander away: babies come out first, older children should get out next because they can be instructed where to wait; toddlers, the most unpredictable of the age groups should wait until last, until the Educator is ready to take them by the hand. This routine should be reversed when getting into the vehicle.

There must be measures/systems/practices in place to always roll call and account for all children e.g., a roll call of all children who have been signed in for the day, specifically calling out each child’s name as well as visually looking at each child’s face as they respond:

- before departing.
- during travel
- arriving at destination
- leaving destination and
- arriving back at the FDC residence

A physical inspection of the vehicle must be conducted to ensure all children have exited the vehicle, including a check under the seats, in the luggage and in any storage areas. This check is to be conducted each time the vehicle is exited:

- Upon arrival to destination outside the FDC residence
- Upon arrival to FDC residence following excursion
- At any other time, the FDC Educator and children exit the vehicle.

All the above measures/systems/practices must relate to measures outlined in the Risk Assessment.

Our Village Family Childcare Service will:

- Ensure that Educators and Coordination Unit Staff have induction and are trained regularly in **this** policy.
- Ensure that the service policies and procedure support accurate and up to date record keeping, including the times when children are being dropped off and collected from the service and during excursions.
- Ensure that buses hired for use on excursions have seatbelts fitted, and that these are correctly used by all children, Educators, families, students, and volunteers for the entire trip.
- Ensure that Educators gain authorisation from the parent/guardian and undertake a written risk assessment prior to conducting excursions, including details of the safest route for travel and type of vehicle to be used etc.
- Ensure Educators always supervise children, including while on excursions and regular outings.
- Ensure that the Educational Leader embeds road safety education in the curriculum, based on the National Practices for Early Childhood Road Safety Education (see Appendices – National Practices for Early Childhood Road Safety Education)
- Organise regular professional development/training for Educators and staff on road safety topics, including vehicle and driveway safety, current legislation, regulations, rules, standards, and best practice information.
- Provide Educators with access to a broad range of resources to support road safety education.
- Children will be encouraged to use helmets when riding wheeled toys in the playground.

Educators will:

- Comply with the National Road Safety Standards which came into effect from 9 November 2009 under which all children under seven years of age must wear a child restraint or booster seat when travelling in a car. The type of restraint will depend on the child's size:
 - Under the age of six months: to be restrained in properly fastened and adjusted approved rearward facing child restraint (e.g., infant capsule)
 - From six months to less than the age of four: to be restrained in either a properly fastened and adjusted approved rearward or properly fastened and adjusted approved forward facing child restraint with inbuilt harness (e.g., child safety seat)
 - From four years to less than the age of seven: to be restrained in either a forward-facing child restraint with an inbuilt harness or booster seat restrained by a correctly adjusted and fastened seatbelt or child safety harness.
- Ensure that if a car has two or more rows of seats, then children under four years must not travel in the front seat.
- Ensure if all seats, other than the front seats, are being used by children under seven years, children aged between four to 7 years (inclusive) may travel in the front seat. In used. situation (above point) a booster seat that is manufactured without a tether strap must be used.
- Ensure if a forward-facing child restraint is used in a seating position where there is an airbag, the seat must be moved back as far as possible.
- Ensure children are not to travel in any vehicle other than that driven by a licensed Educator or driver registered with the service.
- Ensure if a fully licensed adult member of the Educator's family is to be the driver of the vehicle nominated in the annual home safety check, the following conditions apply:
 - The driver is approved by the manager of the service.
 - The driver's license details must be documented on a permission form signed by each parent of any child who is to be transported.

- The permission form must detail the reasons for the driver to be providing the transport and the times when the transport will be provided.
- The permission form is to be completed on an annual basis.
- The Educator is to be present and supervise all children whilst being transported unless exceptional circumstances prevent this occurring.
- Ensure no child is to be left alone in a care under any circumstances. It is a criminal offence under Victorian legislation to leave a child unattended in a care.
- Provide evidence of a current driver's licence and car registration on an annual basis.
- Advise the Coordination Unit immediately of any change of motor vehicle to be used to transport children registered with the service.
- When commencement with the service and annually during the Home Safety check period, have safety restraints and fittings check by an approved Vic Roads Fitting Station. The educator must retain a receipt as evidence of the vehicle check.
- On the occasion when an alternative or new motor vehicle is to be used, approval for this must include an approved restraint fitting.
- At no time will the Family Day Care Educator transport more children in the vehicle that it is registered to accommodate or transport children unrestrained.
- Educators will encourage parents to use the same routines when children are in their parent's care.
- 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 102D. 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.
- The above authority is to be obtained using the Our Village Family Childcare Routine/Specific Outing Authority (Part A)
- Ensure that a written risk assessment 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 using the Our Village Family Childcare Routine/Specific Outing Risk Management Plan (Part B)
- Ensure that all children are adequately always supervised, including while on excursions and regular outings.
- Ensure that road safety education, based on the National Practices for Early Childhood Road Safety Education (see Appendices – National Practices for Early Childhood Road Safety Education)
- Children will be encouraged to use helmets when riding wheeled toys in the playground.
- Ensure that all children in care will be transported in restraints appropriate to their weight and according to current VicRoads regulations.
- Child restraints must be fitted according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- Ensure that only one child will occupy any child safety restraint/seat belt at any one time and that children occupy a child safety restraint/seat belt according to age and development (as per manufactures instructions)
- Ensure that each child's seat belt is secure and always buckled.
- Ensure their vehicle is kept locked and inaccessible to children when not in use.
- Ensure that any goods carried in a vehicle, especially a hatch back or station wagon, are stored safely below the level of the rear seat.
- Ensure no articles are placed on the rear parcel shelf or front dashboard.
- Ensure that they hold either full or probationary drivers' licenses when transporting children.

- Learner drivers and unlicensed drivers are excluded from transporting children.
- Ensure that children are always supervised while travelling in a vehicle.
- Ensure that emergency procedures are followed in the event of a vehicle crash or transport-related injury involving any children from the service.

Families will:

- Sign and date permission forms prior to excursions and regular outings
- Ensure that their child travels in a restraint suitable for the age/size when arriving at or departing from the service.
- Be 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 service, using the “safety door” (the rear kerbside door), driveway safety and role modelling safe road use.
- Communicate any issues or concerns relating to their child’s safety or wellbeing to the early childhood service.
- Be aware of this policy and the Services procedures relating to the safe transportation of children to and from the Service.

If a child is unaccounted for:

- Our Village Family Childcare must be notified immediately if at any times a child is unaccounted for
- Penalties for failing to protect children by complying with state and federal laws are severe and the appropriate Regulatory Authority will take swift action in cases where there has been a breach.
- In addition to the legal consequences, the impact on families, the community and educators is devastating and long lasting.

APPENDICES:

- Our Village Family Childcare – Our Village Family Childcare Routine/Specific Outing Authority (Part A)
- Our Village Family Childcare Routine/Specific Outing Risk Management Plan (Part B)
- National Practices for Early Childhood Road Safety Education
- Our Village Family Childcare Service – Alternative Driver Permission Form

REFERENCES:

- [Education and Care Services National Regulations, \(current version July 1, 2023\) – Regulation 102D, 168](#)
- [VicRoads, \(January 2012\) Child restraints, booster seats and adult seatbelts: Choosing and using the safest restraint for your child.](#)
- [Road Safety Education Victoria – Starting Out Safely](#)
- [VicRoads Acts & Regulations 2019](#)
- [Care for Kids Look before you Lock Guidance for Providers Transporting Children](#)

RELATED POLICIES & PROCEDURES/ WORK INSTRUCTIONS:

- Excursions – 16

- Occupational Health and Safety - 28
- Enrolment and Orientation – 31
- Equipment and Resources – 15
- Tobacco Smoke Free Environment – 27
- Active Supervision – 52

VERSION CONTROL AND LEGISLATION:

For office use only (to be completed by the Quality, Safety & Compliance unit)			
Document Owner:	Chief Operating Officer	Version Number:	2.0
Date Approved:	3 July 2024	Review Date:	3 July 2027
Document Type:	Team	Approved By:	Chief Operating Officer
Legislation:	Education and Care Services National Regulations		