

Policy Statement

The objective of this procedure is to articulate Affinity Education Group's compliance with National Law and Regulations, including Amendment Regulations, from the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 and the Education and Care Services National Regulations WA 2012.

Affinity Education Group prioritises the safety of children and takes every reasonable precaution to protect children from harm and from any hazard likely to cause harm or injury.

At times, centres may be required to transport children in vehicles as part of an excursion, a regular outing or for regularly transportation such as for before and after school care purposes.

This policy and procedure applies to all education and care services who provide or arrange transport for children as part of the education and care provided by the service and when children travel between education services. This policy and procedure does not apply when transport is arranged by the family or other organisation such as a disability service that transports children to school.

Please note: This procedure must be read in conjunction with the 2-P6 Excursions Procedure.

Definitions

- **Transport as part of an excursion** – Transport provided by or arranged by the service for the purpose of transport to a single or one-off excursion event e.g. excursion to a museum.
- **Transport for a regular outing** – Transport provided by or arranged by the service for the purpose of a regular and repeated event where all details of the transport and event remain the same e.g. weekly visit to library.
- **Children are regularly transported** – Transport provided by or arranged by the service for the purpose of regular transport e.g. before and after school care drop off and pick up.
- **Transitions between vehicle and location** – The process of moving between service or location and vehicle and between vehicle and service or location at the commencement and end of the journey.
- **Child Check-Mate Alarm** – All AEG buses are fitted with an alarm that must be disengaged by walking to the back of the vehicle within 4 minutes of turning off the ignition. This ensures a person physically travels through the bus after children disembark.
- **Excursion Roll** – The excursion roll is the name of the attendance record of children due to be transported that is printed directly from XAP that is used to sign children on and off bus for the purpose of excursion and before and after school care.

Procedure Strategies

Compliance Team must notify ACECQA via the NQA ITS of services who provide or arrange regular transportation for children.

1.0 Transportation Risk Assessments

Different transport risk assessments must be completed and implemented for different transport occasions.

- For a one-off excursion, the risk assessment must be completed for that one event
- For a regular outing, the risk assessment must be complete once and stays current for a period of 12 months providing all details of the transport substantially remains the same
- For regular transport, the risk assessment must be complete once and stays current for a period of 12 months providing all details of the transport substantially remains the same

Details of the risk assessment must cover:

(Refer to criteria set out in Regulation 102AAC and Regulation 102C)

1. The number of children requiring transport for the journey

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2. The ages of the children requiring transport, specifically if the children are ambulant, verbal, require specific seating or have vulnerabilities (e.g. medical conditions, very young)
3. The length of the journey
4. The configuration of the vehicle – size/ capacity, licence requirements
5. The configuration of and distance of the carpark to the service
6. How many educators or responsible adults will be required to ensure active supervision will be maintained before, during and after the journey including clearly designated driver, supervisor and checker roles.
7. What happens if the usual driver is away?
8. What if the child is not at the collection point as agreed at for after school care pick up?
9. What happens if children fall asleep?
10. What happens if a child becomes unwell or is injured during the journey?
11. What steps will be taken to ensure the vehicle is adequately ventilated and maintained at safe temperatures?

There is a sample 3-F1 Risk Assessment and Management Plan – Transporting Children available to refer to, however this will need to be adapted to reflect the centre context and specific transport event.

Staff will not use their own vehicles to transport children.

1.1 Determination

Refer to 3-F1 Risk Assessment and Management Plan – Transporting Children and complete details regarding your centre context to determine safety measures and number of supervising staff. Consult with Area Manager for this determination and their recommendation and approval.

Forward all transport and excursion related risk assessments for review and consultation to the Senior Quality Advisor a minimum of two weeks prior to the planned event. Written authorisation and approval to conduct transport and/or excursion from State Manager and then General Manager will be sought after the risk assessment has been reviewed and endorsed.

Adequate supervision will be achieved by at least one supervisor being present in addition to the driver. The risk assessment must address how adequate supervision will be maintained and the number of supervising adults required.

Use the following scenarios as a guide only for this determination:

Scenario 1

Centre has a 12-seater vehicle and eight 6-10-year-old children to collect from the local school. The configuration of the bus means that children will be seated in positions out of direct line of sight of driver and 1 child has anaphylaxis. Determination: Supervisor is required with at least one Responsible Person (either driver or supervisor). A separate person acting as checker is required.

Scenario 2

Centre has a 12-seater vehicle and four 6-10-year-old children to collect from two separate schools. The driver is new to the centre and is not a Responsible Person. Determination: A Supervisor is required that is a Responsible Person. A separate person at the centre acts as a checker.

Scenario 3

Centre has a 25-seater bus and 18 children to collect from three schools. Some children typically exhibit challenging behaviours and one child has high needs and requires physical support to enter and exit the bus. Determination: Two supervisors are required with at least one Responsible Person (either driver or supervisor/s). A separate person at the centre acts as a checker.

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Exceptions may apply to dedicated OSHC services. These services may work with their Quality Advisor and State Manager to determine and document adequate supervision arrangements. The agreed arrangements, outside of this policy, will be documented on a risk assessment and management plan and communicated to all involved in the transport event.

2.0 Authorisations

A child must not be transported by the service without the prior written authorisation of the parent or person named in the child's enrolment record as having authority to authorise transportation. Written authority for regular outings or regular transportation remains valid for 12 months where the details of the transport journey remain substantially the same. If the details change, new authorisation must be provided. Authorisation must be sought each time for one-off excursions.

The information that must be included in the authorisation is as follows:

1. The child's name
2. The reason the child is being transported
3. If the authorisation is for regular transportation, a description of when the child is to be transported (also applicable to authorisation for regular outings)
4. If the authorisation is not for regular transportation, i.e. for an excursion, the date the child is to be transported
5. A description of the proposed pick up location and destination
6. The method of transport
7. The period of time during which the child is to be transported
8. The anticipated number of children likely to be transported
9. The anticipated number of staff members and any other adults who will accompany and supervise the children during the transportation
10. Any requirements for seatbelts or safety restraints under a law of each jurisdiction in which the children are being transported
11. That the risk assessment has been prepared and is available
12. That written policies and procedures for transporting children are available at the service

The written authorisation will be stored in the child's enrolment file.

3.0 Transportation procedure for centre bus usage

3.1 Before the journey

1. The Nominated Supervisor/ Responsible Person must nominate:
 - **the driver** – the person responsible for driving the vehicle, conducting the initial check for children remaining on the bus after they disembark and turning off Child Check-Mate Alarm
 - **the supervisor/s** – the person responsible for counting and supervising the children on and off and in the vehicle and signing children in and out of the centre
 - **the checker** – the person responsible for checking the vehicle at the conclusion of the journey after children have disembarked the vehicle to ensure all children are adequately supervised. The Checker locks the vehicle.

The checker must be a different person to the driver.

The Nominated Supervisor must ensure that all nominated people have completed the Bus Induction prior to acting in the role and have adequate skills and knowledge in conducting the role.

2. The driver, supervisor/s and checker must be nominated in writing (4-F1 Consent for Responsible Roles) and records of this must be available for the Regulatory Authority to inspect. Daily nominated driver, supervisor and checker is determined prior to transport event and is recorded on the 2-D12 Daily Bus Checklist. Each nominated person must be notified prior to each event.

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3. The Nominated Supervisor/ Responsible Person must print the 'bus and excursion roll' immediately prior to each excursion/ regular outing/ regular transport to ensure accurate records. Do not print the rolls for the week; print immediately prior to transporting to capture any last minute changes. No changes will be made in writing on the roll.
4. The Nominated Supervisor/ Responsible Person and Nominated Driver must ensure the vehicle has the correct type of restraints for the children being transported.
5. The Nominated Supervisor/ Responsible Person and Nominated Driver must ensure compliance of the vehicle in terms of servicing and maintenance and adequate fuel. Ensure the vehicle is refuelled without children on board.
6. The Nominated Supervisor/ Responsible Person must ensure all children being transported have been given written authorisation to be transported.
7. The driver is responsible for collecting all required resources prior to the children boarding the vehicle including, but not limited to, daily printed roll, mobile phone, emergency contacts list, stocked first aid kit, medication and action plans/ medication authorisation forms.
8. Driver to complete 2-D12 Daily Bus Checklist immediately prior to transporting children. The children will not be in the vehicle when the check is done.

3.2 Embarking the vehicle

1. (Driver) Position the vehicle as close to the collection location (e.g. gate of the service or collection point at the school) as safe to do so with the ignition off.
2. (Supervisor) Gather children who are due to travel and conduct a head count and roll call. Physically see each child during the roll call. If the children are leaving the service e.g. before school care, they will be signed out of the kiosk, ensuring the actual departure time is recorded. If entering after actual departure time, override the default time by manually entering the time the child/ren departed at the centre.
3. (Supervisor) Escort children to the vehicle and physically assist their entry into the vehicle and conduct a head count and sign the child/ren onto the vehicle 'excursion roll'.
4. (Supervisor) Secure each child into their restraint/ seat buckle. If parents secure their children, the supervisor must check again.
5. (Supervisor) The supervisor will sit at the rear of the vehicle (or at last row of seated children) to ensure maximum supervision of children where a seat is available, otherwise in the front seat.
6. (Supervisor) Immediately after all children have boarded the vehicle the checker will complete FRM 2-F70 Record of Embarking Transport.

3.3 During the journey

1. The driver must only start the ignition and commence the journey once the supervisor verbally confirms that it is safe to do so.
2. The items in 'Boarding the Vehicle' above apply for any subsequent stops and additional collections of children along the way on the journey, if any.
3. Children will not be left unsupervised or unattended in the vehicle at any time.
4. The supervisor is responsible for monitoring the children during the journey and addressing any unsafe or inappropriate behaviours. The supervisor can engage in song or discussion with children, as appropriate.

3.4 On arrival and disembarking

1. (Driver) The driver must park the vehicle in a safe location as close to the destination (e.g. gate of the service or excursion destination point) and turn the ignition off. Turn the key to 'on' within 1 to 8 seconds to activate accessory lights on the dash otherwise the Child Check-Mate Alarm will sound.
2. (Supervisor) The supervisor will remove all children from the vehicle and will conduct a head count and sign the child/ren off the vehicle, ensuring they physically see each child.
3. (Supervisor) The supervisor will escort the children into the service (or excursion destination) where another head count and roll call will be conducted. If the destination is the centre (e.g. for after school care) the supervisor will sign the child/ren into the

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kiosk ensuring the actual arrival time is recorded. If entering after actual arrival time, override the default time by manually entering the time the child/ren arrived at the centre.

4. (Supervisor) The supervisor will deliver the children to their room/ educator and inform the educator of any absences, unexpected absences, or other relevant information.

5. (Driver) The driver will conduct a thorough search of the vehicle for children to ensure no child has left unattended on the bus including under seats, luggage racks and storage areas and turn off the Child Check-Mate Alarm system located at the rear of the vehicle.

6. (Driver) The driver will hand the keys to the checker.

7. (Checker) The checker will conduct a second thorough search of the vehicle for children to ensure that no child has been left unsupervised on the bus including under seats, luggage racks and storage areas and will lock the vehicle.

8. (Driver) Driver to sign off 2-D12 Daily Bus Checklist.

9. (Checker) The checker will complete FRM 2-F71 Record of Embarking Transport.

This completed form must be available for inspection by the Regulatory Authority.

This process will be overseen by the Centre Manager with audits conducted by Operations team as part of the 6PCP.

4.0 Transportation procedures when using externally sourced vehicle e.g. hired bus with external (non AEG employee) driver

Centres wishing to transport children may hire bus with an external driver. Provide the driver with this procedure to read. Ensure you have a copy of the driver's licence. Where this is a regular event (e.g. regular outing or B&A school care), request that the same driver be provided for each event. Where there is a different driver, take a copy of their licence and provide them with this procedure.

All items included in the above 'Transportation procedures for centre bus usage' apply apart from the requirements of completing the 2-D12 Daily Bus Checklist and driver responsibilities. The role of Supervisor and Checker still apply. At least two educators will travel on the bus for before and after school care and excursions. Supervising educators will position themselves throughout the vehicle, where space allows.

The hired driver (external to Affinity) will not be included in ratio and is not responsible for the children's supervision. Children will not be alone on the bus with the hired driver.

Report any concerns with the vehicle or driver to the hire bus organisation.

5.0 Seat belts and restraints

Seating capacities in transport vehicles must be observed and each child is to occupy their own seat. 12-seater vehicles and under, are required to be fitted with age and size appropriate car/booster seats for the age and size of the children using them.

Babies must be in a rear-facing capsule or rear-facing car seat. It is recommended for babies to rear-face for as long as they fit within the height markers on the car seat which may be 12 months or more. Children 6 months to 4 years must be in a car seat or convertible booster seat using a 6-point harness, and children 4 to 7 years must be in a booster seat with lap sash seat belt or H-harness. Refer to the manufacturer's label on the car seat/ convertible booster for recommendations of age and height limits. Children under 12 years of age will not be permitted to travel in the front seat of a car or minibus/ 12-seater style bus.

Check condition of car/ booster seat prior to each use and check expiry dates for car/ booster seats quarterly. Replace as required.

Buses over 12 seats used for transporting children are not legally required to be fitted with restraints but if restraints are fitted, they must be used on the children, appropriate to their age.

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6.0 Driver Responsibility – centre bus

In addition to abovementioned responsibilities during a transport event, the driver must also:

- complete the online bus induction on the Learning Hub prior to driving the vehicle and comply with all items on the induction checklist
- inspect the bus thoroughly as per items on the daily bus checklist and complete the daily bus checklist
- hold a current open and unrestricted driver's licence and a copy of this must be retained at the service
- conduct the initial check for children and ensure that no children are left in the bus/ vehicle
- not refuel the vehicle with children in the vehicle
- abide by all road rules
- not smoke in the vehicle or be affected by drugs or alcohol
- take responsibility for any traffic infringements or fines incurred or received
- reinforce expected behaviour with children, along with other adults on the journey. If children display inappropriate or unsafe behaviours, the driver will pull over when safe to do so and stop the bus until the behaviour is suitable.

Only approved employees will drive the centre vehicle.

7.0 Breakdown or accident procedures

In the instance of vehicle breakdown or accident the person in charge will:

- Pull the vehicle over and off the road, if safe and able to do so; and
- Assess the danger, if safe and able to do so; and
- If broken down, call Road-Side Assistance on 1300 369 349 and quote account AFFINITY EDUCATION; and
- If an accident, check for injuries of all passengers and call 000 for immediate assistance if required, and/or administer first aid if required; and
- Assess the safest place for the children to wait for a replacement vehicle, or for repairs to be carried out; and
- Contact the Centre Manager to report the incident; and
- Take the required details of any other driver involved: name, contact, registration number, driver's licence, insurer and any damage done to either vehicle. Where possible photographs of damage to both vehicle and the surrounds, should be taken
- Fill out the Motor Vehicle Accident Report Form.
- Fill out an Incident Report Form for any person who has received injuries.
- Centre Manager is to contact the Area Manager by phone to update them on what has happened.

8.0 Safe behaviours

Staff will reinforce expected safe behaviours with children regularly including before and during transportation. Discussions and learning experiences around road safety, bus travel, staying in a group and other topics specific to the purpose of the transportation will be incorporated into the program. Children will be briefed about hazards and risks that may occur during transportation as well as procedures in case of emergency.

9.0 Training

All staff responsible for and involved in transporting children will be required to read and sign this procedure. This procedure is included as part of compulsory pre-training for all new employees and will be reviewed at least annually or more often if or when changes occur. Changes to the procedure will be notified to all employees via Promapp, as required. Staff responsible for and involved in transporting children are required to complete the Bus Induction on the Learning Hub which includes this procedure as well as practical competence demonstrations. Nominated Supervisor or those in leadership roles conducting the induction must ensure that employees demonstrate adequate skills and knowledge to be able to act in the driver, supervisor and/or checker role.

Records of this training will be kept at the service and available for Regulatory Authorities for inspection.

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Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
 Education and Care Services National Regulations WA 2012
 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
 Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics
 QLD Govt. 'Transportation.' <https://earlychildhood.qld.gov.au/legislation-and-guidelines/health-and-safety/transportation>
 The Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority: <http://www.acecqa.gov.au/>
 Kidsafe Australia: <http://www.kidsafe.com.au>
 QLD links to child restraint - <http://www.qld.gov.au/transport/safety/rules/children/index.html>
 NSW links to child restraint - <http://roadsafety.transport.nsw.gov.au/stayingsafe/children/index.html>
 Victoria links to child restraint - <https://www.vicroads.vic.gov.au/safety-and-road-rules/vehicle-safety/child-restraints>
 Darwin links to child restraint - http://www.transport.nt.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0019/19603/V25-Child-Restraints-Dec-2012.pdf
 W.A links to child restraint - <http://www.roadwise.asn.au/child-car-restraints.aspx>
 Canberra link to child restraint
http://www.rego.act.gov.au/licensing/licencefaqchildrestraints.htm#What_is_an_approved_child_restraint_or_booster_seat
 Early Childhood Road Safety Education Program: <http://www.kidsandtraffic.mq.edu.au/>
<http://www.kidsandtraffic.mq.edu.au/info-sheets/>

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