



# SAFE TRANSPORTATION OF CHILDREN PROCEDURES

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These procedures implement the HPCH Safe transportation of children Policy, which can be found in hard copy in the Domain Area Office/Domain Manager or online (HPCH Server and website).

Before transporting children HPCH Children's Services management and staff will ensure the safe transportation of children at all times by:

- conducting mandatory risk assessments;
- ensuring supervision requirements continue to be met during transportation; and
- receiving written authorisations.

## 1. 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.

All risk assessments for Transportation must consider (Regulation 102C):

- the proposed route and duration of the transportation; and
- the proposed pick-up location and destination; and
- the means of transport; and
- any requirements for seatbelts or safety restraints under a law of each jurisdiction in which the children are being transported; and
- any water hazards; and
- the number of adults and children involved in the transportation; and
- given the risks posed by transportation, the number of educators or other responsible adults that is appropriate to provide supervision and whether any adults with specialised skills are required; and
- whether any items should be readily available during transportation (such as a mobile phone, list of children attending and a list of emergency contact numbers for the children being transported); and





- the process for entering and exiting the HPCH premises, the pick-up location or destination (as required); and
- procedures for embarking and disembarking the means of transport, including how each child is to be accounted for on embarking and disembarking. These should include checklists and/or team rosters for supervision and a headcount of children when boarding or alighting vehicles.

### **1.1 Embedding review and continuous improvement**

Risks should be evaluated each time children are transported, unless the transportation is 'regular transportation'. For regular transportation, at a minimum, an annual risk assessment must include assessment of the matters set out in the Regular Transportation Risk Assessment. (NQF 7.1)

### **1.2 Actions to mitigate risk and facilitate inclusion**

The Director of Children's Services (Nominated Supervisor) or Responsible person on duty must implement any risk mitigation steps identified by the risk assessment, and communicate the risk assessment to all educators, staff and volunteers to be involved in the excursion so everyone understands any risks present and what needs to be done to maintain the safety and wellbeing of children during transportation for an excursion.

All educators, staff and/or volunteers participating in transportation for an excursion are responsible for implementing actions as described in the risk assessment.

Every child needs to be able to participate in all daily experiences. Educators need to adapt transportation to meet the ages and abilities of all children. In certain circumstances, some excursions may not be suitable for all children, however, HPCH will endeavour to, as much as possible, ensure transportation for excursions is flexible and suitable for all children at the service. (NQF 3.2.1 and Child Safe Standards)

HPCH assesses children's abilities to walk confidently to and from vehicles. To help children become safe walkers, educators must look at the world of traffic from a child's point of view and have an understanding of how children's abilities to learn and reason develop over time. Where there are concerns as to these abilities, additional staff may be required to support and guide the children.

### **1.3 Ensuring written authorisation**

The written authorisation given by a parent or other person named in the child's enrolment record must state:

- if the authorisation is for a regular outing, a description of when the child is to be taken on the regular outings
- if the authorisation is for an excursion that is not a regular outing, the date the child is to be taken on the excursion
- if the excursion involves transporting children, the means of transport and any requirements for seatbelts or safety restraints.





#### **1.4 Required equipment**

The risk assessment should include the items required to be taken on the excursion.

First aid kits need to be: appropriate for the number of children, suitably equipped and easily recognisable and readily accessible to adults.

The Educator (Responsible Person) needs to ensure all items listed in the risk assessment are taken on the excursion by using a checklist.

#### **1.5 Attendance checks**

The risk assessment includes details as to how children are accounted for.

The Educator (Responsible Person) must ensure the risk assessment attendance checks are followed, such as headcounts and/or role calls when alighting or boarding vehicles.

Records of attendance checks conducted need to be stored securely in the Children's Service Domain Office once completed.

#### **1.6 Communication with families**

To ensure ongoing safety at all times regarding excursions, HPCH communicated with families to clearly state:

- pick-up locations;
- the number of educators and staff; and
- details of the excursion activities
- risk assessment plan for the excursion

## **2. AUTHORISATIONS FOR TRANSPORTATION**

Authorisation for a child to be transported must be given by a parent or other person named in the child's enrolment record as having authority to authorise transportation of a child.

If the transportation is 'regular transportation', the authorisation is only required to be obtained once in a 12-month period.

The authorisation must include specific details about the transportation:

- the child's name;
- the reason the child is being transported;
- if the authorisation is for regular transportation, a description of when the child is to be transported;
- if the authorisation is not for regular transport, the date the child is to be transported;
- a description of the proposed pick-up locations and destination;
- means of transport;
- period of time during which the child is to be transported;
- the anticipated number of children to be transported;
- any requirements for seatbelts or child safety restraints;
- that a risk assessment has been prepared and is available at HPCH on request; and





- that written policies and procedures (this policy and these procedures) are available from HPCH.

### 3. PROCEDURE FOR EXCURSIONS INVOLVING TRANSPORTATION OF CHILDREN

#### 3.1 Conduct a risk assessment for the specific excursion.

The Excursion Risk Assessment must be completed by the Director of Children's Services (NS) with support from the Executive Officer (PMC). The Risk Assessment must consider matters listed above in 1 of this procedure and, specifically for excursions the Excursion Risk Assessment must:

- identify and assess risks that the excursion may pose to the safety, health or wellbeing of any child being taken on the excursion
- given the risks posed by the excursion, the number of educators or other responsible adults that is appropriate to provide supervision and whether any adults with specialised skills (such as life-saving) are required;
- consider the proposed activities, proposed duration of the excursion and items that should be taken on the excursion; and
- consider any possible adjustments that could be made to transportation to ensure participation and inclusion of all children.

HPCH to then follow part 1 of this Procedure (see above from 1.3 to 1.6).

### 4. TRANSPORTATION VIA VEHICLES OWNED AND OPERATE BY HPCH

As an accredited (previously registered) Community Bus Operator, HPCH has responsibilities under the *Bus Safety Act 2009* and *Bus Safety Regulations 2020* (apply from 1 March 2022).

Management and drivers of the accredited vehicles used to transport children and individuals needing additional support, must adhere to the *Bus Safety Act 2009* and *the Bus Safety Regulations 2020* including ensuring the buses are roadworthy, registered for the maximum number of passengers and comprehensively insured.

HPCH is required to have in place a Maintenance Management System (MMS) and Management Information System (MIS) to support the safety of operation of bus services.

HPCH is committed to, prior to 1 March 2023, complying with the MMS/MIS requirements by fitting accredited operator numberplates to HPCH owned and operated buses.

### 5. TRANSPORTATION VIA HIRED TRANSPORT

When hiring transport, the Hampton Park Out of School Hours Care program will ensure insurance policies are in place.





## 6. CLEANLINESS and SAFETY OF TRANSPORTATION VEHICLES

Vehicle maintenance and cleanliness to be regularly scheduled and conducted.

The Children's Services Director (or delegated responsible person) is responsible for ensuring the buses are kept in a clean and safe manner at all times. This includes maintenance of child seats and bus maintenance schedule.

HPCH schedules child restraint safety checks by authorised fitters.

## 7. DRIVER COMPETENCY AND RESPONSIBILITIES

HPCH Children's Services drivers will hold appropriate and current licenses.

Drivers are responsible for making sure that:

- complying with road safety rules and regulations and Bus Safety Standards
- all passengers are wearing seat belts or child restraints correctly
- there is only one person in each seating position and seat belt.

## 8. SUPERVISION DURING TRANSPORTATION

- When children transported from their school to the venue, the children will be supervised by the school while waiting to be collected.
- When the children are delivered to the venue, appropriate paperwork will be completed to acknowledge their arrival.

In the event of a vehicle breaking down, a breakdown contingency plan has been developed to ensure the safety of children and staff. The breakdown contingency plan includes the following steps:

- Immediately inform the Program Leader of the breakdown via mobile phone (RACV roadside assist)
- Stay with the bus/children
- The Children's Services Director will send 2<sup>nd</sup> bus to assist as soon as possible

## 9. CAR SEAT RESTRAINTS

When transporting children in our care, HPCH ensures everyone travelling in a motor vehicle must be wearing a child restraint, booster seat or seat belt that is properly adjusted and fastened.

HPCH ensures the guidelines regarding seat belts and child restraints stated below and in accordance with Vic Roads are followed. The type of restraint to use depends on the person's age and size:

Children from birth to 4 years must travel in either a rear facing or forward facing child restraint. The type will depend on their age and size.

Children aged 4 years to under 7 years must travel in either a forward facing child restraint with an inbuilt harness, or a booster seat.





Children aged 7 years to under 16 years must travel in either a booster seat or a seat belt.

People 16 years and over must travel in an adult seat belt.

**Please note:** No child will travel in the front seat unless the bus is full or there is an emergency. In the event that this occurs, HPCH educators, staff and volunteers are to follow the below guidelines from Vic Roads:

- children under the age of 4 years must only travel in the back seat of a vehicle.
- children aged 4 years old to under 7 years old can only sit in the front seat if all of the back seats are taken by other passengers under 7 years old. The child must travel in a booster seat without a top tether strap, because there will be no anchorage points for the front seat.
- children aged 7 years and over can travel in the front seat but must use either:
  - a booster seat, or
  - an adult seat belt.

**An adult lap-sash seat belt is designed for people with a minimum height of 145 cm.** The average child will reach this height between 10 to 12 years of age.

## 10. STAFFING AND FIRST AID ON TRANSPORTATION

### 10.1 Supervision

Supervision of children during transportation is adequate if:

- educator to child ratios are maintained;
- educators have visibility of and access to children, including when entering or exiting the vehicle;
- risks inherent to the mode of transport, environment, and experience of educators have been addressed by risk mitigation actions in response to a risk assessment;
- requirements of individual children – including any medical or disability needs – have been considered; and
- educators have the ability to immediately respond to a situation requiring urgent intervention.

For example, the nominated supervisor and educators need to consider supervision and placement of staff inside and outside the vehicle when children are entering and exiting vehicles.

### 10.2 First aid

There must always be at least one educator or staff member with appropriate first aid qualifications and anaphylaxis and asthma management training in attendance during transportation who is immediately available in an emergency.

There must be up-to-date and suitably equipped first aid kits available during transportation.

The nominated supervisor and educators must have access to a mobile phone in the case of an emergency.





## 11. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### 11.1 Role and Responsibilities of HPCH

HPCH is responsible for ensuring:

- obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations are met;
- no child is transported by HPCH without authorisation from their family that meets the requirements of 2 of this procedure;
- appropriate risk assessments are conducted in accordance with the Safe Transportation of Children Policy and Procedures;
- all relevant actions identified by risk assessments are taken prior to transporting children;
- risk assessments conducted identify and assess risks that transporting children may pose to the health, safety and wellbeing of the children, specify how identified risks will be managed and minimised and address considerations listed in 1. above;
- ensure all supervision requirements are met during transportation;
- ensure first aid requirements are met during transportation;
- ensure seatbelt and child safety restraint requirements are met;
- take reasonable steps to ensure nominated supervisors, educators, staff and volunteers follow the policy and procedures; and
- ensure copies of this policy and procedures are readily available.

### 11.2 Role and responsibilities of nominated supervisor

The nominated supervisor must:

- implement the Safe Transportation of Children Policy and these procedures;
- ensure no child is transported by the service without an authorisation from their parent that meets the requirements in 2 of this procedure;
- conduct risk assessments according to this procedure;
- ensure all educators and staff understand their supervision responsibilities and expectations relating to transportation of children;
- verify that all the required equipment and/or items are taken on the transportation, including, but not limited to, items listed in a risk assessment, a first aid kit, emergency contact lists, and mobile phone;
- verify that educators or staff with current first aid qualifications and training are in attendance during transportation;
- ensure jurisdictional requirements relating to seatbelts and children's safety restraints are met (see 9 of this procedure);
- contact emergency services in the first instance then notify parents/guardians immediately after a serious incident, injury, trauma or medical emergency, or as soon as is practicable; and
- where children leave the HPCH premises using transport that is not part of the service, ensure they leave in accordance with HPCH's Delivery of children to, and collection from, education and care service premises policy and procedures. (regulation 99)





### 11.3 Responsibilities of educators

Educators must:

- ensure transportation is carried out in line with this policy and procedure;
- check all children transported by the service have an authorisation from their parent;
- check that a risk assessment for an excursion has been conducted, including the specific considerations related to transportation listed in 1 of this procedure;
- check that risk assessments have been conducted prior to the service transporting children and meet the requirements of this procedure;
- ensure the risk management/minimisation strategies identified in the risk assessment have been implemented;
- ensure the educator to child ratios are in place and children are supervised at all times;
- undertake regular attendance checks to account for all children, including carrying a list of children at all times and performing headcounts on boarding and alighting vehicles
- if a child is not in attendance, follow Non-attendance policy and procedures
- ensure all the required equipment and/or items are taken on the transportation, including, but not limited to, a first aid kit, emergency contact lists, a list of children attending and mobile phone;
- ensure jurisdictional requirements relating to seatbelts and safety restraints are met (see 9 of this procedure);
- complete any relevant documentation of children's attendance and movement to and from the transportation including;
- communicate with families regarding safe transportation, including for excursions, e.g. pick-up location and destination, the means of transport, and the number of educators and staff and any other adults involved in the transportation; and
- contact emergency services in the first instance then notify parents/guardians immediately after a serious incident, injury, trauma or medical emergency, or as soon as is practicable
- where children leave HPCH premises using transport that is not part of the service, ensure they leave in accordance with HPCH's Delivery of children to, and collection from, education and care service premises policy and procedures.

### 12. DAILY CHECKLIST

- Read and understand the current Risk Assessment and Management plan for safely transporting children
- Read and understand the Safe Transportation of Children and related Policy and Procedures
- Familiar with the emergency contacts list (Including parents/guardian's)
- Collected attendance sheet for the relevant school from OSH attendance sheet folder
- Reviewed and confirmed attendance book, diary for any changes
- Check list for any children with medical, behavioural or special needs
- Collect and check the First Aid Kit
- Mobile phone is charged, undated with contacts and available to use





## SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Attachment 1: Regular Transportation Risk Assessment template

Attachment 2: Excursion Risk Assessment template

Attachment 3: Child transportation authorisation form

Attachment 4: Safe Transportation of Children Guide

Attachment 5: Safety culture guide



Signature of EO



Date of approval by EO

18-02-2022

Hampton Park Care Group Inc.

