

SAFE TRANSPORTATION OF CHILDREN POLICY

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NQF QA 2

1. POLICY STATEMENT

Hampton Park Community House (HPCH) is committed to ensuring the safe transportation of children by our service, including for excursions. The safety of each child and all educators who travel on the service's buses or participate in a regular outing is paramount at all times and is the primary consideration for all decision making about transportation of children. HPCH ensures all educators and staff are familiar with and able to implement this policy relating to safe transportation.

All HPCH educators and staff must follow the procedures at the end of this policy.

2. BACKGROUND

Hampton Park Community House Children's Services staff (educators and drivers) regularly need to transport children as part of the service and care they provide. This may occur as part of a regular occurrence such as transition children from school to Out of School Hours Care or may be provided as part of a 'one off' excursion.

This policy strengthens oversight arrangements and provides guidelines to reduce the risk of harm to children while continuing to provide them with the transport that may be needed as part of their education and care at Hampton Park Community House (HPCH).

The Education and Care Services National Regulations require HPCH to have policies and procedures in place in relation to the safe transportation of children.

3. LEGISLATION

The following legislative requirements must be met at all times:

- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2011 (National Law) and the





- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 (National Regulations)

This includes ensuring that:

- every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and from any hazard likely to cause injury (section 167 of National Law)
- all children are adequately supervised at all times that children are in the care of the service (section 165 of National Law)
- the relevant number of educators is no less than the number prescribed for this purpose (section 169 of National Law).

Some relevant aspects of the National Regulations are:

- Definition regular transportation and regular outing – regulation 4(1)
- Transport risk assessment must be conducted before service transports child – regulation 102B
- Conduct of risk assessment for transporting of children by the education and care service – regulation 102C
- Authorisation for service to transport children – regulation 102D
- Education and care service must have policies and procedures (transportation) – regulation 168(2)(ga)
- Risk assessment must be conducted before excursion – regulation 100
- Conduct of risk assessment for excursion – regulation 101(2)(d)
- Authorisation for excursions – regulation 102(4)

Bus safety legislation

TSV administers the Bus Safety Act 2009 (BSA) and Bus Safety Regulations 2020 (BSR) which provide for safe bus operations in Victoria. The BSA and BSR promote an improved safety culture for HPCH when operating our Accredited Community bus operations

4. PRINCIPLES

HPCH's philosophy has strong roots in a rich and culturally diverse community that believes:

- all children have the right to experience quality childcare and education





- each child is an individual with unique abilities, possessing their own potential and offering an important voice to their learning experiences
- the strength of the local community in its cultural diversity, relationships and unity are the foundations for excellent care and learning for all children
- the learning environment must be welcoming, fun, play-based, safe and supportive and actively involves parents, carers and families
- children, their families and community are connected by the activities, learning and play at the House and this is based on respectful relationships,
- acceptance and a strong sense of belonging.

When implementing this policy and procedures, all HPCH educators and staff must apply the following principles in line with our philosophy:

- Children's health, safety and wellbeing is paramount.
- Safe transportation is a key part of maintain the health, safety and wellbeing of HPCH children.
- Family involvement and contributions are valued at HPCH. Connections with our community, and welcoming and caring interactions with families is important to HPCH.

5. DEFINITIONS

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy and associated procedures.

Excursion means an outing organised by HPCH.

HPCH means Hampton Park Care Group Inc. trading as Hampton Park Community House

Vehicles owned and operated refers to the two Transport Safety Victoria (TSV) Accredited buses which the service maintains.

Regular transportation, in relation HPCH, means the transportation by HPCH or arranged by HPCH (other than as part of an excursion) of a child being educated and cared for by HPCH, 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 is when the means of transport, the transportation route or destination(s) have altered, or the provider of the transportation service has changed.

Regular outing means a walk, drive or trip to and from a destination:

- a. that the service visits regularly as part of its educational program;
- b. where the circumstances relevant to the risk assessment are substantially the same on each outing.





Risk assessment means working out how likely it is that a hazard will harm someone and how serious the harm could be.

Transportation relevant to this policy is transportation when HPCH remains responsible for children during the period of transportation. The responsibility for, and duty of care owed to, children applies when HPCH are transporting children, or have arranged the transportation of children, between HPCH and another location such as their home, school or a place of excursion. This includes any child in transit under the care of HPCH in the Out of School Hours Care or Vacation Care Programs, the staff driving, School Supervising staff and others supporting them. The mode of transportation can include but is not limited to, by bus, walking or riding bicycles.

Transportation does not include:

- Private transport provided by families and carers (i.e. carers not engaged by / registered with HPCH Children's Services)
- Transport provided and/or arranged by an entity other than HPCH Children's Services, for example a school bus, and the children are not under the care of the approved provider
- Transport where HPCH Children's Services is providing the transport service in a capacity other than as the education and care approved provider – e.g. a government department that provides an education and care service, provides school education, and provides a school bus to school students, on which the children who attend the education and care service also travel for practical reasons (such as in a remote or rural location)
- When a disability service picks up children and transports them to school or to an activity.

Walking School Bus A HPCH walking school bus is a group of children walking to or from school supervised by one or more (if group exceeds 15 children) qualified educator.

6. INDUCTION AND ONGOING TRAINING

HPCH ensures and requires all HPCH educators and staff receive training on this policy and procedures, to ensure the ongoing safe transportation of children in connection with the service.

Training is required of all HPCH and staff (including First Aid, frequency as prescribed by legislation). This policy and procedures are available to staff in hard copy from the Domain Area Manager or online (HPCH Server and website). This policy and procedures are also covered as part of all induction processes for new HPCH staff. Training involves role playing scenarios with educators and staff to encourage and develop knowledge around these procedures.



7. EVALUATION

In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, Hampton Park Community House will:

- regularly seek feedback from relevant stakeholders regarding its effectiveness;
- keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy and best practice; and
- revise the policy and procedures as part of the service's policy review cycle, or as required.

8. RELATED POLICIES

- Providing a child safe environment
- Excursions
- Incident, injury, trauma and illness
- Administration of first aid
- Dealing with medical conditions in children
- Delivery of children to, and collection from HPCH premises
- Staffing Policy -Managing and reporting incidents

Authorisation:

Signature of Chair of BOG :



Date of Approval by BOG:

16-02-2022

Hampton Park Care Group Inc.