

POLICY AIM

We are committed to ensuring the safe transportation of children by our service, including for excursions. We ensure that all educators and staff are familiar with and able to implement the policies and procedures relating to safe transportation.

Sweetpeas services **do not** regularly transport children as part of providing education and care services. However, we believe that all educators and staff should be familiar with this policy and its procedures in the case of excursions, regular outings or a change in centre practices.

RATIONALE

The *Education and Care Services National Regulations* require approved providers to ensure their services have policies and procedures in place in relation to the safe transportation of children.

Transport related injuries remain a leading cause of death in children under 14 years of age in NSW. Ensuring children are restrained according to the law, in the safest possible way for their age and size, is crucial to preventing child passenger injuries. As pedestrians, children require adult support to keep them safe. This includes holding their hands when walking, crossing roads and in driveways until they are cognitively able to assess and manage road and vehicle related risks independently. Young children are also particularly vulnerable to low-speed vehicle run-overs in driveways and car parks.

Services transporting children must be aware of possible dangers and have prevention strategies in place to protect against them. This includes the risk of leaving children in vehicles. Sadly, incidents of children left unsupervised in vehicles for extended periods of time do occur and, in some cases, have resulted in serious injury or death.

Transporting children provides opportunities for strengthening connections between educators, families and the wider community. Children's learning and enjoyment can be enhanced by travel routines that allow for quality interactions between children and educators. These journeys also provide opportunities to build on children's understandings of how to keep safe in and around vehicles. (Kids and Traffic, 2020)

SCOPE - WHO IS AFFECTED BY THIS POLICY?

- Staff / Educators
- Children
- Families
- Management

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD

QUALITY AREA 2 - CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY

- Standard 2.2 (Safety) - *Each child is protected.*

QUALITY AREA 4 - STAFFING ARRANGEMENTS

- Standard 4.1 (Staffing Arrangements) - *Staffing arrangements enhance children's learning and development.*

QUALITY AREA 7 - GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP

- Element 7.1.2 (Management Systems) - *Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service.*

RELATED POLICIES & LEGISLATION

RELATED SWEETPEAS POLICIES:

- Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations Policy
- Administration of First Aid Policy
- Arrival and Departure Policy
- Child Safe Environment Policy
- Excursion Policy
- Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy

- Medical Conditions Policy
- Supervision Policy

RELATED EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL LAW AND REGULATIONS:

- Law Section 165 Offence to inadequately supervise children
- Law Section 167 Offence related to protection of children from harm and hazards
- Regulation 89 First aid kits
- Regulation 99 Children leaving the education and care service premises
- Regulation 102B Transport risk assessment must be conducted before service transports child
- Regulation 102C Conduct of risk assessment for transporting of children by the education and care service
- Regulation 102D Authorisation for service to transport children
- Regulation 122 Educators must be working directly with children to be included in ratios
- Regulation 123 Educator to child ratios - centre-based services
- Regulation 136 First aid qualifications
- Regulation 158 Children's attendance record to be kept by approved provider
- Regulation 168 Education and care service must have policies and procedures
- Regulation 170 Policies and procedures to be followed
- Regulation 171 Policies and procedures to be kept available
- Regulation 172 Notification of change to policies or procedures

RELATED LEGISLATION:

- AS/NZS 1754:2013 Child restraint systems for use in motor vehicles
- NSW Road Rules 2014
- NSW Road Transport Act 2013
- Road Transport (General) Regulation 2021

TERMINOLOGY

- **Excursion** - An outing organised by an education and care service.
- **Regular outing** - In relation to an education and care service, means a walk, drive or trip to and from a destination:
 - (a) that the service visits regularly as part of its educational program; and
 - (b) where the circumstances relevant to the risk assessment are the same on each outing. (National Regulations (Definitions))
- **Regular transportation** - In relation to an education and care service, means the transportation by the service or arranged by the service (**other than as part of an excursion**) of a child being educated and cared for by the service, where the circumstances relevant to a risk assessment are the same for each occasion on which the child is transported. (Guide to the NQF - Glossary)
- **Risk assessment** - Assessing the risk means working out how likely it is that a hazard will harm someone and how serious the harm could be. (ACECQA - Risk assessment template: Excursions)
- **Transportation** (that is part of the education and care service) - Transportation forms part of an education and care service if the service remains responsible for children during the period of transportation. The responsibility for, and duty of care owed to, children applies in scenarios where services are transporting children, or have arranged for the transportation of children, between an education and care service premises and another location, for example their home, school, or a place of excursion. Examples of transport not forming part of a service include:
 - private transport provided by families and carers (i.e. carers not engaged by/registered with a service)
 - transport provided and/or arranged by an entity other than the approved provider, e.g. a school bus, and the children are not under the care of the approved provider
 - when a disability service picks up children and transports them to school or an activity. (Guide to the NQF - Transportation)

GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS

- **ACECQA** - Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority - The independent national authority that works with all regulatory authorities to administer the National Quality Framework, including the provision of guidance, resources and services to support the sector to improve outcomes for children.
- **NQF** - National Quality Framework - The NQF provides a national approach to regulation, assessment and quality improvement for early childhood education and care and outside school hours care services across Australia.

IMPLEMENTATION AND STRATEGIES

Sweetpeas services **do not** regularly transport children as part of providing education and care services. Sweetpeas will not, without at least 14 days' notice to all stakeholders, provide transport to children except in the case of:

- Excursions (see Sweetpeas *Excursion Policy*)
- Regular outings (see Sweetpeas *Excursion Policy*)
- An emergency (see Sweetpeas *Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations Policy* and *Enrolment and Orientation Policy*)

For information of children's arrival and departure to and from Sweetpeas service via private transportation (e.g. their family members), staff and families should refer to the Sweetpeas *Arrival and Departure Policy*.

When planning for the safe transportation of children, Sweetpeas services will consider:

- Children's health, safety, and wellbeing is paramount. We are committed to meeting all the regulatory requirements to ensure the safe transportation of children by our service, including for excursions.
- Our educators and staff are integral to the education and care of our children. Clear roles and responsibilities and relevant training ensure they are aware of their roles and responsibilities in relation to the safe transportation of children.
- We value and support the families at our service. At all times we seek their authorisation and input with regard to our transportation of their children.
- Ensuring all supervision requirements are met during transportation, considering factors such as: educator to child ratios; the number, age and level of development of children; visibility and accessibility of passengers by the educator; risks inherent in the mode of transport, environment, location or route; the experience, knowledge and skill of each educator; the requirements of the individual children; the capacity of an educator to immediately respond to a situation requiring urgent intervention
- Ensuring first aid requirements are met during transportation, including the availability of up-to-date first aid kits and that educators or staff with first aid qualifications and training are in attendance
- Consulting with agencies and industry specialists to inform and monitor jurisdictional requirements relating to seatbelts (e.g. correctly fitted and adjusted for school age children) or safety restraints (e.g. ensuring the correct child car seat for a child's size and age)
- Incorporating any jurisdictional requirements for the safe transportation of any non-ambulant children and any staffing implications
- Addressing how the service will assess the children's abilities to walk confidently to and from vehicles and any staffing implications.

PROCEDURES

The following Procedures relate to the safe transportation of children as per *Kids in Traffic Guidelines* and complement this policy as well as the Sweetpeas *Excursion Policy*. Persons responsible for each action in the Procedures will be indicated by the following key:

- (AP) = Approved Provider
- (NS) = Nominated Supervisor
- (ED) = Educator and/or Driver
- (PC) = Parent/Carer

WHEN PLANNING TRANSPORTATION:

1. All educators and staff responsible for transporting children will be inducted and trained in their responsibilities to implement the *Safe Transportation of Children Policy* and Procedures. (AP, NS)
2. While children are being transported, they will always be in the care of a responsible educator. The Nominated Supervisor will appoint a person in charge when transportation of children is undertaken. (NS, ED)
3. A risk assessment will be carried out before authorisation of any transportation is requested. The risk assessment will identify and assess risks that transportation may pose to the safety, health and wellbeing of children and outline steps to manage and minimise them. Consideration will be given to elements such as:
 - the route and duration of transportation
 - collection and delivery locations
 - means of transport
 - requirements for seatbelts and safety restraints
 - water hazards
 - number of children and adults involved in the transportation
 - number of adults appropriate to provide supervision including whether any adult requires specialised skills
 - or training
 - items required to be available while transporting e.g. mobile phone, emergency contact list, first aid kit
 - process for entering and exiting the service, excursion venue or other collection or delivery location
 - procedures for accounting for children when embarking and disembarking the vehicle.

For regular transportation, a risk assessment will be conducted every 12 months or when circumstances relating to transportation significantly change e.g., when collection or delivery location for children changes. When transport is not regular, a risk assessment will be undertaken each time transportation is proposed. (AP, NS, ED)

4. Risk management and minimisation strategies will be implemented to ensure that every reasonable precaution is taken to ensure children's health, safety and wellbeing during transportation. (NS, ED)
5. The number of educators needed while transporting children will be determined as part of the risk assessment and management process. Consideration will include, but not be limited to:
 - the number, age and ability of children
 - the number and physical positioning of educators
 - each child's activity
 - visibility and accessibility in the vehicle
 - risks related to the mode of transportation and when travelling on foot
 - risks in the environment, location or while travelling
 - any previous risk assessment
 - the experience, knowledge and skill of each educator
 - compliance with National Law and National Regulations. (AP, NS)
6. Where required, additional responsible adults, such as parent/carer volunteers, will accompany children to provide extra supervision. However, the service's duty of care cannot be delegated to volunteers. It is recognised that increasing the adult to child ratio improves supervision, minimises risk and allows for better quality interactions between adults and children during transportation. (AP, NS, ED)
7. The approved provider will ensure the number of children being educated and cared for by the service does not exceed the maximum number of children specified in the service approval no matter where the children are located, including while they are being transported by the service. (AP)
8. Written authorisation for transportation will be obtained from each child's parent or authorised nominee and will include:
 - child's name
 - reason for transportation
 - for regular transport, a description of when child is to be transported
 - for transport that is not regular, the date of transportation
 - description of collection/delivery locations

- means of transport
- timing and duration of transportation
- number of children being transported
- number of supervising adults
- requirements for seatbelts or safety restraints
- notification that the prepared risk assessment and the *Safe Transportation of Children Policy* and Procedures are available to view at the service.

For regular transportation, authorisation will be obtained annually or when the risk assessment is amended. For transport that is not regular, authorisation will be obtained each time transport is to be used. (AP, NS, PC)

9. For regular transport runs, Australian Standards (AS/NZS 1754) approved child car seats and booster seats will be installed in the service vehicle by an Authorised Restraint Fitter; educators transporting children will receive advice on how to check and adjust seats and seatbelts to fit individual children. (AP, NS, ED)

WHEN PROVIDING TRANSPORTATION:

1. Vehicles used to transport children as part of the service (including private vehicles) will be initially checked, then checked quarterly, to ensure they are:
 - registered
 - CTP insured
 - comprehensively insured
 - regularly maintained. (AP, NS, ED)
2. Vehicle maintenance checks will be carried out weekly by the educator responsible for the transport run. Checks include, but are not limited to, the safe condition and operation of:
 - tyres, brakes, indicators, lights, windscreen wipers, air conditioning
 - doors and windows (including childproof door and window locks where fitted).

Child car seats, booster seats and seat belts will be checked prior to each transport run. Fuel levels will be checked prior to each transport run to ensure adequate fuel for the duration of the run.

Any maintenance issues will be documented and provided to the nominated supervisor for action as soon as possible. (NS, ED)

3. Educators conducting the transport run will ensure all children are restrained correctly in Australian Standards (AS/NZS 1754) approved child car seats or booster seats suitable for each child's age and size. The Five Step Test will be used to determine appropriate restraint type. (ED)
4. Vehicles used to transport children will contain:
 - a fully stocked first aid kit including emergency asthma and anaphylaxis medications
 - a charged mobile phone and/or satellite phone
 - medication, health plans and risk assessments for individual children
 - emergency contact details for children being transported
 - contact details of the service including an emergency contact number
 - emergency response information including *Emergency and Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness* policies and procedures
 - *Safe Transportation of Children Policy* and Procedures
 - Transportation checklist
 - high visibility vest
 - torch
 - supply of drinking water
 - accurate, current attendance records for each transport run. (NS, ED)
5. Any educator, staff member or volunteer involved in transporting children will have a current Working with Children Check and will be inducted into the requirements outlined in the Safe Transportation of Children Policy and Procedures and any other relevant documents. (AP, NS)
6. Children being transported will be accompanied by at least one staff member with approved and current:
 - first aid qualifications, and
 - anaphylaxis management training, and
 - emergency asthma management training. (AP, NS, ED)

7. Any driver transporting children will have, at minimum, a current and valid C class driver licence and be in a fit and proper state to drive. Provisional licence holders will not drive any vehicle used to transport children as part of the service. Educators or staff driving larger vehicles to transport children must hold the relevant licence for the vehicle classification. (NS, ED)
8. For vehicles seating 12 people or fewer, the number of supervising adults required will be determined by the transport risk assessment. If the risk assessment allows for one educator to transport children, risk mitigation strategies will be determined to ensure adequate supervision and safety. (NS, ED)
9. For vehicles seating more than 12 people, the driver will be supported by at least one additional educator to ensure adequate supervision of children in transit. The number of supervising adults required will be determined by the transport risk assessment. (NS, ED)
10. In the case of an emergency such as vehicle breakdown, crash or other traffic incident, or illness, injury or trauma on board, educators transporting children will follow the service's policies and procedures and refer to the emergency response information in the vehicle. Educators will:
 - check on the welfare of children and other staff and provide first aid, comfort and support
 - call emergency services if required
 - implement all other actions in accordance with the service's Emergency and Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness policies and procedures
 - report the incident to the nominated supervisor/approved provider who will arrange for alternative transport if required and notify families of the incident
 - complete an incident record on return to the service which the Nominated Supervisor/Approved Provider will use to notify the NSW Regulatory Authority within 24 hours if required. (AP, NS, ED)
11. The service will engage children in establishing and implementing travel behaviour rules at a developmentally appropriate level. Rules will be focused on safety and respectful, courteous behaviour to others and will reflect the Behaviour Guidance policy. (NS, ED)
12. Educators will use travel time to engage in conversations to enhance relationships, extend children's learning and strengthen connections between children, educators, families and the community. (ED)

WHEN USING PUBLIC TRANSPORT:

1. When using public buses, trams, trains or ferries, journeys will be carefully planned to ensure children's safety. The risk assessment will consider the additional child protection risks posed by sharing transport with members of the public. Journeys using public transport should be planned outside of peak travel hours to minimise crowding and maximise children's comfort and safety. (NS, ED)
2. Where appropriate, the service will contact the transport provider to inform them of the route and times that children, educators and volunteers may be using the transport so that vehicle operators can be informed and prepared for the group of passengers. (NS, ED)
3. Supervision of children on public transport will be in accordance with the service's Excursion and Supervision policies and procedures and as determined by the transport risk assessment. (NS, ED)
4. When using public transport an educator will cross check and mark the transport attendance record and conduct head counts to ensure all children are present. These attendance checks and headcounts will be conducted at times including, but not limited to:
 - prior to embarking
 - when embarking
 - when on board
 - when disembarking
 - after disembarking.

An educator will always be the last person to embark and disembark the vehicle to ensure all children are accounted for. (ED)

WHEN MOVING CHILDREN TO AND FROM A VEHICLE:

1. Educators will park the vehicle as close as possible to the collection/delivery location to avoid the need for children to crossroads or walk-through traffic areas, including car parks and driveways, wherever possible. (ED)
2. Educators will choose the safest route possible for walking children to and from the vehicle as determined by the risk assessment. (ED)

3. Educators will talk with children about safe practices and actively supervise them when moving to and from the vehicle. Supervision will take into account children's age and development and their capacity to recognise and react to risks. For children not yet able to be independent and safe as pedestrians, educators will hold their hands. The service will follow the *Transport for NSW endorsed key pedestrian safety messages* (info sheet 2). (ED)

WHEN DEPARTING THE SERVICE WITH CHILDREN

1. The driver will enter the vehicle and check the internal temperature. If necessary, the driver will start the vehicle and adjust the air conditioning to ensure the internal vehicle temperature is comfortable for passengers. (ED)
2. Before leaving the service building, an educator will conduct an attendance check and mark each child's name on the transport attendance record. A head count will be conducted. The date and time of the check and the name of the educator completing the check will be recorded. (ED)
3. When boarding the vehicle an educator will conduct an additional attendance check from the transport attendance record, including a head count. The date, time and the name of the educator completing the check will be recorded. (ED)

WHEN ARRIVING AT THE SERVICE:

1. An educator will conduct an attendance check and mark each child's name on the transport attendance record prior to exiting the vehicle. This will be cross checked against the record of children boarding the vehicle. A head count will be conducted. The date and time of the check and the name of the educator completing the check will be recorded. (ED)
2. On entering the service an educator from the vehicle will record children's attendance at the service and conduct a head count. The educator will cross check the service attendance record against the transport attendance record to ensure all children are accounted for. The date and time of the check and the name of the educator completing the check will be recorded. The service attendance record will be verified in writing by a second educator from the service who was not involved in transporting children. (ED)
3. After every transport run the driver of the vehicle will conduct a thorough check to ensure no child remains in or near the vehicle. The check will include:
 - visual inspection of all areas of the vehicle:
 - all seats including the driver's seat
 - under seats
 - storage areas
 - under the vehicle
 - calling out the names of the children who attended the transport run - the driver will ensure the vehicle engine is turned off and there are no auditory distractions that may interfere with hearing a child.

If there is a second educator present that educator will conduct an additional vehicle check following the same procedure. The driver and educator completing the vehicle inspections will record written verification of the vehicle checks on the transport attendance record. (ED)

4. On conclusion of the transport service the driver will park the vehicle in the designated parking area. The driver will ensure windows and doors are locked so as not to allow entry and will store the keys out of reach of children. (ED)

RESPONSIBILITIES

APPROVED PROVIDERS WILL:

- ensure that obligations under the *Education and Care Services National Law* and *National Regulations* are met
- ensure no child is transported by the service without an authorisation from their family
- ensure the appropriate risk assessments are completed and all relevant actions are undertaken prior to an excursion
- ensure the risks assessments for excursions include the specific considerations related to transportation listed in **Regulation 101** (see *Excursion Policy*)
- ensure the appropriate risk assessments are completed and all relevant actions are undertaken prior to transporting children
- ensure the risk assessments for transportation:

- identify and assess risks that transporting the child may pose to the health, safety or wellbeing of the child
 - specify how the identified risks will be managed and minimised
 - include the specific considerations listed in **Regulation 102C**
- ensure all supervision requirements are met during transportation, including educator to child ratios
 - ensure first aid requirements are met during transportation, including the availability of up-to-date, suitably equipped first aid kits and that educators or staff with first aid qualifications and training are in attendance
 - ensure jurisdictional requirements relating to seatbelts and children's safety restraints are met
 - take reasonable steps to ensure that nominated supervisors, educators, staff and volunteers follow the policy and procedures
 - ensure copies of the policy and procedures are readily accessible to nominated supervisors, educators, staff, volunteers and families, and available for inspection

NOMINATED SUPERVISORS/RESPONSIBLE PERSONS WILL:

- implement the *Safe Transportation of Children Policy* and Procedures
- ensure no child is transported by the service without an authorisation from their parent
- conduct a risk assessment for an excursion, including the specific considerations related to transportation listed in **Regulation 101** (see *Excursion Policy*)
- conduct risk assessments prior to the service transporting children. Ensure the risk assessments for transportation:
 - identify and assess risks that transporting the child may pose to the safety, health or wellbeing of the child
 - specify how the identified risks will be managed and minimised
 - include the specific considerations listed in **Regulation 102C**
- 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, 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
- 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

EDUCATORS WILL:

- ensure transportation is carried out in line with the *Safe Transportation of Children Policy* and Procedures
- 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 **Regulation 101**
- check that risk assessments have been conducted prior to the service transporting children, and ensuring the risk management/minimisation strategies they contain are implemented. Check the risk assessments for transportation:
 - identify and assess risks that transporting the child may pose to the safety, health or wellbeing of the child
 - specify how the identified risks will be managed and minimised
 - include the specific considerations listed in **Regulation 102C**
- ensure the required educator to child ratios are in place and children are supervised at all times
- undertake regular attendance checks to account for all children
- ensure that all the required equipment and/or items are taken on the transportation, including, but not limited to, a first aid kit, emergency contact lists, and mobile phone
- ensure jurisdictional requirements relating to seatbelts and safety restraints are met
- complete any relevant documentation of children's attendance and movement to and from the transportation

- 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
- 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

FAMILIES WILL:

- sign the authorisation for their child to attend an excursion and/or for their child to be transported by the service
- ensure they complete the attendance record upon delivery and collection of their child
- provide emergency contact details on the child's enrolment form and ensure that they are kept up-to-date
- keep informed about the service's safe transportation processes, including for excursions, e.g. pickup location and destination, the means of transport, and the number of educators and staff and any other adults involved in the transportation
- reinforce the safe transportation practices with their child, e.g. seatbelts.

REFERENCES

- ACECQA - <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/>
- ACECQA - Risk assessment template: Excursions - <https://acecqa.gov.au/media/22736>
- ACECQA - Safe transportation of children | Information sheet
- Child Care Seats - <https://www.childcarseats.com.au/>
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- Guide to the NQF - <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/nqf/about/guide>
- Kids and Traffic - <https://www.kidsandtraffic.mq.edu.au/>
- Kids Safe NSW (Road Safety) - <https://www.kidsafensw.org/safety/road-safety/>
- Transport for NSW (Centre for Road Safety) - <https://roadsafety.transport.nsw.gov.au/stayingsafe/children/index.html>

REVIEW AND AMENDMENTS

This policy will be updated regularly to ensure compliance with all relevant legal requirements. Appropriate consultation of all stakeholders (including staff and families) will be conducted on a timely basis. In accordance with *Regulation 172* of the National Regulations, families of children enrolled will be notified at least 14 days and their input considered prior to any amendment of policies and procedures that have any impact on their children or family.

Version	Amendment(s)	Review Date	Updated By
1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Policy created to reflect new amendments to the National Regulations	March 2021	Janine Evans (Nominated Supervisor)
1.1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cosmetic changes for new formatting template and colours• Checked links and references	July 2022	Cassandra Way (Assistant Manager)