

Early Learning

Road Safety Education & Safe Road Transport Policy - Transportation as Passenger, Cyclists & Pedestrians

1. Policy Statement

All decisions made by educators and Uniting Victoria & Tasmania are guided by a commitment to children’s safety, rights, and best interests.

Uniting Early Learning is committed to:

- The rights of children to be active citizens and to contribute to the community.
- The rights of children to travel safely as passengers, pedestrians, and cyclists.
- An evidence-based approach in the provision of road safety education and practice.

2. Scope

This policy applies to the following groups working in Uniting Early Learning:

- Approved provider and persons with management or control
- Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge.
- ECT, Educators, FDC educators and all other staff (including agency staff)
- Parents/guardians
- Contractors, volunteers, and students.

3. Policy

Road trauma is one of the leading causes of death among young Australians. Young children are at risk as passengers in motor vehicles, as pedestrians and as cyclists. They are particularly vulnerable due to:

- Their small size and changing needs as they grow
- Their cognitive and perceptual skills are still developing.

Under duty of care obligations, services must develop appropriate procedures to guide staff to address situations where a child is observed to be at risk while being transported to or from the early childhood service. This may include instances where a child is observed to be:

- Travelling unrestrained
- Travelling in an inappropriate restraint for their size
- Travelling in an incorrect position/seat in the vehicle
- Riding a bicycle or wheeled toy without a helmet
- Instances where a family member is in an unfit state to drive due to intoxication or impairment.

Transport used for any excursion, the delivery and collection of children, or a regular outing must meet travel safety standards. This means that all vehicles must be registered, insured, maintained, and have restraints approved by the Roads and Traffic Authority. Any driver of a vehicle must have a current approved license. All

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adults must have a current Working with Children Check (Victoria) or Working with Vulnerable People Card (Tasmania). Proper restraint systems are to be used in vehicles according to current Australian Standards and law of each jurisdiction. Registered vehicles are to have enough petrol to conduct transportation without refueling when children are in the car.

Taxis, public buses, and trams are exempt from supplying car seats; therefore, children are not required to be seated in a car seat when travelling by taxi, tram, or bus. However, all passengers including children must wear seatbelts if they are fitted. If booking a taxi or bus for an excursion, request one that can supply seatbelts and/or car seats.

As transportation can present heightened risks to the safety of children when children get in or out of vehicles and when they arrive at or leave the service, the following regulatory requirements apply to centre based services that provide **regular transportation**.

- Approved providers and nominated supervisors/responsible persons must ensure a staff member or nominated supervisor/responsible persons (other than the driver) accounts for children as they get in or out of a vehicle at the education and care service
- Approved providers and nominated supervisors/responsible persons must ensure records are made showing children are accounted for as they get in or out of a vehicle at the education and care service
- Approved providers and nominated supervisors/responsible persons must ensure records are made confirming a check of the inside of a vehicle was completed at the service after all children have left to ensure no children remain
- Approved providers must notify the regulatory authority when they start providing or arranging regular transport, and again when they finish. This can be done through the NQAITS.

To ensure best practice and minimise risk, Uniting Early Learning is embedding the regulatory requirements into policy and procedures for all **excursions** where children are transported by a vehicle (bus, train or tram).

Educators are expected to follow appropriate procedures when children are transported by bus, public transport, or family day care educator's private vehicle to always ensure safety, which includes undertaking regular head counts/identity checks and cross-checking against the current attendance record to ensure no child is left behind. Children are never to be left unattended in any vehicle. Supervision and communication are key strategies used by educators to ensure smooth, safe, and enjoyable travel arrangements for all.

When children are travelling as part of the service for any reason, educators must ensure that all vehicles (other than public transport) used to transport children have seatbelts fitted and/or child restraints that are suitable for a child's age/size and that

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these are properly adjusted, fastened, and correctly used. The number of children that can be safely transported by a vehicle should not be exceeded.

To ensure the safety of children while travelling, it is essential that all staff; educators, family day care educator assistants and volunteers, involved, communicate regularly, and acknowledge this communication. For example, when undertaking headcounts, ensure everyone knows exactly how many children are accounted for and the identity of every child. Staff are to ensure a charged and functioning mobile communication device is taken on the journey.

As the risks are greater when children travel outside of the service, family day care home/venue environment, a final risk assessment will be required on the day of travel. Unforeseen and or unexpected circumstances on the day may include.

- Unexpected weather changes, dynamic of group, type of bus, change in collection and/or drop off points and destination conditions

As per Uniting Protocol for travel during adverse weather conditions including fire and flood, **no travel is permitted** to, or through, or to any area with an active "Watch and Act", "Evacuate" or "Emergency Warning". Click [CFA warnings & restrictions](#) or [TFS Online](#) to access specific district information and warnings.

3.1 Children travelling by school bus

When children are travelling to or from the service by school bus, undertake the following procedures to ensure that children are safe, and that no child is left behind.

- Written authorisation to allow the children to leave the service must be provided. Ensure parents or authorised nominees (refer to Glossary) have completed and signed a form notifying the service that the child will be travelling by school bus. This form is to be kept with the child's enrolment record and a copy provided to the coordinating school
- Compile a bus list with names of all children travelling to or from the service by school bus and the days they will be travelling. This list should also include emergency contact details for each child and any travel requirements (e.g., medical management action plan and medication, child restraint) and be kept up to date with daily changes recorded (e.g., parents notifying child's absence)
- Provide a copy of the school bus list to the coordinating school. The coordinating school will provide a list to the bus company/bus driver.
- Educator to stand at the bottom of the bus door and count the children as they get on and off the bus
- Educator to mark children off the bus list as they are collected by parents/authorised school staff
- Parents or authorised nominee (authorised school staff/educator) to sign child off the bus
- After the final stop, the educator and bus driver check the bus and the bus list to ensure that no children remain on the bus before returning to the service.

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3.2 Children travelling by Family Day Care educator private vehicle

- Ensuring parents/guardians have access to this policy and that its contents are communicated to them.
- Ensure a transport risk assessment is conducted before a child/ren are transported (refer to [UF-EL-053-Transportation-Risk Assessment Family Day Care 6.3.docx](#) A risk Assessment is only required to be completed at least once for a 12-month period if it is a regular transportation
- Ensuring that all Family Day Care authorised drivers (refer to *Glossary*) hold a current full Australian Drivers License.
- Ensuring vehicles are kept locked and inaccessible to children when not being transported.
- Ensuring there are no loose or sharp objects inside the car that could cause injury if an accident occurs. Any goods carried in a vehicle are to be stored safely below the level of the rear seat
- Ensuring mobile phones are not used whilst driving at any time.
- Assessing and documenting how many children can be transported in an educator/authorised driver's vehicle
- Ensuring that educators follow appropriate procedures in the event of a vehicle crash or transport-related injury involving Family Day Care children or staff (refer to *Incident, Injury, Trauma, and Illness Policy*).
- Maintaining a register of vehicles and authorised drivers that includes motor vehicle registration, insurance and license details, and details of any driving offences, and updating this annually or more frequently as required
- Ensuring that educators/drivers are aware that they are not to leave children unattended in a vehicle at any time, including when refueling
- Ensuring that children are not transported in additional/dickie seats (refer to *Glossary*) due to safety concerns with these types of seats in the event of a crash
- Ensuring that child restraints and booster seats, with at least a four-star crash protection rating as determined by the Child Restraint Evaluation Program (CREP) (refer to *Glossary*), are used by the Family Day Care service. Booster cushions (refer to *Glossary*) do not meet the Australian/New Zealand Child Restraint Standard AS/NZ 1754 2010, 2013 and are no longer allowed to be manufactured in Australia
- Ensuring that educators use child restraints and booster seats in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions
- Ensuring that child restraint accessories, including child safety harnesses (refer to *Glossary*), are not used unless prescribed by a health professional such as an occupational therapist
- Ensuring that 'type of restraint' is included on all excursion authorisation forms under *Method of transport to be used for the excursion*
- Ensuring there are only the number of passengers in a car, that the car can safely accommodate (occupy a proper seating position with a dedicated seatbelt
- Ensuring that children under the age of 12 years do not travel in the front seat of a vehicle if there are rear seats available, due to the increased risk of injury to

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child passengers in the event of a crash. If all rear seats are being used by children aged under 7 years, children aged 4 years to under 7 years are permitted to travel in the front seat, provided they use a booster seat. (If the car has frontal air bags, the seat should be moved back as far as possible.) If a child under 12 years needs to travel in the front seat, parents/guardians must provide informed consent

- Ensuring that parents/guardians of children with disabilities or medical conditions are aware that a health professional, such as an occupational therapist, can prescribe a child restraint appropriate for their child’s needs, and may be able to provide guidance on accessing and using special restraints
- Ensuring that educators, coordinators, authorised drivers, Family Day Care educator assistants and staff members receive training on how to correctly install and use child restraints and booster seats, and professional development on other road safety topics
- Ensuring that educators check that child restraints and booster seats are safe, clean and in good repair, and are no more than ten years old
- Ensuring that any child restraint that is involved in a crash is replaced
- Ensuring that bicycle helmets are available and fitted correctly when bicycles or wheeled toys are used
- Ensuring that bicycle helmets are in good condition and meet the Australian/New Zealand Standard 2063 (*refer to Legislation and standards*)
- Procedure for vehicle accident or breakdown or adverse weather conditions –fire and flood.

3.3 Procedure for when a child is observed to be at risk of harm while being transported to or from a service

Service providers have a duty of care to ensure the safety of children is paramount. Service providers must also comply with their obligations under state or territory child protection laws.

Where a parent/guardian or authorised nominee is observed not using a child restraint, using the wrong child restraint, using a child restraint inappropriately or engaging in other unsafe behaviours such as parking illegally or not using a bicycle helmet, educator should:

- Talk with the parent/guardian/authorised nominee about the importance of safe transport procedures, including the correct use of child restraints and/or relevant road safety behaviours
- Provide/refer the parent/guardian/authorised nominee to relevant information regarding safe transport
- Provide the parent/guardian/authorised nominee with a copy of this policy.

If the parent/guardian or authorised nominee persists with unsafe behaviours, the educator must notify the nominated supervisor/program manager, who should:

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- Contact the parent/guardian/authorised nominee directly and discuss the importance of child restraint use and/or safe road user behaviour, including legal requirements and implications
- Follow up with the parent/guardian/authorised nominee, where required, to ensure that they have the appropriate restraint for their child and that it is being used correctly.
- Contact Orange Door.

If a parent/guardian or authorised nominee appears to be impaired or intoxicated when arriving to collect their child, the Family Day Care educator should:

- Encourage the parent/guardian or authorised nominee to use an alternative form of transport or contact another authorised person to collect the child. If the parent/guardian or authorised nominee is not willing to use an alternative form of transport, the educator can only prevent the parent/guardian or authorised nominee from taking the child if it is safe to do so
- Notify the police and/or child protection authorities immediately if the educator is of the opinion that the child may not be safe in the care of the parent/guardian or authorised nominee.

3.4 Walking children from one program to another on the same site (OSHC and school)

All services hold a duty of care for children during transition periods between school and education and care services.

Risk mitigation strategies are to be developed and implemented, to ensure the safety of all children during the transition between school & OSHC, both of a morning but more substantially of an afternoon.

- Work in collaboration with the school to ensure children are accounted for during the transition between programs
- If a child who is booked into care does not arrive at before school hours care, contact the parents to confirm that the child will not be attending that morning
- When the educators from the other program (school) deliver the children to the after-school hours program, confirm that all children booked in on that day are present. If not, request confirmation from the educator of the program (school) that the child did not attend school, and the parent notified the program (school) to advise of the child's absence on that day
- If a child has not attended After School Hours Care within the first 15 minutes of the school bell, parents, guardians or nominees need to be contacted to ascertain where the child is. If child's whereabouts isn't accounted for by the parent, guardian or nominees (within 20 minutes), the missing child procedure is put in place.
- Communicate with parents the importance of clear and timely communication when a child will not be attending a booked session of outside school hours care.

Communicate with parents the importance of older children not taking an alternative option to OSHC (going home with a friend or going to a friend's house), unless authorised by the parents and the OSHC program has been notified of the change.

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3.5 National Practices for Early Childhood Road Safety Education

The *National Practices for Early Childhood Road Safety Education* have been developed by early childhood education and road safety experts across Australia and New Zealand. The eight national practices are based on research and are aligned with the Early Years Learning Framework.

The national practices guide early childhood educators and policy makers to develop, implement, and evaluate evidence-based road safety programs that support children’s and families learning about road safety. Refer to:

[Starting Safely](#)

[Encouraging safer road use - Road Safety Advisory Council](#)

Holistic approaches

Recognise that children’s learning is integrated and interconnected when making curriculum decisions about road safety education.

Responsiveness to children

Deliver road safety education which is responsive to individual children and extends children’s strengths, knowledge, and interests.

Learning through play

Through play-based learning seek opportunities to address road safety in a way that expands children’s thinking and encourages problem solving.

Intentional teaching

Engage in intentional teaching which extends and expands children’s learning about road safety.

Learning environments

Provide opportunities in the learning environment, including the local community, for safe and meaningful interaction with children, parents, and carers about road safety.

Cultural competence

Implement road safety education that is culturally relevant for the diversity of children, their families, and the community.

Continuity of learning and transitions

Use the opportunity of transitions, in active partnership with children, families and the local community, for road safety education.

Review

This policy is to be reviewed June 2029

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Responsibilities	Approved provider and persons with management or control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	ECT, Educators, FDC educators and all other staff	Parents/guardians	Agency staff, Contractors, volunteers, and students
R indicates legislation requirement, and should not be deleted					
Ensure that early childhood teachers; educators, staff and parents/guardians, agency staff, volunteers, and students have access to and comply with this policy R 168, R 170 & R 171	R	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ensure access of educators and staff to regular professional development/training in road safety and ensure they are kept up to date with current legislation	✓	✓	✓		
Ensure the provision of location-specific road safety information (e.g., details about where to park safely when delivering and collecting children and local area speed limits etc.) to parents/guardians and visitors	✓	✓	✓		
Ensure the provision of general road safety information about transporting children to and from the service (which might include using the 'safety door' (the rear curb side door), driveway safety, child restraint information and role modelling safe road use) to parents/guardians	✓	✓	✓		
Ensure the embedding in the curriculum of Road safety education, based on the National Practices for Early Childhood Road Safety Education – Starting out safely	✓	✓	✓		
Ensure teachers and educators develop appropriate strategies to ensure all children attending the service are included in road safety education	✓	✓	✓		
Ensure that teachers and educators understand and follow the service's procedures where a child is observed being transported to or from the premises in an unsafe manner: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travelling unrestrained • Travelling in an inappropriate restraint for their size • Travelling in an incorrect position/seat in the vehicle • Riding a bicycle or wheeled toy without a helmet • Instances where a family member is in an unfit state to drive due to intoxication or impairment. S 167 	R	✓	✓		
Ensure that a child is not transported without prior written authorisation (except in an emergency) by the parent/guardian or person named in the child's enrolment record, and that the authorisation includes all details required under R 102D	R	✓	✓		

Responsibilities	Approved provider and persons with management or control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	ECT, Educators, FDC educators and all other staff	Parents/guardians	Agency staff, Contractors, volunteers, and students
R indicates legislation requirement, and should not be deleted					
Ensure the risk assessment (refer to Glossary) is conducted and identifies and assesses the risks, specifies how these will be managed and/or minimised, and includes all details required by <i>R 102B, 102C</i>	R	✓	✓		
Ensure all supervision requirements are met during transportation, including educator to child ratios <i>R 123</i>	R	✓	✓		
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, children’s individual medication, required medical management plans and mobile phone and that educators or staff with first aid qualifications and training are in attendance <i>R 136</i>	R	✓	✓		
Ensure the availability (in good condition) and use of bicycle helmets which meet Australian/New Zealand Standard 2063 for bicycles and wheeled toys (refer to Glossary).		✓	✓		
Monitor the correct use of bicycle helmets whenever bicycles or wheeled toys are used <i>R 165</i>	R	✓	✓		
Ensure the Safe Transportation of Children Safety Checklist and Transportation Record Form is completed <i>S 167</i>		✓	✓		
Ensure that teachers and educators understand and follow appropriate procedures in the event of a vehicle crash or transport-related injury involving any children, staff, or volunteers from the service (refer to Incident, Injury, Trauma, and Illness Policy) <i>R 85, R87 & R 89</i>	R	✓	✓		
Ensure jurisdictional requirements relating to seatbelts and children’s safety restraints are met <i>S 167</i>	R	✓	✓		
Ensure when possible that buses hired for use on excursions have fitted seatbelts for use by all children, staff, and volunteers and seatbelts are fitted correctly the entire trip. <i>S 167</i>	R	✓	✓		
Ensure that each child’s enrolment record provides details of the name, address and telephone number of any person who is authorised to consent to transport the child or arrange transportation (refer to Definitions) of the child <i>R160 (3) (b)(vi)</i>	R	✓	✓		

Responsibilities	Approved provider and persons with management or control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	ECT, Educators, FDC educators and all other staff	Parents/guardians	Agency staff, Contractors, volunteers, and students
R indicates legislation requirement, and should not be deleted					
Ensure authorisation is provided on the enrolment record for the regular transportation (<i>refer to Definitions</i>) of the child R161 (2) (c)	R	✓	✓		
Notify the regulatory authority within seven (7) days that the service starts to provide or arranges regular transportation (<i>refer to Definitions</i>). The notification is to be lodged through the NQA IT System R 175(2)(f)	R	✓	✓		
Notify the regulatory authority within seven (7) days if there is a change to the regular transportation (<i>refer to Definitions</i>) provided or arranged by the service, including if regular transportation is no longer provided. The notification is to be lodged through the NQA IT System R 175(2)(g)	R	✓	✓		
Ensure all supervision requirements are met during transportation, including educator to child ratios S 65, R 123 & R 165	R	✓	✓		
Ensure a staff member or nominated supervisor is present at the service when children get on and off a vehicle (FDC exempt). This person must be an additional person; it cannot be the driver of the vehicle. R 102E (4)(a), R 102F (4)(a)	R	✓	✓		
Ensure that the number of educators or other responsible adults involved in the transportation of children, including when children are embarking or disembarking the vehicle, is adequate, effective and ensures active supervision R 165	R	✓	✓		
Ensure each child getting on and off a vehicle is checked against an attendance list, so all children are accounted for R 102E (4)(b), R 102F (4)(a)	R	✓	✓		
Ensure an extensive check of the vehicle after children have disembarked to confirm no child is left behind in the vehicle. S 16 & R 102F	R	✓	✓		
For regular transportation, conduct a risk assessment at least once every 12 months, and as soon as practicable after becoming aware of any circumstance that may affect the safe arrival of children travelling between a children's service and any other education or early childhood service R 71C	R	✓	✓		

4. Legislations/ Regulations

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010: Section 165, 167, 169, 174
 Education and Care Services National Regulations 201: Regulation 99, 102B, 102C, 102D, 123, 124, 126, 127, 136, 158, 168, 172
 National Quality Standard, Quality Area 2: Children’s Health and Safety
 Children’s Services Amendment Act 2019
 Children’s Services Regulations 2020

5. Related Documents

Early Learning

Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations policy
 Child Safe Environment and Wellbeing
 Educational Program
 Excursion, Regular Outing and Service events policy
 Incident, Injury, Trauma, and Illness policy
 Delivery and Collection policy
 Excursion, Regular Outing and Service Event policy
 Supervision of Children policy

Assessment for learning

Together with children and families, reflect on each child’s learning and application of road safety to plan for future learning.

Forms

Form 6.1 - [UF-EL-054-Regular Transportation Authorisation 6.1.docx](#)
Form 6.2 - [UF-EL-052-Transportation-Risk Assessment 6.2.docx](#) (other than as part of an excursion)
Form 6.3 - [UF-EL-053-Transportation-Risk Assessment Family Day Care 6.3.docx](#)
Form 6.4 - [UF-EL-007-Safe Transportation of Children Safety Checklist and Transportation Record Form 6.4.docx](#)

Reference/Sources

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

Uniting Child Safety Policy – Uniting adopts the Uniting Church Australia National Child Safety Policy Framework, 2019 and the principles of this Policy Framework

[Road Safety Education Victoria - Road Safety Road Rules 2009 \(Vic\)](#)

Road Safety Road Rules 2009 (Vic)

[Car Seats Save Lives](#)

[National Child Restraint Best practice guidelines](#)

[School Bus Program](#)

[Starting Out Safely](#)

Tasmanian Licensing Standards for Centre Based Child Care Class 5 (0-12years), 2014. S4.7, 4.8

[Vic Roads Child Safety Restraints](#)

[Department of State Growth Transport – Tasmanian road rules](#)

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