



# Safe Arrival of Children Policy and Procedures

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## Policy Statement

Child Australia is committed to ensure the safe arrival of children who travel between the school and Child Australia’s early childhood service or Child Australia’s Out of School Hour Service. We recognize the heightened risk to children’s safety and wellbeing during these transition periods and have implemented clear policies, procedures, and practices to mitigate potential risks. All educators and staff are required to adhere to these procedures to ensure children’s safety during travel.

## Rationale

Children’s safety and wellbeing are of primary importance, and approved providers and their services must implement appropriate measures to protect children from harm or hazards during travel. Busy drop-off and pick-up times increase the risk of incidents, making clear and well-executed procedures essential for safeguarding children. This policy outlines the strategies and responsibilities associated with ensuring safe arrival.

## Responsibility

**Approved Provider:** The Approved Provider ensures that relevant policies and procedures are in place and that families receive adequate notification of any changes to the policies or procedures.

**Nominated Supervisor and Responsible Person:** The Nominated Supervisor and Responsible Person ensure:

- All staff follow relevant policies and procedures, sign the communication records, and that all training is accurately documented for each educator.
- Parents/Guardians are informed of relevant policies.



- Risk Assessments are conducted regularly and reviewed annually or as needed.
- Staff receive training before accompanying children during transportation.
- Accurate attendance records are maintained.
- Systems are in place to ensure children leave Child Australia's premises in accordance with regulatory requirements.
- All supervision requirements are met during delivery of children to and collection from the service premises, including relevant educator to child ratios.
- Any incidents related to child safety during travel are managed according to the Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy.
- Written arrangements are made prior to children travelling between the service and educational facilities.
- Ensure communication protocols are in place and documented between the service and educational facilities.

**Staff:** Staff are responsible for:

- Understanding and complying with this policy and the associated risk assessment, signing the communication record, and completing all required training.
- Completing attendance records, including ensuring authorised persons sign children in/out.
- Record all transitions during travel, including time of departure/arrival to/from locations.
- Responding appropriately to incidents in line with regulatory requirements.
- Ensuring children are only released to:
  - A parent/guardian or authorised nominee listed on the enrolment record, or
  - A person with written authorisation from the parent/guardian.
- Maintaining supervision requirements during all travel.
- Communicating any changes to travel routines with educators and the relevant educational facility.

**Parents/Guardians:** Parents/ Guardians will:

- Follow designated drop-off and pick-up procedures.
- Inform the service of any changes to travel arrangements (ongoing, temporary, or one-off).
- Stay informed about service practices regarding travel and duty of care.
- Keep enrolment record authorisations up to date.
- Complete attendance records upon arrival and departure.
- Communicate any relevant changes (e.g., child absent from school).
- Provide written authorisation if:
  - A new person is collecting the child
  - The service is transporting the child



- A child is to travel independently between co-located services.
- Ensure their child understands the designated collection/drop-off location.

## Procedures

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### Parent/Guardian Consent

- Written arrangements must be in place before any child travel between the service and an educational facility.
- Any unscheduled or one-off travel changes require updated written authorisation from parents/guardians.

### Designated Arrival and Departure Areas

- All arrivals and departures must occur at clearly designated and supervised locations.
- Parents/guardians will be informed of these locations for each facility.

### Accounting for Children

- A visual and verbal check must confirm each child's presences and be recorded in attendance records.
- Children are to be signed in and out using either manual or electronic systems approved by the service.
- Headcounts must be done at all key transition points, and discrepancies must be logged and escalated.
- Educators must immediately report and escalate any discrepancies in attendance to the Nominated Supervisor or Responsible Person.

### Models of Arrival and Departure

1. Safe Arrival by Bus
  - a. Adhere to the Transportation Policy and Procedures.
  - b. Educators, not the bus driver, hold duty of care during travel.
  - c. Staff must supervise designated bus areas during arrivals and departures.
  - d. Educators must contact the educational facility if delays occur.
2. Safe Arrival by Walking
  - a. Adhere to the Transportation Policy and Procedures.
  - b. Educators walking with children have duty of care during travel.
  - c. Educators must contact the educational facility if delays occur.
3. Independent Arrival (OSHC Only)



- a. The service will assess the child's age and safety awareness before approving independent arrival. The decision must be documented and reviewed regularly.
- b. Staff will be present to supervise the arrival area during peak times.
- c. Children must report to staff and sign in immediately upon arrival.

### Late or Missing Arrivals

If a child expected at the service has not arrived after school:

- **Check the roll immediately.** Verify:
  - Roll
  - Sign in records (paper/app),
  - Transport or bus logs, and
  - Early pick up permissions.
- 1. **Notify the Responsible Person (Nominated Supervisor or delegate).** Declare a "missing child" response:
  - Assign one staff member to coordinate the response
  - Another staff member/s must continue supervising the group
- 2. **Call the school office/classroom** to confirm:
  - Was the child at school today?
  - Were they collected by an authorised person?
  - Did they attend another activity or program?
- 3. **Call the parent/guardian** (and if unreachable, call authorised contacts in order) to confirm the child's whereabouts.
- 4. **Call 000 (Police) immediately if:**
  - The child's location cannot be quickly confirmed, or
  - You have any safety concerns

Do not wait for a set time if you believe the child may be off-site or at risk. A report must be made within 30 minutes after the school bell if the child is unaccounted for.

Be ready to provide:

- Child's full name, age and description
  - Last known location and time
  - Likely destinations or hiding places
  - Medical or safety concerns
5. **Document everything.** Record:
    - Times
    - People contacted



- Advice or information received

If the child does not arrive at the educational facility at the predetermined time, the Nominated Supervisor or Responsible Person or Educator will:

- Support the facility by providing information about the child's departure.
- If safe and possible, assist in searching the route.
- Notify the Nominated Supervisor or Responsible Person.
- Complete and Incident, Injury, and Trauma record as needed.

### **Absconding**

- Children are considered to have absconded when:
  - They do not arrive at the service within 30 minutes of the school bell
  - They leave the service's duty of care suddenly or without permission
- Once the child is located the service will investigate and determine the reason for the absconding.
- If a child booked into the service chooses not to attend or leaves the school grounds the service will:
  - Treat the absconding as a serious incident.
  - Report the incident to the Regulatory Authority within 24 hours.
  - Immediately contact the child's parents or guardians.
  - Lodge a formal incident report.
  - Hold a meeting with the family before the child can return to the service.
  - Determine an appropriate course of action based on:
    - The child's age and level of understanding
    - The level of parental support and engagement
    - Possible outcomes may include termination of enrolment for safety reasons.
- If a child booked into service forgets to attend:
  - Staff will provide support and reminders.
  - Parents will be notified of the absconding.
  - A meeting will be arranged with the family to review booking arrangements and develop a support plan, which may include:
    - Teacher reminders
    - Visual cues
    - A buddy system
  - A formal reminder will be issued to the family.
  - If absconding reoccurs it may result in the termination of care.



- In line with the National Law, a child may be excluded from attending the service if their continued attendance poses a significant risk to safety, and all reasonable steps to resolve the issue have been taken.
- Exclusion will only occur:
  - After other strategies have been attempted,
  - With formal notification to the family,
  - In consultation with the Approved Provider.

### Risk Assessment

- A risk assessment must be conducted and reviewed:
  - At least annually or updated as necessary following any incident.
  - In consultation with educators, families, partner educational facilities, and children where appropriate.
- The risk assessment must include:
  - Roles and responsibilities during travel
  - Communication procedures between services and educational facilities
  - Procedures for missing or unaccounted-for children
  - Educator-to-child ratios and supervision strategies
  - Routes, destinations, entry/exit points, and the children's ability to travel safely
  - Supervision strategies for different travel scenarios
- Who holds duty of care at each transition point

### Children with Additional Needs

- The service recognises that some children may require additional support during arrival and departure routines.
- Individual arrival plans may be developed in consultation with families and allied health professionals.
- Plans must be documented, communicated to all relevant staff, and reviewed regularly.

## Related Documents and Forms

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Enrolment Form

Delivery and Collection of Children Policy

Head Count and Ratio Checks

Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations Policy

Child Safe Environment Policy

Enrolment and Orientation Policy



Accident, Illness and Incident Management Policy  
Transport Policy and Procedure  
Supervision and Active Supervision Policy  
Accident, Illness and Incident Management Policy  
Bus Driver Induction  
Bus Boarding and Alighting Checklist  
Responsible Role Consent Form Bus Driver  
Risk Assessment Bus Transportation  
Risk Assessment Safe Arrival of Children  
Regulatory Authority Response Model

## References

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Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 (Cth)

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 (Cth)

Children and Community Services Act 2004 (WA)

Care and Protection of Children Act 2007 (NT)