



# Victor Harbor Community Kindergarten

## **QUALITY AREA 6: COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS WITH FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES**

### **Safe Transportation of Children Policy**

Updated 11.12.2020

Updated and Amended 8/3/21

Updated and Amended 23/7/2021

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#### Purpose

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Children are sometimes transported by bus arranged by families of children who attend the Victor Harbor Community Kindergarten. The staff has a duty of care to ensure specific steps are taken to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of children who regularly use this bus service. This policy applies to children who travel to and from home and kindergarten via a Department for Education Government bus.

A section is also included in this policy for safe travel where a bus is needed for excursions.

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#### Procedure

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- Children using the bus service must meet the age requirements for preschool.
- All children who travel on the bus must follow the same procedure. The only exception is the Inman Valley bus service that drops children off at the centre but does not pick them up.
- Families must come to kindergarten and fill out a consent form, before they can use the bus service. This must be signed by the Director and also the guardian.
- Families must also go the Victor Harbor High school student services and fill out the relevant forms - Authorisation for transportation in early childhood services. They will be given a bus pass, this way staff are aware that children are eligible to travel on the Government bus.
- Families are given a copy of the bus policy consent form.
- To enable the children to be ready for pick up, staff will ensure lunch boxes and any notices are put in bags, and that kindy bags are collected prior to the last group time. A reminder to go to the toilet before the bus trip will also be given.
- A staff member will walk with the children to the designated bus zone at the time stated by the bus company.
- At the start and end of the day, all children are signed in and out by an educator and if they are travelling on the bus to and from kindy this will be written on the sign in sheet.
- If a child regularly travels on the bus and does not arrive at kindergarten in the morning, an educator will ring their families to follow up.
- Children travelling on the bus will be seated at the front of the bus near the bus driver. An educator will personally put their seatbelt on for them.

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#### Staff Responsibilities

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- A staff member will meet the children at the designated bus zone upon arrival at the centre.
- Staff member will have Bus attendance/checklist sheet and tick off when child has arrived. If a child who normally catches bus is not on for the day the Director will be informed and a phone call will be made to parent if deemed necessary.

- Educator will sign children in at the start of the day on the attendance sheet and write 'Bus' in comments section to let other staff know that child is catching the bus at the end of the day. An educator will also use a highlighter marker to mark the bus children on the role so that it is clearly visible to all staff.
- Educator will check for notes in lunch box to see if there has been any change to usual bus arrangement ie, parent is collecting child at the end of the day rather than child going on bus.
- Staff will check the attendance sheet prior to getting the children ready at the end of the day to ensure there are no changes to the regular bus arrangements. Educator will sign off the attendance sheet to say the child has been put on the bus. Bus attendance/checklist will also be signed off.
- To enable the children to be ready for pick up, staff will ensure bags, lunch boxes and any notices are collected prior to the last group time. A reminder to go to the toilet before the bus trip will also be given.
- Educators will make sure the children are seated at the front of the bus, and will personally put their seatbelt on for them.

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## Parental Responsibilities

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- Parents wishing their children to travel on the DfE school buses will need to notify kindergarten each term and the Victor Harbor High School Student Services at the start of each year to fill out appropriate forms
- Parents will need to notify staff if there are any changes to the regular bus arrangements. This will need to be stated verbally when parent drops child at preschool, by phone, or by a note in lunchbox. This also needs to be written on the daily attendance sign in sheet which staff will check prior to getting the children ready at the end of the day.
- Families will need to write on the daily attendance sheet if their child will be going on the bus after kindergarten.

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## Procedures for Bus Travel for Excursions

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- Children will be accounted for by the use of a checklist of all children going on the excursion. This checklist will be available to be ticked off as children enter the bus, including a column for headcount.
- The children will again be accounted for on the return journey using the same checklist
- Staff will help children to put on seat belts if they are unable to do themselves as well as a visual check that all children have their seatbelts on
- Where possible parents of children requiring additional support will be asked to accompany their child on the excursion. A risk assessment will also be conducted for children with additional needs.
- Steps taken to immediately follow up any children unaccounted for – seat all other children on the bus, depending on number of staff and volunteers have excess staff and volunteers physically search for missing child, ring police if necessary and parent to inform of situation
- Adequate supervision will be maintained at all times by having the correct child to staff ratio so that all children will remain accounted for. Children will also have instruction before the excursion about safety and the need to stay with the supervising Educator and parent and no wondering off.
- The leading staff member for the excursion will undertake and sign-off that the entire bus has been physically checked to confirm that all children have exited the bus (i.e. check for any children who may have fallen asleep during the journey or may be hiding underneath a seat)
- All children's permission information with emergency contact details will be taken on each excursion. This will also include equipment required in the case of an emergency (e.g. emergency contact details for each child, mobile telephone, first aid kit, individual children's asthma packs etc.)
- Before any excursion involving a bus, staff will have a discussion the night before of procedures and processes including roles and responsibilities (including relief staff)

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## Resources

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- NQS 2.2 including regulation 99
- ACECQA Safe Transportation of Children
- DfE Safe transportation of children policy
- DfE Safe transportation of children procedure
- DfE Authorisation for transportation in early childhood services
- Safe Transportation of Children - Risk assessment template

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## Approved and Checked By

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Review 2022 or as required

Approved and Checked By:

Centre Director

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Governing Council Representative

.....Date .....