CatholicCare
DIOCESE OF BROKEN BAY

Children's Services

Safe Arrival and Departure of Children

Policy

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What do we believe?

At CatholicCare Diocese of Broken Bay (CatholicCare), we are committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and hold this at the centre of our decision making and practice. We believe in the principle of paramountcy of the safety of children. This means that the safety, wellbeing, and best interests of the child are the primary consideration in all decisions, actions, and practices. Where there is a conflict between the interests of a child and those of adults or the organisation, the child's safety and wellbeing will always come first.

We believe every child has the right to be safe, secure and protected at all times. The arrival and departure of children are important transitions that require clear procedures, effective supervision and strong partnerships with families to ensure every child is accounted for and released only to authorised persons.

We are committed to maintaining robust arrival and departure practices that promote children's safety, wellbeing and security while meeting our obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations. We recognise that families play a vital role in supporting these practices and work collaboratively with them to ensure consistent and safe routines.

What are we going to do?

To achieve this, we will ensure that every child is signed in and out by a parent, guardian or authorised nominee, and we will verify the identity of any person collecting a child when required. Children will only be released to authorised persons unless otherwise permitted by law, and we will maintain active supervision of children during all arrival and departure times. Accurate attendance records will be kept at all times to ensure every child is accounted for.

We will follow clear procedures if a child does not arrive as expected or is not collected as planned, and we will communicate promptly with families regarding any concerns relating to a child's arrival or departure. Our educators will support children through calm and positive transitions that promote their sense of belonging, safety and wellbeing. We will also regularly review our arrival and departure procedures to ensure they reflect current legislation, best practice, and the needs of our children, families and communities.

How will it be done?

Risk Assessments

Identifying and managing risk is an integral part of CatholicCare's operations. Policies and Procedures and other relevant Regulations, Laws and Legislation guide the development and implementation of our Risk Assessment and management processes. Risk Assessments will be conducted for daily travel of children to and from the Service.

This addresses the requirements around safe arrival of children when children move to, from and in between an education and care service, a school or any other education or early childhood service. When this occurs:

- A risk assessment for the safe arrival of children must be prepared.

- The risk assessment must be conducted at least once every 12 months, and as soon as practicable after becoming aware of any circumstance that may affect or change the safe arrival of children travelling between an education and care service and any other education or early childhood service.
- During the development and review of the risk assessment process staff parents and (if applicable) children at the service are consulted.
- All schools should be consulted in regard to the process for arrival and departure of children in a school setting.

A risk assessment must consider the matters set out below:

1. The age, developmental stage and individual needs of the child;
2. The role and responsibilities of the service in the care of which the child is entering or leaving;
3. The role of the nominated supervisor of each service;
4. The role of the educators
5. The child's parent;
6. An authorised nominee named in the child's enrolment record;
7. The communication arrangements between the service the child is leaving and the service the child is entering including any communication arrangements if the child is missing or cannot be accounted for during the child's travel;
8. The procedure to be followed by the service if the service has identified that the child is missing or cannot be accounted for during the child's travel;
9. Given the risks posed by the child's travel, the number of educators or other responsible adults that are appropriate to provide supervision;
10. The proposed route and destination, including any proximity to harm and hazards
11. The process for entering and exiting the service premises, the pick-up location or destination (as required);
12. The management of any medicines possibly required by diagnosed children, during the transfer period
13. The procedure to be followed by the service to ensure the child leaves the service premises in accordance with regulation 99(4)(b).

See *Safe Arrival and Departure of Children in Extra-curricular Activities Risk Assessment* on IsidoreNet.

Procedures for the safe arrival of children

Each service will work with their Practice Manager to develop an individual procedure for the safe arrival of children to their services. When developing these they will consider:

- Their unique environment
- The different ages and abilities of each child
- The different skills of their teams
- Arrival times and departure times of the children
- Inclusion of any medical conditions' requirements

Once completed these procedures, along with their risk assessment will be uploaded to their cluster "safe arrival of children" folder.

When a child is missing or cannot be accounted for:

Non-Arrival to After School Care

- All OSHC services will have a site-specific procedure for children that do not present for After School Care. This will include but is not limited to: Determine if the child was at school by the class teacher and/or School Administration Office.
- Refer to Children's Services Non-Arrival Flow chart which provides educators with clear step-by-step process to follow when a child expected at the service does not arrive. The flow chart supports timely verification of a child's whereabouts, ensures appropriate communication with families and schools, and outlines escalation procedures where a child cannot be located.
- Where a child is not present on arrival:
    - Educator / Responsible Person will confirm with the school that the child was in attendance.
    - If school confirms child was absent from school or went home unwell the Educator / Responsible Person will:
        - Contact the Parent or Guardian and will confirm with them that the child was absent or collected from school.
        - Remind the Parent or Guardian that they are required to notify the service if their child will be absent, if alternative arrangements had been made, or if the child was collected from school early.
        - No further action is required.
- If the school confirms child was in attendance the Educator / Responsible Person will:
    - Notify the NS / PM
    - Contact the Parent / Guardian / Authorised Nominee to locate the child. If the Parent / Guardian / Authorised Nominee confirms location of child the Educator / Responsible person will:
        - Remind the Parent or Guardian that they are required to notify the service if their child will be absent, if alternative arrangements had been made, or if the child was collected from school early.
        - No further action is required.
    - Contact the Parent / Guardian / Authorised Nominee to locate the child. If the Parent / Guardian / Authorised Nominee do not answer the Educator / Responsible person will:
        - All children will be moved into licensed indoor space, to ensure adequate supervision of the remaining children and that they are kept safe, calm and are all accounted for.
        - Allocated an Educator to undertake a thorough search of the immediate area, specifically checking likely hiding places, and walking the path taken to the service.
        - Keep calling the Parent / Guardian / Nominated supervisor until they answer. If the Parent / Guardian / Nominated supervisor answer and confirm the child should be in attendance the child will be deemed missing. Police will be contacted immediately '000' or '112' (Mobile)
        - If no answer for 15 minutes child will be deemed missing. Police will be contacted immediately (000).

- Educator / Responsible Person must keep contacting Parent / Guardian / Authorised Nominee until they have spoken with the parents.
- Once police have arrived, they will take charge of the incident and staff will follow their direction, whilst ensuring that the remaining children are kept safe.
- Incident report to be completed.
- Major incident report to be completed.
- Report to submitted to The NSW Early Learning Commission within 24 hours of the incident occurring.
- Report to be sent to Practice Manager, General Manager, Practice Manager – Quality and Compliance, and Safeguarding Office.

Child Missing During Session

- Child cannot be located during a head count:
  - Notify the NS / PM
  - Allocated an Educator to undertake a thorough search of the immediate area, specifically checking likely hiding places.
  - Contact the Parent / Guardian / Authorised Nominee to locate the child. If the Parent / Guardian / Authorised Nominee do not answer the Educator / Responsible person will:
    - All children will be moved into licensed indoor space, to ensure adequate supervision of the remaining children and that they are kept safe, calm and are all accounted for.
    - Allocated an Educator to undertake a thorough search of the immediate area, specifically checking likely hiding places, and walking the path taken to the service.
    - Keep calling the Parent / Guardian / Nominated supervisor until they answer. If the Parent / Guardian / Nominated supervisor answer and confirm the child should be in attendance the child will be deemed missing. Police will be contacted immediately ‘000’ or ‘112’ (Mobile)
    - If no answer for 15 minutes child will be deemed missing. Police will be contacted immediately (000).
    - Educator / Responsible Person must keep contacting Parent / Guardian / Authorised Nominee until they have spoken with the parents.
    - Once police have arrived, they will take charge of the incident and staff will follow their direction, whilst ensuring that the remaining children are kept safe.
    - Incident report to be completed.
    - Major incident report to be completed.
    - Report to submitted to The NSW Early Learning Commission within 24 hours of the incident occurring.
    - Report to be sent to Practice Manager, General Manager, Practice Manager – Quality and Compliance, and Safeguarding Office.

Extra-curricular activities in our OSHC Services

CatholicCare recognises that extra-curricular activities provide opportunities for children to engage in enriching extension programs which support their growth and development. From time to time, extra-curricular activities may be provided within school grounds and that some families may wish to access these for their children who are attending the OSHC program. It is therefore essential to implement practices which support the needs of children and families without compromising the capacity to provide quality care for all children attending our services.

Parents/guardians shall be responsible for informing the OSHC service of any extra-curricular activities that the child/ren may be involved in whilst enrolled and registered to attend the OSHC services. This must be done by completing an *Extra-curricular Activity Permission Form* each term.

Children will not be released to an activity without a current and accurate permission form received prior to the day of the activity. This form must state:

- The name and contact details of the provider of the activity.
- Where in the school the activity is being held.
- Duration time of the activity.
- Is the child attending the activity straight from school?
- Who supervises the child coming to the OSHC at the conclusion of the activity.
- Is the child attending OSHC first and then attending the activity? If so, who is supervising the child going to the activity and will the child return to the OSHC?

Parents are responsible for renewing the form immediately if changes are made to the child's timetable.

Due to ratio and supervision National Regulations and Law, our educators will not be responsible for taking or picking up children from their extracurricular activities that are during the operational times of the OSHC service.

If CatholicCare believes that the safety of the child/ren is comprised at any time, we reserve the right to review extra-curricular service for the child/ren.

Who is responsible?

Roles	Responsibilities
Approved Provider	• Ensure that obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations are met. • Ensure that the safety, wellbeing, rights and best interests of children are the paramount consideration in safe arrival systems, staffing decisions, communication arrangements and risk management. • Ensure that an attendance record is kept with: each child's name; the date and time they arrive and depart; and the signature of the person who delivers or collects the child, a nominated supervisor or educator (regulation 158). • Ensure that a risk assessment is conducted at least annually or as soon as practicable after becoming aware of any circumstances that may affect the safe arrival of children travelling between an education and care service and any other education or early childhood service, to identify and address any risks that a child's travel may pose and clearly states who holds the duty of care for children during these periods of travel. • Take reasonable steps to ensure that nominated supervisors, educators and staff are aware of, access and use the risk assessment to manage risks and maintain the safety of children during travel to or from the service.

Roles	Responsibilities
	• Ensure there are effective systems for identifying children who are expected to arrive, confirming their arrival, recording absences, and responding immediately if a child cannot be accounted for. • Ensure systems are in place so that children only leave the service premises: o If they are given into the care of a parent, an authorised nominee named in the child's enrolment record, or a person authorised by the parent or authorised nominee. o In accordance with the written authorisation of the child's parent or authorised nominee. o If they are taken on an excursion or on transportation provided or arranged by the service, with written authorisation from the parent or authorised nominee. o If they are given into the care of a person or taken outside the premises because the child requires medical, hospital or ambulance care or treatment, or because of another emergency (regulation 99). • Ensure that an enrolment record is kept for each child which contains the information set out in regulations 160 and 161, including authorisations from families. • Ensure all supervision requirements are met during delivery of children to, and collection from, the service premises, including relevant educator to child ratios (regulations 122 and 123). • Should any incidents occur relating to the safety of children during travel, (e.g. a child cannot be accounted for) ensure that the response meets all regulatory requirements, including implementing your Incident, injury, trauma and illness policy and procedures (regulations 86 and 87). • Take reasonable steps to ensure that nominated supervisors, educators, staff and volunteers follow the Safe arrival of children policy and procedures. • Ensure that copies of the policy and procedures are readily accessible to nominated supervisors, co-ordinators, educators and staff, and available for inspection. • Notify families at least 14 days before changing the policy or procedures if the changes will:affect the fees charged or the way they are collected or significantly impact the service's education and care of children or significantly impact the family's ability to utilise the service. • Maintain records of each risk assessment conducted under this regulation, and evidence of consultation, review and implementation.
Practice Manager	• ensuring the Safe Arrival and Departure Policy and procedures are current and comply with the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations, National Quality Standard and organisational requirements • monitoring compliance with this policy across all services through quality assurance processes, audits and service visits • providing guidance, advice and support to Coordinators, Responsible Persons and educators regarding the implementation of safe arrival and departure practices • ensuring systems and processes are in place to support accurate attendance records, active supervision and the safe release of children • supporting services to identify and manage risks associated with the arrival and departure of children and implementing continuous improvement strategies where required • ensuring incidents, complaints and identified non compliances relating to children's arrival and departure are reviewed, investigated where appropriate, and managed in accordance with organisational policies and legislative requirements • ensuring appropriate professional learning, resources and support are available to enable staff to implement this policy effectively • monitoring changes to legislation, regulations, recognised authorities and best practice and ensuring this policy is reviewed and updated accordingly • promoting a child safe culture where the safety, wellbeing and protection of children remain the highest priority during all arrival and departure procedures.

Roles	Responsibilities
Nominated Supervisor	• Implement the Safe arrival of children policy and procedures. • Ensure the safety, wellbeing, rights and best interests of children are prioritised in daily safe arrival practices. • Ensure that an attendance record is kept with: each child's name; the date and time they arrive and depart; and the signature of the person who delivers or collects the child, a nominated supervisor or educator (regulation 158). • Ensure that a risk assessment is conducted at least annually and in accordance with Division 6A 102AAC or as soon as practicable after becoming aware of any circumstance that may affect the safe arrival of children travelling between an education and care service and any other education or early childhood service • Identify and address any risks that a child's travel may pose, and clearly states who holds the duty of care for children during these periods of travel. • Take reasonable steps to ensure that educators and staff are aware of, access and use the risk assessment to manage risks and maintain the safety of children during periods of travel. • Ensure educators know which children are expected to arrive each session and have a process for checking expected attendance against actual attendance. • Ensure any child who is not present as expected is followed up immediately. • Implement systems so that children only leave the service premises: o If they are given into the care of a parent, an authorised nominee named in the child's enrolment record, or a person authorised by the parent or authorised nominee. o In accordance with the written authorisation of the child's parent or authorised nominee. o If they are taken on an excursion or on transportation provided or arranged by the service, with written authorisation from the parent or authorised nominee. o If they are given into the care of a person or taken outside the premises because the child requires medical, hospital or ambulance care or treatment, or because of another emergency (regulation 99). • Ensure that an enrolment record is kept for each child which contains the information set out in regulations 160 and 161, including authorisations from families. • Ensure all supervision requirements are met during travel to and from the service premises, including relevant educator to child ratios (regulations 122 and 123). • Communicate any changes to the travel routine (e.g. a different walking route is proposed due to inclement weather) to educators and staff. • Should any incidents occur relating to the safety of children during travel between the service and an education or early childhood service, (e.g. a child cannot be accounted for) ensure that the response meets all regulatory requirements, including implementing your Incident, injury, trauma and illness policy and procedures (regulations 86 and 87). • Ensure safe arrival procedures monitored and reviewed with educators to confirm they are understood and consistently followed.
Educators	• Are aware of and follow the Safe Arrival of Children policy and procedures. • Actively account for the safety, wellbeing, attendance and whereabouts of children during all arrival, departure, handover and travel periods. • Ensure that the attendance record is completed when children arrive and leave, including: each child's name; the date and time they arrive and depart; and the signature of the person who delivers/collects the child, a nominated supervisor or educator. • Must be aware of, access and use the risk assessment to manage risks and maintain the safety of children during periods of travel. • Check expected attendance lists against actual attendance and immediately investigate any discrepancy. • Should any incidents occur relating to the safety of children during travel between the service and any other education or early childhood service, (e.g. a child cannot be accounted for) ensure that the response meets all regulatory requirements, including implementing your Incident, injury, trauma and illness policy and procedures (regulations 86 and 87).

Roles	Responsibilities
	• Ensure that, when leaving the service, children are: o Given into the care of a parent, an authorised nominee named in the child's enrolment record, or a person authorised by the parent or authorised nominee o Given into the care of a person in accordance with the written authorisation of the child's parent or authorised nominee. • All supervision requirements are met during travel to and from the service premises, including relevant educator to child ratios (regulations 122 and 123). • Communicate any changes to the travel routine (e.g. a different walking route is proposed due to inclement weather) to other educators and the nominated supervisor. • Are aware of the requirements should any incidents occur and immediately escalate concerns where a child is late, missing, absent without notification, not handed over as expected, or cannot be accounted for. • Report any risks identified immediately to the nominated supervisor to ensure a new risk assessment is conducted to address these new identified risks. • Maintain active supervision and direct communication with other educators during transitions and handovers.
Parents / Guardians	• Are aware of and follow the Safe Arrival and Departure of Children policy and procedures. • Remain up to date with the service's practices related to the travel of children between the service and any other education or early childhood service, including knowledge of who holds the duty of care for children during periods of travel. • Provide authorisations in their child's enrolment form and ensure the information is kept up to date. • Complete the attendance record when their child arrives and leaves, including: their child's name; the date and time they arrive and depart; and their signature. • Communicate any changes to their circumstances that may impact the service's practices related to the travel of children between the service and any other education or early childhood service, for example if their child will be absent from school and will not be attending the service. • Provide written authorisation or authorised nominee should they require a person (other than the people listed in the enrolment record) to collect their child from the service. • Notify the service as soon as practicable if their child is absent, late, collected early, attending a different activity, or if travel arrangements change. • Ensure emergency contact details and authorised nominee information remain current.

National Quality Standards (NQS)

Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety		
2.2	Safety	Each child is protected.
2.2.1	Supervision	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard.
2.2.2	Incident and emergency management	Plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are developed in consultation with relevant authorities, practiced and implemented.
Quality Area 6: Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities		
6.2	Collaborative partnerships	Collaborative partnerships enhance children's inclusion, learning and wellbeing.
Quality Area 7: Governance and Leadership		
7.1	Governance	Governance supports the operation of a quality service that is child safe.
7.1.2	Management systems	Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service that is child safe.

Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations	
S. 2A	Paramount consideration—safety, rights and best interests of children
S. 3A	Paramount consideration
S. 165	Offence to inadequately supervise children
S.166A	Offence to subject child to inappropriate conduct Offences relating to inappropriate conduct
S. 167	Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards
S. 175	Offence relating to requirement to keep enrolment and other documents
S. 175H	Offences relating to possession or control of personal devices—approved providers and nominated supervisors
S. 175I	Offences relating to possession or control of personal devices—persons working directly with children
86	Notification to parents of incident, injury, trauma and illness
99	Children leaving the education and care service premises
102AAB	Safe arrival of children policies and procedures
102AAC	Risk assessment for the purposes of safe arrival of children policies and procedures
102C	Conduct a risk assessment for transporting children by the education and care service
102D	Authorisation for service to transport children
102E	Children embarking a means of transport – centre-based services
102F	Children disembarking a means of transport – centre-based services
122	Educators must be working directly with children to be included in ratios
123	Educator to child ratios
158	Children's attendance record must be kept by the approved provider
160	Child enrolment records to be kept by the approved provider and family day care educator
161	Authorisations to be kept in enrolment record
168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures
170	Policies and procedures to be followed
171	Policies and procedures to be kept available
172	Notification of change to policies or procedures

Related documents

CatholicCare policy

- *Child Safe Policy*

Children's Services Policies or Guidelines

- *Acceptance and Approval of Authority Policy*
- *Child Safe Environment Policy*
- *Delivery and Collection of Children Policy*

Forms

- *Extra-curricular Activity Permission Form*
- *ELC Extra-curricular Activity Permission Form*
- *Safe Arrival and Departure of Children in Extra Curricular Activities Risk Assessment*

Resources

External

- *Child Safe Standards (NSW)*
- *National Regulations | ACECQA*
- *National Law | ACECQA*
- *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child*
- *Guide to the National Quality Framework*

Glossary

ACECQA – Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authorities

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.

Active Supervision

A combination of observation, listening, risk assessment, positioning and engagement that enables educators to monitor children's safety and wellbeing at all times.

Authorised Nominee

A person nominated by a parent or guardian on the child's enrolment record who has authority to collect the child from the service and, where applicable, consent to the child's enrolment and education and care.

Child Paramountcy

Child paramountcy refers to the obligation to ensure that the best interests, safety, and wellbeing of children are paramount above all other considerations. All decisions, practices, and actions must prioritise the protection and wellbeing of children, particularly where competing interests exist.

ELC

All centre-based services for children aged 0-5 years including Long Day Care and Preschool services.

OSHC

Out of School Hours Care

Practice Manager

A practice manager oversees and supports a cluster of services within a local area. They work with the Nominated supervisor to ensure services operate safely, meet legal and quality requirements, and follow organisational policies. They do not work directly with children day to day.

Responsible person in charge

This is the Responsible Person that the Nominated Supervisor has determined to be in day to day charge in their absence.

Risk Assessment

A systematic process of evaluating the potential likelihood and consequences of risks that may be involved in a projected activity or undertaking.

Written permission

Written permission is ideally a signed note supplied in advance. However, in case of an emergency or last minute change to collection arrangements, a text message to the service's mobile phone or email will suffice.

Sign off and review

This document remains valid until it is either superseded by a new version or officially revoked.

CatholicCare values your input and welcomes feedback on this policy. Your suggestions help us improve and better support your work. Please send any feedback to policy.updates@catholiccaredbb.org.au.

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