



7.18 Car Restraints and Transport Policy

Policy number: 7.18
Date last reviewed: September 2023
Reviewed by: Child Care Team

This policy relates to	
National Quality Standards Early Childhood Education & Care	<p>QA</p> <p>2- Children’s Health and safety</p> <p>3.2.1 Outdoor and indoor spaces are organised and adapted to support every child’s participation and to engage every child in quality experiences in both built and natural environments.</p> <p>4.1 staffing arrangements enhance children’s learning and development.</p> <p>7.1.2 Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service.</p>
Policy relates to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incident, injury, trauma and illness • Dealing with medical conditions in children • Emergency and evacuation • Safe transportation of children • Providing a child safe environment • Nutrition, food and beverages, dietary requirements • Sun protection • Water safety • Sleep and rest for children • Acceptance and refusal of authorisations • Delivery of children to, and collection of children from, education and care service premises • Transport policy -7.18 (a) • Car restraint policy

Purpose

The service ensures that children in care who are transported in educators’ vehicle or other forms of transport are safely transported and securely restrained.

Background

In Australia, motor vehicle crashes are a major cause of child death and disability. Each year, an average of 850 children are seriously injured on Australian roads (Charlton 2005).

Child restraints play a vital role in reducing injury and death in children involved in car crashes. The death rate is reduced by 71% in infants and 54% in young children if they are properly restrained (WHO, 2004). Other studies of children involved in car crashes have also revealed that unrestrained children were three times more likely to be injured than children who were properly restrained in motor vehicles (Durbin et al, 2005) (Queensland Ambulance Service www.ambulance.qld.gov.au/25/10/13)

Policy

Mandatory Standard

The mandatory standard is based on AS/NZS 1754 and applies to all car restraints.

Children must only be transported in correctly installed and fitted car restraint. The correct car seat must be used for each child according to the standards.

It is the educator's responsibility to ensure that all children are correctly fitted with their car seat and that the seat belts are secure. Children are not to be responsible to fit themselves into car seats at any age.

New educators may be supplied with car seats and boosters initially for up to 6 months after which time educators are required to purchase their own car seats, boosters. It is important to only use car seats appropriate for the age of the child and to know the history of any second hand car seats.

Second Hand Restraints

- Has never been in an accident- recommended practice to gain a declaration from the supplier of the car seat stating the seat has not been in an accident;
- Seats must have the Australian standard label on it – AS/NZS 1754;
- The seat must be in good condition with no frayed or broken straps and buckles;
- The seat must come with the original instruction booklet.

It is essential that outings are discussed with parents and that written permission is received in advance. For regular outings, educators complete a "Regular Outing" form at the commencement of each year for parents to sign. Updates on this information should be provided to parents and the service as regular visits change due to new bookings or change of routines. For any outings not listed on the Regular Outings form, educators must obtain written permission from parents on an Outing form in advance and forward this form to the service. (Refer to 7.13 Play Sessions, Outings and Excursions Policy.)

It is important that risk assessment has occurred when ever children are going to be transported. This should include the route to be taken and any possible risks to children.

The educator should maintain attentive concern for the safety of the children at all times particularly when providing care away from the home. A first aid kit, emergency numbers, drinking water and nappy change supplies are also a requirement.

If educators are using their vehicle to transport children in care, the service sign listing contact number should be displayed at all times. Educators need to ensure this vehicle is maintained in a



safe and roadworthy condition with a yearly safety certificate provided to the service. The installation of children’s and infant restraints should also be checked annually with a certificate provided to the service.

The educator is responsible for checking the restraints of all children every time they are used so they are fitted correctly. It is also the educator’s responsibility to buckle the children into their car restraints or seat belts.

The child restraint check can be conducted by:

- Appointment with ambulance stations which have completed their course in Advice and Installation of Child Restraint Systems with ACRI (Australian child restraint resource initiative); **or**
- Certified Beaucare Coordinators.

Appropriate Restraints for Children by Age

The Queensland Government Transport and Main Roads law requires all children up to seven years of age to be correctly restrained according to their size and age. Appropriate restraints are as follows:

Babies

Babies aged 0 to six months must be secured in an approved rearward facing baby capsule or infant restraint that is properly fastened and adjusted.

Babies and Children

Babies and children aged between six months and four years of age must be secured in either an approved rearward facing child restraint or an approved forward facing child restraint with built-in harness that is properly fastened and adjusted. It is recommended that a baby remain in an approved infant restraint for as long as possible. Babies and all children are to be removed from car seats or capsules at the end of the journey, even if this means waking the child. It is not safe for children particularly infants to spend long periods of time in car seat, capsules or infant seats.

Children

Children who have reached four years of age must be secured in an approved booster seat with a H-harness or a booster seat with a secured adult lap/sash seatbelt that is properly fastened and adjusted. The child must be secured in this manner up until they turn seven years of age.

Code	Age	Indicative Weight	Child Restraint
CAP	0 to 6 months	less than 8 kgs	Rearward facing baby capsule or infant restraint
INF	6 mths to 1 yr.	8 to 12 kgs	Rearward or forward facing infant restraint
CR	6 mths to 4 yrs.	8 to 18 kgs	Forward facing child restraint with built-in harness
BH or BS	4 yrs to 7 yrs.	14 to 26 kgs	Booster seat with H-harness or a booster seat with a secured adult Seatbelt
S/Belt	Over 7 years		Adult seatbelt

The rules recognise that some children may be too large or too small for a specific type of child restraint:

- If a child is too small to move into the next level of restraint, they should be kept in the lower level restraint for as long as possible (for example, a child who has turned four but is too small for a booster seat should remain in a forward facing child restraint with a built-in harness).
- If a child is too large to fit into a child restraint specified for their age, the child may move into the next level of restraint. A child is too tall for a booster seat when the level of the child's eyes is above the level of the back of the booster seat.
- If a child has been supplied with a specific seat due to disability or health condition a letter from a doctor, specialist of disability services will be required. Manual of the restraint will be required to ensure it is being used correctly.

Seating Children in the Front Passenger Seat

Whether a child can sit in the front passenger seat will depend on the age of the child and whether there is more than one row of seats in the car.

Each educator is responsible to check their own car manual to determine if children under 12 years of age are safe to sit in the front seat of the vehicle or not. For some vehicles this applies only to children aged 12 years.

Seating Children where there are Two or More Rows of Seats

A child under four years of age **cannot** sit in the front seat of a vehicle that has more than one row of seats, even if the child is three years of age and large enough to sit in a booster seat. A child aged between four and seven years of age **cannot** sit in the front seat of a vehicle that has more than one row of seats, **unless** all the other seats are occupied by children less than seven years of age. In this situation the eldest child should always sit in the front seat and only if the car manual allows for this to occur depending on air bags and any other specifications.

Child restraints that are more than 10 years from the date of manufacture must not be used. Overseas child restraints cannot be used in Australia because they do not display the Australian Standards.

If a second-hand child restraint is used, educators are responsible for ensuring that it has not been involved in a car accident or damaged in any way that could cause it to be faulty.

Advice on fitting restraints may be obtained from RACQ hotline 1800 816 523 and Queensland Government and Main Roads www.transport.qld.gov.au/childrestraints. Instructions on the installation of scheme car seats are included in this policy.

Children Should Never be left Unattended in Cars

It is common for a fire to start spontaneously or through children playing with matches and lighters. For this reason, educators should follow strict procedures to ensure that children are **never** left alone in a vehicle even for brief periods of time. There are no exceptions to this requirement. Children should be removed from the vehicle even if an adult is standing nearby. Petrol should be purchased when children are not in care or by using a station with driveway service.

School Transport

If children are attending school, transport arrangements should be discussed with parents with a clear understanding of what method of transport is to be used including details of meeting places and times. If an educator is escorting children or collecting children from a school bus, waiting is recommended to occur on the same side of the road as where the bus stops, whether the educator is in a car or on foot. When transporting children to and from school, legal drop off and pick up zones or car parks must be used. Children must enter and exit the vehicle on the kerb side of the educator’s vehicle. The educator’s vehicle must be legally parked and stationary.

Bus Transport

If children are travelling by bus, the educator must have a documented bus transport form which outlines procedures to be followed in case a child does not get off the bus or has missed their stop, the form will include documenting the bus contact details and emergency process to follow.

Relevant Legislation

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 167

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011

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Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 165,167,174

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 100-102,168,166,176 National Quality Framework 2011

Section 165	Offence to inadequately supervise children
Reg 89	First aidkits
Reg 90	Medical conditionspolicy
Reg 99	Children leaving the education and care service premises
Reg 100	Risk assessment must be conducted before excursion
Reg 101	Conduct of risk assessment for excursion
Reg 102	Authorisations forexcursion
Reg 122	Educators must be working directly with children to be included in ratios
Reg 123	Educator to child ratios - centre-based services
Reg 123A	Family day care co-ordinator to educator ratios - family day care service
Reg 124	Numberofchildrenwhocanbeeducatedandcaredfor-familyday care educator
Reg 136	First aidqualifications
Reg 168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures
Reg 169	Additional policies and procedures – family day care service
Reg 170	Policies and procedures to be followed

Reg 171	Policies and procedures to be kept available
Reg 172	Notification of change to policies or procedures

Queensland Government Transport and Main Roads

www.transport.qld.gov.au/childrestraints

www.tmr.qld.gov.au/~media/a34d7a95-2ff5-4b5e-b57b47aeb515d0af/child_restraints_ganda.pdf

Key Resources

Excursions and regular outings –

<https://earlychildhood.qld.gov.au/legislationAndGuidelines/>

[PPOResources/Fact%20sheets/excursions-regular-outings-NQF.docx](#)

Guide to the National Quality Framework – <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/nqf/about/guide>

Plan your adventure – [https://www.acecqa.gov.au/newsletters/acecqa-newsletter-issue-1-](https://www.acecqa.gov.au/newsletters/acecqa-newsletter-issue-1-2015)

[2015](#) Risk assessment and management - <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/media/29421>

Template excursion risk assessment (Queensland) -

<https://earlychildhood.qld.gov.au/>

[legislationAndGuidelines/ECSactresources/Templates/ecs-excursion.doc](#)

Template excursion risk management plan – [https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2018-](https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2018-12/Excursionriskmanagementplan.docx)

[12/Excursionriskmanagementplan.docx](#)

ACCC Find out more: Keeping baby safe

www.accc.gov.au

RACQ

www.racq.com.au/motoring/cars/safer_cars/child_restraints

Queensland Ambulance Service

www.ambulance.qld.gov.au/

Queensland Transport, Safety

www.transport.qld.gov.au/childrestraints

Kid safe Queensland

www.kidsafeqld.com.au

www.kidsafeqld.com.au/images/stories/pdfs/inews.17679.1.pdf

Australian Car Restraint Initiative

www.acri.com.au/

[Appendix H: Safe Work Practices](#) – Attachment 8 InfaSecure Convertible Car Seat Manual (Models CS7110 series and CS7210 series)

[Appendix H: Safe Work Practices](#) – Attachment 9 InfaSecure Convertible Booster Seat Manual (Models GMA 2010 and GM 2010)