



## Road Safety

### **Children's Services Policy No 2.14**

**Date issued:** December 2018

**Replaces issue/policy:** Road Safety Long Day Care Policies 2003

**Date effective:** December 2018

**Date Reviewed:** August 2010; March 2012; April 2015; November 2015; and May 2019

#### **Aim:**

- To ensure that all families utilising Council's education and care services are able to arrive and depart in a safe manner.
- To provide educational experiences to children that will instil road sense and an understanding of the potential dangers as a road user.
- To assist the parents/guardians to implement road safety strategies as provided by Kidsafe NSW.

#### **Background Information:**

Young children are not able to identify the dangers associated with vehicles and roads. Children, due to their size and nature are vulnerable road users. Children are unpredictable and do not have the ability to anticipate the speed of vehicles or often the attention span to monitor traffic, until the approximate age of 10 years.

One child is run over in a driveway each week in Australia (1) Children aged 5 to 9 years are at greater risk of a road related injury due to their increased mobility, likelihood of being unsupervised, and lack of developmental skills necessary for crossing a road. Adult supervision and education programs are key strategies in ensuring children remain safe.

#### **Relevant Legislation:**

- Education and Care Services National Amendment Regulations (modified July 2018)
- Children (Education and Care Services National Law Application) Act 2010
- Road Transport (Safety and Traffic Management) Act 1999.

#### **Resources:**

- Kidsafe NSW [www.kidsafensw.org/road-safety/](http://www.kidsafensw.org/road-safety/)
- National Quality Standards - Quality Area 2, Standard 2.2, Element 2.2.1.

**Note:** In this policy "staff" refers to staff employed by Willoughby City Council and educators registered with Council's Family Day Care Scheme.

#### **Practices:**

When developing an education program for parents/guardians and children, there are several aspects of road safety that need to be covered to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the risks associated with being a road user. Pedestrian safety, Passenger safety, Driveway safety, Safe School travel, and Heat Stress in Cars will be the main focal points of these educational programs.

1 – Kidsafe NSW, Road Safety, Driveway Safety, February 2015.

**Pedestrian Safety General Information for Parents/guardians and Staff**

This involves crossing the road, developing an awareness of vehicles, using designated pedestrian crossings and traffic signals.

Children are vulnerable road users, anywhere where there is a potential for moving vehicles is a potentially dangerous traffic situation for children. This includes residential areas, car-parks, at traffic lights, along footpaths, pedestrian and other crossings, driveways, quiet streets, and busy streets.

Although children may think they can handle crossing a road by themselves, remember that children:

- Are easily distracted and focus on only one aspect of what is happening.
- Are smaller and harder for drivers to see.
- Are less predictable than other pedestrians.
- Cannot accurately judge the speed and distance of moving vehicles.
- Cannot accurately predict the direction sounds are coming from.
- Are unable to cope with sudden changes in traffic conditions.
- Do not understand abstract ideas - such as road safety.
- Are unable to identify safe places to cross the road and tend to act inconsistently in and around traffic ([www.kidsafensw.org/road-safety/pedestrian-safety/](http://www.kidsafensw.org/road-safety/pedestrian-safety/)).

### **Long Day Care and Family Day Care Practices**

Where children are taken from the service environment for the purpose of an excursion or local outing, staff and educators are required to implement the following strategies:

- A risk assessment must be performed prior to any excursion and a permission signed by parents/guardians.
- Prior to departing the service discuss road safety rules with the children.
- Explain to the children the expected behaviours during the walk.
- Ensure the staff to child ratio is adhered to, as stated in the Excursion Policy 3.2.
- Children will walk in lines and on the footpath and/or holding the pram.
- Ensure the children are walking in an orderly manner.
- Remain alert at all times.
- Staff will be familiar with the route that will be taken when walking the children.
- Undertake extreme care crossing all roads.
- Ensure children cross the road at the crossing or lights where available, and obey the road rules.
- Stop the group should there be any inappropriate behaviour, or identified hazards.
- Walks will be used as opportunities to talk with children about road safety.

### **Passenger Safety General**

Children are required to be appropriately restrained in a vehicle. For information on child restraints refer to Safe Transportation of Children Policy 2.13 or contact the Roads and Traffic Authority.

- Parents/guardians are required to restrain their child in their vehicle prior to leaving any of Council's education and care facilities or family day care homes.
- It is illegal for a person to be unrestrained in a vehicle.
- Children should be seated in the rear of the vehicle whenever there is a space available.
- The rear seat is the safest seat for children.

Often children will resist sitting in their child restraint, or want to sit in the front of the car. Parents/guardians need to be vigilant and avoid the temptation to allow a young child to be in the front seat, or for any child to travel unrestrained. Parents/guardians and staff can work

together to ensure children understand these key safety messages. Wearing a seat belt is the Law.

Staff and Family Day Care educators are to adhere to Council's Safe Transportation of Children Policy 2.13 when transporting children parents/guardians in their vehicles.

### **Driveway safety**

Driveways are a dangerous place for children. Children should be taught that a driveway is not a play area. Due to the volume of vehicles that are entering and leaving the driveway or a car park within a child care service parents/guardians are required to hold their child's hand when arriving at the centre and when leaving.

### **Parental Responsibilities**

When arriving and departing from a Council Education and Care Service or educator's home parents/guardians are responsible for:

#### **On arrival:**

- Entering the driveway approach with caution.
- Obeying speed zones, children are sure to be about.
- Turning off the engine and removing the car keys before getting out of the car.
- When helping their child out of the car, use the door closest to the kerb, walkway or building. This is the safest side of the car as it is away from the road and traffic. This door is referred to as the "Safety Door".
- Teaching the child to wait at the door until the parents/guardians is ready to move on. Often an effective strategy for little children is to have them place the palm of their hand on the safety door until they can hold parent/guardian's hand.
- Hold the child's hand as you walk to the service door.
- Parents/guardians **must not** leave any children in the car when they are taking their child in to the service. Leaving children in cars unattended is against the Law, and is extremely dangerous for your child. Children can be exposed to potentially dangerous situations, such as Heat Stress, abduction, or injury should another vehicle hit a parked car. It may be difficult to wake a sleeping baby; however, parents/guardians must not leave them or older children in the car.

#### **On Departure:**

- Hold the child's hand whilst walking through the service car park or driveway.
- Walk the child to the "Safety Door".
- Put the child in the car restraint or in the case of older children their seat belt. It is against the Law for any person to be in a car without a seat belt on.
- Before starting the engine look around to see who is near. There might be other children and adults in the immediate vicinity. Be aware of others.
- Fasten seat belt-many parents/guardians forget about their own safety.
- Drive slowly and cautiously out of the driveway.
- Obey speed zone.

### **Devonshire Street Children's Centre**

- Parents/guardians are requested to park in between the lines that show the designated parking space to allow other families to access the remaining spaces.
- The drive-way is 'One Way' with the entry being on Devonshire Street.
- Parents/guardians are asked to limit the time spent in the 5 minute drop off zone, as long stays in these spaces can cause congestion in the driveway. If parents/guardians wish to remain at the centre for longer, they are requested to park in the long term space.

**Artarmon Kids Cottage Community Centre – Artarmon OOSH.**

- The parking provided is for pick up/drop off purposes only; reverse park into designated spaces.
- Parking is patrolled and patrons may incur a fine if parked for prolonged periods of time.

#### **Trumper Pavilion – Chatswood OOSH**

- There are limited parking spaces at this venue.
- The car park is timed and patrolled by Council Rangers – encourage families to adhere to the signage displayed.
- Reverse Parking in designated spaces is encouraged where possible.
- Parents/guardians are asked to look for pedestrians on entry into the car park, and then if there are no pedestrians on approach, reverse park vehicles into a designated space. This will mean that drivers will not have to reverse out of the space, where their view of pedestrians may be obscured by other vehicles.
- Great care is required in this car park as there is also a community play space adjacent to the carpark, and no pedestrian footpath from the car park to the venue itself.

#### **Bales Park Pavilion – Bales Park OOSH**

- There are limited parking spaces at this venue.
- The car park is timed and patrolled by Council Rangers – encourage families to adhere to the signage displayed.
- Reverse Parking in designated spaces is encouraged where possible.
- Parents/guardians are asked to look for pedestrians on entry into the car park, and then if there are no pedestrians on approach reverse park vehicles into a designated space where possible. This will mean that drivers will not have to reverse out of the space, where their view of pedestrians may be obscured by other vehicles.
- Great care is required in this car park as there is also a preschool adjacent to car park and the oval is used for various sporting activities.

#### **Safe School Travel**

Due to the volume of vehicles and the number of pedestrians in one area this is a potentially dangerous time for children.

- When walking children to school, parents/guardians should always hold their child's hand to cross the road and use designated crossings.
- If driving, parents/guardians are encouraged to drop their child off and pick their child up from the school side of the road. Children should use the "Safety door", which is the door on the same side as the footpath, when getting in and out of the car.

#### **Out of school hours care services**

Staff undertake tremendous responsibility when dropping off and collecting children from school and on excursions. Both staff and children must be responsible for their own safety as well of the safety of others.

Council will not tolerate inappropriate risk taking behaviour from staff or children when walking to and from school and on excursions. Staff are required to role model appropriate safety rules and behavioural expectations of adults and children as road users.

OOSH services will ensure that the following strategies are implemented when walking children to and from school and on excursions:

- Assign adequate staff to walk with the children based on the number and abilities of children in attendance for the walk. The maximum ratio of staff to children is 1:15.
- Assign one staff member to walk at the front, and one at the back of the group of children (and middle if large numbers present).
- Children will walk on the footpath where available.

- Ensure the children are walking in an orderly manner.
- Remain alert at all times.
- Staff will be familiar with the route that will be taken when walking the children.
- Where possible staff will perform the walk prior to collecting the children to survey for potential dangers or obstructions and where possible remove the hazard. At this point the staff can assess if another route should be undertaken for greater safety.
- Undertake extreme care crossing all roads.
- Ensure children cross the road at the crossing or lights where available, and obey the road rules.
- Stop the group should there be any inappropriate behaviour, or identified hazards.
- Set expectations of appropriate behaviour from the children. Where these expectations are not followed and children place themselves or others at risk during the walk, staff may discuss these concerns with the parents/guardians.
- Daily walks will be used as opportunities to talk with children about road safety.

### **Education Programs**

- Parents/guardians are the ideal role models to assist children to understand road safely. Day to day experiences should be used to educate children on the dangers of the road, as well as how to use the road safely.
- Staff and educators will promote positive and appropriate road safety messages to children and families.
- The service will provide current and relevant information to families about road safety through posters, pamphlets and newsletters. Parents/guardians can use these as tools to talk to their children.
- Staff will incorporate road safety within the programme on a regular basis.
- Staff will use road safety kits, which include books, CD's, posters and discussion charts in educating children on road safety.
- Staff will use excursions and outings as an opportunity to discuss these issues with children. Staff will model appropriate road safety tips including talking to children about holding an adults hand, stop, look, listen, and wait along with walking on the footpath and across the road.
- Staff will ensure that the children are wearing helmets when riding bicycles, scooters or skateboards' at the service as a means of reinforcement of this road rule.