



Safe Arrival of Children

Policy Title	Safe Arrival of Children
Policy version	V1
Review Cycle	Annually
Last Review Date	
Implementation Date	August 2026
Next Review Date	July 2027

Policy Statement

SHARE OOSH is committed to ensuring the safe arrival of every child travelling between the Service and a school or other education and care setting. Through planned arrangements, effective communication, clearly defined responsibilities, accurate attendance information and active supervision, SHARE will take every reasonable precaution to protect children from harm and ensure they are accounted for throughout each transition.

Safe arrival is a shared responsibility between SHARE, families, children and relevant education and care services. SHARE will maintain service-specific procedures and risk controls that support reliable handover, the timely identification and resolution of attendance discrepancies, and an immediate and coordinated response where a child's whereabouts cannot be confirmed.

The safety, rights and best interests of each child are the paramount consideration in all decisions and actions under this policy.

Definitions

Acknowledged handover	A direct transfer of responsibility in which the person receiving the child is aware of, accepts and can account for the child. A child being physically nearby, entering a location or being assumed to have joined a group does not, by itself, constitute an acknowledged handover.
Attendance discrepancy	Any inconsistency between a child's physical presence, expected attendance, booking information, absence notification, electronic or printed roll, headcount or reported location.
Attendance record	The record required under regulation 158 that identifies each child and records the date and time the child arrives and departs, together with the required signature or verification.
Designated collection point	The agreed location at Summer Hill Public School where children are to present to SHARE educators, or from which SHARE educators directly collect children.
Education or early childhood service	A school, education and care service, children's service, or any other service that provides education or care to children.
Independent travel	An authorised arrangement where a child travels or departs without direct educator accompaniment. Independent travel requires written authorisation and must comply with SHARE's relevant policies, procedures and risk assessment requirements.
Missing or unaccounted child	A child whose location or safety cannot be immediately confirmed when they are expected to be in, entering, leaving or travelling between the care of SHARE and another education or early childhood service.
Positive accounting	A process that confirms each child's identity, presence and status through more than assumption. It includes matching attendance information with physical sighting, direct handover and headcounts at defined transition points.
Safe arrival	The planned and supervised process by which a child travels between SHARE and Summer Hill Public School and is safely received, accounted for and handed over.
Travel period	The period in which a child is moving between SHARE and Summer Hill Public School, including preparation, collection, handover, walking, entry and exit, and final reconciliation.
Written authorisation	Authorisation provided and retained in a form that meets the National Regulations and SHARE's Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations Policy.

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (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, practised and implemented.

QUALITY AREA 6: PARTNERSHIPS WITH FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

6.2	Collaborative partnerships	Collaborative partnerships enhance children's inclusion, learning and wellbeing.
6.2.1	Transitions	Continuity of learning and transitions for each child are supported by sharing information and clarifying responsibilities.

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.

Legislative And Regulatory References

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL LAW	
S 2A and 3A (NSW)	Paramount consideration - the safety, rights and best interests of children.
S 165	Offence to inadequately supervise children.
S 167	Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards.
S 175	Offence relating to requirement to keep enrolment and other documents.
EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS	
86	Notification to parents of incident, injury, trauma and illness.
87	Incident, injury, trauma and illness record.
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.
122	Educators must be working directly with children to be included in ratios.
123	Educator to child ratios - centre-based services.
158	Children's attendance record to be kept by the approved provider.
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 Policies

- Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations Policy
- Administration of First Aid Policy
- Delivery and Collection of Children Policy
- Emergency and Evacuation Policy
- Enrolment and Orientation Policy
- Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy
- Providing a Child Safe Environment Policy
- Safe Use of Digital Technologies and Online Environments Policy
- Staffing Policy
- Supervision of Children Policy

Purpose

This policy establishes SHARE OOSH's framework for ensuring the safe arrival and handover of children travelling between the Service and Summer Hill Public School, or between SHARE and another education or care service. It applies to before-school delivery, after-school collection and any other agreed arrangement involving a child travelling or being handed over between services.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- clearly define the roles and responsibilities of SHARE, families and relevant education or care services;
- ensure children are actively supervised, safely handed over and accurately accounted for throughout each transition;
- establish effective communication, attendance and reconciliation arrangements;
- identify and manage risks associated with children's travel through a service-specific risk assessment; and
- provide a clear and timely response where a child does not arrive as expected or their location cannot be confirmed.

Guiding Principles

SHARE OOSH is guided by the following principles when implementing this policy:

- **Children's safety and wellbeing are paramount** – The safety, rights and best interests of each child guide all decisions relating to their travel and handover, procedures and any operational changes.

- **Duty of care must be clear** – Responsibility for each child must be clearly understood and formally transferred at each stage of arrival, departure and travel.
- **Roles and systems must be reliable** – Educators must have clear responsibilities, appropriate training and access to accurate information and effective communication systems.
- **Practice must be risk-informed** – Safe arrival arrangements must reflect the service's context, children's individual needs and identified risks, and be regularly reviewed.

Procedures

1. Safe Arrival Arrangements

SHARE will:

- maintain documented arrangements for children travelling between SHARE and Summer Hill Public School, and for any other agreed travel between SHARE and an education or early childhood service;
- clearly identify the collection point, route, supervision arrangements, handover process and the point at which duty of care transfers;
- ensure children are actively supervised and positively accounted for throughout each arrival, departure, handover and travel period;
- allocate sufficient educators, considering the number, ages, developmental stages and individual needs of children, the environment and route, and educators' experience and capacity to respond;
- ensure attendance records, family communications, authorisations, medical information and other relevant information are current and available to educators responsible for the collection and travel period;
- maintain contingency arrangements for foreseeable disruptions, including attendance or communication system failures, staffing changes, altered collection arrangements and route changes;
- use direct and acknowledged handovers rather than relying on assumptions that a child has entered or left another person's care; and
- require written authorisation and additional planning for any non-standard arrangement, including independent travel or travel involving another service or activity provider.

Detailed arrangements for before-school delivery, after-school collection and other forms of travel are set out in the relevant Safe Arrival of Children Procedures and risk assessments.

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2. Risk Assessment and Planning

SHARE will:

- maintain a service-specific risk assessment for each regular arrangement involving children travelling between SHARE and an education or early childhood service;
- consider children's age, developmental stage and individual needs, including disability, medical, behavioural, communication or mobility needs, together with the route, environment, handover points, supervision requirements and educator capability;
- clearly identify who holds duty of care during each stage of the travel period;
- document communication arrangements between SHARE, families and the relevant education or early childhood service, including how changes and attendance discrepancies will be managed;
- include procedures for responding when a child is missing, unaccounted for or does not arrive as expected;
- consult with educators, families, children where appropriate, and the relevant education or early childhood service when developing and reviewing the risk assessment;
- review the risk assessment at least annually and whenever an incident, change or new circumstance may affect children's safety; and
- update the policy, procedures and control measures as soon as practicable when a new or changed risk is identified.

Staff responsible for implementing safe arrival arrangements must have access to, understand and follow the current risk assessment.

3. Attendance, Handover, and Reconciliation

SHARE will:

- maintain accurate and current attendance information;
- physically sight and identify each child as they enter or leave SHARE's care;
- record each child's arrival and departure in accordance with regulatory requirements;
- use direct and acknowledged handovers where responsibility transfers between SHARE and another person or service;
- complete headcounts and reconcile them against the attendance record at designated transition points; and
- ensure any difference between the attendance record, physical headcount or reported location of a child is resolved or formally escalated before the group leaves the collection or handover point.

Electronic attendance records support, but do not replace, active supervision, physical sighting and reconciliation processes.

4. Child Does Not Arrive or Cannot Be Accounted For

Where a child expected to attend does not arrive at the designated collection point, SHARE will:

1. **Reconcile** - check current attendance and booking information, absence notifications, recent changes and relevant service communications.
2. **Verify and search** - check the designated collection area and agreed school locations and confirm relevant attendance or early collection information with the school.
3. **Maintain supervision** - ensure all other children remain actively supervised while checks or searches are undertaken.
4. **Contact** - notify the Responsible Person and contact the SHARE office, family, school office, and authorised emergency contacts as required.
5. **Escalate** - where the child's whereabouts cannot be promptly established and their safety cannot be confirmed, call 000 and activate the missing or unaccounted child response.
6. **Document** - record the checks, communications, decisions and outcome, and complete any required incident and regulatory notifications. Notify Business Manager / Approved Provider.

Where a child presents to SHARE but their booking or attendance status cannot immediately be confirmed, the child will remain supervised while the discrepancy is resolved.

Detailed operational steps and responsibilities are set out in the Safe Arrival of Children Staff Procedures.

5. Communication, Records and Continuous Improvement

SHARE will:

- maintain clear communication with families, educators and relevant education or early childhood services about safe arrival arrangements, changes and responsibilities;
- ensure current policies, procedures, risk assessments and related resources are accessible to staff;
- keep required attendance, authorisation, incident and risk assessment records;
- communicate changes to procedures, routes, collection points or supervision arrangements before they are implemented, where practicable;

- review incidents, near misses and identified risks to determine whether changes are required;
and
- consult with staff, families, children and relevant services as part of ongoing review.

The policy and related procedures will be reviewed at least annually, and earlier where legislation, service arrangements, identified risks or incidents require changes.

Roles and Responsibilities

ROLE	RESPONSIBLE FOR
Approved Provider	• ensuring SHARE meets its obligations under the National Law and Regulations; • ensuring current safe arrival policies, procedures and risk assessments are in place; • taking reasonable steps to ensure staff understand and follow these requirements; • ensuring systems support accurate attendance, supervision, handover and accountability; • ensuring relevant educators, families, children and education or early childhood services are consulted when developing or reviewing this policy, procedures and risk assessment, and that consultation is documented; • ensuring sufficient staffing, training, equipment and resources are available for each travel period; • ensuring identified risks, incidents and near misses result in appropriate review and corrective action; and • ensuring required records are maintained and notifications are made where necessary.
Nominated Supervisor	• implementing this policy, related procedures and risk assessments; • ensuring safe arrival arrangements clearly identify who holds duty of care at each stage; • ensuring appropriate staffing, supervision and role allocations are in place; • ensuring educators have access to current attendance, authorisation, medical and communication information; • ensuring staff are inducted, trained and competent to perform their allocated roles; • overseeing responses to incidents, attendance discrepancies and missing or unaccounted children; • ensuring required records, family notifications and regulatory notifications are completed; and • reviewing arrangements and implementing corrective actions when risks or changes are identified.
Responsible Persons	• overseeing the safe arrival procedures during each session;

	• confirming that roles are allocated to suitable educators before travel begins; • ensuring current attendance records, communications, medication and required equipment are available; • supporting educators to resolve attendance or handover discrepancies; • ensuring children remain appropriately supervised while checks or searches are undertaken; • coordinating communication with families, the school, the Nominated Supervisor and emergency services where required; • ensuring incidents, near misses and departures from procedure are documented; and • escalating any matter that cannot be safely resolved within their authority.
Educators	• understanding and following this policy, the relevant procedures and risk assessment; • carrying out their allocated role and maintaining active supervision throughout the travel period; • using current attendance information and accurately recording children's arrival and departure; • physically accounting for children at required handover and reconciliation points; • immediately reporting and escalating any attendance discrepancy, missing child or departure from procedure; • communicating relevant changes or concerns to the Responsible Person and other educators; and • completing required incident and other records.
Families	• being aware of and following SHARE's safe arrival arrangements; • providing current enrolment, contact and authorisation information; • notifying SHARE as soon as possible if their child will be absent, collected early or subject to any change affecting their expected attendance or travel; • providing written authorisation for non-standard travel or handover arrangements; • ensuring their child understands where and when to meet SHARE educators; and • promptly responding when SHARE contacts them about an attendance discrepancy or emergency.
Other Staff	• maintaining accurate booking, attendance, enrolment and contact information within their role; • promptly communicating bookings, absences, changes and relevant family messages to the educators and Responsible Person; • maintaining current versions of policies, procedures, risk assessments and related records;

	• supporting communication with families, the school and emergency services when directed; and • reporting any error, system issue or communication failure that may affect a child's safe arrival.
Students/Volunteers	• following this policy and educators' directions; • participating in relevant induction before accompanying children during a travel period; • remaining under the supervision of an educator; • promptly reporting any concern, discrepancy or unaccounted child to an educator; and • maintaining confidentiality and professional conduct.
Summer Hill Public School	• participating in agreed collection, handover and communication arrangements with SHARE; • providing attendance or early collection information when required to account for a child; • identifying an appropriate contact for attendance discrepancies or emergencies; • communicating significant changes that may affect agreed collection or handover arrangements, where practicable; and • supporting agreed responses where a child cannot be accounted for.

Induction and Ongoing Training

All staff, including casual and relief educators, must be inducted in this policy, the related procedures and current risk assessment before participating in safe arrival arrangements. Students and volunteers must receive relevant instruction and remain under educator supervision.

Training will include:

- duty of care, role allocation and handover responsibilities;
- attendance records, physical headcounts and reconciliation;
- responding to attendance discrepancies and missing or unaccounted children;
- communication with families, SHPS and the Responsible Person;
- contingency arrangements for system, staffing or communication failures; and
- the specific risks and controls identified in the current risk assessment.

Refresher or additional training will be provided:

- at least annually;
- when policies, procedures, routes or arrangements change;

- following an incident, near miss or identified practice gap;
- before an educator undertakes an unfamiliar or critical safe arrival role; and
- when an educator returns after an extended absence.

The Nominated Supervisor will ensure training and competency records are maintained and that staff can practically implement the procedures, not only confirm that they have read them. This supports ACECQA's expectation that all educators, including casual and relief staff, are aware of and able to implement the procedures.

Monitoring, Evaluation, and Review Process

Monitoring

The Nominated Supervisor and Responsible Persons will monitor implementation of this policy and the related procedures through:

- observation of safe arrival practices;
- review of role allocations, attendance records and reconciliation checks;
- staff feedback and supervision discussions;
- review of incidents, near misses, discrepancies and departures from procedure; and
- confirmation that current procedures and risk assessments are accessible and being followed.

Any identified gap will be addressed promptly through clarification, supervision, training or corrective action.

Evaluation

The effectiveness of this policy and related procedures will be evaluated by considering:

- whether children are consistently supervised, handed over and accounted for;
- whether staff understand and perform their responsibilities;
- whether attendance and communication systems are accurate and reliable;
- whether identified risks and control measures remain appropriate;
- feedback from staff, families, children and relevant education or early childhood services; and
- findings from incidents, near misses, complaints, audits or regulatory feedback.

Evaluation outcomes will inform changes to procedures, training, staffing arrangements, resources and risk controls.

Review

This policy, its procedures and the Safe Arrival of Children Risk Assessment will be formally reviewed at least annually and earlier where:

- an incident or new risk is identified;
- travel, collection, route or handover arrangements change;
- monitoring or evaluation identifies a gap;
- legislation, regulations or regulatory guidance change; or
- consultation indicates that current arrangements are no longer effective.

Where a risk assessment identifies a new or changed risk, the policy and procedures will be updated accordingly.

Staff will be consulted as part of the review process and families will be invited to provide feedback.

Where changes to this policy may have a significant impact on the service's provision of education and care or families' ability to utilise the service, families will be notified in accordance with Regulation 172.

Updates to this policy will be endorsed by the Approved Provider/Management Committee and communicated to staff. Staff will be required to acknowledge updated versions where applicable.

Consultation Record

Consultation undertaken in the development and review of this policy, related procedures and risk assessment will be documented below.

Date	Person / group consulted	Method	Feedback received	Changes made	Reason changes were / weren't made