Transportation
Policy/Procedure

Ensure the safety of children being transported to and from Head Start. Inform parents of the transportation policies and procedures. Transportation may not be available in all areas.

*Training: Parents and children will receive bus safety training within 30 days of starting the program. Bus Monitors and Drivers will receive training in all safety procedures before being allowed to perform job duties.

Policy/Procedure:

On the pick-up route…

1. The parent will be asked to have their child ready and watch for the bus.
2. The parent will display the provided bus sign in clear view for the bus driver (visible window); this tells the driver to STOP – your child IS going to Head Start or to GO – your child WILL NOT be attending that day.
3. The bus will wait up to two (2) minutes and may honk the horn. If the parent does not acknowledge, the bus will leave and the adult will be responsible to transport the child to the center.
4. When it is necessary to pick up a child on the opposite side of the street, the child MUST BE ESCORTED BY AN ADULT (Parent or Designee at the home). Children are not to be left unattended at any time. The bus driver cannot leave the children on the bus unattended.

On the drop-off route…

1. A parent or another responsible contact MUST BE AT HOME AND MAKE THEIR PRESENCE KNOWN to the driver prior to the child leaving the bus. The parent or guardian must complete an “Arrowhead Head Start Busing Information Form” to identify a list of approved people who have permission to receive the child from the bus. Anyone not recognized by staff must present photo identification before the child can be left in their care. Due to varying staff and drivers assigned to buses, it is strongly encouraged that all people taking children off the bus have a photo identification with them every time. (People allowed to receive the child from the bus must be 11 years of age or older. If the child cannot be dropped off, the bus driver will contact Transit Dispatch and the Head Start will be notified.)
2. In such cases where a responsible adult is not making their presence known, the Bus Monitor may come to the door if the parent is not visible. If the Bus Monitor must leave the bus to approach the home, the Bus Monitor will complete the Bus Reporting form. Parents/Emergency contacts will be notified and will be expected to pick-up their child at the classroom.

Changes to the route…

1. Route changes may ONLY occur through the direction of the Head Start office. Route changes may only occur if: 1) there is an EXTREME EMERGENCY (either a death in the family or hospitalization incident), (2) if Head Start changes a child’s program, or (3) if a parent’s work or school schedule changes on a permanent basis (permanent basis = 2 weeks or more).
2. Route changes need to be made with a minimum of 2 days notice by calling the Head Start office at 1-800-662-5711 ext. 7351 or 218-748-7351.
3. Head Start is not able to accept ANY transportation changes left on the office voicemail/answering machines.
4. Once a transportation change is made through the Head Start Office, it will be the parents’ responsibility to also notify classroom staff of the change.

**Safety concerns**
Our number one concern is the safety of all Head Start children. Children are expected to behave appropriately on the bus to ensure everyone’s safety. If necessary, a BUS REPORT form will be completed by the Bus Monitor if concerns arise regarding the child’s behavior. Children who are consistently unable to ride the bus safely may lose bus privileges.

To ensure no children are left on the bus the Bus Driver and the Bus Monitor will complete a sweep of the bus once the route is completed.

Any changes to the Bus Form must be initiated by the parent.

Because a bus can break down, have a malfunctioning heater or an accident, children must be appropriately dressed for cold weather. If a Bus Monitor believes that a child is not dressed appropriately for the cold, she will complete the AHS Bus Policy and Report form indicating her concern. A Bus Monitor needs to also consider whether the lack of proper clothing constitutes child neglect and, if so, must report the neglect to Social Services.

**Bus Driver and Bus Monitor training…**
Arrowhead Transit drivers receive training, licenses and certifications that meet all Federal and State guidelines for public bus transit. Centers where daily transportation is offered to children will have one assigned monitor per bus plus one back-up monitor in case of illness or absence of the assigned monitor. Both assigned and back-up monitors will receive Child Passenger Restraint System Training from an instructor certified by the MN Dept. of Public Safety, Office of Traffic Safety, every five years.

In centers where busing is offered, three bus evacuation drills will be conducted during the Head Start year. A bus evacuation drill will also be conducted before each first field trip when a bus is used to transport children from centers where regular transportation is not offered.

*See Arrowhead Head Start Bus Policy and Report Form and Arrowhead Head Start Busing Information Form in Appendix A*
Approved by Policy Council on _6-12-18_.
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