

Tocumwal Pre-School

SECTION: 2 - Children's Health and Safety

POLICY NO: 2.1.2

POLICY: Arrival & Departure

REVIEW DATE:

DATE OF APPROVAL:

Introduction

It is the responsibility of staff and families to ensure the safe arrival and departure of children at the centre and the completion of statutory documentation. Practical and safe approaches will promote a smooth transition between home and the centre, assure the completion of the required records and confirms children's presence or absence from the service. Settling a child into a child care environment takes time and consistency from both staff and families. Helping children have predictable routines at arrival and departure times along with familiar staff, assists children to build confidence in their social skills and in their interactions with staff, peers and their surroundings enabling children to feel safe, secure and supported. Arrival and departure times encourage families to interact in the Centre environment, build relationships, open communication networks and enhance confidence in the staff and the Director. Children develop a sense of belonging to groups and communities and an understanding of the reciprocal rights and responsibilities necessary for active community participation.

Goals – What are we going to do?

- An accurate record of child attendance is critical to ensure that there is a record of the children being cared for or educated by the service and that the correct child/staff ratios are being met by the service.
- Practical and safe approaches to the delivery and collection of children at the education and care service will promote a smooth transition between home and the service, assure the completion of the required records and confirms the child's presence or absence from the service. This ensures a child's arrival and departure at the service continues their safe care and custody and that the service is meeting its duty of care obligations under the law.
- Support children in settling into the centre each day to experience quality education and care through continuity of educators and positive interactions within the community of the service. This will be facilitated through staff rosters and regular casual staff.
- The Service endeavours to provide a consistent and predictable environment for families at arrival and departure times.

**National Quality Framework, Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety
Standard 2.3 Each child is protected**

- 2.3.1 Children are adequately supervised at all times
- 2.3.2 Every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and hazard likely to cause injury

National Quality Framework Quality Area 7: Leadership and service management

Standard 7.1 Effective leadership promotes a positive organizational culture and builds a professional learning community

- 7.1.3 Every effort is made to promote continuity of educators and coordinators at the service
- 7.3.1 Records and information are stored appropriately to ensure confidentiality, are available from the service and are maintained in accordance with legislative requirements.

Strategies - How will it be done?

The Approved Provider will ensure:

- On enrolment parents/guardians provide the names of two people who are authorised nominees for the purpose of collecting their child/ren from the service.
- A record of attendance, kept at the centre, includes full name of each child attending, arrival and departure times, signature of the person who delivers and collects the child or the nominated supervisor or educator.
- A child will leave the centre only with a parent, authorised nominee, an authorised delegate as a part of an excursion or because the child requires medical care. **Please note:** Both parents have lawful authority of their children and are consequently permitted to remove children from the centres' care unless a Magistrates Court or Family Law Court make different orders prohibiting contact with the child. Court orders must be provided to the service and will be stored with the child's enrolment information.

The Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 state that the approved provider of an education and care service must ensure that a record of attendance is kept for the service that—

- records the full name of each child attending the service; and
- records the date and time each child arrives and departs; and
- is signed by one of the following persons at the time that the child arrives and departs—
 - the person who delivers the child to the education and care service premises or collects the child from the education and care service premises;

(ii) the nominated supervisor or an educator.

In this regulation the person who collects the child must be authorised to do so by a parent or authorised nominee named in the child's enrolment record (See Section 6, Appendix 1 Enrolment Form & Section 2, policy 2.1.1 Custody arrangements & access

The Nominated Supervisor or responsible person will in addition to these records:

- Review the Sign In and Out Sheet. Where parents or authorised persons have not signed in a staff member will note that the child is in attendance. Families will be reminded to complete this record.
- Prior to closing the centre, two staff members verify all children have been signed out of the centre. If a child is not signed out educators/ staff members will check all areas of the centre to ensure no child remains. This will be recorded on the attendance sheet.
- Request a Verbal Collection Authorisation Form from the family prior to allowing anyone other than those listed on the enrolment form to collect a child from the service.
- Ensure children do not leave the education and care service premises except in accordance with the National Regulations (for example, with a parent, on an authorised excursion, or for emergency medical treatment).
- Allow a child to leave the centre only with an authorised person who appears able to appropriately care for the child. Educators and staff will always act in the interest of safety for the child, themselves and other children in the care and education service. It is at the educators' discretion to determine if they believe an authorised person is unable to appropriately care for the child based on the individual case and circumstances
- On orientation, and on the first day of enrolment, families will be reminded that all children need to be signed in and out as part of legal requirements by the Department of Education and Communities (DEC). Families will also be informed that Centre sign on sheets will be used for emergency evacuations and need to be completed by families both on arrival and on departure from the Centre.
- Roster staff to ensure continuity of care for the families and children throughout the day. The Centre will have a casual pool of regular casual staff available in the absence of a staff member.
- Ensure all staff members have photos available in the entry area to who will be working in all areas and shift times.

Families/family member or delegated authority will:

- On enrolment parents/guardians are to provide the names of two people who are authorised nominees for the purpose of collecting their child/ren from the service.

- Authorised Nominees must be over 18 years of age to sign a child out. Older siblings who are not 18 years or over are not able to sign a child out.
- Sign each child in and out of the service upon arrival and at the time of departure, on Record of Attendance with a full signature.
- Remain responsible for their child whilst they are on the education and care premises.
- Leave your child(ren) in the direct care of a staff member
- Communicate any changes of routine with staff. It is important that staff and families communicate regarding medication, change of routine, a person other than a known authorised adult picking up a child or a change in time of arrival or departure for a child. These must be known by staff to ensure the safety and wellbeing of each child.
- Ensure educators are aware your child has been collected from the service.
- Provide the service with any court orders relating to your child.

Educators and staff will:

- Set the environment with familiar areas for children to enjoy when they are settling into care. Changes in the environment will be discussed with children and families to promote consistency and to help children feel secure in their setting.
- Greet families and find out about the child's needs for the day and record any communication in relevant communication book
- Ensure the safe and documented arrival and departure of children at the Centre by checking that each child has been signed in and out of the Centre by an authorised adult
- In instances when a parent or authorised nominee has not signed the child in, a staff member will sign that the child is in attendance.
- Provide a supportive and welcoming environment for children and families to assist with separation and settling.
- Welcome families at the conclusion of the day and communicate about the child's day. Any important messages will be passed on to families, including any changes in the child's routine, accident reports or medication needs.
- Ensure the Centre environment will be set up with familiar areas for children to go to when they are settling into care. Changes in the environment will be discussed with children and families to ensure all needs are being met and there is consistency to help children feel secure in their setting.
- Unfamiliar authorised Nominees will be required to show photo ID to educators prior to collecting and signing out child/ren.
- Staff members are to check the name on the photo ID against the list of approved persons to collect a child and sign the roll in completion. A person is not allowed to collect a child if they do not have ID, or if the ID does not match the authorisation list.

- If the educator cannot confirm that the person trying to collect the child is authorised to collect the child, the child's parents will be contacted immediately.
- Follow all service procedures regarding the delivery and collection of children

Educators and staff will always act in the interest of safety for the child, themselves and other children in the care and education service. If staff members are concerned for the safety of a child or do not consider that a person is in a fit state to take responsibility for a child, they will exercise their duty of care by not allowing the child to be removed from the service by that person. In this circumstance, staff will contact an authorised nominee to collect the child. Situations when this may occur include:

- when a parent or other person who is authorised to collect the child seems to be ill or affected by drugs or alcohol and does not appear to be able to safely care for the child; and
- when a young person who is authorised to collect the child, for example a sibling, does not seem sufficiently mature to safely care for the child.

Arrival and departure times encourage families to interact in the environment, build relationships, open communication networks and ensure the safety of children when being delivered and collected from the service.

Statutory Legislation & Considerations

- National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and Care and School Age Care, Council of Australian Governments December 2011
- Education and Care Services National Amended Regulations 2014, Regulation 99,158-159,168(2)(f), 176
- Family Law Act 1975 (Cth), as amended 2011
- Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998

Sources

- Early Years Learning Framework
- Community Child Care Co-operative Ltd. (NSW)
- Department of Education – www.education.gov.au
- Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) www.acecqa.gov.au