

Delivery and Collection of Children Policy and Procedure

Preschool



Introduction	<p>Children are considered to be under the care of an education and care service at the point the service is taken to assume responsibility for their care and wellbeing. At this point the National Law and National Regulations apply.</p> <p>This policy outlines the requirements for children's services programs under the Education and Care Services National Regulations and includes procedures for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The authorised delivery and collection of children. • When a child arrives to the children's service unaccompanied or in the company of a person under the age of 16 years. • The collection of a child by a person other than parent/guardian. • The attempted collection of a child by an unauthorised person. • The late or non-collection of children. • The collection of a child by an adult who may place the child's wellbeing at risk. • Parental Orders or court orders inclusive of AVO/DVO.
Outcome Area	<p>Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reasonable steps are taken to identify and manage risks, and everyday reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and hazards. <p>Quality Area 7: Leadership and Service management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Records and information are stored appropriately to ensure confidentiality, are available from the service and are maintained in accordance with legislative requirements. • Service practices are based on effectively documented policies and procedures that are available at the service and reviewed regularly
Eligibility	<p>This Policy applies to all staff employed by Learning Links. The term staff also applies to students, interns, and volunteers.</p>
Policy	<p>Accurate arrival and departure documentation is a legislated requirement in all services approved by the Regulatory Authority. Maintaining current accurate arrival and departure records ensures successful implementation of efficient emergency responses to incidents and ensures the preschool can effectively maintain children's health and safety.</p> <p>A child may only leave the education and care service under any of the following conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A parent/ guardian or authorised nominee collects the child and/or provides authorisation for another individual to collect a child • A parent/ guardian or authorised nominee provides written authorisation for a child to attend an excursion. • The child requires medical, hospital or ambulance treatment, or there is another emergency. <p>Educators and staff are required to adhere to Court Orders, AVO/DVO, parental plans pertaining to individual children. Both parents have equally lawful authority of their children and are consequently permitted to remove children from the service's care unless a Magistrates Court, Family Law Court or an interim DVO issued by police prohibits contact with the child. Court orders must be provided to the service and stored with the child's enrolment information.</p>
Definitions	<p>Authorised person A person who is authorised by a parent/legal guardian of the child to collect the child from the service.</p> <p>Unauthorised person A person who is not authorised by a parent/legal guardian of the child to collect the child from the service. Or a parent/guardian/individual who is prohibited from access/collection of a child.</p>

Procedures

Procedure where an individual collecting a child could place the child's wellbeing at risk (e.g. , under the influence)

When children are leaving the service, staff have a duty of care to ensure the child is going into the supervision of an authorised person who is able to supervise and care for the child appropriately.

Step 1.

Staff will notify the Nominated Supervisor (or Responsible Person) when a parent/legal guardian or authorised person arrives at the service who may be affected by:

- Alcohol/drugs
- Experiencing a mental health de-regulation and /or
- Is carrying a weapon.

Staff are required to advise the individual that another person should attend to collect the child and the guardian to support their wellness and wellbeing.

Step 2.

If the parent/legal guardian or authorised person leaves the service with the child and places them at risk of harm, staff record the vehicle number plate (if possible) and ring the police to advise of risk to child and guardian and to explain the incident.

Staff are required to contact the other parent/guardian listed on the Enrolment Form to inform them of what occurred.

Step 3.

Following the child leaving the service, staff are required to take the following steps:

- Contact the parent who collected the child to confirm their safety.
- Inform the Nominated Supervisor or Responsible Person on site at the time.
- Document the interaction on the Record of Conversation and store on the child's file.
- Follow the Child Safe Mandatory Reporting Procedure.
- Work through the Mandatory Reporting Guide (MRG) to confirm if a mandatory report should be lodged.
- Lodge a mandatory report with DCJ via the ChildStory website in the event that this is the outcome of the Decision Tree report.
- Upload the outcome of the Decision Tree against the child's file in Salesforce.

Procedure for Parental Orders

When Learning Links is notified by the person with parental responsibility that court orders or parenting plans apply to their enrolled child the Nominated Supervisor (or delegate) will ensure that the following procedures below are followed:

Step 1.

The parents/persons with parental responsibility will:

- Produce original court orders containing details of restrictions of contact with children e.g. restraining orders, custody papers, parenting plan either prior to the child's commencement in the program or as the parental orders are made; and
- Supply a photograph of person/s named in court order (if possible).

Step 2.

If residence or restriction of contact orders apply, then the Nominated Supervisor or delegate of the children's service is required to:

- Interview the parent or person who has parental responsibility during the child's program attendance days;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ascertain relevant history, especially in relation to violent incidents by restrained party and any previous ‘Apprehended Violence Orders’ issued; • Keep a dated copy and amendments of court orders and parenting plans on the child’s file; and • Ensure staff working with the child and any other relevant Learning Links staff are aware of the procedures and relevant safety issues for such families. <p>Step 3. The Nominated Supervisor recommends to the custodial parent that the courts orders include detail regarding the restricted parent’s access to the child whilst attending the children’s service.</p> <p>Step 4. The Preschool staff must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure they are conversant with any court orders held; and • Ensure that access allowed is in accordance with court orders or parenting plans held. • Document an emergency action plan to be followed in the case of a non-custodial parent attempting access to the child whilst in the children’s service where this is not allowed according to the court orders in our possession. The plan will include a photograph of the non-custodial parent (wherever possible), contact details of the custodial parent and clear steps for staff to follow during an illegal access attempt. A copy of this plan will be kept discretely near a telephone. <p>If court orders or parenting plans are not held, requests for access cannot be denied to any parent as long as there are no current concerns that the child is at risk of harm.</p>
<p>Roles and Responsibilities</p>	<p><u>Approved Provider</u> Ensure the service operates in line with the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations regarding the delivery and collection of children at all times.</p> <p><u>Nominated Supervisor</u> Provide supervision, guidance and advice to ensure adherence to the policy at all times.</p> <p>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, on transportation as authorised, or for emergency medical treatment).</p> <p>Ensure that a parent of a child being educated and cared for by the service may enter the premises at any time when the child is being educated and cared for by the service – except when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permitting entry would pose a risk to the safety of children and staff or conflict with any duty of the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor or educator under the National Law, or • The Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor reasonably believes that permitting the parent’s entry would contravene a court order. • Ensure an authorised person (as defined in the National Law) does not remain at the service while children are present unless the person is under direct supervision or is an authorised person. <p>Provide enrolled families with information from this policy and procedure.</p> <p><u>Educators and Staff</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure accuracy of attendance records at all times. • Be available for individual greeting and settling of children. • Provide a supportive and welcoming environment for children and families to assist with separation and settling. • Follow all service procedures regarding the delivery, collection and transportation of children.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greet and farewell parents and caregivers directly. • Assume responsibility for signing that the child is in attendance in those instances when a parent or authorised nominee has not signed the child in. • Close the service following verifying that all children have been signed out. If a child is not signed out, educators/ staff members must check all areas of the centre and check for clues such as bags remaining in lockers, to ensure that no child or children remain. This must be recorded on the Attendance Sheet. <p><u>Authorised Nominees</u> On enrolment, parents are required to provide the names of 2 authorised nominees for the purpose of collecting their child/ren from the service.</p> <p>Authorised nominees are required to show photo ID to educators prior to collecting and signing out a child/ or children.</p> <p>Staff members are required to check the name on the photo ID against the list of approved persons to collect a child and must then sign the roll as completion. A person is not allowed to collect a child if they do not have ID, or if the ID does not match the Authorised Nominees list.</p> <p>Educators must contact the child’s parents immediately if they cannot confirm that the person attempting to collect the child is an Authorised Nominee.</p>
<p>Related Legislation, Standards, Documents</p>	<p><u>Legislation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 • Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 • Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 <p><u>Early Years Learning Framework</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children feel, safe, secure and supported. • Being, Becoming, Belonging, The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia (2009) <p><u>Key Resources</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA): www.acecqa.gov.au • Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
<p>Review</p>	<p>This policy and guidelines will be reviewed every two years and will incorporate current information, legislation and feedback as required.</p> <p>The service will ensure that families of children enrolled at the service are notified at least 14 days before making any change to a policy or procedure that may have significant impact on the provision of education and care to any child enrolled at the service.</p> <p>This policy is owned by: Preschool</p> <p>Policy updated on: 23 February 2023 Policy updated by: Director, Preschool Version number: 2.0 This version approved by: GM, Service Quality, Risk and Compliance This document can be viewed on: SharePoint, Learning Links Preschool Website</p> <p>Policy due for review: 23 February 2025</p>