

Arrival and Departure of Children Policy

BELLA GRACE EARLY LEARNING CENTRE

Background

Services and parents have a shared responsibility to ensure the safety and wellbeing of each enrolled child entering and leaving the premises.

During the times when parents are delivering and collecting their children, educators' and parents' attention is momentarily diverted from the children by other tasks such as exchanging information and completing attendance records. When children arrive, educators also have the task of greeting and settling them. When children leave, educators must ensure that the children are returned into the care of an authorised person.

Policy statement

This Policy outlines the Service's requirement for the delivery and collection of children to ensure that the safety, security and wellbeing of the children entrusted to its care are given the highest priority.

Strategies and practices

Arrival

- The person who delivers a child to the Service signs them in on the Kiosk in the foyer. Educators also record the child's name and time of arrival on the Room Register. Once the majority of children have arrived in each room, educators check that all children have been signed in. If a child is present but not signed in, the educator signs for that child, noting the time. We are responsible for the accountability of all children in our care, including in the event of an emergency evacuation or lock down.
- The person delivering the child is to place the child into the care of an educator and this action be acknowledged before leaving the Service.
- Any critical information required to meet a baby's or child's needs on any given day is to be provided or obtained from the person bringing the child into the Service.
- Children who are absent for the day will be marked as absent on the Kiosk. Parents will be asked to confirm any absences via the Kiosk.
- Educators use the Room Registers to check that all children signed in are present throughout the day. The room registers are reconciled at intervals throughout the day and this is recorded. Educators from each room are also to reconcile their room registers immediately before the completion of their shift. The Nominated Supervisor and Responsible Person in Charge are to check that the Room Register reconciliation has been completed each day.

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Departure

- Parents complete a new re-enrolment form each year. Details of authorised collection people are included on the form and parents are asked to inform the Service immediately of any change.
- Children will only be given into the care of: a parent of the child; an authorised collection person detailed in the child's enrolment record; or, to a person with written authorisation by a parent. The person must be aged 16 years or older.
- Children are not given into the care of a parent who is prohibited by a court order from having contact with the child.
- No child is released into the care of any person not known to the educators without photo identification. In the event that no photo identification can be presented, contact must be made with the parent or an authorised collection person to confirm the person's identity.
- The person who collects the child from the Service signs the child out on the Kiosk. Children are also signed out on the Room Register by an Educator and the time noted.
- Any critical information from the day must be communicated to families to ensure a baby's or child's continued wellbeing and needs can be met.
- At the end of the day, educators check that all children have been signed out. If a child has not been signed out on the kiosk, parents will be asked, when the child next attends, to confirm the time they were collected.
- If it is discovered that a child cannot be accounted for, the family will be contacted. If the child is not in the family's care, the Service will seek immediate advice from the Police then notify the Regulatory Authority as soon as possible (within 24 hours).
- If a child has been removed from the service in a manner that contravenes the National Regulations or is mistakenly locked in or locked out of the Service's premises or any part of the premises, the Service will seek immediate advice from the Police then notify the Regulatory Authority (within 24 hours). (Section 174(2)(a) and Regulation 176(2)a).
- At the end of each day, educators are to do a final walk through and check the premises including outdoor and indoor environments to ensure that no child remains on the premises after the Service closes. This is part of the closing service procedure.
- Parents must give prior written notice where the person collecting the child is someone other than an authorised nominee (e.g. in an emergency situation). The person nominated by the parent must be able to produce some form of photo identification.

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- In the event of an emergency (e.g. illness of a parent, car breakdown), it may be necessary for the parent to notify the Service verbally that a person other than an authorised nominee will collect the child. Where it is not possible for the parent to give written notice, a verbal consent must be witnessed by two staff members and details of the conversation recorded. The Service will also require photo identification of the person collecting the child before the child is released.
- Parents are to advise the Nominated Supervisor or the educators in their child's room on any occasion a non-regular authorised collection person will be collecting the child.
- If the person collecting the child appears intoxicated, under the influence of drugs, or educators consider that person unfit to take responsibility for the child, the educators are to draw it to the person's attention and attempt to persuade the person to contact someone else to collect the child. Wherever possible, the discussion is to occur without the child being present. If the person insists on taking the child, and is planning to drive a vehicle, educators are to immediately contact the police and provide them with the person's name and vehicle registration number. If the person is planning to walk the child from the centre, contact is to be made with another authorised collection person to inform them of the incident and for them to arrange support for the person once they have departed the centre. In extreme cases where no contact can be made with an authorised collection person, it may be necessary to contact the Police or Family Services to ensure the safety of those involved after leaving the centre.
- If a child has not been collected from the Service by closing time, attempt will be made to contact the parents or guardians, followed by authorised collection people. If no contact can be made with any of these people, the Responsible Person in Charge may contact the Police who will inform the Service of the appropriate action to take to ensure the continued safe care of the child. This may involve removal of the child by Police to a temporary care facility until the parents can be located.
- Children may be escorted from the premises in the event of an emergency, and for excursions where parents have given prior written permission.

Links Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, National Quality Standard 2011

Regs	99	Children leaving the education and care service premises
	102	Authorisation for excursions
	158	Attendance and enrolment records
	168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures
	176	Time to notify certain information to Regulatory Authority

QA	2.2.1	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard
	6.2.1	Continuity of learning and transitions for each child are supported by sharing information and clarifying responsibilities

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Sources

- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011.
- Guide to the National Quality Standard 2011.

Further reading and useful websites

- Early Childhood Australia. *Who can collect a child from childcare? Legal issues.*
<http://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/our-publications/every-child-magazine/every-child-index/every-child-vol-17-1-2011/can-collect-child-child-care-legal-issues-child-care/>
accessed 26 December 2017
- ACECQA. (2017). *Reporting requirements about children.*
<http://www.acecqa.gov.au/reporting-requirements-about-children> accessed 26 December 2017

Policy review

The Service encourages staff and parents to be actively involved in the annual review of each of its policies and procedures. In addition, the Service will accommodate any new legislative changes as they occur and any issues identified as part the Service's commitment to quality improvement. The Service consults with relevant recognised authorities as part of the annual review to ensure the policy contents are consistent with current research and contemporary views on best practice.

REVIEW DETAILS:

Review Date	Details of Changes
January 2018	Updated to changed NQF requirements 1 Feb 2018
April 2018	Collection by intoxicated person – walking from centre. Reconciliation of room registers added.