SAFE ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE OF CHILDREN
Early Years Services

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure appropriate measures are in place to protect children from harm or hazards, and support children's safe arrival and departure from the service with an authorised person. Safeguarding children during these transition times is supported by effective procedures that provide clear guidance for Educators and parents/guardians.

Policy Statement

City of Stonnington is committed to maintaining secure environments and implementing practices that safeguard children's safety, rights and best interests at all times.

Early Years Services supports the safe arrival and departure of children through effective supervision, secure access arrangements, accurate attendance records and clear procedures. Children may only leave the premises with authorised persons in accordance with legislative requirements or written parent/guardian authorisation.

Definitions:

Authorised Nominee: a person who has been given permission by a parent/guardian to collect the child. In addition to collecting the child, this person may be authorised to provide consent to medical treatment, authorise administration of medication or authorise an Educator to take the child outside the service for excursions or if required.

Duty of Care: a legal concept that refers to the responsibility of all employees in Victorian early years services to take reasonable steps to protect children in their care from harm that is foreseeable.

Nominated Supervisor: an individual nominated by the approved provider of the service and given written consent to be responsible for day-to-day management of the service and has responsibility relating to educational programs, supervision and safety of children, entry to and from the premises, nutrition, food and beverages, administration of medication, drugs and alcohol, sleep and rest, excursions, transportation, staffing ratios and qualifications.

Parent: in relation to a child, includes: a. A guardian of the child; and
b. A person who has parental responsibility for the child under a decision or order of a court.
(Regulation 99, 'parent' does not include a parent who is prohibited from having contact with the child)

Responsible person: a responsible person must be present at all times when children are being educated and cared for. In the absence of the Nominated Supervisor, a designated responsible person will be in charge for the duration of the absence.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- Early Years Coordinator
- Early Years Services Lead

City of STONNINGTON

- Team Leaders
- Administration Officers
- Educational Leader
- Educators including Agency Educators
- Parents/Guardians
- Chef
- Students and Volunteers

Responsibilities

Early Years Coordinator/Early Years Services Lead

- Maintain compliance as the Person with Management and Control (PMC) under *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010,* and *Education and Care Services National Regulations*
- Ensure the Nominated Supervisor demonstrates a clear understanding of their responsibilities and has the knowledge, skills, and capacity to effectively supervise and manage the operation of the service in accordance with legislative requirements *(Section 162, 165 & Regulation 117B)*
- Ensure *Safe Arrival & Departure of Children Policy* and procedures are implemented, reviewed and available for Team Leaders, Educators, other staff, and parents/guardians *(Regulation 168 - 172)*
- Verify *Enrolment Record* templates contain all required information, including details for authorised nominees who may collect a child from the service, consent to medical treatment, or authorise Educators to take the child outside the service for excursions, or regular outings and authorise transportation of a child *(Section 175 & Regulation 160-162)*
- Support Team Leaders to develop effective processes for monitoring attendance, authorising the collection of children and access to the service *(Regulation 99 & 158)*
- Approve risk assessments that identify any hazards related to the arrival or departure of children
- Take reasonable steps to minimise risks associated with the safe arrival to or departure of children from the service and ensure any identified concerns are actioned promptly. *(Section 167).*

Team Leaders

- Oversee the daily operations of the service ensuring compliance with *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010,* and *Education and Care Services National Regulations*
- Must nominate a Responsible Person in their absence while children are present *(Section 162)*
- Ensure *Enrolment Records* are accurate, including up to date information relating to authorised nominees, collection arrangements or any court orders *(Section 175 & Regulation 160-162)*
- If a parent/guardian or authorised nominee overlooks signing a child in/out via the digital system on the service iPad, complete on their behalf reflecting arrival or departure time to ensure accurate attendance records *(Regulation 158)*
- Ensure children only leave the premises with parent/guardian, authorised nominee or person authorised in writing by the parent/guardian, except where emergency medical treatment is required or another emergency situation *(Regulation 99)*
- If a court order or parenting plan affects the collection arrangement for a child, inform Educators and comply with requirements of the order, and store securely in the child's file *(Regulation 99)*
- When an unfamiliar or new person arrives to collect a child, sight and verify photo identification against the child's *Enrolment Record* before releasing the child into their care *(Regulation 99)*
- Document any incidents where an unauthorised person attempts to collect a child and report to Early Years Services Lead or Early Years Coordinator as soon as practicable and submit an incident report on *SolvSafety Reporting System* and notification to *Victorian Early Childhood Regulatory Authority (VECRA)* via the *National Quality Agenda IT System (NQAITS) (Regulation 175)*
- Confirm staffing arrangements, and supervision plans support safe arrival or departure of children
- Undertake risk assessments to identify any hazards related to the arrival or departure of children

- Develop and maintain effective systems for monitoring attendance records, authorising the collection of children, and access to the service *(Regulation 99 & 158)*
- Complete the induction program for new employees, including opening and closing procedures ensuring the safe arrival of and departure of children
- Take reasonable steps to minimise risks associated with the arrival and departure of children and ensure any identified concerns are addressed promptly. *(Section 167).*

Administration Officer

- Greet children, their parent/guardian or authorised nominee on arrival or departure
- Prompt parent/guardian or authorised nominee to sign children in/out via the digital system on the service iPads located in the foyer *(Regulation 158)*
- If a parent/guardian or authorised nominee overlooks signing a child in/out via the digital system on the service iPad, complete on behalf of parent/guardian reflecting arrival or departure time to ensure accurate attendance records *(Regulation 158)*
- Ensure *Enrolment Records* are accurate, including up to date information relating to authorised nominees, collection arrangements or any court orders *(Section 175 & Regulation 160-162)*
- Ensure *Enrolment Record* is updated as required when advised of changes by parent/guardian
- When an unfamiliar or new person arrives to collect a child, sight and verify photo identification against the child's *Enrolment Record* before releasing the child into their care *(Regulation 99)*
- Securely store any court orders, parenting orders, parenting plans or other legal documentation within a confidential folder in the child file and share information with the Team Leader
- Maintain confidentiality of personal information ensuring children's records are securely stored.

Educational Leader

- Greet children, their parent/guardian or authorised nominee on arrival and departure
- If a parent/guardian or authorised nominee overlooks signing a child in/out via the digital system on the service iPad, complete on behalf of parent/guardian reflecting arrival or departure time to ensure accurate attendance records *(Regulation 158)*
- Provide support when Educators depart the service with children for excursions or regular outings.

Educators

- Follow opening procedures and complete daily checklist to prepare for the safe arrival of children
- Greet each child, their parent/guardian or authorised nominee allowing time for handover of information on arrival to the learning space
- Prompt parent/guardian or authorised nominee to sign children in/out via the digital system on the service iPads located in the foyer *(Regulation 158)*
- If a parent/guardian or authorised nominee overlooks signing a child in/out via the digital system on the service iPad, complete on behalf of parent/guardian reflecting arrival or departure time to ensure accurate attendance records *(Regulation 158)*
- Conduct headcounts throughout the day and record a minimum of three headcounts daily using the attendance system on service iPads to verify children's attendance records are accurate
- When an unfamiliar or new person arrives to collect a child, sight and verify photo identification against the child's *Enrolment Record* before releasing the child into their care *(Regulation 99)*
- Acknowledge and greet each child's arrival into the learning space, allowing time for handover of any information with parent/guardian or authorised person dropping off the child
- Follow closing procedures ensuring checking children have been signed out via the digital system on the service iPad, and all children have safely departed the service
- Report any concerns to the Team Leader immediately to protect children from harm or hazards associated with the arrival and departure of children *(Section 167).*

Parents/Guardians

- Remain responsible for their child until they are signed in and acknowledged by an Educator
- Accompany the child into the learning space, ensuring time for handover of relevant information
- Confirm any previous entries completed by Team Leader, Administration Officer or Educators via the digital system on the service iPad, ensuring accurate attendance records *(Regulation 158)*
- Advise the service if another person will be collecting the child, that person must be listed on the *Enrolment Record* as authorised to collect the child
- Provide information regarding changes to child's *Enrolment Record* including authorised nominees, court orders or parenting arrangements
- Provide a copy of any court orders or parenting orders that alter custody arrangements for a child
- If requesting someone not listed to collect a child on *Enrolment Record*, parent/guardian must complete *Collection Authorisation Form*, send email, or add details via *My Family Lounge* portal
- Ensure an Educator acknowledges the child's departure, and handover of any information occurs
- Upon collection of the child, they must be signed out via the attendance system on service iPads.

Procedure

Safe Arrival of children

- Parent/guardian or authorised nominee must accompany the child into the learning spaces and ensure an Educator acknowledges the child's arrival before leaving *(Section 165 & 167)*
- If a child is not signed in by parent/guardian or authorised nominee; the Team Leader, Administration Officer, or Educator must sign the child in on their behalf using the service iPad
- Parent/guardian will be prompted to confirm these occurrences upon collection of their child.

Departure of children – Collection by parent/guardian

- Parent/guardian must collect their child in line with operational hours of the service
- Parent/guardian must sign out via the iPad located in the foyer when collecting their child
- If a child is not signed out by parent/guardian or authorised nominee; the Team Leader, Administration Officer, or Educator must sign the child out on their behalf using the service iPad
- Parent/guardian will be prompted to confirm missed sign out when they next attend the service
- Children may leave the service with a parent/guardian unless that parent/guardian is prohibited by a court order from having contact with the child *(Regulation 99).*

Departure of children – Collection by an authorised person

- Parent/guardian must advise the service if another person will be collecting the child. That person must be listed on the *Enrolment Record* as authorised to collect the child
- If requesting someone not listed to collect a child on *Enrolment Record*, parent/guardian must complete *Collection Authorisation Form*, send email, or add details via *My Family Lounge* portal
- When an unfamiliar or new person arrives to collect a child, Team Leader, Administration Officer or Responsible person must sight and verify photo identification against the child's *Enrolment Record* before allowing the child to leave the service *(Regulation 99)*
- Team Leader, Administration officer or Educators may contact parent/guardian to confirm the person collecting the child is authorised if they have not previously been informed
- Children may only leave with a parent/guardian (unless a parent/guardian is prohibited), an authorised nominee listed on the *Enrolment Record* or a person who has been authorised in writing by the parent/guardian (Regulation 99).

Departure of children – Unauthorised person collecting a child

- If an unauthorised person arrives to collect a child, do not allow the child to leave the service
- Contact the parent/guardian for clarification immediately

- Request parent/guardian send an email authorising the collection of their child, including the full name, address, phone number and the dates that the person is authorised to collect the child
- If parent/guardian is unable to provide an email, verbal authorisation can be accepted provided two Educators or other staff record the information, including full name, address, phone number, and the dates that the person is authorised to collect the child. A *Collection Authorisation Form* must be completed and signed by the parent/guardian the next time the child attends the service
- Photo identification must be sighted and verified against the details provided by the parent/guardian before allowing the child to leave the service *(Regulation 99)*
- If a person arrives to collect a child who is prohibited by a court order from having contact with the child, Team Leader/Educators must follow orders outlined in the court order, in the child's file.

Departure of children – Late collection of children

- A Late Collection Fee applies if a child is collected after the session time or service closing hours
- Late Collection fees will be attributed to parent/guardian accounts. Late Collection fees do not attract Child Care Subsidy and must be paid in accordance with *Fees and Payment of Fees Policy*
- At least two Educators must remain on duty until all children have been collected from the service
- At all times there must be a responsible person on duty at the service
- If a child has not been collected by service closing time, Educators must contact parents/guardians
- If parents/guardians are unable to be contacted, the Educator must attempt to contact authorised nominees provided in the child's *Enrolment Record* as they may be able to collect the child
- Contact the Team Leader, if unable to make contact after several attempts, contact Early Years Services Lead or Early Years Coordinator (details found on *Emergency Contact List* in the office)
- Continue to phone contact numbers as listed on the *Enrolment Record* with the aim of locating either parent/guardian or authorised nominee.

If a child is not collected at closing time two Educators must remain on duty. If either Educator is unable to remain on duty, they must take responsibility for arranging a replacement Educator and cannot leave until the replacement Educator arrives. Replacement Educators may be an Educator from another service, casual Educator or the Team Leader.

One hour after closing time

- If no contact with parent/guardian, authorised nominee, Team Leader, Early Years Services Lead, or Early Years Coordinator
- Contact Police Assistance line on 131 444 to request assistance to locate parent/guardian while the child remains at the service with Educators. If police arrive, Educators follow their guidance
- Educators continue to try to contact parents/guardians, authorised nominees, Team Leader, or Early Years Services Lead or Early Years Coordinator
- Educators follow guidance from Early Years Services Lead or Early Years Coordinator regarding the next steps which may include contacting Child Protection After Hours Hotline on 13 12 78
- Once a child has been collected by an authorised nominee or as instructed by authorities, Educators must update Team Leader, Early Years Services Lead or Early Years Coordinator
- Once a child is collected a notice must be placed at entrance advising the parent/guardian to contact the Team Leader via the work mobile phone for details.

Departure of children – By a person under the influence of drugs or alcohol

- Educators must act in the best interests of children, following their duty of care obligations, by speaking to Team Leader if they are concerned about a child's safety or wellbeing
- If a parent/guardian/authorised nominee appears to be affected by alcohol or drugs in a way that may compromise their ability to safely collect and care for a child, notify the Team Leader or responsible person as soon as possible

- Educators should respond calmly, avoid confrontation, and an incident report must be completed and submitted on SolvSafety
- If there is an immediate risk to a child, Team Leader or responsible person will contact the Police
- Where possible, the Team Leader or responsible person may request that another parent/guardian or authorised nominee collects the child
- Team Leader will discuss concerns with the Early Years Services Lead or Early Years Coordinator and if required follow procedures outlined in the *Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy*.

Opening/Closing Procedures

- Educators follow opening or closing procedures to complete tasks at both times of the service
- Early shift Educators undertaking opening tasks will complete routine checks for hazards prior to the arrival of children and report any concerns to the Team Leader
- Regular checks of the iPad are undertaken by Educators to ensure all children are signed in during the morning and that all children have been signed out at the end of the day
- Educators must conduct a thorough check of premises prior to leaving the service at the end of the day to ensure all children are accounted for, and everyone has left the building
- Educators must complete closing procedures and remain on premises until service closure time.

Children travelling from a City of Stonnington Early Years Service to any other Education or Early Years Service *(Regulation 102AAB – 102AAC)*

- Transport of children from a City of Stonnington Early Years Service to any other Education or Early Years Service is not offered as part of the current service delivery
- If a City of Stonnington Early Years Service is to commence transporting children to another Education or Early Years Service, the *Safe Arrival & Departure of Children Policy* will be reviewed
- *Safe Arrival & Departure Risk Assessment* will be conducted to identify and assess risks that a child's travel to any other Education or Early Years Service may pose to their safety, health, and wellbeing *(Regulation 102AAC)*
- *Safe Arrival & Departure Risk Assessment* will be reviewed every 12 months or as soon as practicable after any change that may affect children's safe arrival, each version is kept as a record
- Prior to travel arranged by the service, written authorisation must be obtained
- A notification to Victorian Early Childhood Regulatory Authority (VECRA) via NQAITS will be submitted if regular transportation is arranged by the service for children to travel between the service and another Education or Early Years Service.

Excursions or Regular Outings

- Risk assessments will be undertaken prior to any excursions or regular outings in accordance with the *Excursion, Regular Outings and Transportation of Children Policy.*

Emergency Situations

- In case of an emergency where a child requires medical treatment, consent is obtained on each child's *Enrolment Record* authorising the child to depart the service by ambulance
- Team Leader or Educator must accompany the child via ambulance until parent/guardian arrives
- Team Leader must advise Early Years Services Lead or Early Years Coordinator as soon as practicable and submit incident report on the City of Stonnington SolvSafety Reporting System
- Submit a notification to VECRA via NQAITS in accordance with legislative requirements.

<u>Relevant Legislation, Policies & Sources</u>

Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations Policy
Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA)

Child Safe Standards
Child Safe Environment Policy
City of Stonnington Child Safety and Wellbeing Reporting Procedure
City of Stonnington Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
City of Stonnington Child Safety Code of Conduct
City of Stonnington Employee Code of Conduct Policy
City of Stonnington Occupational Health and Safety Manual
Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
Education and Care Services National Regulations (2011 SI 653) – Version 12 August 2026
Emergency Management Plan
Enrolment and Orientation Policy
Excursions, Regular outings and transportation of Children
Fees and Payment of Fees Policy – Princes Close inc Funder Kindergarten
Fees and Payment of Fees Policy – Winter Street
Governance and Management of Services Policy
Incident, Injury, Trauma, and Illness Policy
National Quality Framework
Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004
Tobacco, Vaping, Drugs, and Alcohol Policy
Victorian Early Childhood Regulatory Authority (VECRA)

Related Service Forms

Safe Arrival and Departure Risk Assessment
Child Safety Risk Assessment
Collection Authorisation Form
Enrolment Record
Opening Procedures
Closing Procedures
Parent Handbook