



## **Collection of Children Policy**

### **Rationale**

All children have the right to receive quality care in an environment which ensures their health and safety. The Education and Care Services National Law Act requires that an approved provider takes reasonable care to protect children from risk of harm and ensure that children are released to authorised persons which is a key aspect of ensuring safety.

### **Legislation and Government Requirements**

State and Territory Laws relating to child protection  
Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010  
Education and Care Services Regulations

### **Strategies for Policy Implementation**

#### **Arrival at the Service**

On arrival families and children are welcomed. Attendance records are signed and information is exchanged about pick up and departing the service. Attendance records will be signed and accurate attendance records must be kept.

#### **Authorisation for Collecting Children**

On enrolment, and at regular intervals, the centre must establish the identity of guardians and authorised persons able to collect the child from the centre. The names and contact numbers of all persons authorised to collect children must be included on the enrolment form. Any changes to these must be authorised in writing to the service by the enrolling parent. The centre must also keep evidence of any court orders relating to guardianship of and access to the child including parenting orders.

A child departing from the centre must be given into the care of a parent/guardian. If a parent/guardian is not available, it must be established that a person is authorised in writing by a guardian to collect the child from the centre. A child will not be released to a person 16 years or younger from the centre.

If circumstances prevent a parent or guardian collecting the child and written authorisation is not able to be sought, the centre must write down verbal instructions including:

- Precise identification and name of the person to collect the child
- The relationship to the child if applicable
- The time of collection and any other relevant information

The parent/guardian should be informed verbally that formal identification will be asked for such as a driver's licence to confirm and establish the identity of the person collecting. The centre's staff should note how identification was established in the centre's sign in sheets.

There is a late fee of \$1.00 per minute charged after 6.00pm. The centre's staff will attempt to contact parents/guardians to remind them to collect the child and also ring any emergency contacts on the enrolment form. If no contact can be made with parents or emergency contacts when children are not collected by 6.00pm, Crisis Care may be contacted to collect children and any advice received should be documented and followed. All attempts to contact guardians/emergency are to be documented.

**In the case of separated parents:**

- ❖ We will treat separated parents as equal for collection purposes, therefore both parents should agree on who is able to collect their child.
- ❖ Where written authorisation is not readily available from both parents, verbal permission will be sought at the centre's discretion. In the event that verbal permission is not obtained the other parent/guardian will be advised.

**When there is a custody issue:**

- If a parent/guardian that is named in a custody order and unable by law to take the child arrives at the Centre the parent/guardian who has full custody is to be contacted immediately.
- Explain the Centre policy regarding collection by authorised persons with written authority.
- If directed by the full custody parent/guardian to contact the police the team leader or Director may do so. (If the non-custodial parent becomes agitated or threatening in any way **DO NOT** put yourselves at risk, let them take the child and then contact the police).

The staff's primary responsibility is to the safety and welfare of all children in the Centre (as well as themselves). In any situation that has the potential to become dangerous it is best to co-operate and contact the police immediately.

A note regarding suspected parent/guardian intoxication:

Staff have a duty of care to ensure the safety of children in their care. If a staff member suspects that the safety of a child might be compromised the following steps will be followed:

- Staff will advise parent/guardian to contact a friend/relative to pick them up or offer to call a taxi.

If a parent/guardian insists on collecting their child, staff will record this information and advise the parent or guardian of this. The police will also be contacted and advised of the situation.

Under Part 4 of the Children's Protection Act 1993, we are legally obliged to notify Families SA via the Child Abuse Report Line (CARL) 13 14 78 if we suspect on reasonable grounds that a child/ young person's health or safety is at risk.

### **Links to Other Policies**

Confidentiality Policy  
Enrolment Procedure  
Grievance Policy

### **Sources**

DEEWR Child Care Service Handbook

23.09.07 Robyn Brauer  
Director

Reviewed 24.09.09  
Kirsty Hurrell  
Director

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