**Delivery and Collection of Children Policy**

**Rationale:**

The Avenue Children’s Centre and Kindergarten is committed to:

* Ensuring the safe delivery and collection of children being educated and cared for at the centre meeting its duty of care obligations under the law.
* To ensure all children are signed in and out of the centre on a daily basis. Failure to do so is a breach of the Education and Care Services National Regulations.
* To ensure all children are collected no later than 6.00pm, so as sufficient staff are available to supervise children.
* To ensure the collection of children is by an authorised parent/guardian or persons who has lawful authority to collect the child.

**Policy:**

All parents/guardians/caregivers **MUST** ensure their child/children is signed upon arrival and departure.

The child may only leave the centre in the care of a parent/guardian, authorised nominee (person on your child’s enrolment form) or a person authorised by one of these parties to collect the child. These people can be changed at any time, but it is your responsibility to keep this record up to date.

It is the policy of this centre that no child in care will be collected from the centre by a person under the age of 16 years. An authorised person does not include a parent who is prohibited by a court order from having contact with the child.

Parents/guardians/caregivers must accompany their child/children into the centre, sign them in, and take them to a staff member to announce their arrival. Children must not be left unattended in a room upon their arrival. When departing the centre, the parent/guardian/caregiver must notify a staff member that they are collecting the child and sign the child/children out.

If someone is collecting your child for the first time at the centre, and the person is unknown to the staff members, the person will be asked for photo ID before the child will be allowed to leave with this person. On occasion, this may involve asking a parent to show their ID if they have not been to the centre before.

Supervision of children who accompany their parents/guardians or carers but are not enrolled at the centre at that time, is the responsibility of the parents/guardians or carers while they are on the premises.

All children **MUST** be collected from the centre no later than 6.00pm. After 6.00 pm, a late collection fee of $1 per minute will apply. This will be included in the next statement of fees.

**Strategies and practices:**

* Ensure parents/guardians have completed the authorised nominee section of their child’s enrolment form, and that the form is signed and dated
* Ensure a child is not taken outside the centre’s premises on an excursion or general outing except with the written authorisation of a parent/guardian or authorised nominee
* Ensure that parents/guardians or authorised nominees are contacted in the event that an unauthorised person arrives to collect a child from the centre, and that appropriate procedures are followed.
* Keeping a written record of all visitors to the centre, including time of arrival and departure and contact details
* Notifying DET in writing within 24 hours, and the parents as soon as is practicable, in the event of a serious incident, including when a child has left the service unattended by an adult or with an unauthorised person
* Maintain educator-to-child ratios at all times children are in attendance at the centre.
* Ensure all children are signed in/out of the centre, and this is monitored throughout the day

The following steps are to be followed on arrival:

• Signing the child/children in

• Take the child/children to a staff member to announce your arrival.

• Say goodbye to your child/children and let them know that you are leaving for the day.

The following steps are to be followed on departure:

• Signing the child/children out.

• Announce to a staff member that you have arrived, so that a member of staff is aware that the child/children is leaving for the day.

Procedures to Ensure the Safe Collection of Children

Early childhood professionals have a duty of care not to endanger children at the centre by knowingly placing them in a situation that could reasonably be expected to be dangerous, including releasing a child into the care of an inappropriate person.

If the situation arises whereby someone arrives to collect a child/ren and there is no written authorisation for them to do so, the following steps will be taken:

1. Staff will find out the person’s identity by checking current photo identification and check with coordinator/2IC or Person in Charge of the Centre for written approval of this arrangement.
2. If there is no written authorisation, the child’s parents or emergency contact numbers will be contacted for verbal approval.
3. If parents or emergency contacts cannot be contacted, the child will not be allowed to go with this person.

You can nominate a person over the telephone or by email. When doing so you need to state the following:

1. Name of person and their relationship to the child.
2. Contact details of the person
3. Time of collection of child.
4. A brief description of the person being nominated.

The nominated person must carry some identification to ensure educator is handing over your child to the correct person.

Parents must provide the centre with a copy of the relevant Court Order forbidding or restricting a person’s contact with a child. Staff will make all attempts to ensure that no person who is forbidden to gain access to the child while at the centre.

**Late Collection of a children**

All children MUST be collected from the centre no later than 6.00pm. If the parent/guardian has not contacted the centre and the child has not been collected 15 minutes after the negotiated collection time or by the 6.00pm closing time, the staff member should follow the following processes:

* Attempt to telephone the parent/guardian. If the parent/guardian is not contactable, telephone the emergency contacts listed on the child's enrolment form to arrange for the child's immediate collection.
* If no-one from the parent’s emergency contacts can be contacted and the child has not been collected 15 minutes after the centre's normal closing time the coordinator or 2IC will be contacted. The coordinator or 2IC will then return to the centre.
* The coordinator or 2IC will then contact the Committee President or another Committee member to come and support them.
* The coordinator or 2IC will continue to try and get in contact with the parents/guardian of the child or one of their emergency contacts.
* Contact the local police (000) or Child FIRST (1300 775 160) if the parents/nominated guardian are unable to be contacted by the set time period of 90 minutes (7.30pm)
* Notifying DET (Department of Education and Training) as soon as possible

**Person’s Deemed Unfit to Collect Child/ren**

Where an educator believes that the parents/guardians or authorised nominee may be ill, affected by alcohol or drugs, or not able to safely care for the child, the following procedures must be followed:

* Take the child to a separate room/area, whilst the second person advises the person collecting the child of their concerns and suggest contacting an alternative authorised nominee to collect the child.
* Consult with the coordinator/2IC or Person in Charge of the Centre, if possible.
* If the educator/coordinator/2IC or Person in Charge of the Centre fears for the safety of the child, themselves or other centre’s staff at any time, contact the police immediately.
* If no alternative authorised persons are able to collect the child, police must be notified and the child is to be kept on the premises with two staff members until a suitable person is able to collect
* Complete the Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record and file with the child’s enrolment form.
* Inform the coordinator/2IC as soon as is practicable, and at least within 24 hours of the incident.
* Inform the Regulatory Authority (DET) within 24 hours of a serious incident occurring

**Links to other policies:**

* Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations Policy
* Child Safe Environment Policy
* Medical Conditions Policy
* Emergency and Evacuation Policy
* Enrolment and Orientation Policy
* Excursions
* Fees Policy
* Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy
* Privacy and Confidentiality of Record Keeping Policy
* Supervision of Children Policy

**Sources and further reading:**

* Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
* Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic)
* Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
* Family Law Act 1975
* National Quality Standards

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