

## 1. Policy Objective

To ensure that all children are brought to and collected from the Service/FDC Educator home by an authorised person/nominee and to ensure that the Service is fully informed about any child custody issues.

## 2. Explanation

The National Law and Regulations give guidelines about arrivals and departures that need to be followed. On enrolment, families will be asked to nominate specific adults who are allowed to drop off and collect their child/ren. These are Authorised 'Nominees'. The Service/FDC Educator has a duty of care to ensure that children are collected by an authorised adult and this can only happen if parents disclose full information about any custody issues and provide copies of Court documents.

## 3. Implementation

### 3.1 General

- Children must be collected by an Authorised Nominee. The Authorised Nominee is a parent/guardian or a person noted on the child's enrolment form who is 18 years or over.
- Parents/guardians will have an orientation conducted when they start with their child at the Service. Arrival and departure expectations will be explained.
- At enrolment, parents/guardians will be asked to nominate authorised adults who may pick up the child, if the parents/guardians are unable to do so.
- It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to keep this information up to date.

### 3.2 Delivery of Child

- Children must be brought into the Service/FDC Educator home and signed in by an Authorised Nominee.
- The child must be taken to an educator, so that they are aware the child has arrived.
- Educators will assist the child to say 'goodbye', if needed.
- Children who are collected from a school/college for after school care will be signed into the Service by an educator.

### 3.3 Collection of Child

- Children must be collected by an Authorised Nominee.
- All educators have a duty of care to ensure that children are collected only by Authorised Nominees.
- Children must be signed out by the Authorised Nominee on departure.

- Educators must be notified that the child has been collected and is leaving the premises, by the Authorised Nominee collecting the child.
- If educators are unsure of who an Authorised Nominee is, they will ask for photo ID and check the name on the authorisation section within the child's enrolment form. A copy must be taken of the photo ID and placed in the child's file. A phone call to the parent/guardian should also be made if educators remain unsure that the person who is collecting a child is authorised to do so.
- If the parent/guardian rings the Service to give permission for an alternate person to collect their child, that person must bring photo ID and show this to the Responsible Person/FDC Educator. A copy must be taken of the photo ID and placed in the child's file. The parent/guardian must then put this permission in writing and forward to the Service/FDC Educator.
- In the case of joint custody of a child, an educator must ensure that the child is only collected by the Authorised Nominee for that day and inform both parents/guardians if anything different occurs, as soon as possible, before releasing the child.
- If educators are concerned that an Authorised Nominee is not in a fit state to take the child, they must inform the Service Leader or Children's Services Manager. The Responsible Person/Educator should speak to the parent/guardian about their concerns and offer a place for them to rest or call a taxi or a friend to collect them.
- Educators cannot stop an Authorised Nominee from taking a child from the Service but should document the incident.
- Educators must not offer to take the adult and child in their personal vehicle.
- Educators must not take children home unless they are an Authorised Nominee.

#### 3.4 Late Collection of a Child

- If a child remains in the Service/FDC Educator home after the designated closing time and no message has been received from the parent/guardian, the educator will ring the contacts listed in the enrolment form to try to find an alternative person to collect the child.
- Families who are regularly late will be asked to pay a 'late collection fee' to cover the cost of staff staying beyond their normal finishing time. Continuing lateness may jeopardise the child's enrolment at the Service.
- If a child is not collected after thirty minutes past closing time of the Service or the booked hours of care (FDC) and no successful contact has been made with any of the Authorised Nominees listed in the enrolment form, the Service Leader is to be informed. The Service Leader should then contact police and inform the Children's Service Manager.
- Educators will continue to try the contact numbers listed in the enrolment form.

#### 3.5 Parenting Orders and other Court Appointed Arrangements

- A full induction will be conducted for families when they enrol and an enrolment form completed, giving full and confidential information about the child and family situation.
- Information will be shared with educators who need to know relevant details.

- If any court documents/orders exist relating to the care of a child, a copy of the current signed document/order MUST be on file at the Service.
- Where the Service has no copy of a court document/order, both parents will be deemed to have long term and day-to-day responsibility for the child's care, welfare, development, and residence.
- Educators will treat both parents with courtesy and respect and refrain from being drawn into any disputes or 'taking sides'.
- Any information given to one parent must also be given to the other parent if listed on the enrolment form unless information is sought under a court document/order.
- If the Service receives a subpoena requesting certain information in relation to a child's enrolment and attendance at the Service, the Service Leader MUST inform the Children's Services Manager, who will assist with compliance of the order.
- If there are changes to a court document/order, a copy of this document MUST be given to the Service as soon as possible.

### 3.6 Refusal of an Unauthorised Person

- In the event that an unauthorised person comes to collect a child:
  - If authorisation cannot be sought for the person coming to collect the child, the Educator will advise the person that they are unable to take the child with them, due to the fact that they have not been able to verify authorisation with a parent/guardian.
  - The unauthorised person will be advised that they will be able to collect the child once the Service/FDC Educator has been able to confirm authorisation with a parent/guardian.
  - The unauthorised person will be asked for contact details and to leave the Service/FDC Educator home until authorisation can be sought. Waiting outside or in their car is acceptable.
  - The National Regulations provide that a parent/guardian can be refused entry to an Approved Service's premises if permitting the parent's entry would pose a risk to the safety of Children and Staff, or if the Approved Provider, supervisor or educator is aware of a court order prohibiting the parent from having contact with the child.

### 3.7 Non-Arrival of Children to After School Care

- When a child is enrolled and booked into the Service and does not arrive at After School Care, the following procedure and timelines will be followed:
  - Step 1 (5-10 minutes after the school bell)
  - Contact the school office to enquire whether the child was at school on the day and/or went home sick. If the child was not at school, proceed to step 3 (first dot point only).
  - If the child was at school a PA Announcement (or alternative) is to be made, asking the child/ren to go immediately to the OSHC Service or FDC Educator meeting point.

- If the child was at school and sometimes catches a bus, the bus company is to be contacted to see if the child is on the bus.
- Step 2 (Within 10 minutes after the school bell)
- A search of the school grounds is to commence for the child.
- Step 3 (10-15 minutes after the school bell)
- If the child cannot be located on the school grounds or information has been provided that the child has left with another person, the Responsible Person is to contact the parent/guardian to inquire about the child's whereabouts.
- A second announcement is to be made via the PA Announcement (or alternative).
- Step 4 (15-20 minutes after the school bell)
- If the parents/guardians cannot be contacted via phone or text, the emergency numbers listed on the enrolment form are to be contacted.
- Check with the school office if there are alternate numbers for the parents/guardians.
- Continue to contact the parents/guardians until contact is made and the child is located.
- Step 5 (20-30 minutes after the school bell)
- The Responsible Person is to contact their Manager and list all steps taken. If the child is still unaccounted for, the Manager will review and direct the Responsible Person to contact the police on 000.
- Where a child attends an extra-curricular activity during After School Care hours, the Service must obtain written permission from the parent/guardian for their child to be delivered or collected from the extra-curricular activity, This is recorded on the GSM Extra Activity Authorisation form.

#### **4. Compliance**

All workers who have responsibilities under this policy are responsible for understanding and complying with this policy. Non-compliance with this policy and procedure may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

#### **5. Evaluation**

This policy will be reviewed and updated (if needed), at least every two years, by the Early Childhood Team, following input from all stakeholders.

## 6. Related Documents

Enrolment and Orientation Policy

RIC Interactions with Children Policy

GSM Enrolment Package

GSM Extra Activity Authorisation Form

## 7. References

### ***Legislation***

Education and Care Services National Law 2011: Section 165, 167, 170

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2020: Regulation 99, 161, 165, 166

Family Law Act 2006