

	<h2 style="text-align: center;">Delivery and Collection of Children Policy and Procedure</h2>
Version No.	Version 3.0 12 April 2023 (approved)
Authorisation	Director City Life
Expiry Date	Policy to be reviewed by December 2025
Responsible Officer	Manager Families and Children
Policy Owner	Early Childhood Coordinator

1. Purpose

Melton City Council is committed to ensuring the safe delivery and collection of children attending Melton City Council children's services.

- maintaining a duty of care to children and users of Melton City Council children's services.
- Compliance of the Victorian Child Safe Standards and the National Principals for a Child Safe Organisations.
- ensuring the safe delivery and collection of children being educated and cared for at the service
- meeting its duty of care obligations under the law

1.1. This policy has been adapted from *PolicyWorks* Manual - National Quality Framework released by the Early Learning Association Australia.

2. Scope

This policy applies to services responsible for the direct education and care of children, including the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Person In day-to-Day charge, Responsible Persons, , educators, staff, students on placement, volunteers, parents/guardians, children and others attending Melton City Council programs and activities.

3. Background

A duty of care exists at all times the child is attending a children's service. In addition, the service has a duty of care to a child while they are on the service's premises even if they haven't yet been signed into the service or have been signed out of the service and is legally under the care and supervision of the parent/guardian (refer to *Supervision of Children Policy*).

A child may only leave the service in the care of a parent/guardian, Authorised Nominee or a person authorised by one of these parties to collect the child. An authorised person does not include a parent who is prohibited by a court order from having contact with the child and no child will be released into the care of a person under 16 years of age.

An exception is made in the event of a medical or other emergency (refer to *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy* and *Emergency and Evacuation Policy*) and for excursions (refer to *Excursions and Service Events Policy*).

4. Definitions

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy and related procedures. For commonly used terms, e.g. Approved Provider, Regulatory Authority etc. refer to the *Glossary of Terms*.

Word/Term	Definition
Attendance Record	Kept by the service to record details of each child attending the service including name, time of arrival and departure, signature of person delivering and collecting the child or of the Nominated Supervisor/educator (National Regulations 158 (1)).
Authorised Nominee (Emergency Contact)	(In relation to this policy) a person 16 years or over who has been given written authority by the parents/guardians of a child to collect that child from the education and care service. These details will be on the child's enrolment form. In the case of authorisation of medication and excursions the Authorised Nominee must be over 18 years.
Inappropriate Person	A person who may pose a risk to the health, safety or wellbeing of any child attending the education and care service, or whose behaviour or state of mind make it inappropriate for them to be on the premises e.g. a person under the influence of drugs or alcohol (<i>National Law Act</i> reference 171 (3)).
Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record	<p>Contains details of any incident, injury, trauma or illness that occurs while the child is being educated and cared for by the service. Any incident, injury, trauma or illness must be recorded as soon as is practicable but not later than 24 hours after the occurrence.</p> <p>Details required include the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • name and age of the child • circumstances leading to the incident, injury, trauma or illness (including any symptoms) • time and date • details of action taken by the service including any medication administered, First Aid provided, or medical personnel contacted • details of any witnesses • names of any person the service notified or attempted to notify, and the time and date of this • signature of the person making the entry, and time and date of this. <p>These details need to be kept for the period of time specified in National Regulations 183.</p> <p>A sample Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record is available on the ACECQA website (see <i>Sources</i>).</p>
Medication Record	Contains details for each child to whom medication is to be administered by the service. This includes the child's name, signed authorisation to administer medication and a record of the medication administered, including time, date, dosage, manner of administration, name and signature of person administering the medication and of the person checking the medication, if required (National Regulations 92)
Serious Incident	An incident resulting in the death of a child, or an injury, trauma or illness for which the attention of a registered medical practitioner, emergency services or hospital is sought or should have been sought. This also includes an incident in which a child appears to be missing, cannot be accounted for, is removed from the service in contravention of Regulations or is mistakenly locked in/out of the service premises (National Regulations 12).

Word/Term	Definition
	A Serious Incident should be documented in an Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record (see <i>Sources</i>) as soon as possible and within 24 hours of the incident. The Regulatory Authority (Department of Education & Training (DET)) must be notified within 24 hours of a Serious Incident occurring at the service (National Regulations 176). Records are required to be retained for the periods specified in the National Regulations 183.
Unauthorised Person	(In relation to this policy) is a person who is not a parent/guardian, family member, Authorised Nominee, emergency services or medical personnel, or a person who holds a current Working with Children Check card.
Child safe standards	<p>These Standards were introduced via amendments to the <i>Child Safety and Wellbeing Act 2005</i> (Vic), and from January 2017, all Victorian organisation which provide services for children, including Council, were required to comply with the Standards.</p> <p>On July 1, 2022, new Child Safe Standards were legislated. The Standards now consist of 11 Standards. The 11 Standards cover four main areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Children and Families 2. Leadership, governance, and culture 3. Staff, contractors, and volunteers 4. Risk Management. processes, policies, and complaints

5. Responsibility/Accountability

5.1. The Approved Provider, according to Regulations is responsible for the implementation of this policy. This will be achieved through the Leadership Group and their service staff:

- parents/guardians have completed the Authorised Nominee section of their child's enrolment form, and that the form is signed and dated.
- providing an Attendance Record/Timesheet that meets the requirements of Regulations (National Regulations 158) and is signed by the parent/guardian or Authorised Nominee on delivery and collection of their child from the service every day
- a child does not leave the service except with a parent/guardian or Authorised Nominee, or with the written authorisation of one of these or in the case of a medical emergency or an excursion (National Regulations 99)
- a child is not taken outside the service premises on an excursion except with the written authorisation of a parent/guardian or Authorised Nominee
- authorisation procedures are in place for excursions and other service events
- that there are procedures in place when a child is given into the care of another person, such as for a medical or other emergency
- that there are procedures in place when a parent/guardian or Authorised Nominee telephones the service, in an emergency, to advise that a person not listed on their child's enrolment form will be collecting their child
- that parents/guardians or Authorised Nominees are contacted in the event that an Unauthorised Person arrives to collect a child from the service, and that appropriate procedures are followed

- that there are procedures in place if an Inappropriate Person attempts to collect a child from the service
- keeping a written record of all visitors to the service, including time of arrival and departure
- procedures are in place for the care of a child who has not been collected from the service on time
- that the educator-to-child ratios are maintained at all times children are in attendance at the service according to the requirements of National Regulations 123 and 360
- 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 or with an Unauthorised Person (National Regulations 12, 86 and 176).
- providing parents/guardians with information regarding procedures for delivery and collection of children prior to their child's commencement at the service.

5.2. The Nominated Supervisor/Person In day-to-day charge is responsible for:

- ensuring a child does not leave the service except with a parent/guardian or Authorised Nominee, or with the written authorisation of one of these or in the case of a medical emergency or an excursion (National Regulations 99)
- ensuring a child is not taken outside the service premises on an excursion except with the written authorisation of a parent/guardian or Authorised Nominee
- ensuring that educator-to-child ratios are maintained at all times children are in attendance at the service (including when children are collected late from the service) according to the requirements of National Regulations 123 and 360
- ensuring children are adequately supervised at all times
- following the authorisation procedures listed in the *Delivery and Collection of Children Procedure*

5.3. All staff are responsible for:

- ensuring the Attendance Record/Time Sheet is signed by the parent/guardian, Authorised Nominee, Nominated Supervisor, Person in day to day charge or an educator, detailing the child's time of arrival and departure from the service (National Regulations 158).
- refusing to allow a child to depart from the service with a person who is not the parent/guardian or Authorised Nominee, or where there is not written authorisation
- implementing the authorisation procedures in the event that a parent/guardian or Authorised Nominee telephones the service to advise that a person not listed on their child's enrolment form will be collecting their child
- following the authorisation procedures and contacting the parents/guardians or Authorised Nominees if an Unauthorised Person arrives to collect a child from the service
- following procedures in the event that an Inappropriate Person attempts to collect a child from the service
- informing the Approved Provider as soon as is practicable, but within 24 hours, if a child has left the service unattended or with an Unauthorised Person
- following procedures for the late collection of children
- maintaining educator-to-child ratios at all times children are in attendance at the service (including when children are collected late from the service)
- ensuring the entry/exit doors and gates are kept closed during program hours

- displaying an up-to-date list of the telephone numbers of the Approved Provider, DET, Child FIRST, Department of Human Services (DHS) Child Protection Service and the local police station.

5.4. Parents/Guardians are responsible for:

- completing and signing the Authorised Nominee section of their child's enrolment form before their child attends the service. A minimum of one emergency contact is needed for enrolment.
- signing and dating permission forms for incursions / excursions and prior to their attendance
- signing the Attendance Record/Time Sheet as their child arrives at and departs from the service
- ensuring educators are aware that their child has arrived at/been collected from the service
- collecting their child on time at the end of each session/day
- alerting educators if they are likely to be late collecting their child
- supervising their own child before signing them into the program and after they have signed them out of the program
- Collect all belongings including medication.
- In the event that a person nominated by the lawful authority of the child is unable to collect a child from care, written approval must be provided by the lawful authority. In the case of an emergency this may be in the form of an email or text message. Photo identification must be provided upon collection.
- supervising other children in their care, including siblings, while attending or assisting at the service
- paying a late-collection fee if required by the service's *Fees Policy*.

5.5. Volunteers and students, while at the service, are responsible for following this policy and its procedures.

6. References, Sources, Links to Legislation and Other Documents

6.1. Please refer to Reference and Sources page.

6.2. Related service policies:

- *Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations Policy and Procedure*
- *Dealing with Medical Conditions Policy and Procedure*
- *Emergency and Evacuation Policy and Procedure*
- *Enrolment and Orientation Policy and Procedure*
- *Excursions and Service Events Policy and Procedure*
- *Fees Policy and Procedure*
- *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy and Procedure*
- *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy and procedure*
- *Supervision of Children Policy and Procedure*
- *Child Safe Policy and Procedures*
- *Child Wellbeing and safety Act 2005*

1. Procedures

1.1. Family Day Care (FDC)

- An Attendance Record in FDC also acts as timesheet for payment. The person delivering and collecting the child completes the documentation.
- The Attendance Record also has provision to confirm accuracy of the information contained in the record and the parent must sign this off at the end of each week.
- In the instance where the Parent/guardian requests that the FDC educator collects or delivers their child/ren to a nominated location outside of the FDC residence, including but not limited to; the child's home residence, early childhood services, schools or bus stops, this request must be in writing and a relevant authorisation form and risk assessment must be completed prior to the travel/outing occurring,
- If a parent provides written consent, an educator may let the child enter and leave the school grounds upon delivery and collection unattended as long as they are in the educators view at all times and are not required to cross any roads. In a situation of a young child/ren or a child/ren beginning school for the first time it would be advisable to walk the child to his/her room until they become comfortable in their new environment.
- If an authorised person has not arrived or made contact regarding the collection of their child(ren), educators will commence the following procedure after the session has ended:
 - Two educators as per Regulations, except in the case of Family Day Care, remain at the service with the child(ren) at all times. Educators will contact the parent/guardians to find out their estimated time of arrival and to arrange collection of the child(ren).
 - If the parent/guardians are not contactable, then educators will begin calling the emergency contacts nominated on the child(ren) enrolment form. If the educator is unable to contact any of the emergency numbers, educators will contact the team leader or coordinator. At the discretion of the team leader or coordinator, educators will then contact Police to collect the children. Family Day Care educators are to contact the on-call phone outside business hours and speak to on-call staff to seek further direction. If Family Day Care educators are unable to contact staff on call, educators will then contact Police to collect the children.

1.2. In terms of emergency situations

In an emergency the child may be given into the care of "a person" if the child requires medical, hospital or ambulance care or treatment, or because of another emergency (National Regulation 99(4d)). If the child is given into the care of "a person" Educator to document this on the Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness record.

1.3. In terms of concerns for safety and wellbeing

A child will not willingly be given into the care of a person if the staff member or educator, has reasonable grounds to believe that doing so would place the child in danger, even if the person in question has lawful authority or has been given authority to collect the child.

Situations where concern may occur include:

- A parent or other authorised person seems too ill or affected by alcohol or drugs to safely care for the child.
- A young person who is authorised to collect the child does not seem sufficiently mature to safely care for the child.

In this situation, the educator will contact one of the other people who is authorised to collect the child and arrange alternate means for the collection of the child.

If educator is placed in a position where they fear for the safety of the child, their own safety and that of others at the service, they will contact the police.

1.4. In terms of authority to collect a child

Educators will check the photo identification of the person collecting the child(ren) on arrival at the service to verify their details. Please note that new educators or educators that parent/guardians have not previously met may also request to see parent/guardian identification to verify their identity.

1.5. In terms of lawful authority

- All parents have power and responsibilities in relation to their children, which can only be changed by a court order. It is not affected by the relationship between the parents, such as whether or not they have lived together or are married.
- A court order, such as under the *Family Law Act*, may take away the authority of a parent to do something or it may give it to another person.
- A guardian of a child also has lawful authority. A legal guardian is given lawful authority by a court order. The definition of guardian under the regulations also covers situations where a child does not live with their parents and there are no court orders. In these cases, the guardian is the person the child lives with who has day-to-day care and control of the child (National Regulations 160).
- Non-legal guardians such as foster carers enrolling children in the service do not have the authority to sign enrolment forms and are required to obtain the signature of the parent or legal guardian. Department and agency staff may have the authority to sign enrolment documentation if the agency or department are the legal guardians of the child (National Regulations 160).

1.6. In terms of persons not authorised to collect a child

In the event that a person not authorised on the child(ren)'s enrolment form arrives to collect them from the service, educators will contact the parents/guardians to see if they had made these arrangements for the collection of their child(ren) from the service.

If contact is made with the parents/guardians and they give permission for the person to collect the child(ren) from the service:

- the service educators will check the photo identification of the non-authorised person and with the written permission of the parent allow the child(ren) to go with that person. In case of an emergency, verbal permission will be allowed.
- the parent/guardian will be required to add that person/s name to the enrolment form in writing and provide written permission for the person to collect the child(ren) that day, to go on file.

If contact is made with the parent/guardian and they do not give permission for the person to collect the child(ren) from the service, educators will not allow the child(ren) to go with that person(s). If the person(s) become hostile and or will not leave the service, the educator will contact the Police.

1.7. In terms of if the parents/guardians cannot be contacted

- Educators will not allow the child(ren) to go with that person(s). If the person(s) become hostile and or will not leave the service, the educator will contact the Police.
- In the event that parent/guardians regularly do not notify the service of changes to the persons collecting their child(ren) the parents/guardians will be required to

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meet with the program leader/supervisor to review their enrolment form details and the persons they have authorised to collect their child(ren).