

2.4 ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE OF CHILDREN POLICY

Policy Statement

The service recognises its responsibility to provide quality care for children. This includes practices and procedures to ensure they attend and supervise as parents and the Regulatory Authority expect.

Children's arrival, departure and attendance are critical processes for the service. Clear communication and expectation of roles are essential elements to ensure children are cared for and accounted for at all times. Where unexpected events occur, the service will have plans and procedures in place to respond in a timely and collaborative manner, upholding the paramount principle of the safety of children.

The service will ensure departure, including persons collecting children from the service will be reflective of regulations and parental consent. Sound documentation and records will reflect the services practices.

The Approved Provider also recognises their duty to comply with *Education and Care Service National Regulations 2011 168 (2)(f), 12, 99.*

Related Policies

- 2.3 - Educator to Child Ratios
- 2.12 - Managing Duty of Care - Non-Attending Children
- 2.14 - Bookings and Cancellations
- 4.5 - Incident, Illness, Injury or Trauma
- 9.9 - Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations
- 10.33 - Managing Notifications

Auxiliary Documentation

- 2.4.1 - Arrival and Accountability Flowchart
- 2.4.2 - Self-Care/Sibling Care Arrangement Information

Roles and Responsibilities

Approved Provider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will ensure employees are provided with procedures that will support the service to account for the care and respond to children's attendance, collection and departure.
Nominated Supervisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will ensure that rosters and appropriate provisions are made to ensure that process listed in this policy can be carried out.
Coordinator or Responsible Person in Charge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will be responsible for ensuring children are accounted for, collected and depart as parents have expressed in writing or response to an emergency. • Will support parents and authorised nominees to access the services sign-in and sign-out recording system. • Will collaborate with the school community to respond to children who are not accounted for in a timely manner. • Will respond to and lead critical incidents, liaising with Police as required.
All Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will provide quality supervision and support to children, responding to their needs to ensure children feel secure to remain in attendance at the service. • Respond to critical incidents in a timely manner, providing clear and concise information to the Nominated Supervisor for response and management.

Procedures

Middle Park State School OSHC Hours of Operations			
Before School Care	6.30am – 8.30am	After School Care	3.00pm – 6.30pm

Vacation Care	6.30am – 6.00pm	Pupil Free Days	6.30am – 6.00pm
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The service's attendance records (the roll) are managed through QK Kiosk and the use of tablets (electronic devices) or the service's computer. Parents and authorised nominees must be registered with a security PIN to sign children in or out.

Note: In the event of a parent not notifying the service of an absence before the start of the session or in the event of a child arriving without a booking, a non-communication fee will be added to the family account as per policy 10.4, Setting Reviewing and Managing Fees.

Arrivals

BSC and Vacation Care

1. All children must be signed in by a parent, guardian, or authorised nominee.
2. If a child arrives without a booking, parents will be reminded that a booking is required before arriving at the service. Failure to do so may mean the service cannot accept the child due to limited places and/or staffing arrangements.

ASC

1. Parents can notify of absences via email. These details are recorded in a booking diary and noted on the relevant role.

Collection and Sign-In

2. An assigned educator will collect the Prep students from their respective classrooms at 3.00pm each day.
3. During term 1, an assigned educator will collect Year 1 students from their classroom. Over the term, the Nominated Supervisor will support educators in equipping children with skills for independently making their way to OSHC.
4. Prep (and, when relevant, Year 1) students will be walked to the OSHC building, where they will be signed in by the educator escorting them.
5. The Year 1 – 6 students are signed in by lining up and being greeted by an educator on a tablet to sign them in individually via QK Kiosk. Children will put away their bags and transition to their relevant afternoon tea or play areas.
6. Where a child has been sent to OSHC from the office without a prior booking, and no contact has been able to be made between school, parents and emergency contacts, the child will need to return to the office, and school procedures for non-pickup followed. Middle Park State School OSHC is unable to accept a child without prior approval from a parent or caregiver.

Confirming Absences

7. It is expected all children have arrived at OSHC at 3:20 pm. A delegated person is then responsible for confirming the whereabouts of children that have not arrived. The delegated person is supported by Educators and the Responsible Person who is on shift.
8. Correspondence with families should always be respectful and gentle, reminding parents/guardians of the importance of notifying OSHC if a child will be or is absent and to do so before the session starts, via the Myfamily Lounge App. In the first instance, the Coordinator communicates persistent non-notification issues with the parent. If continued, The Nominated Supervisor will communicate with the families on the importance of notifying the service of absences.
9. Where a child's location cannot be confirmed, the following actions will be taken to locate the child:
 - a. checking immediate proximity,
 - b. phoning all parents/emergency contacts.
10. Where a child cannot be located after reasonable effort to identify their whereabouts and where parents/emergency contact cannot be contacted, the Police will be notified. The steps to be taken and associated decision-making are illustrated in 2.4.1 Arrival and Accountability Flowchart.
11. Once the child has been located and our other reporting and duty of care is satisfied, apply fees to the parent's accounts where appropriate.

Departures

BSC

1. Children who participate in sports or music programs within the school and where a parent has signed permission for early release (recorded via Extra Curricular Permission form) may be signed out early as the parent's permission advises.
2. The responsible person will sign the children out at 8.30am.
3. Year 1's will be released from care at 8.35am and will make their way directly to their classrooms. (During Term 1, an educator will escort them directly to their classrooms).
4. Two educators will escort Prep students directly to their classrooms at 8.40am.

ASC and Vacation Care

1. All visitors authorised nominees and parents to sign children out via the equipment in front of the Middle Park State School OSHC office. All visitors and authorised nominees are requested to report directly to the Middle Park State School OSHC office
2. All persons signing a child out must be registered with signed authority to collect the child (except in an emergency):
 - a) parent (unless a court order prohibits parent),
 - b) authorised nominee (as recorded on the enrolment form), or
 - c) where the parent has provided written authorisation, and the departure is in accordance with the parent's authorisation
3. Where the departure relates to an emergency, a record of the departure will be recorded in an incident report or a note attached to the child's enrolment form (by the Responsible Person in Charge) outlining the details.

Authorised Nominees

4. All authorised persons collecting children must have current Login details for QK Kiosk. If no Login details have previously been set up or they have expired, then:
 - a) Consult with the Nominated Supervisor/Responsible Person in Charge to confirm the authority to collect the child.
 - b) Request and sight identification to confirm the person's identity with enrolment records if setting up a QK Kiosk login.
5. Where staff are unsure of authority, they are to contact the parent/guardian to seek clarification and advice.

Written authority (e.g. an email) is required for authorisation to collect a child unless there is an emergency.

6. If parent/s are not contactable, contact an authorised nominee (if enrolment permission allows) to seek advice and authority to release the child (written authority required).
7. If the parent (or relevant authorised nominee) does not provide written authority, inform the unauthorised person that the centre cannot release the child – children may **only** leave the service in accordance with procedures contained within this policy.

Departures due to Emergency (Regulation 99(4)(d))

A child may leave the premises where they have been given into the care of a person because:

- a) the child requires medical, hospital or ambulance care or treatment
- b) another emergency

The service will record and report the details of any instances where a child has left the premises due to an emergency. Notification to the Regulatory Authority will be required (*4.5 Incident, Illness, Injury or Trauma and 10.33 Managing Notifications*)

Late Departures

Staff will contact parents if the child has not been collected by 6.30 pm. A late fee of \$20.00 will be charged for the first 15 minutes, with a further \$1 per child per minute applied for every minute after 6.30pm (refer to 10.4 Setting, Reviewing and Managing Fees Policy). In the event that a child has not been collected a half hour after closing time (7:00pm), and there is no response from a parent, authorised nominee or emergency contact, advice will be sought from the Police, and an incident report will be completed (refer to 4.5 Incident, Illness, Injury or Trauma and 10.33 Managing Notifications).

Departures of Children with Self-Care or Sibling Care Arrangements Policy

The service will apply the following procedure for children who are permitted to leave the premises by way of written instruction from their legal parent/guardian either on their own or with a sibling:

1. If parents request self-care and sibling arrangements, the service will support families in decision-making by providing relevant information and guidance. Refer to - 2.4.2 Self-Care/Sibling Care Arrangement Information.
2. The service request that families use this information to determine the capacity of their child/ren to be left in self-care arrangements.
3. The service will require the parent to provide the following information along with the written consent to support departure notification:
 - o date/s and times of departure;
 - o child's destination and expected length of the journey;
 - o mode of transport, i.e. on foot or bicycle; and
 - o name and date of birth of older sibling collecting the child (if applicable).
4. An educator will then sign the child out upon leaving the premises.
5. The parent will be offered the opportunity to be notified (by phone, text or email) that the child has left the premises. This arrangement will be negotiated by the needs of families and will additionally reflect the duty of care upheld by Middle Park State School OSHC.
6. The service acknowledges that families may use their discretion in determining the capacity of their children to enter into self-care arrangements.
7. The service will communicate with parents and authorised nominees (where relevant) if there are concerns regarding the safety and protection of children departing from the service in this manner. The Nominated Supervisor (or alternative delegate) will not allow the departure of a child if there is a reasonable concern about the child's safety and wellbeing in doing so.

The Queensland Criminal Code 1899 (Section 364A) states:

- A person who, having the lawful care or charge of a child under 12 years, leaves the child for an unreasonable time without making reasonable provision for the supervision and care of the child during that time commits a misdemeanour.
- Whether the time is unreasonable depends on all the relevant circumstances.

2.4.1 Arrival and Accountability Flowchart illustrates the following two critical incident procedures and decision-making.

Child Leaving without Permission

1. If a child leaves the service without permission or without the authority described above, the staff will assess the situation immediately and call the Police and a parent/guardian.
2. Staff will not leave the service to follow a child if:
 - a) it will or may leave the other children in the service with insufficient supervision, or
 - b) it will or may expose that staff member to an unacceptable risk of personal harm.
3. As soon as practical, the Approved Provider will be notified of the incident.
4. A notification will be made to the Regulatory Authority of the incident.
5. Following the incident, 2.7 Supporting Complex Behaviours procedure will be followed. Consultation with parents, the Approved Provider and Nominated Supervisor will direct the plan of action moving forward.

Children Unaccounted for During the Program

1. If a child is unaccounted for during the program's operating hours, the Nominated Supervisor/Responsible Person will be notified immediately by the educator as soon as the disappearance is discovered/identified.
2. The Nominated Supervisor/Responsible Person will undertake a rapid and comprehensive search of the service's premises to locate the child. In the event that the child is not located, the child's parent/guardian will be notified, and the Police will be called.
3. The Nominated Supervisor/Responsible Person will advise the Approved Provider immediately upon calling the Police, and the Regulatory Authority will be notified using the appropriate forms.

An incident report will be completed and will include:

- date, time and location of the child when they were last accounted for;
- the name of supervising educator and the circumstances surrounding the child's disappearance;
- details of actions taken to locate the child;
- what the child was wearing and any distinguishing features; and
- time parent/guardians and other agencies were contacted.

Relevant Laws and Provisions

- *Education and Care Services National Law Act, 2010 and Regulations 2011*
- *Work Health and Safety Act 2011 and Regulations 2011*
- *Child Protection Act 1999*
- *Department of Education and Training Child Care Provider Handbook*
- *The Queensland Criminal Code 1899*
- *National Quality Standard, Quality Area 2 – Children's health and safety; 4 - Staffing arrangements; 5 - Relationships with children; and 6 - Collaborative partnerships with families and communities.*

ECEC Regulation Compliance

- *Education and Care Services National Regulations 168 (2)(n) and 172(2).*

Policy Controls			
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